

Granville Charles Schuch – November 10, 1942 to May 7, 1943

Part 3 – Destiny on the Battlefield

The entire TORCH campaign to capture primary targets only took three days and was swiftly followed by the dispersal of the Allied naval fleet as the Royal Navy had been stripped its assets and needed to redeploy them to the hard-pressed Atlantic convoy routes. They intended to travel as a convoy dashing through the straits on to England, to bring back reinforcements. The return trip would, however, not be without incident.

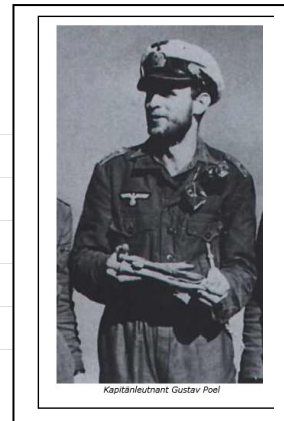
On that dash the *Viceroy of India* was lost, but the four Union-Castle ships were soon safe at anchor in the shadow of the Rock of Gibraltar. On November 12 the convoy left Gibraltar. In the Atlantic the weather was vile. The ships were buffeted by heavy seas; the escorting destroyers were almost submerged. Two days later an enemy submarine dived under the ships and took up her position ready to attack. Her victim was the **Charlie's** ship, *Warwick Castle*.



Viceroy of India sinking off Oran



It took six hours to pick up the survivors. In reporting the loss, the First Officer commented both on the courage shown by the Captain, officers and seamen of the rescuing ship, *Achates*, and also on the excellent behavior of the crew of *Warwick Castle* from beginning to end.



Kapitänleutnant Gustav Poel

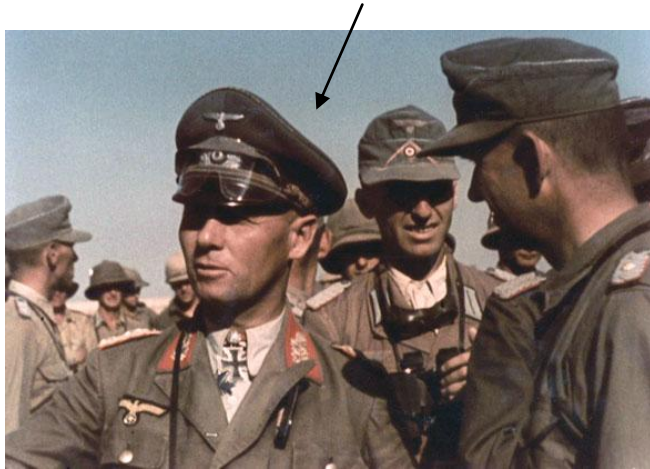
Fate	Sunk by U-413 (Gustav Poel)
Position	39.12N, 13.25W - Grid CG 4546
Complement	462 (96 dead and 366 survivors).
Convoy	MKF-1X
Route	Gibraltar (12 Nov) - Glasgow
Cargo	Ballast
History	Completed in January 1931 as motor passenger ship for Union-Castle Mail SS Co Ltd, London. In September 1939 requisitioned by the Admiralty as troopship.

Notes on loss At 08.44 hours on 14 Nov, 1942, the **Warwick Castle** (Master Henry Richard Leepman-Shaw) in convoy MKF-1X was hit by one of two torpedoes from U-413 about 200 miles northwest of Cape Espichel, Portugal. The U-boat hit her with two coups de grâce at 08.57 hours, that caused the ship to sink about one hour later. The master, 61 crew members and 34 service personnel were lost. 201 crew members, 29 gunners, 5 naval personnel and 131 service personnel were picked up by **HMS Achates (H 12)** (LtCdr A.H.T. Johns, DSO, RN), **HMS Vansittart (D 64)** (LtCdr T. Johnston, DSC, RN), **HMCS Louisburg (K 143)** (LtCdr W.F. Campbell, RCNVR) and the British motor merchant **Leinster** and landed at Greenock.



The Axis Forces

Before Operation TORCH in North Africa the Germans and their Italian allies had controlled a narrow strip along the Mediterranean coast between Tunisia and Egypt with an army numbering some 100,000 men under Field Marshal Erwin Rommel.



Four days before the Torch landings took place, the Axis defenses at El Alamein, Egypt, had finally given way and the British 8th Army began the last pursuit of the Afrika Korps - who with typical efficiency succeeded in fighting repeated and stubborn rear guard actions as they retreated westward despite their exhaustion and lack of supplies. One of the weaknesses of the Torch planning, however, was that no provision had been made to neutralize Tunisia during the initial stages. German reaction was faster than Allied planners had thought possible. A race developed between the German advance parties and the British 1st Army, lead by General Kenneth Anderson, who drove into Tunisia

to clear the coastline and link up with the 8th Army under British commander by Lt. Gen. Bernard L. Montgomery, now advancing west from El Alamein, catching Rommel in between.



The strategy for the British 1st Army was to first seize certain vital airfields with airborne troops, and then to occupy the passes leading into the Tunisian plain with orthodox forces. The Allies won the first lap, but their advance towards Tunis and Bizerta was stopped by the Germans on a line running from Oudna through Tebourba towards Mateur. By this time, the British 1st Army had outrun

its supply lines and lacked the impetus to break through the German defenses.

Meanwhile, the Germans and Italians continued their build-up, pouring in troops and aircraft. The swift conquer of Algeria and Morocco had been untypical; in Tunisia the Germans reacted with speed and efficiency, and rapidly built up their forces. Within three days of the Allied landings in Operation TORCH, German air-lifts were bringing troops and



equipment into Tunis. By this time the Luftwaffe in Tunisia had reached a total of 81 fighters and 28 dive-bombers and there were a handful of parachute troops and panzer-grenadiers on the ground. Shortly afterwards JU-52s began landing troops at the rate of 750 a day. At sea armaments including the formidable Tigers, the dreaded '88' anti-aircraft/anti-tank gun, field artillery and transport poured in despite interference from the Maltese based British aircraft and submarines. By mid-November the Axis has landed some 5,000 troops and by the end of the month



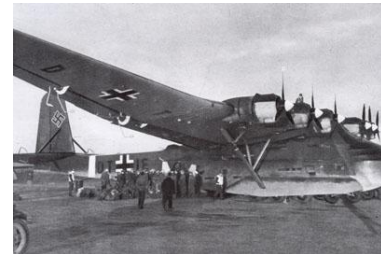
Front view of a new Tiger tank.



Side view from above of a PzKpfw VI Tiger

15,000 well-armed and experienced German soldiers, 9,000 Italians and 130 tanks These resources were expertly deployed to block Allied plans.

By pouring troops into this 'Tunisian Bridgehead' Hitler was hoping to prevent or at least delay an Allied attack on southern Europe. The prime German deficiency was in artillery: guns of all types numbered less than 40, but operations were in fact hardly hampered – **Stuka** aircraft provided intense fire-support by day and the mortars were a deadly supplement. It was the mountainous terrain, however, which most aided the Axis defense.



German soldiers are shown here embarking on a Me323 GIGANT transport plane on Sicily for their air-lifting to the Tunisia bridgehead.



A swarm of Junkers Ju 87 Stuka dive bombers. They were used in large numbers during the initial part of World War 2, and came to symbolize the concept of close support air operations for Blitzkrieg attacks by army Panzer formations.

Additionally, during the early days of the campaign the Axis air forces retained air superiority. Allied airfields were far from the front, and for the most part were not all-weather, which meant that when the winter rains came at the end of November they would become virtually inoperable. The Axis, on the other hand, had good airfields close to the front, with the added capability of being able to fly sorties from Sardinia, Pantellaria and Greece, as well as relatively easy lines of communications from Sicily and Italy.

The Allies continued to underestimate the German build-up in Tunisia throughout the early days and by 9 November 1942 the Axis forces were building in Tunisia unopposed by the local French forces under General Barré who occupied much of the area. Wracked with indecision, Barré moved his troops into the hills and formed a defensive line from Teboursouk through Medjez el Bab and ordered that anyone trying to pass through the line would be shot. On 19 November the German commander, Walter Nehring, who had arrived on 16 November to command the German defense of Tunisia demanded passage for his troops across the bridge at Medjez and was refused. The Germans attacked the poorly equipped French units twice and were driven back. However, the French had taken heavy casualties and, lacking artillery and armor, Barré was forced to withdraw.



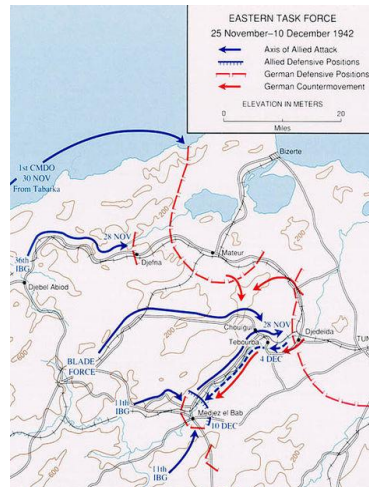
Walter Nehring



By this time the General Anderson and the British First Army from the Eastern sector of Operation TORCH had advanced 400 miles (640km) from Algiers, and was inside Tunisia only 50 miles (80km) from Tunis.



Jurgin von Armin



Kenneth Anderson

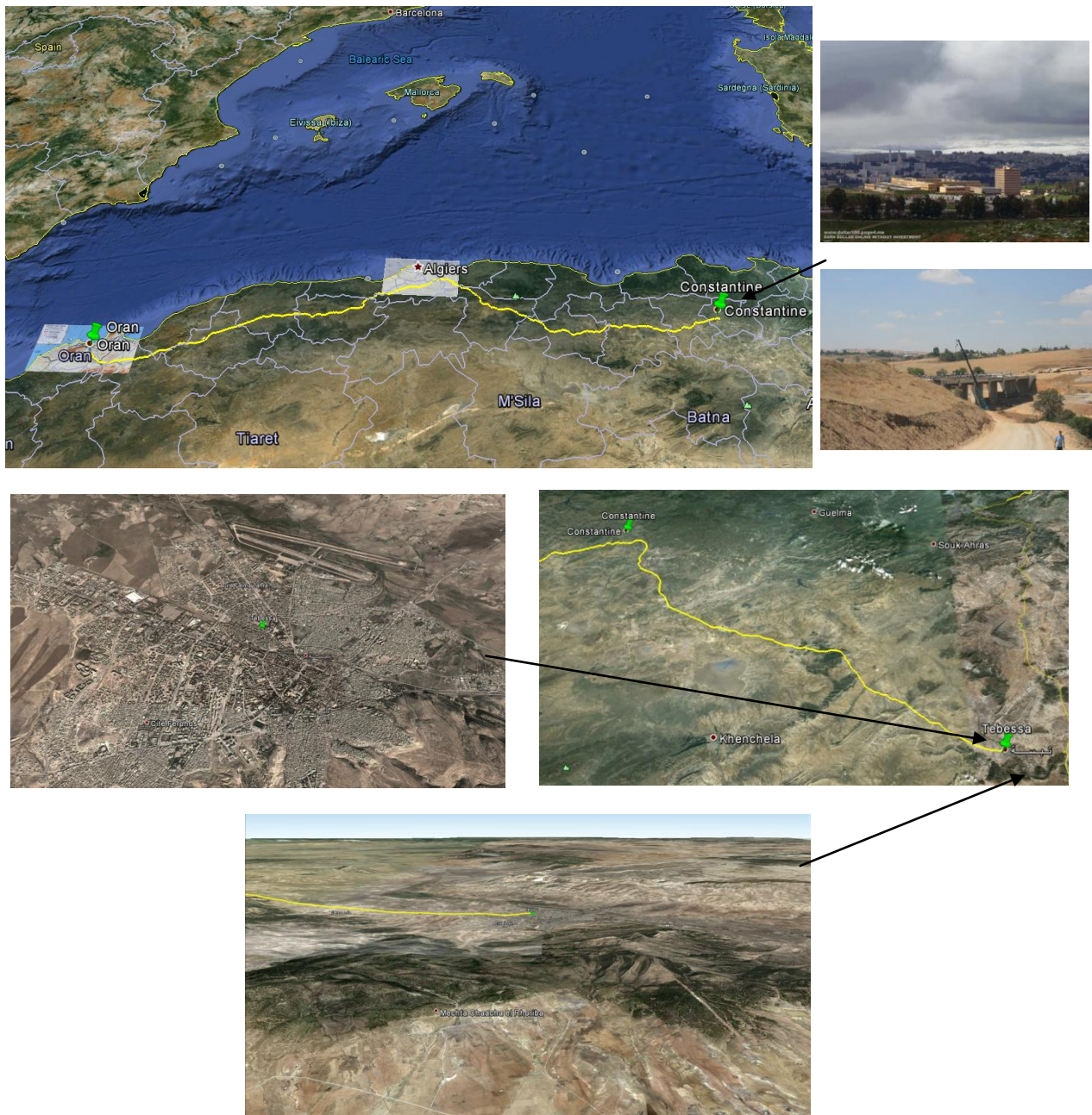
By the 22nd November, Anderson's 1st Army was ready to launch a major assault on Tunis but by then the German/Italian forces were strong enough to defeat an Allied attack on 24 November at Djedieba. German counter-offensives on 27 November and 1 December forced an Allied withdrawal. These unsuccessful offensives on 22-24 December demonstrated that the British First Army could only hold a defensive position while building up its forces, expanded by local French troops as well as Corps II USA reinforcements including the 1st Infantry Division and Charles Schuch arriving from the Operation TORCH from the west. With logistics problems choking the Allied army under the British General Kenneth Anderson, the Germans gained valuable time. December rains turned the roads and tracks into a quagmire forcing the postponement of

II Corps	
	
Shoulder sleeve insignia of the II Corps	
Active	1918–1945
Country	 United States of America
Branch	 United States Army
Garrison/HQ	Camp Kilmer, NJ (after 1958)
Engagements	World War I World War II *Battle of Sidi Bou Zid *Battle of the Kasserine Pass *Battle of El Guettar *Operation Husky *Battle of Monte Cassino
Commanders	
Notable commanders	George W. Read Mark W. Clark George Patton Omar Bradley Geoffrey Keyes
U.S. Corps (1939 - Present)	
Previous	Next
I Corps (United States)	III Corps (United States)

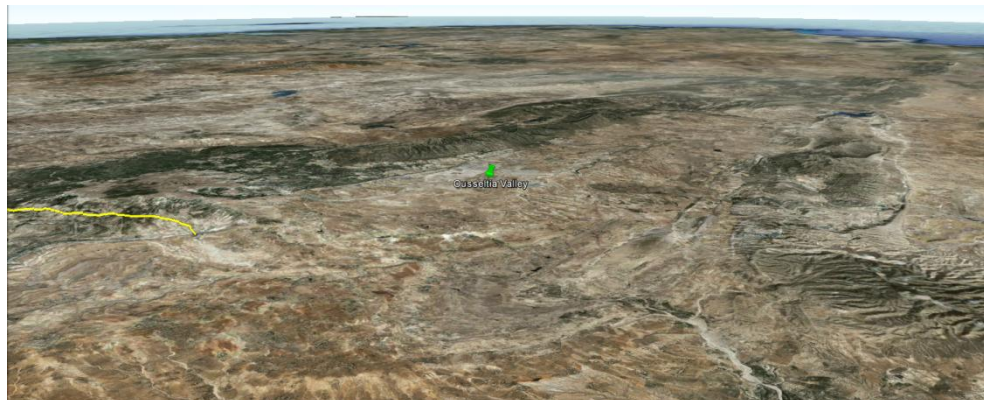
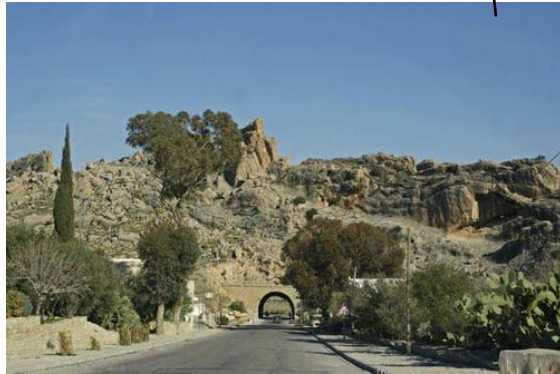
a planned renewed Allied offensive. There was stalemate. On the 8th December General von Arnim replaced Nehring but both sides failed to break the stalemate.

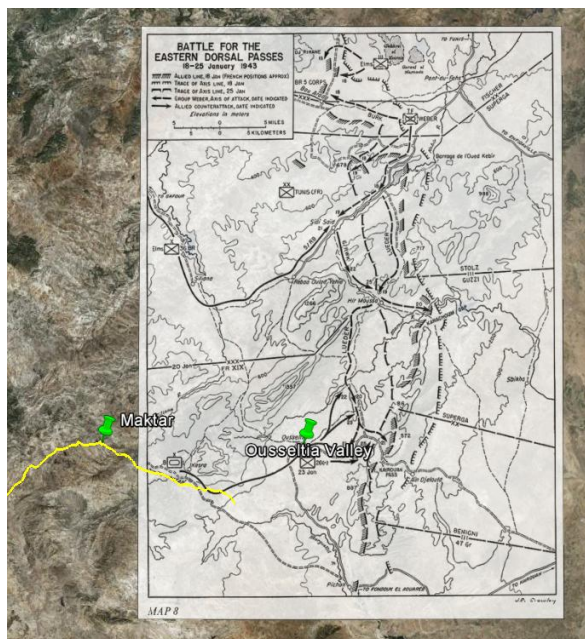
Meanwhile the British 8th Army in the East, commanded by General Bernard Montgomery, had also stopped around Tripoli to allow reinforcements to arrive and build up the Allied advantage.

Headquarters, U.S. II Corps, began moving to Constantine from Oran on 4 January. One week later, its main section was operating there near Headquarters, British First Army, while an advance command post under Brig. Gen. Ray E. Porter opened in Tébessa. Eventually General Fredendall's headquarters moved southeast of Tébessa to a wooded hillside in which underground corridors were constructed while the advance command post went to Gafsa.



While plans for a new offensive against Rommel called Operation SATIN were being prepared, the troops to be under Fredendall's command continued to shift from northern Tunisia or came eastward from Morocco and Algeria. On 21 January the **3rd Battalion, 16th Infantry** deployed from Tebessa when Fredendall was authorized to extend his forces northward through Maktar to the hills west of the Ousseltia Valley.





The first elements of the U.S. 1st Infantry Division began arriving before the end of the day, too late to organize an attack for 24 January. An attack begun at 0900, 25 January. By that time, German forces started to withdraw, leaving a newly established main line of resistance across the northern end of the Ousseltia valley and along the eastern edge to Djebel Ousselat to be defended by an Italian force consisting of elements of the *1st (Superga) Division* and *Group Benigni*. The first attack encountered about noon a battalion of Italian infantry which had been recruited in Tunisia, drove it back, and continued advancing through the following night. By the next morning, it had gained the western end of the OusseltiañKairouan pass and had come up against a German unit. Its offensive continued during the next two days.

The U.S. **1st Infantry Division** (General Allen) with headquarters in Maktar temporarily assumed defense of the Allied line running along the Ousseltia valley and outeast toward Pichon. Colonel Fechet's **16th** Combat Team was to be on the north and Brig. Gen. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.'s, mixed command of American and French units, on the south. However, before they engaged the battle in the Ousseltia valley was ended.

The enemy had dealt a hard blow, especially to the French, one battalion being reduced to only 196 men. Prisoners totaled 3,449. Material captured or destroyed, as reported, included 87 machine guns, 16 antitank guns, 36 artillery pieces, 21 tanks, 4 armored reconnaissance cars, 4 self-propelled gun carriages, more than 200 other vehicles, and over 300 horses. Allied aviation and artillery had inflicted considerable damage on the enemy, but control of the passes west of Kairouan was worth this price to the *Fifth Panzer Army*.

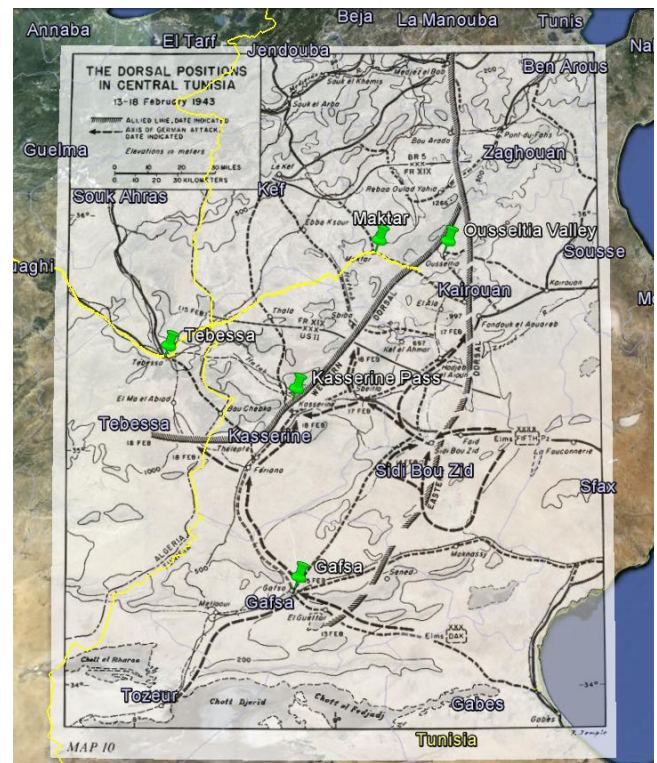
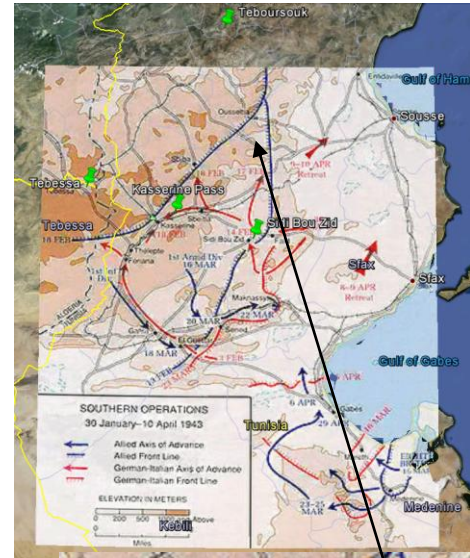
Because of the termination of its commitment on 28 January, the Allies lost the opportunity of regaining the passes through the Eastern Dorsal before the enemy could become solidly established astride them. The French had fought ably, but they were handicapped by the lack of heavy weapons and means of communication. From now on it would be necessary to reinforce their sector with U.S. and British units until their equipment could be brought up to modern standards.

The note of hopefulness with which January had opened, and the high expectation of II Corps of carrying the battle to the enemy, had led early in February to temporary frustration. The enemy was still calling the tune. Until the Allies were strong enough to resume the offensive in March, they would have to fight the enemy where he chose to attack, and when.

As the Allied forces converged on Tunisia they were facing a formidable and growing foe. By the end of January 1943 the Axis had over 100,000 troops in Tunisia and had brought the Allied advance to a halt.

Rommel's troops, falling back northwestward before the British Eighth Army's drive from Egypt in the east, established themselves behind the so-called Mareth Line in southeastern Tunisia in contact with the German reinforcements. Having consolidated a giant beachhead in Tunisia, Rommel assumed the offensive on 14 February 1943. Powerful German armored units moved out from passes in south central Tunisia on the front of the U.S. II Corps, in an attempt to turn the south flank of the British First Army, and capture an Allied base of operations around Tebessa. The Germans defeated the Allies in a series of sharp armored actions, pushing them out of Sidi Bou Zid forcing a westward withdrawal for US troops in disarray. The defeats were compounded by American inexperience, poor senior leadership, and lack of armor comparable to that in the German panzer forces, as well as the highly effective German high-velocity 88 mm anti-tank guns, which were used in screening tactics to destroy American tanks lured into pursuit of German armored forces.

The Germans had made a spectacular advance of almost a hundred miles as Field Marshal Erwin Rommel led the 22nd Panzer tank division to overrun forward Allied positions.



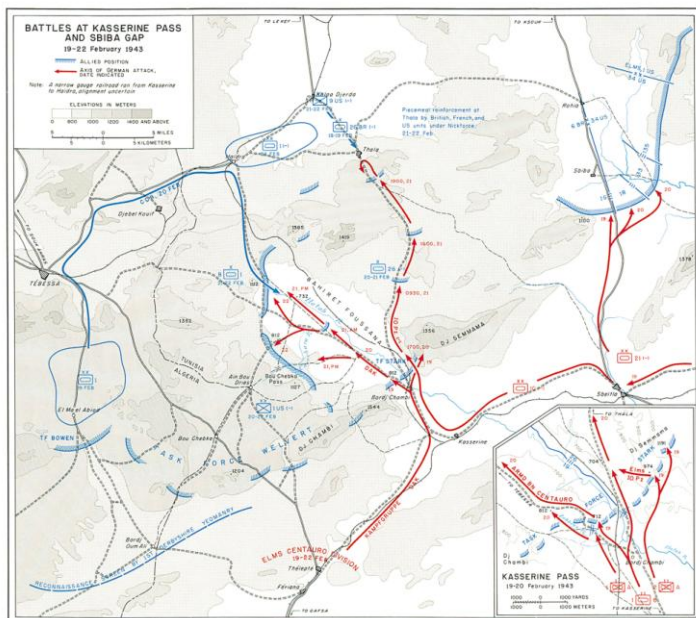
On 16-17 February a redeployment of Allied forces to the north shortened Allied lines permitting the subsequent withdrawal of the **16th** Regimental Combat Team of the U.S. **1st Infantry Division** from the Ousseltia Valley heights. They moved southwestward on 17-21 February to the II Corps area at Bou Chebka between Tébessa and Fériana, Tunisia. The Allies were planning a major offensive against Rommel.



Eisenhower, with Patton's well-known personal courage in mind, told him, "I want you as a Corps commander, not as a casualty." And, he added: "You must not retain for one instant any man in a responsible position where you have become doubtful of his ability to do the job. . . . This matter frequently calls for more courage than any other thing you will have to do, but I expect you to be perfectly cold-blooded about it. . . . I will give you the best available replacement or stand by any arrangement you want to make."



The new commander of the II Corps attempted to transmit to his entire command the aggressive spirit with which he himself was animated, and to expedite preparations for the forthcoming attack. General Patton drove his principal subordinates and moved with restless energy throughout this area. His regime substituted military decorum for all traces of casualness, and required "spit and polish" as a preventive against carelessness. Some of Patton's methods to stamp his personal leadership on the entire II Corps seemed trivial to those on whom they were imposed. Changes which some might attribute to Patton's methods were perhaps also traceable to the lessons learned by troops in combat. The II Corps matured, working at its job, looking ahead more than it looked back, and needing more than anything else successes to boost its morale.



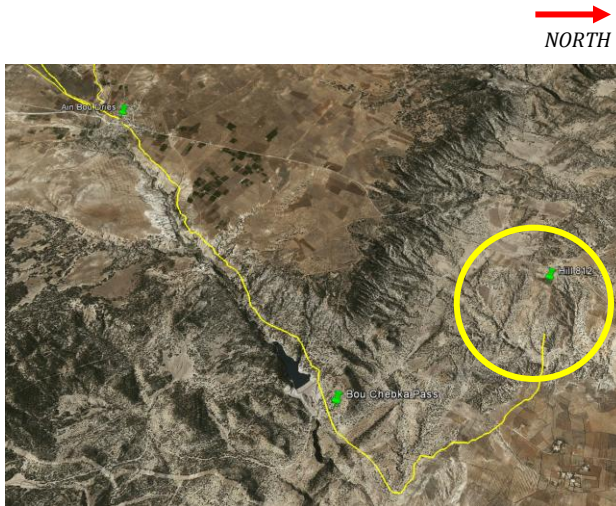
On 21 February after reinforcing the Kasserine Pass with American troops, Lieutenant General George S. Patton now commanding the men of the fighting **1st Division** reorganized and conducted the first of three counter-attacks that would stop Rommel in his tracks still short of their objective at Tébessa.



By 0800, on 22 February the 3d Battalion, 16th Infantry, was ready to begin a counterattack on the left of the 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry, to restore a lost situation from the early morning and to prevent any further penetration by the enemy between the 1st Infantry Division's units at Bou Chebka pass and those of Combat Command B, 1st Armored Division, to the north. General Terry Allen kept trying all morning to get the counterattack started but without success; it began at 1600.



MAJ. GEN. TERRY ALLEN,
Commanding General, U.S. 1st
Infantry Division



The 3d Battalion, 16th Infantry, advanced against Hill 812. It was supported by fire from the 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry, on the right and from the 2d Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry, on the left. Aided by a sortie of Company G, 13th Armored Regiment, the 3rd Battalion drove the enemy off the hill. The Germans abandoned eight American guns and the vehicles which he had captured earlier that morning, all in serviceable condition, and after suffering heavy casualties withdrew in some disorder toward Kasserine pass.

Axis reconnaissance along the north Tunisian front on 22 February indicated that the advanced positions of British 5 Corps and French XIX Corps had not been seriously weakened or deprived of local reserves.²¹ Air reconnaissance west of the Allied southern flank revealed the fact that reinforcements were approaching Thala from Le Kef and moving from Tébesa toward the Bahiret Foussana plain. With a fairly correct picture of the Allied dispositions, Rommel recognized that his offensive could not succeed. Mud and mountain terrain ill suited to tank action, rain and fog impeding air support, and the lowered combat strength of the Axis units had all contributed to final failure.

The Kasserine Pass was retaken and the stage was set for Hitler's Afrika Corps to be defeated.



MARCHING THROUGH KASSERINE
PASS, 26 February 1943



American combat engineers search for mines at the Kasserine train station, February 26, 1943. Rommel's withdrawing soldiers planted more than 43,000 mines, forcing American troops to "spread out like caddies and golders looking for a lost ball."

During the first part of March the Germans attempted two lesser offensives—one against the British First Army and the other against the British Eighth Army at Medenine on 6 March but were easily repulsed. Rommel counseled Hitler to allow a full retreat to a defensible line but was denied, and on 9 March Rommel left Tunisia to be replaced by Jürgen von Arnim, who had to spread his forces over 100 miles (160 km) of northern Tunisia.

At this point the Allies were able to resume their offensive. In late March, Rommel's forces were driven from the Mareth Line toward the north. Protecting his line of retreat, the enemy fought a stubborn delaying action against the Americans and the British in the El Guettar-Gafsa area.

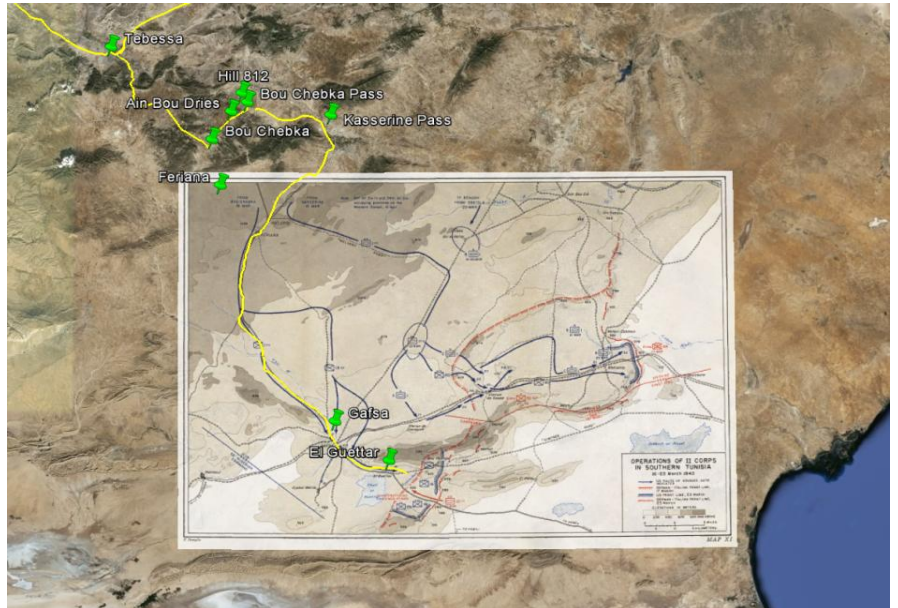


On March 16, 1943, on the eve of the II Corps attack on Gafsa, Eisenhower pins a third star on buoyant Patton to mark his promotion to lieutenant general. One officer said of the new II Corps commander, "Bedizened with stars and loaded with guns, he came with Marsian speech and a song of hate."



Field Marshal Harold Alexander (left), commander of the new 18th Army Group, with Eisenhower (center) and Patton during their first collective meeting, in Feriana, on March 17, 1943, the day the American attack began on Gafsa and El Guettar.

The U.S. II Corps including the 1st Infantry Division and **Charles Schuch**, now under Patton, attacked toward the flank and rear of the Mareth Line. Despite heavy Axis attacks and aerial bombardment, elements of the 1st Division engulfed Gafsa on 18 March. The **16th Infantry**, was leading the **3d Battalion, 16th Infantry**, into the village from the northwest. They had overrun enemy security detachments and although mines and booby traps were plentiful, they found Gafsa to be free of defenders and pushed toward El Guettar. On 21 March 1943, in a brilliantly coordinated attack, the men captured the town of El Guettar. It was on this drive that **SGT Schuch** fought under the command of the incomparable Patton.

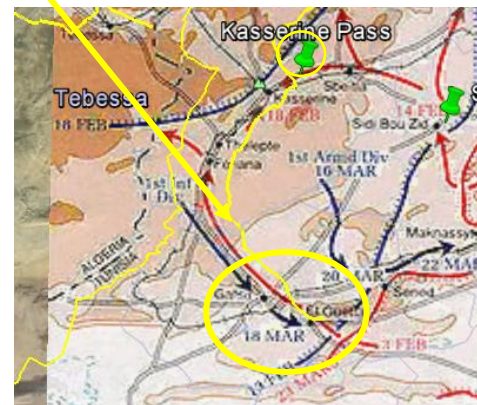


Nephew Neil Edgar remembers uncle Charlie saying, "Now Patton...he was a heck of a leader. The best."

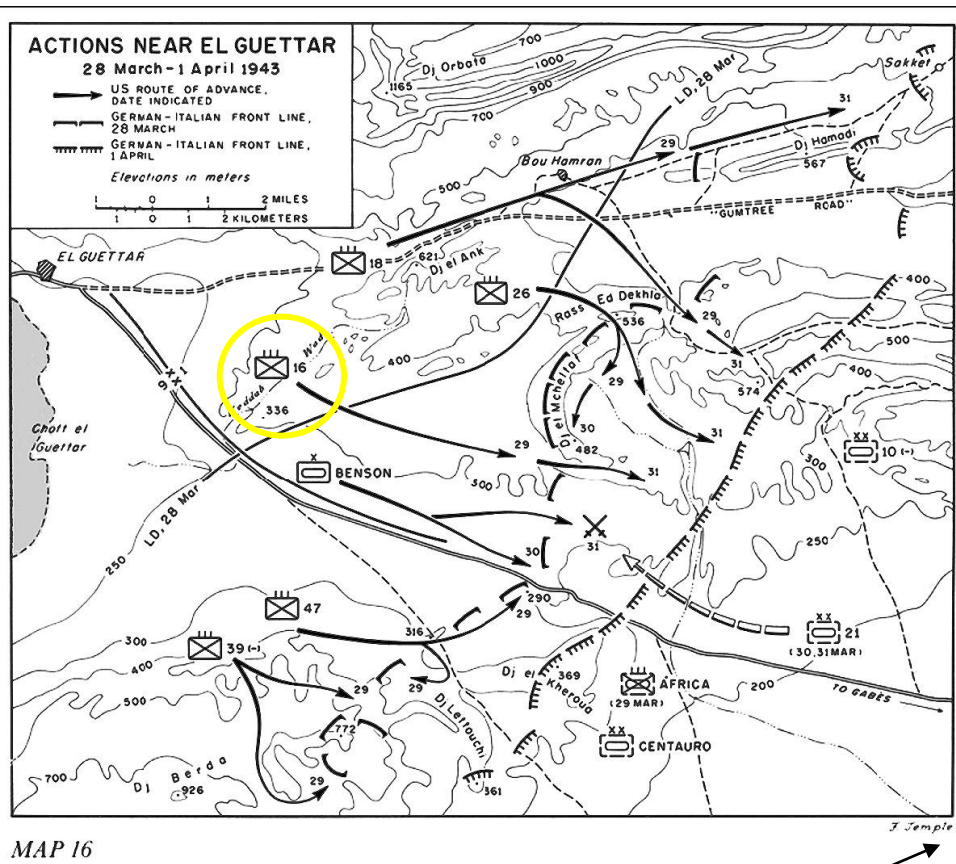
LT. GEN. GEORGE S. PATTON, JR., and General Eisenhower conferring at beginning of II Corps offensive, Tunisia, 16 March 1943



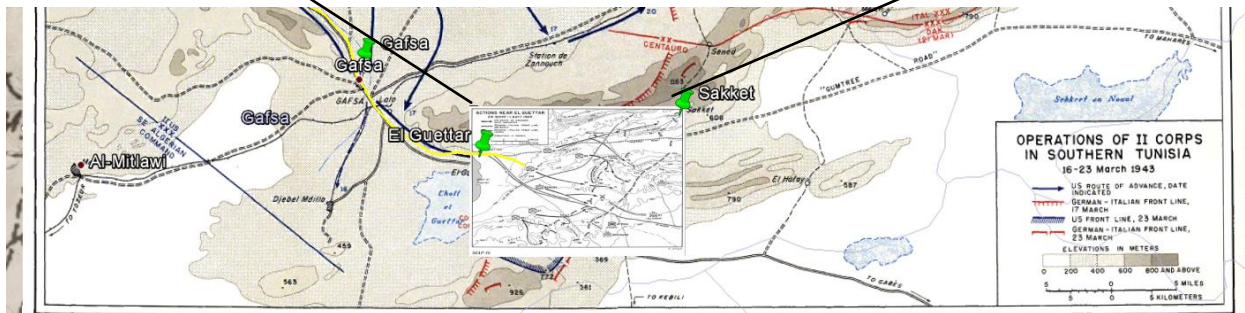
INFANTRYMEN NEAR EL GUETTAR occupying the heights south of the Gabès road.



Following the occupation of El Guettar, the 16th Infantry Regiment was an integral part of driving the enemy to the east. By the end of March the Germans mounted one last counteroffensive.



MAP 16



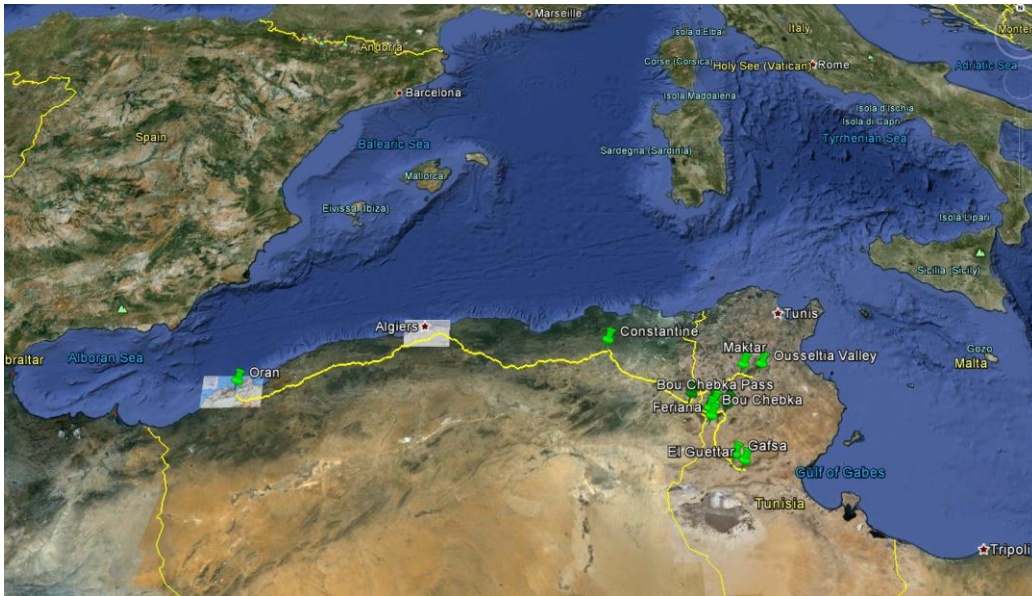
The 1st Infantry Division drove doggedly ahead to take the village of Sakket on 3 April, but slowed down thereafter.

Upon the failure of this counteroffensive, the Germans withdrew to their original positions.

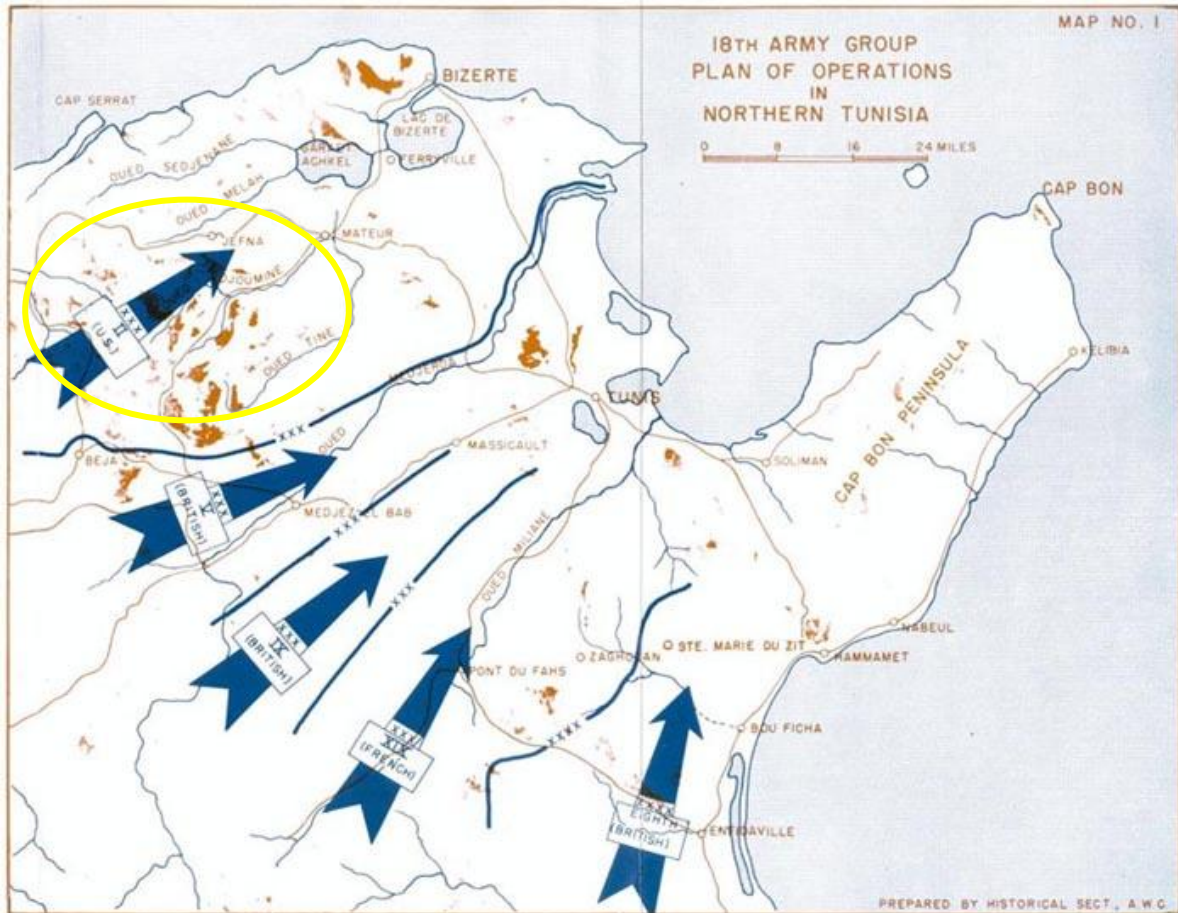
The Final Campaign for North Africa

A delegation of German Officers arrived at American Headquarters south of Ferryville at 0926 on the morning of 9 May 1943. Their mission was to surrender the remnants of a once proud unit of the Wehrmacht, the formidable Fifth Panzer Army. On the same morning, two German staff officers reported at the Command Post of the 1st Armored Division southeast of Bizerte to request an armistice. Three days later, General Jürgen von Arnim was captured at Ste. Marie du Zit. Marshal Giovanni Messe, commanding the Italian First Army, surrendered unconditionally to the British Eighth Army on 13 May. The long battle for North Africa was ended.

*These events were the culmination of grand strategy but were made possible only by the heroic struggle of Allied soldiers across the coastal areas of North Africa, through deserts, mountains, and swamps. Troops of the **II Corps**, U. S. A., including **Charles Schuch** and the **1st Infantry Division**, who had entered the fight for Africa with the TORCH invasion on 8 November 1942, played a prominent role in the decisive final battle which opened on 23 April 1943.*



By 22 April the equivalent of 5 Italian and 9 German divisions were at bay for what they planned to be a protracted defense of Tunis and Bizerte. But the Axis was not allowed a breathing space to strengthen its defenses. The Allied forces, united under General Sir Harold R. Alexander as the Eighteenth Army Group, were already preparing the blow that was to destroy the enemy forces in a battle lasting 21 days. In its simplest outline, the Allied plan was for a powerful thrust by the British Eighth Army in the center of the Axis forces heavily supported by armor, with secondary attacks on the flanks (with the 16th Infantry Regiment of the 1st Infantry Division to the north) to hold the enemy down and prevent him from concentrating to meet the main effort.



General Alexander's Eighteenth Army Group included the British-French First Army under Lt. Gen. Sir Kenneth A. N. Anderson, the British Eighth Army under General Sir Bernard L. Montgomery, and the United States II Corps now commanded by Maj. Gen. (now Lt. Gen.) Omar N. Bradley who relieved Patton who was now preparing for the invasion of Sicily. For administrative purposes, the II Corps was under the First Army. Supporting the First Army and II Corps were the 242d Group (RAF), the XII Air Support Command, and the Tactical Bomber Force. Thus for the final drive to capture Tunisia, General Alexander had more than 20 divisions, in 3 main groups, on a front of about 140 miles.

General Montgomery's Eighth Army held the Allied right flank in the mountainous Enfidaville sector. Its role was to maintain pressure on the enemy in this area and to advance against his route of escape into the Cap Bon Peninsula. The main Allied attack was to be delivered in the center of the front by the

forces of the British-French First Army; seven infantry divisions (three French) and nearly three armored divisions. In this area lay the two principal natural corridors into the Tunis plain: the valleys of the Medjerda and the Miliane. While the French XIX Corps, in the Miliane valley, drove northeast, the main effort was to be along the Medjez el Bab-Tunis axis, in an area where armored units could best maneuver. The **United States II Corps**, with the Corps Franc d'Afrique, was to operate on the left flank of the British attack, with the high ground southeast of Mateur and the heights between Jefna and Garaet Achkel as principal objectives. This attack would endanger the flank and rear of enemy forces facing the British drive.

THE ALLIES CONTROL THE AIR

For the months preceding the battle the heavy bombers of the Strategic Air Force, commanded by Maj. Gen. James H. Doolittle, had been carrying out raids against Axis shipping, supply lines, and air bases in Tunisia and in Europe, with significant results for the battle for North Africa. As the Tunisian campaign developed, the attacks were directed at the transportation facilities and ports of Sicily and southern Italy, especially Naples, Messina, and Palermo. Meanwhile medium bombers and fighters were striking at enemy surface and aerial shipping in the Sicilian Strait. Allied air attacks and the activities of the British Navy were making precarious any long-term existence of the Axis forces in Tunisia.

The Tactical Air Force, commanded by Air Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham, was prepared to collaborate with the field armies in bombing and strafing rear installations, roads, and convoys. In one sense the final phase of the Tunisian campaign began not on 23 April but on the nights of 18 and 19 April, when the Allies employed night bombers against German airdromes and destroyed 129 Axis planes, including 72 out of 100 enemy transports. On 22 April the Tactical Air Force destroyed 20 ME-323 6-engine transports carrying the equivalent of a regiment into Tunisia.

During the first 2 days of action, the Tactical Air Force made 1,500 sorties, but from 25 April to 5 May weather conditions grounded most of the planes. Air power was to play an important role again on 6 and 7 May, when the Allied Air Force blasted the enemy in the Medjerda Valley and contributed powerfully to the decisive breakthrough by the British First Army.

The **II Corps** Surprise Move to the North



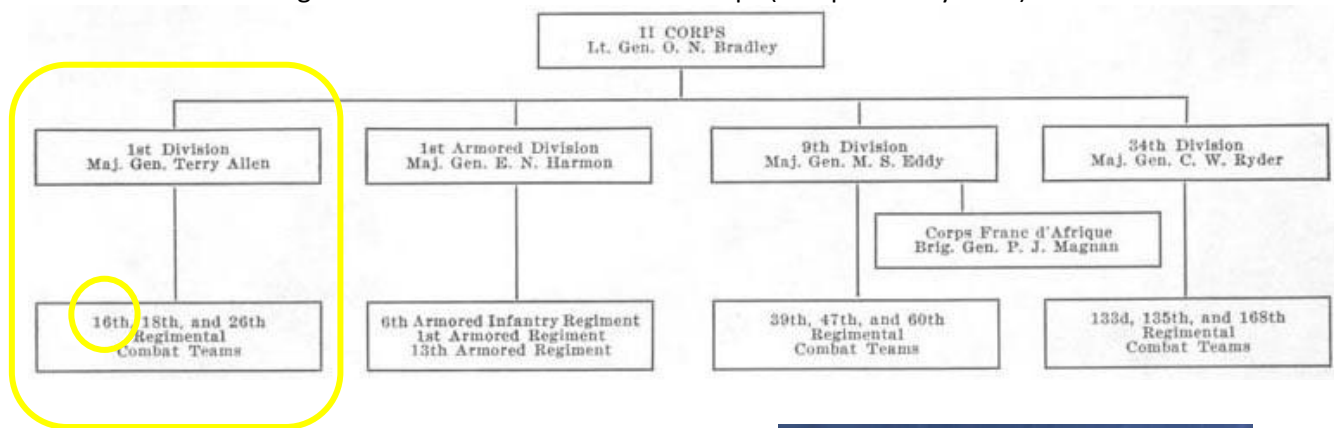
Soldiers marching along a desert roadway in Tunisia, 1943. [Source](#)

By the opening of the battle on 23 April, the Allied Air Force had won the mastery of the air from the Luftwaffe. One major result, it is believed, was the enemy's inability to secure knowledge of the surprise move of the **II Corps** from southern to northern Tunisia until after it was completed. When General Anderson, commanding the First Army, issued his operational orders for the final phase of the Tunisian campaign, the **II Corps** was completing an action in southern Tunisia. El Guettar. In order to reach assigned positions for the attack on 23

The **II Corps** assembled its units in the Tébessa area between 14 and 18 April. It had to move more than 100,000 men, plus equipment of all types, an average distance of 150 miles over difficult country and across the communication lines of the First Army. In addition, supplies for the coming operation had to be assembled from bases and ports many miles to the west. The accomplishment of this move was one of the outstanding achievements of transport and supply in the North African campaign – over 2,400 vehicles per day. The 9th Division reached the northern area and began relieving British units on 12 April. The **1st Division** began arriving in its zone on 16 April covering a distance of 185 miles only three weeks after taking Gafsa and El Guettar. Forward units of the 1st Armored Division came into the Beja sector on 22 April, followed by the 34th Division on the following day.



Organization of the United States II Corps (23 April-9 May 1943)



Summary of **II Corps** Action – 4 April – 9 May

The operation of the **II Corps**, U. S. A., lasted 17 days and involved advances of 25 to 50 miles by four divisions. As ordered by General Alexander, the main effort was made on the right flank. Three divisions began the attack on a 13-mile front where advance by the II Corps would best support the big British thrust in the Medjerda Valley. On the northern part of the II Corps front, the **16th Infantry Division** and the Corps Franc d'Afrique struck at enemy defenses west of Mateur.



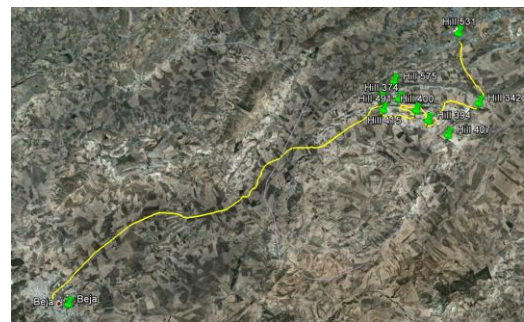
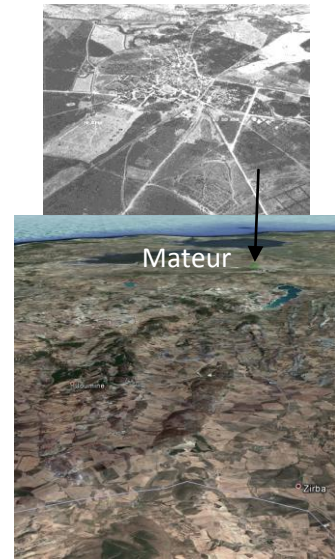
In the first phase of action, 23 April to 3 May, the **II Corps** stormed or outflanked all the major German hill fortresses, and forced an enemy retreat to a line east of Mateur and the Tine Valley on the last hills protecting the roads to Bizerte and Tunis. The II Corps was not fighting isolated battles; its action was always geared to a coordinated Allied operation. Although there is a larger story here, the battle of Tunisia was won by the British Eighteenth Army Group with the **II Corps** played its part, and played it well, as described here:

The **II Corps**, holding a front of about 40 miles from Cap Serrat to the Medjerda Valley, was to attack highly organized enemy positions in terrain as difficult as can be found in the whole battle area. A belt of rugged hill country, 15 to 20 miles in depth, lay between the American lines and Mateur, a center of enemy communications and key to the Bizerte area. The map suggests a main ridge pattern running from southwest to northeast-roughly, the direction planned for the II Corps attack. In detail, however, the hills and ridges form a jumbled maze, providing no broad corridors for an advance. The high ground averages 500 to 1,000 feet above the narrow valleys.

In the bare country south of the Sidi Nsir-Mateur road, where trees and brush are scarce, the rocky slopes steepen at times into cliffs. The valleys offered little or no cover, and, as one officer remarked, "The enemy on his hill positions was constantly looking right down your throat." In the sector north of Sidi Nsir to the coast, the problem of cover ran to the opposite extreme. Here, in equally rugged country, the valleys and lower slopes are covered with dense scrub. Movement of any sort was difficult; paths for guns or supplies had to be hacked out by hand.

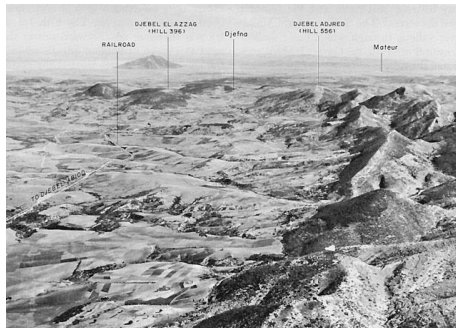
Four small rivers flow through the hills toward Mateur and Garaet (Lake) Achkel, but none of these streams opens up an easy route for an attack to follow. The Sedjenane, Melah, and Djoumine Rivers wind in deep and narrow valleys dominated by steep hills. The most southern of the four, the Oued (River) Tine, has a valley - sometimes 2 or 3 miles wide, but still too narrow for easy passage if the adjacent heights are held by the enemy. Only two hard-surfaced roads

cross the hills to Mateur: the highway from Sedjenane, following the Melah Valley, and the Beja road in the Djoumine Valley. These roads were of more importance to the **II Corps** operations as lines of rear supply than as routes of access to Mateur. For the rest, mere trails and paths connect the scattered Arab villages and farms.

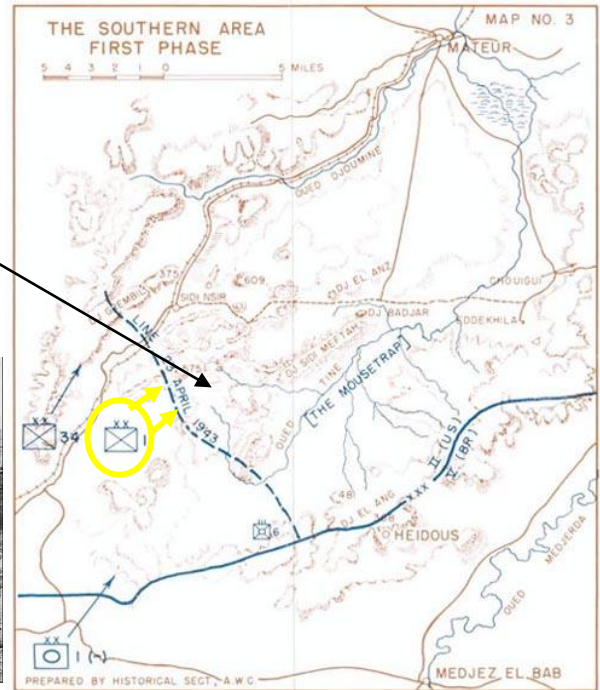




The Melah Valley from the Southwest. Photographed from terrain model prepared by Camouflage Branch, Engineer Board, Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

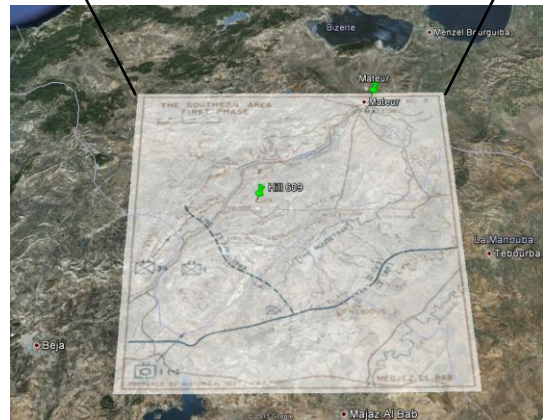


DJEFNA AREA, looking east to the plains of Mateur.



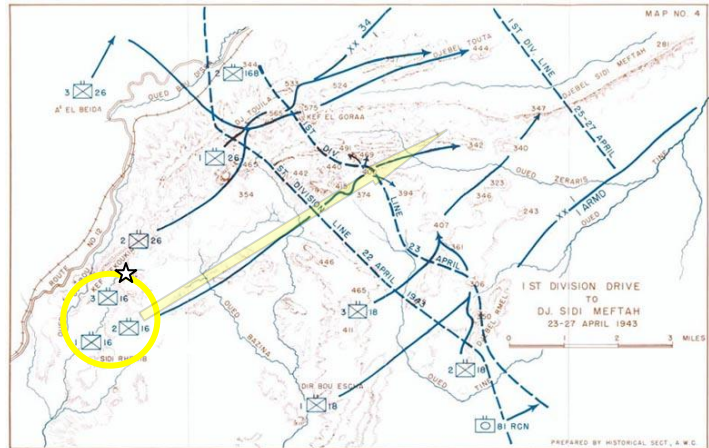
The rugged country facing the **II Corps** had two disadvantages for its men. It was naturally suited to defensive fighting, and was very familiar to the enemy. Skilled in all the arts of defensive warfare, the Germans had organized strong positions during the months they had held the area. The narrow valleys, followed by streams and roads, were blocked in depth by minefields. Machine-gun and mortar posts on the hills, and artillery directed from excellent observation posts, controlled the natural corridors of approach.

Advance through country of this sort had to be made the hard way. The valleys had to be cleared of mines and the enemy driven from the high ground, but the fight for the high ground was no simple matter of taking a few key heights. Although a hill like 609 (hill numbers designate height in meters above sea level; 609 meters=1998 feet). dominated the country for miles around, it was flanked on all sides by smaller but still difficult hills which must be taken in order to approach the main enemy position. Again and again the attack encountered a group of mutually supporting positions, and an advance of a mile or two might demand the capture of half a dozen hills on a narrow front. The **II Corps** was in for hill-to-hill fighting, with each main hill a fortress.



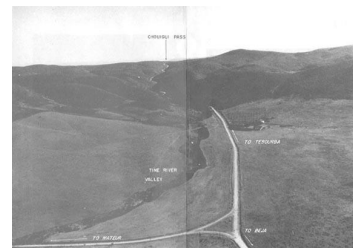
Plan of Attack in the Southern Zone

In the southern part of the II Corps zone, the 1st Division (Maj. Gen. Terry Allen), the 34th Division (Maj. Gen. Charles W. Ryder), and the 1st Armored Division (Maj. Gen. Ernest N. Harmon) were to make the main attack on a front of 13 miles. Through the area facing the American troops ran two chief routes to Mateur: the River Djourmine Valley, followed by a highway and railroad, and the Oued (River) Tine Valley. The

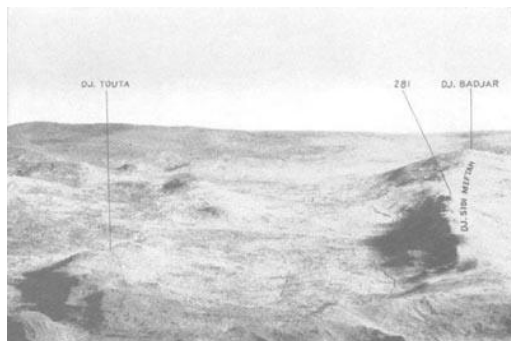


narrow Djoumine Valley was completely controlled by steep hill positions. The broader Oued Tine Valley seemed to offer the one main corridor to the northeast for an armored striking force. The hills defy all efforts to organize them into recognizable patterns but, in general, consist of a series of widely varying complexes in which a higher crest and neighboring hills form interlocking groups. Foremost among these complexes is the one including Djebel Tahent (Hill 609) near Sidi Nsir, from whose summit it is possible to see Mateur. General Bradley realized, however, that such an attack might run into a natural "mousetrap." (see map 3) The valley, heavily mined, was flanked by ridges and hills on both sides and narrowed as it ran east. The advance of armored units depended on control of the hills.

The opening attack was, therefore, made into the hills which dominate the upper Tine Valley. The 1st Division, organized in three regimental combat teams, was to clear the hills north of the Oued Tine; the 6th Armored Infantry of the 1st Armored Division was to attack the hills on the southern rim of the valley. The flank north of the Beja-Mateur road was to be covered by a combat team of the 34th Division, which was just coming into that zone. The rest of the 34th Division and units of the 1st Armored were in support. The 1st Division jumped off on a 6-mile front, extending from the hills just south of Sidi Nsir to the Tine Valley. The direction of the attack led into a belt of hills 7 miles deep from Kef el Goraa (Hill 575) to the eastern end of Djebel (Hill) Sidi Meftah. Three strongpoints turned out to be the keys of German defense, and



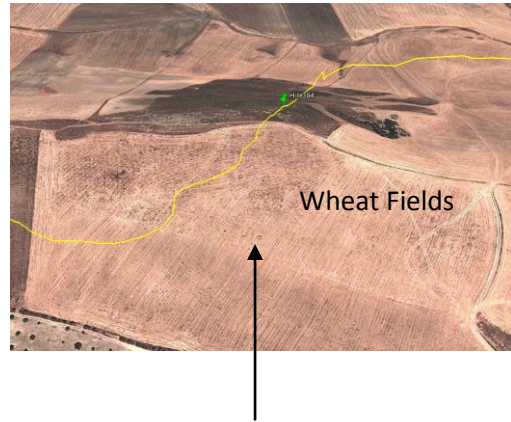
the story of the first days centers on the fighting for Hills 575, 400, and 407. These heights fell in the zones of attack of the 26th, 16th, and 18th Regimental Combat Teams.



Djebel Sidi Meftah Area from the Southwest
Photographed from terrain model prepared
by Camouflage Branch, Engineer Board, Fort
Belvoir, Virginia.

THE 16TH REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

Early on 23 April, while the 26th Combat Team was making its initial attack on 575, the **16th Infantry** advanced into the hills to the southeast and by the end of the morning had taken Hills 415 and 374. The enemy fought stubbornly, subjecting our troops to mortar and artillery fire from the slopes of Hill 407. Hill 400 saw the hardest fighting and changed hands three times before it was finally taken, shortly before noon. On the next day, with Hill 400 in its possession, the **16th Infantry** was able to capture three more heights: Hills 491 and 469, to the north, and 394, midway between 400 and 407. Hill 394 was taken by the **3rd Battalion, 16th Infantry**'s direct assault in a dirty, bloody fight. The men would move silently at night through the wheat fields to base of the hill where they began their climb. Usually under fire, the men would advance up the hill and use grenades and bayonets in the final stages of the attack.



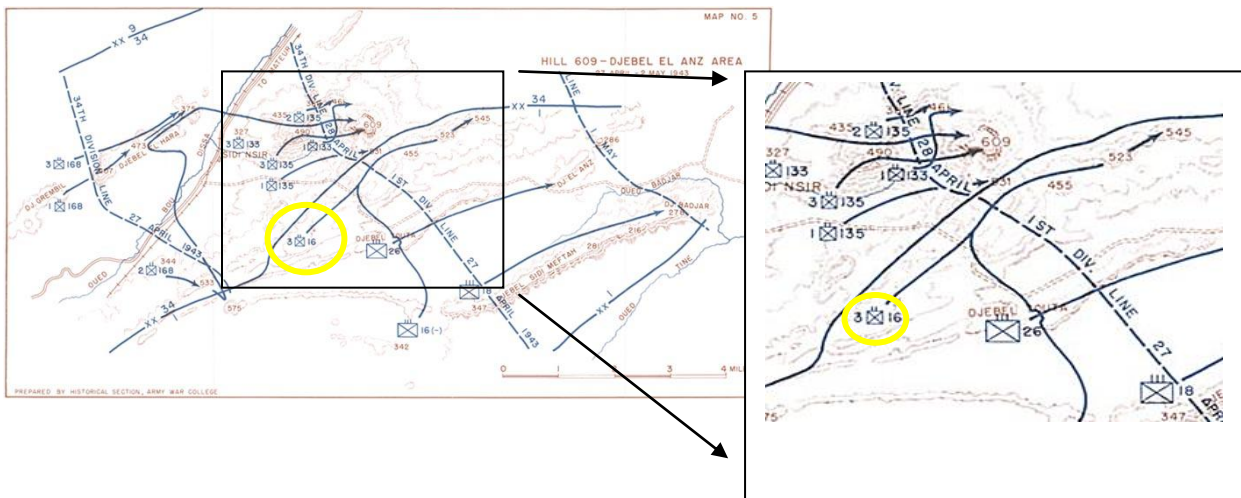
The **16th Infantry**'s experience on 24-25 April was an outstanding example of the widening consequences of a success at a particular hill. The 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry, fought its way to the top of Hill 469 (Djebel Berboukr) in a battle which took much of the day. As the battalion cleared the enemy from that height in the late afternoon, the **3d Battalion, 16th Infantry**, which had been pinned down by flanking fire from Hill 469, was at last able to push northeastward up Hill 394 (Djebel Bou Achour), about a mile east of Hill 469. At the same time, the 2d Battalion, 26th Infantry, extended its line eastward along the ridge south of Hill 575 toward Hill 469, and held its positions there. Thus the **1st Infantry Division**'s line was pushed forward, southeast of Hill 575, until it faced almost north on a front nearly four miles long.



During the night of 24-25 April, the Germans began to withdraw on the whole division front. The **16th Combat Team** had played an important part in forcing this retirement including a nighttime bayonet attack into the face of machine gun fire from an enemy strongpoint by a platoon lead by young **Sergeant Charles Schuch**. In the follow-up of the enemy movement, the 16th occupied Hill 342 as division reserve.

By the time the attack jumped off early on 25 April, only security detachments remained to protect the enemy's retirement. But his artillery was zeroed in to strike the hills under American attack once they were occupied, and succeeded at 0400 in driving the American troops off two of them (Hills 469 and 394) for a time. The enemy left booby-trapped mine fields as he withdrew to a new line.

By 26 April the 1st Infantry Division had attained its initial objectives and controlled all the high ground south of a line from Hill 575 to Hill 347 (Djebel Sidi Meftah). However, the division now had a long flank on the left, exposed to enemy counterattack from strong positions on high ground. Corps Headquarters saw that any further progress eastward would increase the danger to this flank.



The next moves, therefore, were coordinated blows by the 34th and **1st Divisions**. The 34th was to attack into the hills east and west of Sidi Nsir, with Hill 609 (Djebel Tahent) as a key objective. Supported on its flank by this attack, the **1st Division** was to carry on its offensive eastward and complete the opening of the Tine Valley.

The ground facing the 34th Division was as hard to fight through as the area just won by the **1st Division**. The German right flank was anchored on Djebel el Hara, west of Sidi Nsir and dominating the highway and railroad from Beja to Mateur. To the east, the enemy held Hills

435, 490, and 609. From these heights, as a result of the retirement forced by the **1st Division**, the enemy line now ran slightly south of east to the eastern end of Djebel Sidi Meftah.

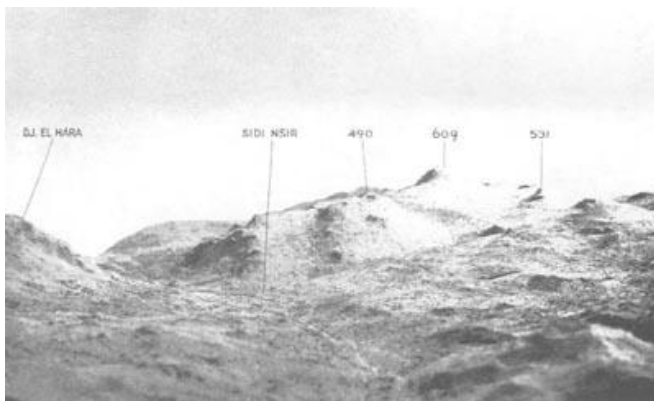
ADVANCE TO HILL 609

The attack of the 34th Division was aimed at one of the strongest defensive areas in the German line. The enemy had held this ground for months and had used this time to organize a whole series of positions protecting the valley to Mateur and the road from Sidi Nsir to the Tine Valley. Outstanding in height, Hill 609 was the key fortress in this area, and its approaches were defended by supporting positions on hills almost as difficult.



Two of the more important outlying defenses of Hill 609 were the ridge of Djebel el Hara and Hill 375. The key features of the ridges were two high points (407 and 473). Across a wadi to the northeast, Hill 375 was a supporting position. The capture of these strongly fortified hills would compel the Germans to fall back east of Sidi Nsir.

The enemy held on through 3 days of artillery fire and infantry attacks. On 25 April, the 175th Field Artillery Battalion and several battalions of Corps Artillery laid down a heavy fire on Djebel el Hara. The 1st and 3d Battalions of the 168th Regimental Combat Team then began their assault, but enemy machine-gun and mortar fire halted the advance after slight progress. On 25-26 April, the artillery fired numerous concentrations on Hills 407 and 473 to soften enemy positions. On 27 April, after renewed heavy shelling by the artillery, the infantry again attacked. The 2d Battalion moved up from the southeast and obtained a foothold on the southern slopes of Djebel el Hara. On the next day, while the 2d Battalion mopped up Hills 473 and 407, the 1st Battalion went on to capture Hill 375.



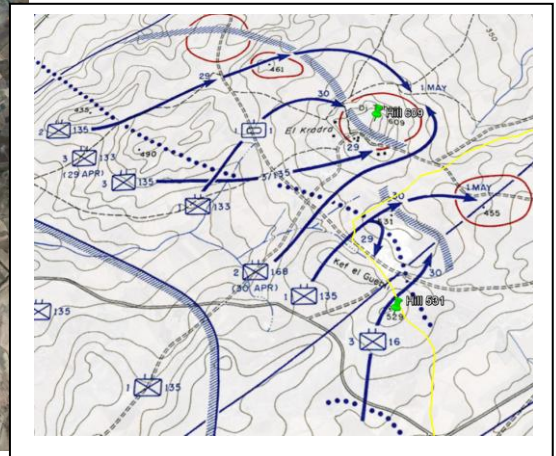
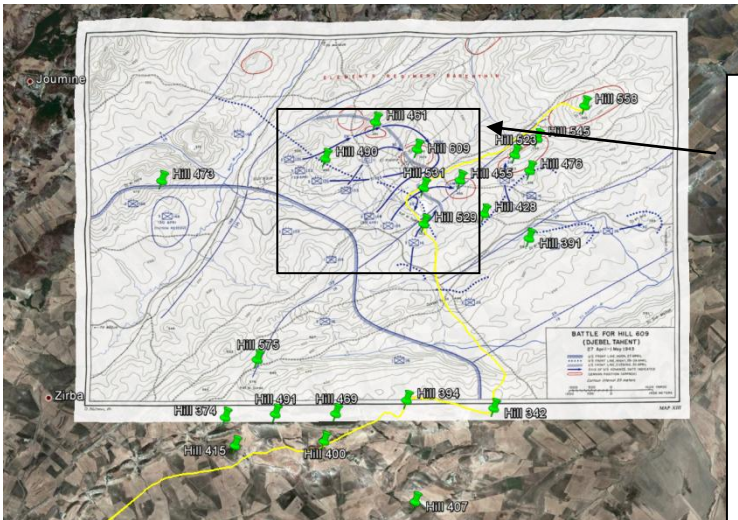
Hill Positions in the Line of the Advance to Hill 609 from the West. Photographed from terrain model prepared by Camouflage Branch, Engineer Board, Fort Belvoir, Virginia



While this success was being achieved on the left, the 135th Regimental Combat Team was finding harder going toward Hill 609. Its first effort was directed at Hill 490, which protected the approach to 609. In the opinion of the men who finally captured it, Hill 490 was "tough." When the attack jumped off at 0430 on 27 April, the 3d Battalion had to cross a stream bed to get to the 600-foot hill, and the enemy, firmly entrenched, was ready for the doughboys. Nearing the base of the hill, the 3d Battalion was under fire from machine guns, mortars, and artillery. At 1600, after hours of hard fighting, the 3d had troops on 490, but they were forced to withdraw. In a night attack, K Company gained an advantage which was decisive, and by morning Of 28 April the hill was occupied. Enemy artillery started shelling with air bursts, causing heavy casualties. In the afternoon the Germans made four counterattacks, two of them rather weak, which were subdued by rifle fire, and two desperate attempts which were only repulsed by artillery. Hill 490 was finally in the hands of the Allies.



TROOPS MOVING TO A NEW POSITION NEAR HILL 609, 28 April 1943



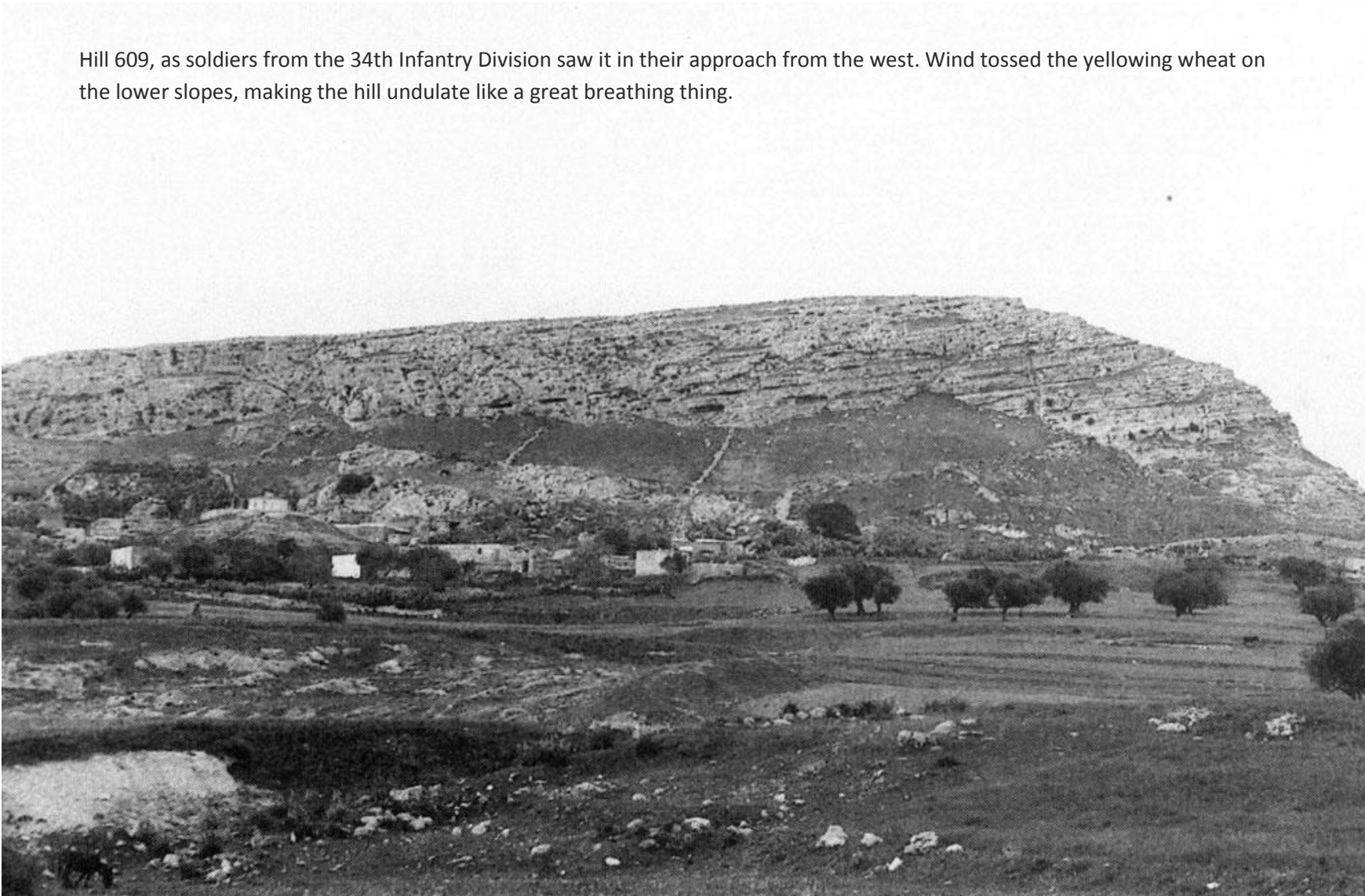
Hill 609 was now accessible but promised no easy conquest. With wall-like cliffs at several points, this flat-topped fortress dominated the open country on all sides. American artillery fire, strong and incessant, had pounded away all day on 28 April. The valley resounded with the rumble of shells and the splitting of rock.



Hill 609 (Djebel Tahent) from the Southwest



Hill 609, as soldiers from the 34th Infantry Division saw it in their approach from the west. Wind tossed the yellowing wheat on the lower slopes, making the hill undulate like a great breathing thing.



THE 1ST DIVISION REACHES THE EDGE OF THE HILLS

The **1st Division**, with the 34th Division swinging into action on its left flank, had resumed its attack to the northeast. Progress in this direction would outflank Hill 609 and would still further clear the way for advance down the Tine Valley. Djebel el Anz and Djebel Badjar were the immediate objectives of this drive; beyond them, the Germans would have little commanding ground for continued defense of the approaches to Mateur.

On the **1st Division's** left and under fire from the enemy on Hill 609, the 2d and **3d Battalions** of the **16th Infantry** advanced on Hill 531 just 12 miles southwest of Mateur. This position, supporting Hill 609 and about a half mile south, was partially occupied on 28 April, but the enemy still held the reverse slopes. On the next day the enemy counterattacked against Hill 531, but I Company held the position.

Another strategic position was Hill 523, lying east of Hill 609. The 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry, attacked this strongpoint on 29 April with artillery support, but made little headway. On 30 April the 1st Battalion joined in the attack, and the hill fell to a bayonet charge before 0300. The attack carried on northeast about a half mile to take Hill 545. The enemy counterattacked furiously and recovered both positions, which were vital to his defense of Hill 609.

While the enemy counterattack was in progress, Company H of the 1st Armored Regiment was moving up from its bivouac near Beja to support the 16th Infantry. The enemy had succeeded in recovering both Hill 545 and Hill 523 before the tanks arrived. When the tank platoons of Company H moved into the valley before 523, the Allied infantry was pinned down by enemy machine-gun and rifle fire. The 1st Platoon took up a defiladed position behind a steep cliff in the middle of the area while the 2d Platoon attempted to move down the valley. Enemy 47-mm guns knocked out three tanks, including that of the company commander. The rest of the 2d Platoon then joined the 1st Platoon in its defiladed position, and the tanks, once more moving down the valley, destroyed two 47-mm guns and a machine-gun nest. The difficult terrain, however, prevented the tanks from advancing to their objective, and the infantry was still pinned down by rifle fire.

The attack by II Corps in the south had reached a critical point after the failure on 29 April. Casualties included 183 killed, 1,594 wounded, and 676 captured or missing.¹¹ General Allen's battered units were obliged to operate at an enormous disadvantage. The **16th Infantry** had been severely punished trying to reach Hill 523.

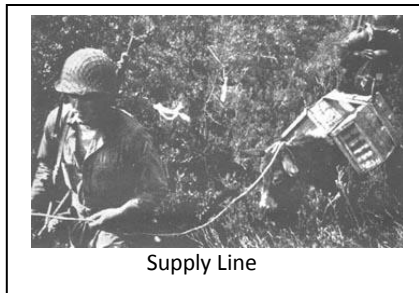
The fall of 609 made Hill 523 of no further importance to the enemy. The reconnaissance section of a tank destroyer battalion, attached to the 34th Division, established an observation post on 523 prior to daylight on 1 May. On the next morning Allied troops moved in, skirting the minefield left by the Germans at the base of the hill.



Djebel El Anz and Djebel Badjar, objectives of the 1st Division in its drive to push the enemy from his positions in the Tine Valley. (Map No. 5).

For the next 3 days the front was relatively quiet, and the enemy maintained his positions. The enemy skillfully and quietly withdrew on the nights of 1-2 and 2-3 May. The scope of this retirement was suspected on 2 May due to heavy motor traffic. It was confirmed next day. From Hill 609, a large fire was visible in Mateur. Elsewhere, explosions and fires indicated the demolition of bridges and destruction of matériel. The Germans were withdrawing to the north and east.

From 23 April to 1 May the **1st Division** accomplished a 10-mile advance which gained for it the full control of the hills north of the Tine Valley. On the other side of the "Mousetrap" units of the 1st Armored Division matched this progress.



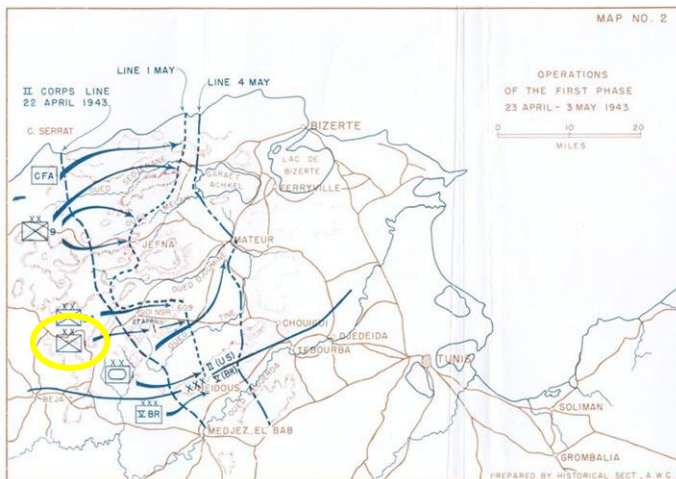
Supply Line

Looking West from Hill 609



The German Retreat and the Capture of Mateur

At every point where the **II Corps** attacked, the enemy had offered bitter and stubborn resistance, marked by frequent counterattacks to recover lost ground. Despite all their efforts, by 1 May the Germans were in a critical situation in the whole II Corps zone.



The II Corps advance had dislodged the enemy from his best defensive positions in two areas. In the south, our main effort had fully opened the corridor to Mateur down the Tine Valley. By his failure to retake Djebel el Anz and Hill 609, the enemy was left fighting on the edge of the high ground, with lower rolling country behind him to Mateur. In this country there was no such series of naturally strong positions as the II Corps had just conquered. Full use of our armor was now possible, and a successful American attack north from Djebel Badjar might easily become a breakthrough, cutting off German units still in the hills to the northwest.



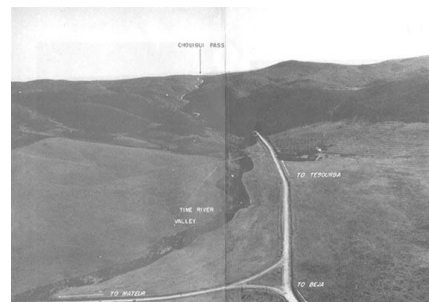
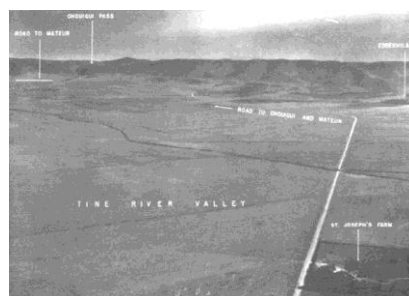
American Infantry on the Road to Mateur

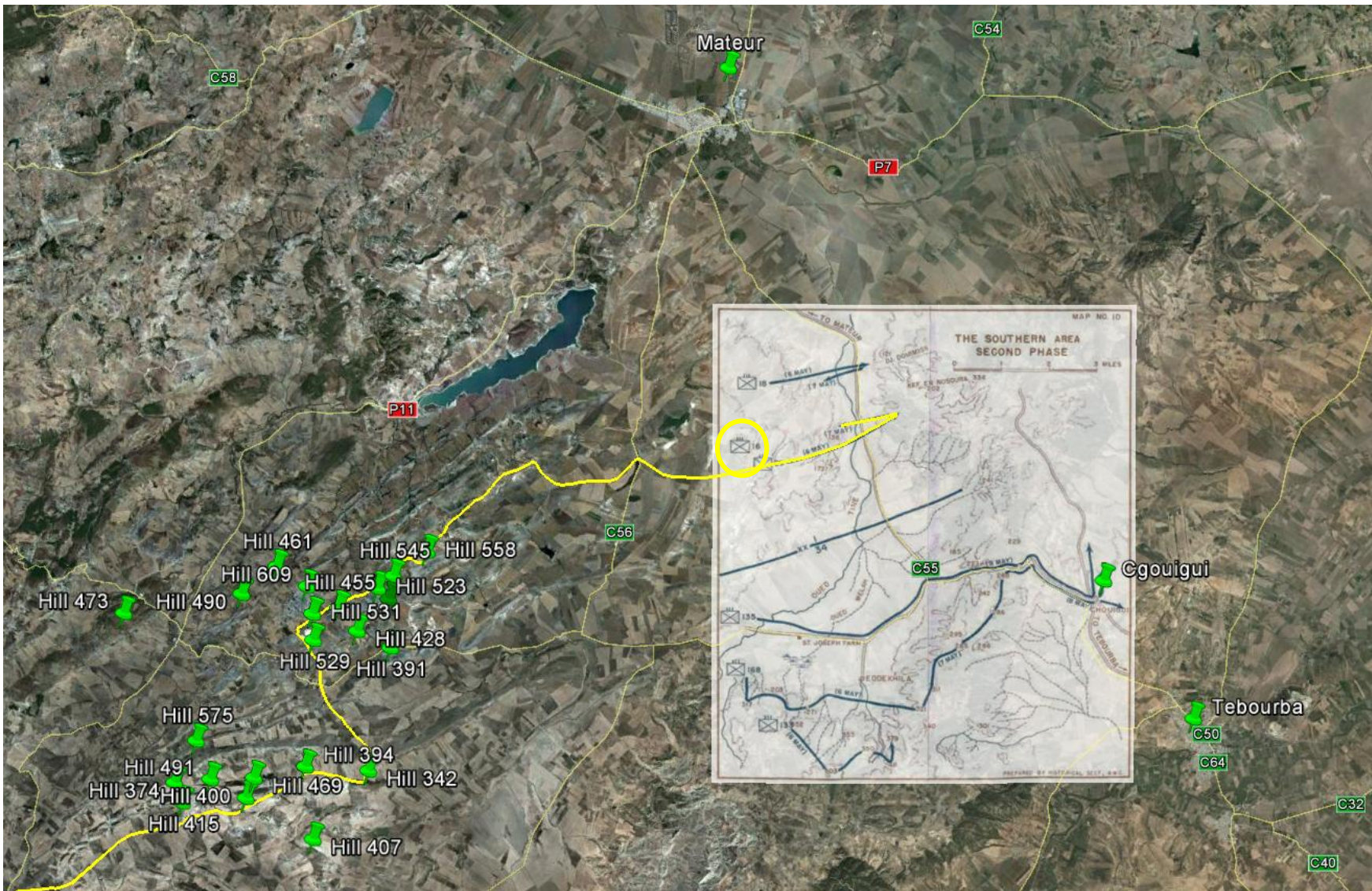


The enemy retreat was followed up at once by a powerful striking force. General Harmon, commanding the 1st Armored Division, ordered Combat Command B to move north from the Tine Valley to Mateur. At about 1100 on 3 May the 81st Reconnaissance Battalion entered Mateur, quickly followed by other units. This prompt and aggressive action undoubtedly interfered with the enemy's plan for withdrawal and hampered his organization of defensive positions between Mateur and Ferryville. That this move upset the enemy was shown by his desperate efforts to hold the 1st Armored Division at Mateur. Infantry, armor, artillery, and planes were rushed into the breach from other parts of the front. ME-109's bombed Mateur heavily from 3 to 5 May, trying to knock out rebuilt bridges. Dive bombers and artillery attacked our troops fiercely in an attempt to halt the advance. The capture of Mateur meant that the main system of German defense in the north was broken. The pressure thus put on the enemy prevented him from effective concentration to meet the British drive from the south in the Medjerda Valley. The II Corps had taken the first major prize of the Allied attack.

THE SECOND PHASE - Plans for the Wind up of the Campaign - General Situation on 2 May 1943

The hard won success of the **II Corps** and the forced retreat of the Germans in its zone came at just the right time to give strongest support to the renewed effort in the center of Tunisia. The German retreat east of Mateur strained the whole enemy line of defense. With the **II Corps** at Mateur, the right flank of the Germans was endangered. From that area our forces not only threatened Bizerte to the north but could move directly against the rear of the German forces. The Allied advance put additional stress on the already weakening Axis lines and played an important part in the enemy collapse a few days later.





The Axis Surrenders

By 7 May it was apparent that the battle for Tunisia was won. For 2 weeks the enemy had contested every hill furiously and had counterattacked incessantly to recover lost positions. Pushed back and dented, his lines had not been broken. But the unrelenting Allied pressure finally told.

By the night of 7 May, the British First Army had driven an armored wedge clear through to Tunis, and the Axis armies were cut in half. At the same moment, U. S. armored units were in Bizerte, and organized resistance by the enemy could not last much longer. In the next 2 days, enemy forces were widely separated and cut off from bases and supplies. The German units in the **II Corps** zone were in a particularly hopeless position. The three-pronged eastward drive of the 9th Division and the 1st Armored left only minor enemy groups to be rounded up in the hills. When Combat Command B of the 1st Armored Division met British units at Protville, a main group of German forces, pressed on the west by the **1st Division** and the 34th Division, was stranded in the Tebourba area. On 9 May, the Germans in the II Corps area asked for terms. Unconditional surrender was accepted by Maj. Gen. Fritz Krause at noon; and, as General Bradley's report states, "All organized resistance in Northern Tunisia in front of the II Corps came to an end." Early in the afternoon on 9 May, six German generals, now prisoners, arrived at II Corps Headquarters. Among them were the commanding generals of the 5th Panzer Army, the 15th Panzer Division, and the Manteuffel Division, the artillery commander of the Afrika Korps, and the commanding general of the Luftwaffe at Bizerte.

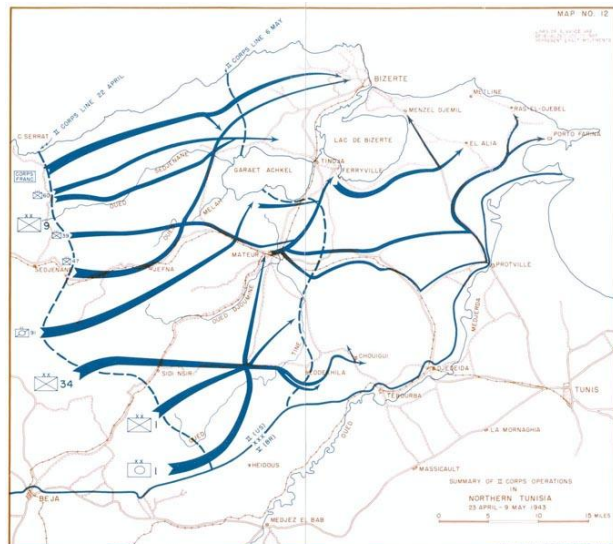
Axis resistance in the hill mass southeast of Tunis lasted only a few days longer. On 9 and 10 May, British armor cut off the escape route to the Cap Bon Peninsula. Under pressure by the French on the west and the Eighth Army from the south, the remaining Axis forces, the last of some 275,000 Germans and Italians, surrendered on the Cape Bon Peninsula on 13 May 1943.

Port City of Bizerte near Ferryville,



Summary of Action – April 23, 1943 to May 13, 1943

The mission of the II Corps had been threefold: to protect the left flank of the British V Corps; to keep the enemy from concentrating in front of the First Army; and to capture certain major objectives. The **II Corps** had completed its mission. It had maintained contact all during the operation with the left flank of the British V Corps, which was never menaced. At the beginning of the campaign only about 12,000 front-line enemy troops opposed the advance; at the close of the operation approximately 40,000 enemy troops were in front of the **II**



Corps. All the objectives of the **II Corps** had been captured, both those assigned initially in the Jefna and Chouigui areas and the ultimate goal, Bizerte. American advances had been coordinated with French and British successes.

The accomplishment of the mission assigned to the **II Corps** is a record of fighting men with the will and ability to win. It is also the record of an army well supplied, well equipped, and expertly led.

For operations of such scope and intensity, the losses during the 21 day campaign for Bizerte were small. Outflanking maneuvers around strong positions such as Bald Hill and Green Hill in the Jefna sector, concentration on key terrain features such as Hill 609, intense artillery bombardment preceding major attacks, and use of armor to exploit infantry successes were important factors in holding casualties to a minimum. The following tabulation shows losses of the **II Corps**.

	Killed	Wounded	Missing
1st Division	103	1,245	682
9th Division	82	548	20
34th Division	85	470	79
1st Armored	68	424	96
Corps Franc	70	400	----
Other Units	13	49	----
Total	421	3,136	877

Losses in matériel were likewise very low. Nine light tanks, 40 medium tanks, and 19 halftracks were lost. One 155-mm gun, which had received a direct hit by a 500-pound bomb, was destroyed. Thirteen mortars, 69 automatic weapons, and about 400 other small arms were lost.

Of this final victory, war correspondent Ernie Pyle wrote: *"It was a war of such intensity as Americans on this side of the ocean had not known before. It was a battle without letup. It was a war of drenching artillery, hidden mines, walls of machine gun fire and even of the barbaric bayonet. It was an exhausting, cruel, last-ditch kind of war, and those who went through it would seriously doubt that war could be any worse..."*



Correspondent Ernie Pyle, slender as a thread at one hundred pounds and given to drink and melancholy, arrived in North Africa with a typewriter to educate America about the war. Here he is seen with wounded soldiers at a hospital near St. Cloud, Algeria, in early December 1942.

Enemy losses in the campaign are reckoned in terms of the total destruction of an army. This is the all-important loss, but even a brief, incomplete statement of some details is of interest. Prisoners of war taken by the **II Corps** numbered 35,934 Germans, 5,861 Italians, and 41 others. The enemy killed were estimated at 3,000. In addition to the heavy enemy materiel losses in battle, large quantities of equipment and supplies were seized by our troops before the enemy could destroy them. Seven hundred and fifty motor vehicles, 45 halftracks, 75 motorcycles, 50 trailers, 250 artillery pieces, 75 mortars, 750 machine guns, 50 tanks, and 30,000 small arms were among the major items of booty. Likewise, 1,000 tons of ammunition, 1,600 tons of rations, 1,000 tons of clothing and equipment, 75 tons of medical supplies, and 1,000 tires were captured.

Praise from Generals Omar Bradley and Harold Alexander

American and French troops of the **II Corps** distinguished themselves throughout the campaign.

"French units under their efficient commander, Colonel Magnan, fought with courage and determination . . . in mountainous terrain and suffered many casualties. Even though exhausted at the end, they still had but one purpose in mind—to drive the enemy from their shores. Their determination, their courage, and their devotion to their cause were an inspiration to our troops."

So said General Omar N. Bradley, in his report on the operations of the **II Corps**, and he gave high praise to the men of his command: *"Some of the **II Corps**, namely, the **1st Infantry Division** and elements of the 1st Armored and 34th Infantry Divisions, have been fighting in North Africa almost continuously since they landed at Oran on 8 November. Other units have been in action in Tunisia for varying periods from 18 January onward. Practically all units have fought the enemy both in the desert and in the mountains. The **II Corps** has fought with and without air superiority. It has suffered reverses, and it has known victory. Officers and men alike understand our enemy and his methods. They no longer underestimate or overestimate his abilities. With the common sense that is characteristic of Americans, they have learned that the surest way of living is to outmaneuver and outsmart those who oppose us. With their practical sense, their understanding of the enemy, their first-hand knowledge of the hardships and dangers of war, and above all else their courage and loyalty, soldiers of the **II Corps** have played a major role in the winning of a great Allied victory."*

In a special Order of the Day, dated 13 May, General Sir Harold R. Alexander, Commander of the Eighteenth Army Group, addressed the Allied forces:

"Today you stand as the conquerors and heroes of the North African shores. The world acknowledges your victory; history will acclaim your deeds. British, French, and American arms have swept from these lands the last of the German and Italian invaders. As your Commander in the Field, I add my admiration and gratitude to those of the United Nations for this great victory, which will go down to history as one of the decisive battles of all time."

Battle Casualties Sustained by the Allied Forces in the Tunisian Campaign
12 November 1942–13 May 1943

a These preliminary data (April 1945) differ somewhat from Final Report of Battle Casualties of World War II (TAG, June 1953). The final report, totaling 2,390 killed in action, 8,577 wounded, and 3,017 captured or missing, however, does not show distribution by division.

b Figures shown are for the period 8 November 1941-11 May 1943, which may include a few casualties suffered by the British First Army in initial landings in Algeria.
c Includes data for British Dominion troops serving with the Eighth Army.

Source: U.S. Army data (including Air Force) are from Battle Casualties of the Army (preliminary), 1 April 1945, prepared by Machine Records Branch, AGO. British data were supplied by the British Cabinet Office, Historical Section. French data are from the Office of the Military Attaché, Paris, France, Intelligence Report of French Army Casualties During World War II (1942-1945), 27 June 1946, which cites as primary source, Informations Militaires, No. 59, 31 May 1946.

Organization	Total	Killed	Wounded	Missing
Total	70,341	10,290	38,688	21,363
U.S. Forces	^a 18,221	2,715	8,978	6,528
1st Infantry Division	3,916	634	2,585	697
3rd Infantry Division	38	5	33	0
9th Infantry Division	2,724	411	1,825	488
34th Infantry Division	4,049	444	1,539	2,066
1st Armored Division	3,407	547	1,633	1,227
2nd Armored Division	41	11	25	5
Army and Corps Troops	2,046	259	915	872
Twelfth Air Force	2,000	404	423	1,173
British Forces ^b	35,940	6,475	21,630	7,835
First Army	23,545	4,439	12,575	6,531
Eighth Army ^c	12,395	2,036	9,055	1,304
French Forces	16,180	1,100	8,080	7,000

Decorations (Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Service Medal, and Silver Star Only)

- The following list of decorations is based on the best records available to date but is not necessarily complete. The list is arranged alphabetically by name, showing rank, arm or service, residence, organization, station, and date of citation. Posthumous awards are indicated by an asterisk (*).

Distinguished Service Cross

2D LT. GEOFFREY C. FERRIS*, FA, CONNECTICUT, 1st Division, Tunisia, 6 May 1943.

1ST LT. RICHARD L. HARRIS, Inf., New York, organization not indicated, 30 April 1943.

CAPT. FELIX P. SETTLEMIRE, Inf., Arkansas, organization not indicated, Sedjenane, 23 April 1943.

LT. COL. ALBERT A. SVOBODA, Inf., Illinois, 34th Division, Tunisia, 30 April 1943.

PFC. ANTHONY P. COLL, MD, Pennsylvania, organization not indicated, Tebourba, 6 May 1943.

SGT. BILLIE N. GRICE, CE, Alabama, 20th Engineer Regiment, Bizerte, 8 May 1943.
 S/SGT. GERRY H. KISTERS, Cav., Indiana, 1st Armored Division, Tunisia, 7 May 1943.
 S/SGT. FRANK J. MATWIZYCK*, Inf., New York, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.
 SGT. SAMUEL J. MAZZOTTI, Inf., New York, 1st Division, 25 April 1943.
 PFC. SIDNEY RAPEPORT*, Inf., Ohio, 1st Division, Tunisia, 6 May 1943. *Distinguished Service Medal*
 MAJ. GEN. OMAR N. BRADLEY, GSC, Missouri, II Corps, North Africa, 1 May 1943.
 BRIG. GEN. LOWELL W. ROOKS, GSC, Washington, Hq. N. A. Theater of Operations, 8 May 1943.

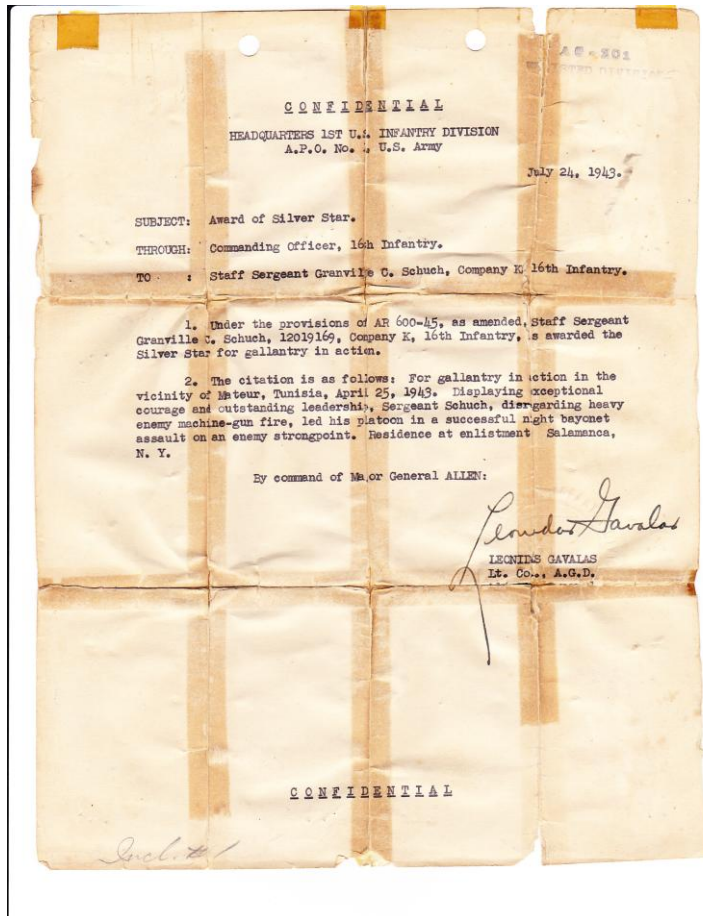
Silver Star

1ST LT. PAUL ALTOMERIANOS*, Inf., New York, 1st Division, 23 April 1943.
 1ST LT. JOHN V. BARNETTE, FA, North Carolina, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 28 April 1943.
 1ST LT. LINWOOD W. BILLINGS, Inf., New Hampshire, 1st Division, Mateur, 6 May 1943.
 COL. EUGENE F. CAFFEY, CE, Georgia, organization not indicated, Tunisia, ♦ May 1943.
 CAPT. HOWARD F. CASEY, FA, Massachusetts, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 28 April 1943.
 CAPT. TED H. CORRY, FA, Oklahoma, 34th Division, Sedjenane, 27 April 1943.
 2D LT. WILLIAM O. COX, JR.,* Inf., Ohio, 1st Division, Tunisia, 28 April 1943.
 CAPT. ELBERT N. Du PUY, MC, West Virginia, 1st Armored Division, Mateur, 7 May 1943.
 CAPT. HOWARD L. FIELDEN, FA, Oklahoma, 1st Armored Division, Ferryville, 7 May 1943.
 1ST LT. JOHN P. FOLEY, Inf., New York, 1st Division, Mateur, 6 May 1943.
 1ST LT. GEORGE K. FOLK, Inf., Ohio, 1st Division, 23 April 1943.
 CAPT. THOMAS A. GREEN*, Inf., Michigan, 1st Armored Division, Mateur, 7 May 1943.
 1ST LT. ALBERT J. HAFT., MC, New York, 9th Division, Bizerte, 7 May 1943.
 1ST LT. KENT HERRIN, SC, Tennessee, 9th Division, Bizerte, 7 May 1943.
 1ST LT. WILLIAM W. KRIEBLE, Inf., Indiana, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 29 April 1943.
 2D LT. RICHARD V. LOHRENS, Inf., Illinois, 1st Division, Tunisia, 1 May 1943.
 CAPT. PAUL R. LOWRY, FA, Texas, 9th Division, Tunisia, 28 April 1943.
 CAPT. LAUREN E. McBRIDE, Inf., Iowa, organization not indicated, Tunisia, 11 May 1943.
 LT. COL. ROBERT P. MILLER, Inf., Minnesota, 1st Division, Tunisia, - May 1943.
 1ST LT. ALBERT G. PRESTON, JR., Inf., New York, 1st Division, Mateur, 6 May 1943.
 CAPT. CARL O. RANDALL, JR., Inf., New Hampshire, 1st Division, Mateur, 23 April 1943.
 1ST LT. DAVID J. ROGERS, FA, Florida, 1st Armored Division, Ferryville, 8 May 1943.
 CAPT. FRANCIS J. ROSINSKI, Inf., New Hampshire, 1st Division, Beja, 23 April 1943.
 CAPT. ISAAC H. ROWLAND, FA, Illinois, 9th Division, Tunisia, 28 April 1943.
 2D LT. JACK C. SAPP, FA, Florida, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 1 May 1943.

SGT. GRANVILLE CHARLES SCHUCH, Inf., 1st Division, Tunisia, 25 April, 1943

FORMER LOCAL GIRL'S HUSBAND DECORATED
 S|Sgt. Granville C. Schuch, stationed somewhere in Africa, has been awarded the Silver Star for gallantry under fire, it was learned here last week. Previously Sgt. Schuch was awarded the Purple Heart, a decoration given soldiers wounded in combat.
 Sgt. Schuch married Miss Barbara Lignian, granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. G. Lignian of Coudersport. Mrs. Schuch, now living in Tuscon, Arizona, informed relatives here that she is now one of a corps of female gasoline station attendants at an Army Air Base, situated near Tuscon.

STAFF SGT. SCHUCH AWARDED SILVER STAR
 Staff Sgt. G. C. Schuch, who is serving in the North Africa theater, has been awarded the Silver Star for heroism in action, according to information received yesterday by his wife, Barbara, of 1701 East Fourth street.



NOTE: The citation mentions he lead his platoon. The sad implication is this: his platoon leader, platoon sergeant, and squad leaders where probably killed or wounded leaving him in charge as a young sergeant.

Nephew Neil Edgar remembers asking Uncle Charlie how he earned his Silver Star and never forgot his response. He said,

"We had no water, food, or ammunition left and it was us or them. We're not heroes, we did what we had to do to survive."

CAPT. RAYMOND W. SELLERS, Inf., Washington, organization not indicated, Tunisia, 6 May 1943.
 1ST LT. R. J. SHALLENBERGER, Inf., Massachusetts, 9th Division, Tunisia, - May 1943.
 2D LT. ORION C. SHOCKLEY, Inf., Missouri, 9th Division, Bizerte, 7 May 1943.
 1ST LT. EARL R. SIEBER, Inf., Washington, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 6 May 1943.
 CAPT. ANTHONY SORDILL, MC, New Jersey, 9th Division, 1 May 1943.
 2D LT. JOSEPH STURM, Inf., Ohio, organization not indicated, Mateur, 7 May 1943.
 1ST LT. WILLIAM E. TOLBERT, Inf., Illinois, 1st Division, Tunisia, 6 May 1943.
 CAPT. EDMUND H. TORKELESON, MC, Washington, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 28 April 1943.
 2D LT. ROBERT E. WEAR, Cav., Florida, 1st Division, Mateur, 7 May 1943.
 MAJ. JAMES F. WHITE, CE, Ohio, organization not indicated, Tunisia, - May 1943.
 2D LT. WILLIAM R. WHITE, AC, Texas, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 27 April 1943.
 1ST LT. EDWARD F. WOZENSKI, Inf., Connecticut, 1st Division, Mateur, 5 May 1943.
 CAPT. JONATHAN YERKES, JR. *, Inf., Florida, 1st Division, 25 April 1943.
 PFC. JAMES ANDERSON, MD, Pennsylvania, 34th Division, Tunisia, 6 May 1943.
 CPL. ALBERT ANDY, Inf., New York, 9th Division, Tunisia, 24 April 1943.
 CPL. ROBERT ARDELL, Inf., Wisconsin, 9th Division, 24 April 1943.

SGT. ANTHONY A. AULENTI, Inf., Connecticut, 1st Division, Tunisia, 30 April 1943.
S/SGT. JOHN F. BAARS, Inf., New Jersey, 1st Division, Tunisia, 26 April 1943.
PVT. FRANK J. BAFARO, Inf., Illinois, 1st Armored Division, Fondouk, 23 April 1943.
TEC. 5 NEWBORN BATES, MD, Alabama, 1st Division, Tunisia, 23 April 1943.
PFC. FRED J. BECKS, Inf., Ohio, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.
PVT. ALBERT W. BELTHUIS, Inf., Iowa, organization not indicated, Tunisia, - May 1943.
SGT. EARL G. BLAIR, Inf., Texas, 1st Armored Division, Fondouk, 23 April 1943.
PFC. HUGO A. BONDONI, Inf., New York, 1st Division, 25 April 1943.
CPL. HERBERT W. BRASINGTON, Inf., South Carolina, 9th Division, Tunisia, 24 April 1943.
PFC. WALTER L. BRYSON, Inf., Texas, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 24 April 1943.
SGT. MARINELLO S. CAPONE*, Inf., New Jersey, 9th Division, Tunisia, - May 1943.
SGT. JAMES O. CHANCELLOR, Inf., Oklahoma, 1st Division, 26 April 1943.
PFC. NICK W. CINDRIC, JR., Inf., Pennsylvania, 1st Division, Tunisia, 28 April 1943.
SGT. CHARLES H. CLAY, Inf., New York, 1st Division, 30 April 1943,
1ST SGT. FRANK COCHRANE, Inf., California, 1st Division, Tunisia, 28 April 1943.
PVT. WALTER L. COLTER, Inf., Ohio, 1st Division, 28 April 1943.
PVT. CHARLES C. CONNE, Inf., Pennsylvania, 1st Division, Tunisia, 6 May 1943.
PFC. PIERSON S. CRAWFORD, Inf., Connecticut, 1st Division, 29 April 1943.
TEC. 5 JOSEPH F. DARDEEN, CE, Ohio, organization not indicated, Tunisia, - May 1943.
PFC. JAMES H. DEAL, MD, Iowa, organization not indicated, Tunisia, - May 1943.
PVT. ERNEST C. DELANEY, MD, South Dakota, 1st Division, Tunisia, 1 May 1943.
PVT. THEODORE J. DOSKUS, Inf., Pennsylvania, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.
SGT. LEO B. DUBOIS, Inf., New York, 1st Armored Division, Fondouk, 23 April 1943.
PFC. GEORGE DULONG, Inf., Massachusetts, 1st Division, Mateur, 7 May 1943.
TEC. SAMUEL J. ELLIOTT*, Inf., Indiana, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.
TEC. LEONARD B. ELLIS, SC, Nebraska, organization not indicated, Tunisia, 7 May 1943.
PFC. FOSTER EVANS, Inf., West Virginia, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.
PFC. CLAYTON S. FORD, Inf., Michigan, 1st Division, Tunisia, 23 April 1943.
PFC. ROBERT L. FRANER, MD, Ohio, organization not indicated, Tunisia, 6 May 1943.
PVT. WARREN E. GATES, JR., Inf., Massachusetts, 1st Division, Tunisia, 26 April 1943.
CPL. WALTER GAVITT, Inf., Pennsylvania, 9th Division, Tunisia, 24 April 1943.
PFC. JOHN J. GERAGHTY, MD, New York, 1st Division, Tunisia, 5 May 1943.
TEC. 5 HERMAN GILLIS, CE, Georgia, organization not indicated, Tunisia, - May 1943.
PFC. RALPH F. GOODENOUGH, Inf., Connecticut, 1st Division, Mateur, 6 May 1943.
PVT. RALPH W. GRAZIOLA, MD, Vermont, 1st Division, Tunisia, 23 April 1943.
SGT. GEORGE J. GRILLO, MD, New Jersey, 9th Division, 3 May 1943.
SGT. ROBERT E. HENTGFS, Inf., Iowa, organization riot indicated, Tunisia, 1 May 1943
PFC. RICHARD J. JACOBSEN, MD, Iowa, organization not indicated, Tunisia, 6 May 1943.
CPL. THEODORE E. JUNKINS, Inf., Alabama, organization not indicated, Tunisia, 1 May 1943.
TEC. 5 DAVID M. KENDALL, JR., SC, New York, 9th Division, Bizerte, 7 May 1943
PVT. ROSS A. LA MONICA, SC, Ohio, 9th Division, Bizerte, 7 May 1943.
PFC. ROBERT E. LAKIM, MD, Iowa, organization not indicated, Tunisia, 6 May 1943.
SGT. RAYMOND E. LARSON, FA, Minnesota, 1st Armored Division, Tunisia, 8 May 1943.
S/SGT. CHARLES O. LEE, Inf., North Carolina, 9th Division, Bizerte, 7 May 1943.
SGT. DANIEL S. LUBOWITZ, Inf., Michigan, organization not indicated, Tunisia, 1 May 1943.
1ST SGT. JOSEPH P. MARKSMAN, Inf., Minnesota, organization not indicated, Tunisia, 1 May 1943.
PVT. RALPH MENDOZA, MD, New York, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.
PVT. IRA M. MERKLINGER, Inf., New York, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.
1ST SGT. JOHN W. MILLER, Inf., New York, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 24 April 1943.
TEC. 5 JOHN J. NEUNDORF, Inf., New York, 1st Division, Tunisia, 23 April 1943.
PVT. JOHN M. NORAK, Inf., Pennsylvania, 1st Division, Tunisia, 26 April 1943.
PFC. CLARENCE A. NORDER, FA, Wisconsin, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 22 April 1943.
PVT. JOSEPH V. OKOLOWICZ, Inf., Wisconsin, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.
PFC. KARL W. OWEN, Inf., Michigan, 1st Division, Tunisia, 28 April 1943.
SGT. ROY G. PAQUIN, Inf., Michigan, 9th Division, Tunisia, 24 April 1943.
PVT. JOHN H. PARKER, Inf., Mississippi, 1st Division, Tunisia, 26 April 1943.
PVT. MIKE J. PAVELLA, Inf., Pennsylvania, 1st Division, Tunisia, 23 April 1943.
S/SGT. WILLIAM E. PAYNE, Inf., Kentucky, 1st Armored Division, Fondouk, 23 April 1943.
PFC. WALTER B. PEEPLES, Inf., Maryland, 1st Division, Tunisia, 23 April 1943.
PVT. HAROLD W. PETTYS, Inf., New York, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.
SGT. ALVIN L. PIERCE*, FA, Tennessee, 13th Field Artillery Brigade, Tunisia, 9 May 1943.
PFC. FRED C. PLANTY, Inf., New York, 1st Division, Tunisia, 26 April 1943.
PFC. LEROY A. POTTER*, Inf., Ohio, organization not indicated, Tunisia, 6 May 1943.
PFC. RICHARD J. POWERS, FA, Massachusetts, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 22 April 1943.
PVT. PETER W. PROKITY, Inf., Pennsylvania, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.
PVT. MARTIN QUINN, Inf., New Jersey, 1st Division, Tunisia, 23 April 1943.

PVT. JOHN J. QUIRKE, MD, New York, 1st Division, Tunisia, 28 April 1943.
 CPL. FRANK A. RICE, Inf., Ohio, 1st Division, Tunisia, 6 May 1943.
 SGT. JAMES R. ROBERTSON*, Inf., Georgia, 34th Division, Tunisia, 1 May 1943.
 PVT. DAVID W. ROBICHEAU, Inf., Massachusetts, 1st Division, Tunisia, 26 April 1943.
 TEC. 4 THOMAS K. RUBY, SC, New Jersey, 9th Division, Bizerte, 7 May 1943.
 SGT. STEPHEN RUZYCKI, AC, New Jersey, organization not indicated, Tunisia, - May 1943.
 S/SGT. ALFRED J. SANFORD, Inf., New York, 1st Division, 29 April 1943.
 PFC. Roy H. SCHEERS, Inf., Michigan, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 24 April 1943.
 PFC. SEYMOUR SCHNFODFR) MD, New York, 1st Division, Mateur, 5 May 1943.
 SGT. IRVINE R. SCHOONOVER, Inf., New York, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 7 May 1943.
 SGT. CLYDE K. SCOTT, Inf., Illinois, organization not indicated, Tunisia, - May 1943.
 1ST SGT. HAROLD W. SELL, Inf., Wisconsin, 9th Division, Sedjenane, 27 April 1943.
 PFC. FRANCIS E. SHAW, Inf., New York, 1st Division, Tunisia, 26 April 1943.
 PFC. EARNEST E. SHUMATE, Inf., Georgia, 1st Division, Tunisia, 26 April x943.
 PVT. JOSEPH A. SIENKIEWICZ, Inf., Pennsylvania, 1st Division, Tunisia, 9 May 1943.
 PVT. VINSON E. SMITH, Inf., Alabama, organization not indicated, Tunisia, 7 May 1943.
 PFC. RICHARD C. SNOW, MD, Massachusetts, 1st Division, Mateur, 5 May 1943.
 CPL. MEYER SPIEGEL, Inf., Massachusetts, 1st Division, Tunisia, 26 April 1943.
 SGT. JOHN M. SPLET, Inf., Pennsylvania, 1st Division, Beja, 29 April 1943.
 PFC. JOSEPH M. STAUD, Inf., Mississippi, 1st Division, Mateur, 4 May 1943.
 CPL. WOODROW W. TAYLOR, Inf., Ohio, 1st Division, Tunisia, 22 April 1943.
 CPL. NICK VINCICH, Inf., Pennsylvania, 1st Division, Tunisia, 1 May 1943.
 TEC. 4 ROBERT H. WALDSMITH, Inf., California, 1st Armored Division, Mateur, 6 May 1943.
 PVT. CLAUD L. WATKINS, MD, Oklahoma, 1st Division, Mateur, 5 May 1943.
 CPL. JAMES R. WILLIAMS, Inf., New York, 1st Division, 25 April 1943.
 S/SGT. EARL L. WILLS, MD, New York, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.
 CPL. CHARLES L. WILSON, Inf., Pennsylvania, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.
 PFC. WALTER W. WISNIEWSKI, MD, Pennsylvania, organization not indicated, Tunisia, - May 1943.
 PVT. CARL H. WOODEN, JR., Inf., New York, 1st Division, 29 April 1943.
 PVT. Louis R. ZICK*, Inf., New Jersey, 34th Division, Tunisia, 1 May 1943.
 PFC. FRANK J. ZYSK, Inf., Connecticut, 1st Division, 30 April 1943.

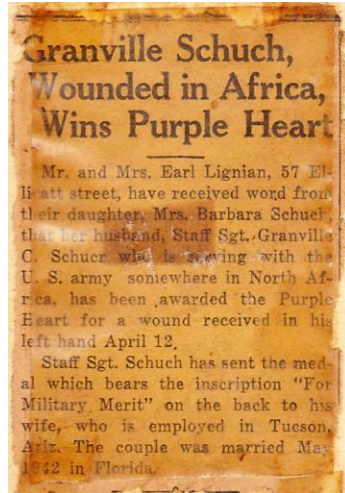
- On 07 May 1943 the **First Infantry Division** is relieved. It would receive the Presidential Unit Citation for their actions at Mateur. It was the Division's first Presidential Unit Citation.



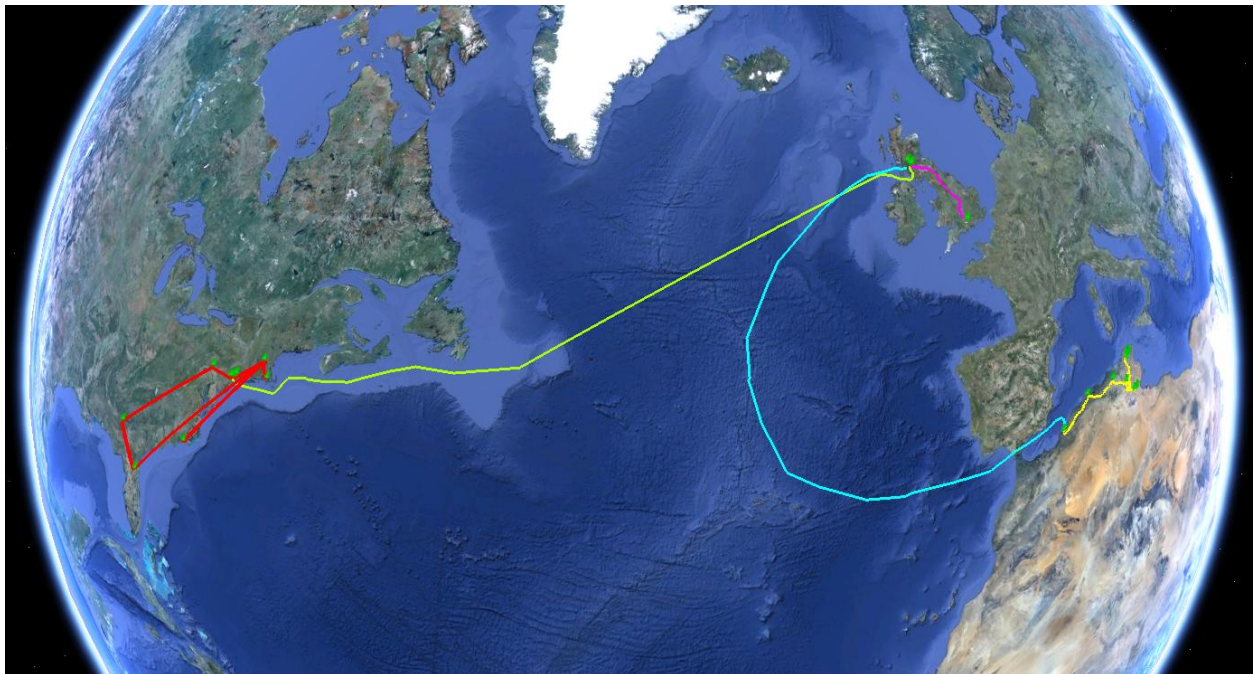
Description: The Presidential Unit Citation emblem worn to represent award of the Presidential Unit Citation is 1 7/16 inches wide and 9/16 inch in height. The emblem consists of a 1/16 inch wide Gold frame with laurel leaves which encloses an Ultramarine Blue 67118 ribbon.

Criteria: The Presidential Unit Citation is awarded to units of the Armed Forces of the United States and co-belligerent nations for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy occurring on or after 7 December 1941. The unit must display such gallantry, determination, and esprit de corps in accomplishing its mission under extremely difficult and hazardous conditions as to set it apart and above other units participating in the same campaign. The degree of heroism required is the same as that which would warrant award of a Distinguished Service Cross to an individual. Extended periods of combat duty or participation in a large number of operational missions, either ground or air is not sufficient. This award will normally be earned by units that have participated in single or successive actions covering relatively brief time spans. It is not reasonable to presume that entire units can sustain Distinguished Service Cross performance for extended time periods except under the most unusual circumstances. Only on rare occasions will a unit larger than battalion qualify for award of this decoration.

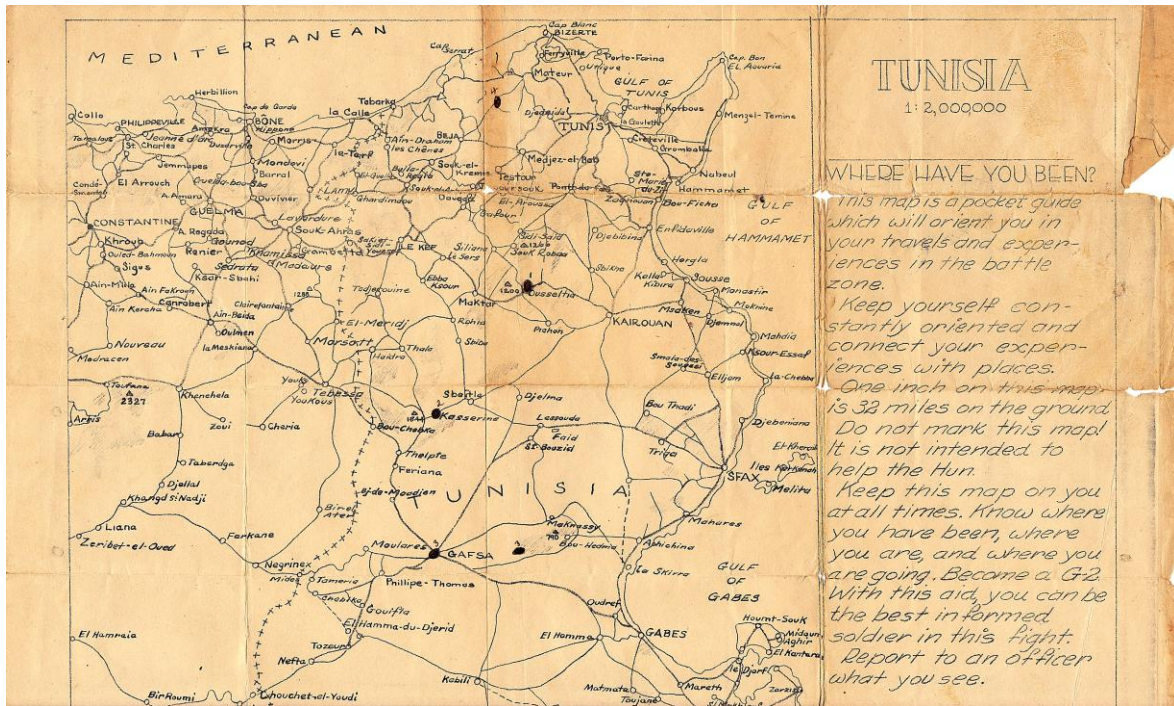
- On 10 June 1943 **Granville Charles Schuch** is awarded the Purple Heart for wounds sustained in combat during the North African Campaign.



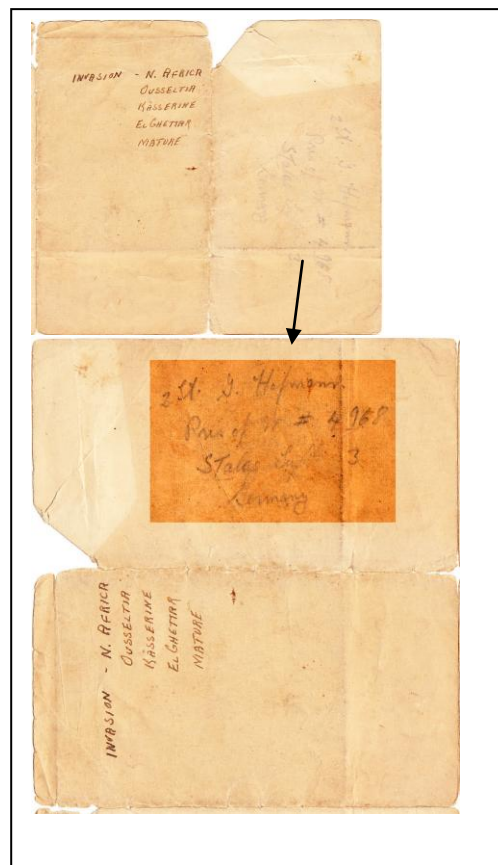
Staff Sergeant Schuch had been on a 12,000 mile journey since his enlistment on October 20, 1940, taking him and his comrades to places he never would have imagined – and now, would like to forget.



He would carry a map of Tunisia with him as the battles raged on, marking a single “dot” on the places he had been. This was one of the souvenirs he brought home after the war.



On the inside of the folded map he listed the battles – Ousseltia, Kasserine, Gafsa, El Guettar, Mateur. A little over a year after North Africa was liberated, **Charlie** penciled in the name and address of his sister’s husband, George, who had been shot down in May of 1944 on a bombing mission over France and was now a prisoner of war at Stalag Luft III in Germany (the writing was so faded we almost missed it - but that is another story).

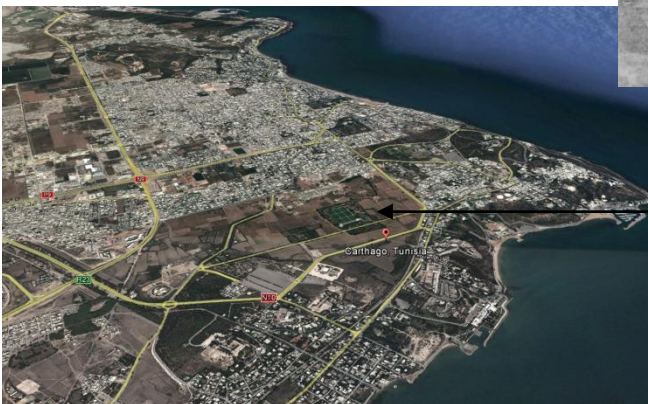
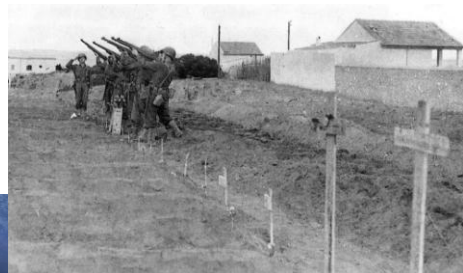




He also kept a memento the likes of which the world hoped it would never see again. These were the insignias of the men he had fought – Rommel’s Panzer Division – one of the finest minds and forces in military history who, unfortunately, fought for the wrong cause.

Wounded and shell shocked Staff Sergeant Schuch and many others like him would not be able to return to the front line. Fighting non-stop for six months had taken its toll. While Post Traumatic Stress Disorder would not be acknowledged until 1980, someone in the chain of command made the right call for these men and **Charles Schuch** began the next phase of his accomplished military career while a new wave of American soldiers arrived to invade Europe.

For others, it was too late



Twenty-seven acres of headstones today fill the American military cemetery at Carthage, outside Tunis – 2715 total for the American soldiers who never came home.