

going back to control of the 133d, the battalion waited for the assault on Cassino, and patrolled to the front and flanks. At 2330 hours of the 24th, the 133d initiated the first attack against Cassino by way of the Rapido River. After an hour and twenty minutes' barrage, the 100th jumped off with Companies A and C leading, along with elements of the Ammunition and Pioneer platoon. By the following morning, the two companies had gained the river wall, and held there to establish a Line of Departure for an attack across the river. The morning of the 25th, B Company, which had secured the original Line of Departure, was moved up to force the river line, but the enemy was not to be fooled twice. The company was caught in a terrific artillery concentration, and only fourteen men reached the river. The remainder were killed, wounded, driven back, or forced to find shelter where they could. Still, the order was to attack. The commanding officer, Major Clough, was wounded the same day and Major Dewey of the 133d took command. On the 25th, when Major Dewey went on a reconnaissance with the executive officer, Major Johnson, and Captain Mitsuho Fukuda, commanding officer of A Company, the party was caught by machine gun fire. Major Dewey and Major Johnson were hit, and in trying to disperse, one of the party tripped a mine which killed Major Johnson. Its leaders lost, the 100th was pulled back to San Michele. Providentially, Major James W. Lovell, the battalion's original executive officer, returned from the hospital and took command on 29 January, readying the unit for an attack on the castle northeast of Cassino, halfway up the mountain to the famous monastery. The 135th and 168th were to attack the monastery and the remaining two battalions of the 133d were to take Cassino itself from the rear. At 0645, 8 February, the battalion moved out and advanced rapidly, despite heavy shelling, until ordered to hold on Hill 165 and protect the right of the regiment. All other units had been stopped by fierce resistance. Both flanks of the battalion were now exposed, and a change in the wind pulled away its smoke screen, exposing it to direct observation and murderous fire. Grimly, the 100th held for four days and then withdrew on order, sending B Company into that part of Cassino that had been taken, and with-

drawing the rest of the battalion to regimental reserve. Major Lovell had again been wounded seriously on the first day of the attack, and Major Clough returned to command. The division launched another abortive attack on 18 February sending the 100th to storm the same objective. Four days later, the battalion pulled back to Alife for rest and reorganization.

For the 100th Battalion and for the 34th Division, this was the end of the forty-day struggle against impossible odds, plus the cream of the German Army. Rest meant relief from cold, bitter weather that left men chilled to the bone and swelled their feet to the point where it was torture to take a step. The ranks were thin, so thin that when the medics carried a man out now, there was no one to take his place, only a gap in the line and an empty foxhole where he had been. This was the end of the fighting in Cassino itself, fighting that was never measured in yards or miles. It was measured instead, in houses taken, in rooms of houses, and in cells of the jail wrested from the German paratroopers one by one.

These men had seen all that there was to see, endured all that there was to endure. They had seen Cassino and the ancient Abbey crumble under the weight of thousands of tons of bombs and shells. They had attacked, only to find the German infantry risen from the rubble and the ashes to drive them back. They had learned that air power was not enough.

The attack on Cassino had failed, that much was clear. But history will record that when the line was finally broken and the enemy reeled back, five fresh divisions took on the job that one division so gallantly attempted and so nearly completed. History will also record that among the foremost in the ranks of that division were the men of the 100th Infantry Battalion. Among their ranks were fewer and fewer of the men who had started overseas with the battalion, because casualties had again been heavy: four officers and 38 men killed; 15 officers and 130 men wounded or injured; six men died of wounds; two men missing: and one officer and one man, prisoners.

In the meantime, all was not too well at Anzio. The battle had been long and decimating; reinforcements were badly needed. So, on 26 March, the 34th Division landed

at Anzio Harbor, with it the 100th. On 30 March, the 2d Battalion of the 133d returned, replacing the 100th. Fifth Army, however, left the battalion with the 34th Division. During this time, replacements from the 442d Combat Team (The Combat Team was in Camp Shelby and preparing to come overseas) had come in, bringing the battalion nearly up to strength. Through April and on into May, the opposing forces fenced and sparred, sending out patrols and raiding parties for prisoners and information. The German "Anzio Express" and smaller guns constantly kept the beachhead under fire, causing casualties and keeping nerves stretched taut.

Finally, on 24 May, 1944, the Anzio beachhead which had smoldered so long, burst into flame and exploded in the faces of the Germans. Behind tremendous air and artillery preparations, the race for the Eternal City was on. The 100th Battalion was initially given the mission of protecting the VI Corps' right flank along the Mussolini Canal, with a frontage that eventually reached 14,000 yards. The great drive rolled on until the 2d of June, when the enemy put up a last ditch defense around Lanuvio and La Torretto, creating a bulge in the 34th Division's line which had to be reduced, and the battalion was ordered to take on the job. After an intense 36-hour battle in which the 100th suffered 15 killed, 63 wounded, and one missing, the line was cracked and the Road to Rome was open. For this single action, six members of the battalion were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, and one, the Silver Star. About noon of 3 June, Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Singles, who had assumed command of the battalion at the beachhead, was put in command of a task force. This force crushed the last German resistance in the sector. The next day the task force began to roll. They swept through Arricia and Albano, marching, riding when they could on what they could, until they were ordered to stop eleven kilometers from Rome while armor took up the chase. At 2200 hours, 5 June 1944, the 100th Battalion boarded trucks and rolled through Rome, along with the rest of the Red Bull Division until that outfit was finally relieved after the capture of the old port of Civitavecchia, many miles from the Eternal City.

It was there that the 442d Combat Team caught up



with the 100th in the middle of June, having come from Naples through Anzio and Rome. There also the 100th became the First Battalion of the 442d Combat Team, which was only fitting, since the original 1st Battalion of the 442d had been bled dry to furnish replacements for the 100th during the long winter campaign.

This was the beginning of an association that was to become famous through two armies: The 442d Infantry Regiment, the 522d Field Artillery Battalion, and the 232d Combat Engineer Company.



*Men of the 100TH INFANTRY BATTALION moving up to the front in the Velletri area.*

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Section III

THE 442<sup>ND</sup> COMBAT TEAM  
ROME TO THE ARNO - "AIRBORNE"

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Several days after the 100th Battalion had been attached to the 442d Combat Team, the two merged in a bivouac area a few miles from the port of Civitavecchia. The Red Bull Division had been pulled up short for a rest in this area while the 36th Division took up the chase of the retreating enemy. Here the troops trained until 21 June, when they entrucked and moved to another bivouac area southwest of Grosseto. From here, reconnaissance was instituted and final preparations were made to take the unit into combat. Five days later, on the 26th, the regiment was committed to action in the vicinity of Suvereto. The 2d Battalion passed through the 142d Infantry. The 3rd Battalion passed through the 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment. The 100th Battalion was being held in reserve. The regimental objective was a key road junction beyond the town of Sassetta. On the left, the 3d Battalion advanced slowly, against stiff small arms resistance, although artillery fire was light. On the right, the 2d Battalion's advance slowed and stopped in the face of murderous artillery fire. At this point, around 1200 hours, the 100th was committed, driving through a gap between the two assault battalions to seize the high ground around Belvedere, and cut the Suvereto-Sassetta road. Immediately, A and B companies swung northeast to seize a hill which the Germans had neglected to cover and which overlooked Belvedere. From here they observed the enemy's defensive positions, and several artillery pieces which had been shelling the 2d Battalion. Company A now launched an attack on Belvedere and Company B swung back to cut the road south of the town.

This assault on their flanks and rear completely demoralized the enemy, and the defenders were quickly chopped up in small groups and annihilated or captured with all their arms and equipment. The bag for the day was one SS battalion completely destroyed.

The 3d Battalion, continuing the frontal attack, had cleared Suvereto at 1500 hours, and the regiment pushed

out along the Suvereto-Sassetta road in a column of battalions — 100th, 3d, and 2d. For the Belvedere action, the 100th Battalion was later awarded a Presidential Citation.

The following day, the 100th stormed into Sassetta, while the 3d Battalion executed a flanking movement and seized the high ground overlooking the town from the north. The 522d Field Artillery Battalion, Cannon Company, and the massed mortars and machine guns of the 100th and 3d Battalions supported the attack, picking off enemy stragglers and nipping one counterattack in the bud.

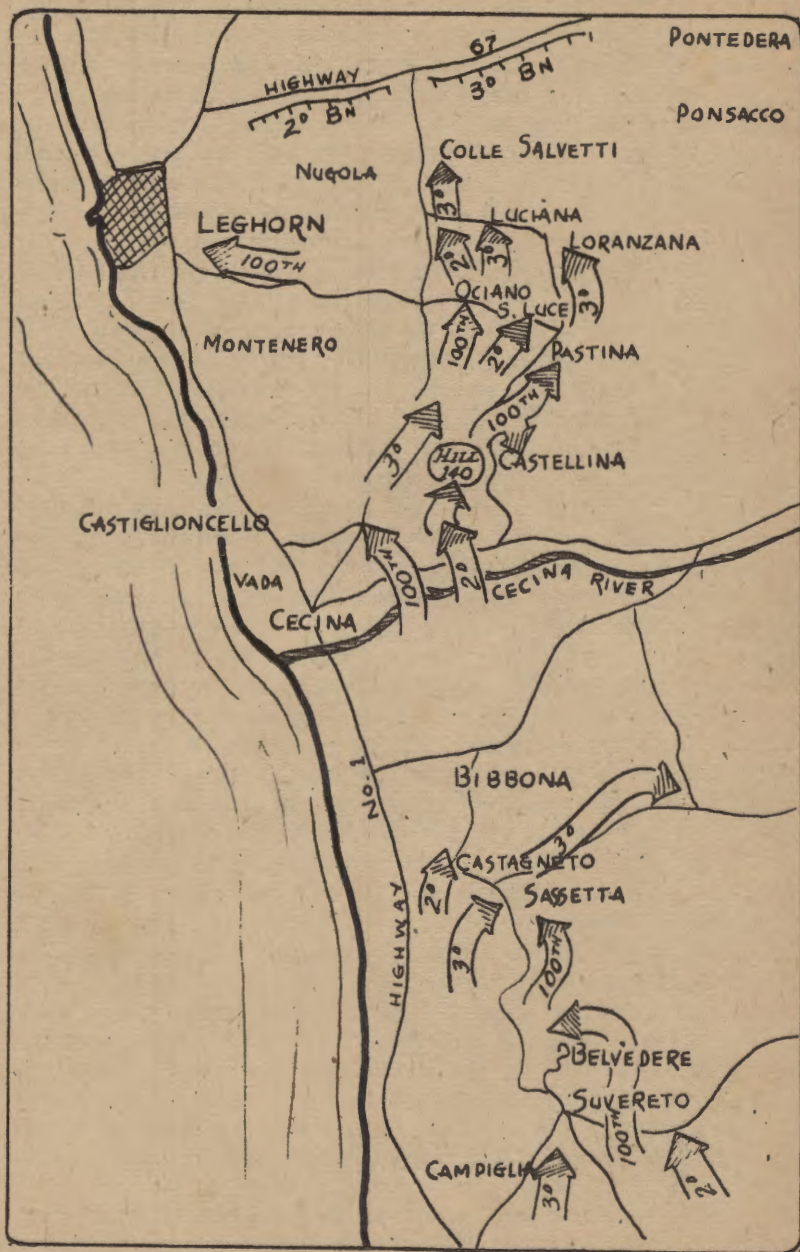
Following this breakthrough, the Combat Team, less the 3d Battalion, went into division reserve near Bibbona to rest for a day or two and meditate on some of the lessons the new men had learned in their first few days of battle; lessons that proved valuable in some of the bitter days that came later. Probably the most important thing the young regiment discovered, much to everyone's surprise, was the fact that advice, even from battle-wise veterans, was well-meaning but practically useless. A well-trained soldier acquires his final polish in battle, and in no other way. The experience had proved fatal to some, but to most of the men it had been the best teacher of all.

Meanwhile, the 3d Battalion had been swung far to the right of the division sector to block against a possible counterattack from the northeast, where the 1st Armored Division had opened a gap between the two divisions. When this threat failed to materialize, the 3d Battalion rejoined the Combat Team. All three battalions crossed the Cecina River on 1 July with the 2d and 100th in assault, and drove north to cut off an important road junction five miles northeast of Cecina. The objective was secured after the 522d Field Artillery and the regimental Cannon Company poured a paralyzing concentration of fire on the German troops defending there.

The following day, the regiment pushed on to cut the east-west road from Castellina to the sea. Here, however, the enemy elected to put up his most determined stand since his defenses before Rome, and the attackers ran into a storm of fire of all types. Our troops were limited to small gains for the next two days, though they kept up a steady pressure against the enemy.

On 4 July, the 3d Battalion moved in to relieve the 100th; the 2d and 3d Battalions went on to grind out a





costly yard by yard advance against Hill 140 and the ridge line running west from it to the coastal plain. By the afternoon of the 5th, the 3d Battalion had overrun strong enemy defenses dug into caves, and the 2d Battalion, after two days of butting into the enemy's interlocking fires on a hillside that contained little cover and no concealment, stormed and seized their part of Hill 140 in a vicious night attack before dawn of 6 July. Enemy casualties on the positions overrun by the regiment approximated 250.

Here the 100th Battalion swung around the right flank of the 2d, and driving abreast of the 3d, cut the Castellina road and cleared Castellina by the evening of the 7th. Still the enemy gave ground grudgingly, and it became evident that here in these hills and not in the port itself would the battle of Leghorn be fought. Accordingly, the regiment settled down to its task and battled the enemy where he chose to stand, seeking to destroy his defenses.

The 2d Battalion relieved the 3d on the 10th of July, and the 100th and 2d again jumped off abreast with the mission of clearing the hilltop town of Pieve di San Luce. They had advanced only a short distance when they were stopped decisively by heavy fire from their objective and from Pastina, which lay in the hills to the right front of the 100th. Immediately the 100th took to the high ground to clear Pastina, while the 2d Battalion dug in in the valley below and hung on against all the artillery the enemy could muster. After a two-day battle, Pastina fell at 2300 hours 12 July to the combined efforts of the 100th and deadly spot shooting by the 522d Field Artillery Battalion.

Here the 3d Battalion took over again from the 100th and drove north, abreast of the 2d Battalion, as far as Lorenzano, where the advance spluttered and ground to a halt against one of the enemy's inevitable hill positions. On 14 July, the 168th Infantry relieved the 3d Battalion in front of Lorenzano, leaving that battalion free to swing back to the left of the sector and replace the 2d Battalion on the night of the 15th. In the meantime, the 100th Battalion had passed to division control and was driving northwest on the Orciano-Leghorn road, establishing a series of roadblocks to protect the left flank of the regiment and at the same time to threaten the city of Leghorn itself.

The 3d Battalion, 442d, having relieved the 2d Battalion, drove north for the little hilltop town of Luciano,



100TH BN.  
2ND BN.

3D BN OCT. 18 '44

BRUYERES

100TH BN

2ND BN.

3D BN.

LA BROQUAINE

O'CONNOR TASK FORCE. CO. L & F

100TH & 3D BN. OCT. 27 '44

OCT. 21 '44

100TH BN.

OCT. 23 '44

3D BN.

OCT. 23 '44

BELMONT

3D BN.

100TH BN.

2ND BN.

3D BN.

OCT. 27-30 '44

100TH BN.

BIFFONTAINE

2ND BN.

LOST BATTALION

3D BN.

LA HOUSSIERE