

The 3d Battalion tried until the 8th to clear the hill to the valley below, finally succeeding in clearing part of it with the aid of the 2d Battalion's G and E Companies, but the effort was too great. Average company strength in the regiment was 35 men. Company I had a total of five riflemen, plus a few men from the weapons platoon. Company K was commanded by S/Sgt. Tsutomu Yoshida, a squad leader (later lieutenant).

The regiment was relieved on the 8th and moved to the Lepanges area, out of artillery range, on the 8th and 9th. Here the men washed, drew new clothes and gradually assumed the semblance of human beings again. On the 10th, the 100th was detached, sent to another rest area, and subsequently ordered south to the Maritime Alps sector under Seventh Army control. The morning of the 13th, the regiment took over holding positions on the division left flank, with the 2d Battalion on line and the 3d Battalion in reserve. There they remained until the 17th. For these few days, weather was the worst enemy. Then the Combat Team pulled back to Docelles, leaving there the following day for Nice. They carried with them a commendation from the Commanding General, 36th Division, and more important to the men, the respect and admiration of the division's doughboys.

The month the Combat Team spent with the 36th Division had been a month of great heroism and great tragedy. At the time they went into the lines, these had been the only fresh troops the Seventh Army possessed. They were committed against an enemy whose orders were to hold to the last man. In destroying this enemy, the Combat Team was so badly battered that it was impossible to go on without reinforcements, and these were not forthcoming. Perhaps if it had not been for the urgency of the mission to reach the "lost battalion" casualties would have been lower, but even this is doubtful. Suffice it to say that the 442d Combat Team contributed mightily to the drive of the Seventh Army when its contribution was needed most. That, after all, is the highest accolade of any regiment of infantry.

After a three-day run down the flooded Rhone Valley by truck, the Combat Team closed into an assembly area near Nice the night of 21 November, expecting several

days' rest before being committed to action. Instead, it was found that the 100th was already holding a sector high in the mountains to the north of Nice, near St. Martin Vesubie. Two days later, on the 23d, the remainder of the Combat Team was sent into line, occupying a line between the coast resort of Menton and the little town of Piera Cava, ski mecca 20 miles to the north. The 100th held the coastal area, having been relieved in the north; the 3d held the center sector around the Franco-Italian border town of Sospel, and the 2d Battalion held the Piera Cava region. Although battalions rotated, the regiment held the same sector throughout the winter on the Riviera.

Although this was in many ways a forgotten front, it was vitally important. A determined German push here could conceivably have carried down the coast, disrupting Allied installations as far west as Marseille. The Combat Team, attached for operations to the 44th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Brigade, was assigned the mission of defending the area against such an eventuality, and of patrolling aggressively to keep the German 34th Division, posted across the border in Italy, worried and off balance. This was accomplished by the use of frequent patrols and raiding parties, as well as occasional "shoots" by the 522d Field Artillery, the regimental Cannon Company and supporting 75's and medium artillery.

Here the regiment stayed for four months. There was little action, but men were killed and wounded. The medics still performed their heroic service, and the supply teams, operating with borrowed pack mules, kept the food and equipment going up to the men on their lonely mountain outposts. Still, there was time for play. Rest centers opened in Nice and Cannes, and, while the weather and quantities of mines were not conducive to lolling on the beach, there were girls and dancing, lights and music, and a chance to forget the war for a few days in hotels once inhabited by the world's idle rich.

As all good things must, this also came to an end. In March, word got around that the outfit was moving out. Rumors flew, for the destination was a closely kept secret. CBI? Italy? The States? After much speculation, a French division took over the Combat Team's sector, relief being completed 16 March 1945. The 522d Field Artillery

Battalion was separated from the Combat Team and sent north to help support the Seventh Army's jump across the Rhine. The men regretted the loss as they had learned to respect the shooting abilities of their mates and the ability and gallantry of the forward observer parties. Shortly before the relief was effected, Colonel Charles W. Pence, still suffering from an injury received in the fighting in the Vosges, had also been ordered to other duties, to be replaced by his executive, Colonel Virgil R. Miller. Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Singles, commanding the 100th Battalion, was also transferred to a new command. Lieutenant Colonel (then Major) Jack E. Conley, took command of the battalion. Lieutenant Colonel James M. Hanley was named regimental executive officer, and Major Robert A. Gopel took command of the 2d Battalion. So, under new management, the unit moved to an assembly area at Antibes, left there March 17th, 18th, and 19th, arriving in Marseille staging area the same days. Finally, on March 20th, 21st, and 22d, the outfit boarded LST's. Destination: Italy!



Preparing mule train for the trail to supply outpost on the Maritime Alps.

Section V

RETURN TO ITALY - MASSA TO GENOA
END OF THE WEHRMACHT

Debarking at Leghorn, which it had fought for many months before, the Combat Team moved to a Peninsular Base Section staging area near Pisa, and drew entirely new equipment. It then moved, under control of IV Corps, to an assembly area at San Martino, near Lucca. Finally, on 3 April, the Combat Team was detached from Corps, assigned direct to Fifth Army, and attached to the 92d Division for operations. General Almond assigned the Combat Team the sector from Highway One east to include the Folgorito ridge line, a 3,000-foot hill mass which rose abruptly from the coastal plain, dominating Massa, Carrara, and the great naval base of La Spezia.

The mission of the 92d Division with the 442d and 473d Infantry Regiments attached was to launch an offensive some time before the main weight of the Fifth Army was hurled at Bologna. It was believed that such a move would lead the enemy to divert some of his central reserve, then massed in the Po behind Bologna, to meet this threat to his flank.

Under cover of darkness 3 April, the 100th Battalion moved into a forward assembly area in the vicinity of Vallechia. The 3d Battalion detrucked at Pietrasanta, and marched eight miles over mountain trails to Azzano, a mountain village which was under full enemy observation during daylight. There the unit remained hidden until the next night, when it moved out, led by a Partisan guide, and gained the ridge line between Mount Folgorito and Mount Carchio.

This move had been a long gamble on the part of Colonel Miller, the regimental commander. It was necessary that the troops achieve this ridge line without detection since it was a Herculean task in itself merely to scale the sheer mountain walls. It would have been an impossibility to take the positions by storm. Success meant that a position which had resisted the 92d Division for six months would

probably fall in two days. Failure meant that the regiment would be forced to make a costly frontal attack on these same positions. Our troops did not fail.

Gaining the ridge line, the 3d Battalion jumped off at 050500 April, enveloping the enemy from the rear. At the same time, the 100th Battalion attacked the enemy positions on the ridge line which ran southwest from Mount Folgorito to the coastal plain.

The attacking battalions, having moved toward each other for 24 hours, made contact on Mount Cerretta late the following day. They had been supported by three battalions of artillery plus a very effective air strike, and enemy casualties were extremely heavy. Exploiting the initial advantage, the 2d Battalion had followed the route of the 3d during the night of 5 April, and at 061000 swung north from Mount Folgorito to seize Mount Belvedere. This was a long mountain top, having a knoll at each corner and forming a rough rectangle. Resistance was heavy and the mountain was not occupied by nightfall.

On the 7th, the 100th consolidated its gains, while the 3d made an attack on the Colle Piano spur, and the 2d resumed its attack on Mount Belvedere. Elements of the 3d Battalion missed direction and ended up attacking the town of Strinato, but in doing so, captured four heavy enemy mortars, so the time was well lost. These operations continued through the following day, with the 3d Battalion finally clearing Colle Piano and moving down to occupy the valley community of Montignoso. The 2d Battalion launched an early morning attack, cleared Belvedere, and moved on to take Altagnana. In attempting to take Pariana, on the same slope and to the west of Altagnana, F Co. was met by violent resistance and was forced to withdraw until the following morning. Supported by mortar fire, the company then made a coordinated assault, took the town and wiped out the remainder of the crack Kesselring Machine Gun Battalion, which had already been badly mauled.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the 2d Battalion advanced to the Frigido River line on the 9th. The 3d Battalion advancing abreast and on the left of the 2d, reached a point two miles from the river after reducing an enemy position on Colle Tecchione. The 100th remained

to garrison the Mount Folgorito-Mount Belvedere ridge against enemy positions known to be to the east, or regimental right rear. The advance continued for the next two days with light opposition, the 100th coming from reserve on the 11th to take over the 3d's place in the line. The 3d Battalion then swung to the west and entered Carrara, which had already been partly secured by Partisans. The Anti-Tank Company established blocks on main roads to the east. The engineers, trying desperately to keep supply routes open to the advancing troops, lost four bulldozers, all being blown up by deeply buried demolition charges.

After consolidating its positions and allowing a little time for supplies to catch up, the regiment continued the attack on the 13th.

Elements of the 100th Battalion swung toward the coastal sector to make contact with the 473d Infantry, but ran into strong enemy pockets that had been by-passed and a stiff fire-fight developed. Meanwhile, the remainder of the battalion assembled in Gragnana, from where B Company was sent to Casteloggio to reinforce the 2d Battalion, which had launched an attack on Mount Pizzacuto.



The COMBAT ENGINEERS worked long and hard to keep the supply net open.

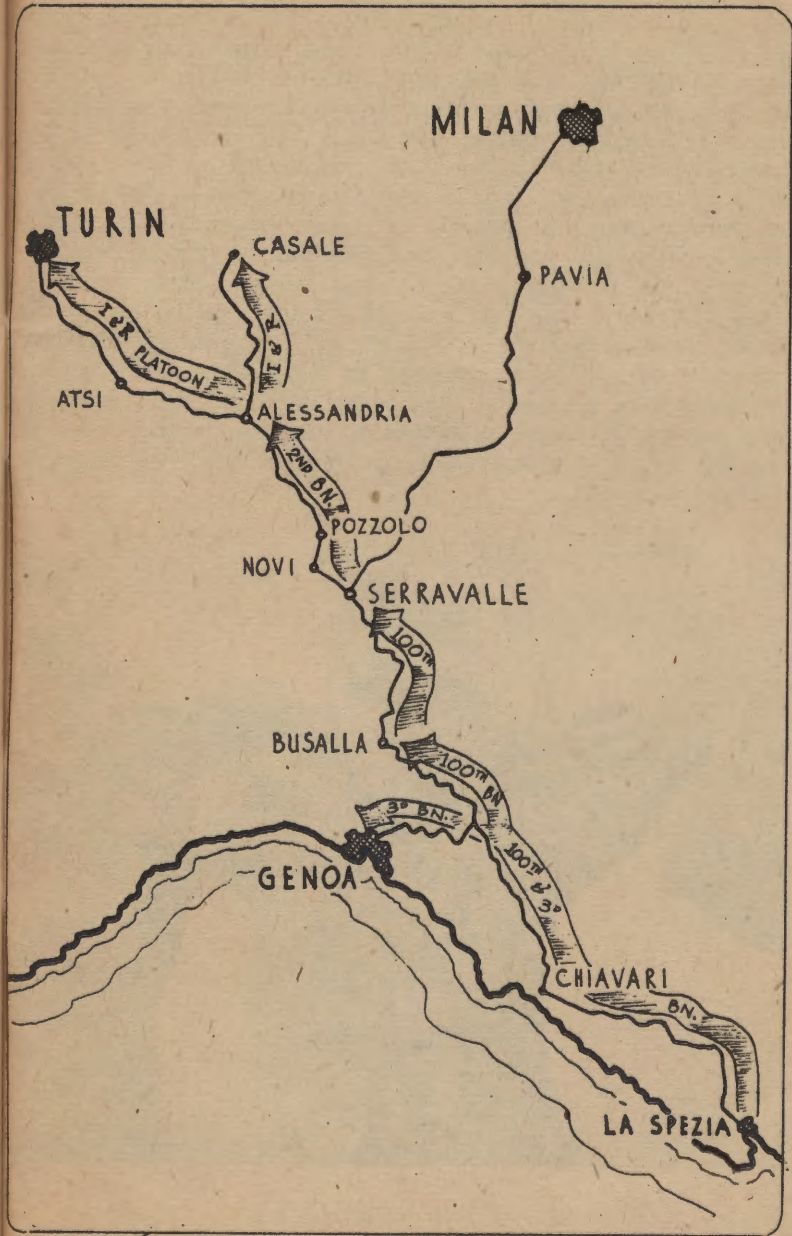
On 14 April, the resistance in the 100th sector had been cleared only after a full-scale attack by C Company. Early that morning the enemy launched a strong attack on Castelpoggio, thinking that only the 2d Battalion command group was in the town. On being greeted by a hail of fire from B Company men stationed in strategic buildings, the enemy withdrew in rout after a fierce fire-fight. An entire enemy battalion was badly mauled in this abortive attempt to cut off the 2d Battalion. Assault companies of the 2d then took Mount Pizzacuto at 0900 hours.

Our troops were now committed over so wide an area that it was necessary to call on the 232d Engineers to lay aside their bulldozers and occupy La Bandita ridge, which dominated the supply route through Castelpoggio. The engineers relieved I Company in position and held the ridge, successfully driving off one counterattack. The attack continued, Mount Grugola being taken by the 2d Battalion while the 100th assisted the 473d in clearing the town of Ortonovo. The 3d Battalion then relieved the 2d and pushed on to Mount Tomaggiara and Pulica, where the advance was stopped.

The enemy held this line desperately until the 20th, having heavily organized this last high ground before Aulla, vital communication center, through which ran all roads from La Spezia to the Po Valley. On the 20th, the 2d and 100th Battalions swung to the right of the 3d Battalion to cut Highway 63 and turned west to take Aulla and envelope the resistance holding up the division advance.

Both battalions ground out a slow costly advance until 23 April, when elements of the 2d Battalion executed a brilliant flanking movement and seized the town of San Terenzo. This move resulted in the capture of 115 enemy and the rout of a greater number. Many of these prisoners were Italian. It therefore became evident that the Germans were pulling out, leaving their former ally to hold the sack. This was confirmed when the 3d Battalion took the strong point at Mount Nebbione the same day and found only a holding detachment left there.

A task force, composed of Companies B and F, was then formed to exploit the apparent breakthrough. This force drove down to seize the high ground south of Aulla, which fell on the 25th with comparatively little resistance



as the task force and 2d Battalion linked up. For the next two days as much of the regiment as trucks could be found for followed the advance of the 473d, which had exploited the breakthrough and was now driving on Genoa. Finally, on the 27th, the regiment was ordered to flank Genoa from the north, seize Busalla, and block the pass at Isola del Cantone to the north, so as to cut off the enemy's escape route to Turin. The 100th immediately moved out on this mission, occupying Busalla at 1000 hours of the 28th after an all night foot march, inasmuch as it was impossible to repair bridges in time to get trucks across. Late the same afternoon, the 3d entered Genoa, riding commandeered street cars. Elements of the 3d had also accepted the surrender of a thousand enemy in the hills directly to the southeast even as Genoa was being entered. The battalion then set up defensive positions to the north and west of the city, where it remained in occupation until the cessation of hostilities.



END of THE WEHRMACHT.

On the 29th, the 100th moved into regimental reserve at Bolzaneto, while the 2d passed through its positions and occupied Alessandria, where it accepted the surrender of over 1,000 enemy from nearby towns. The following day, the regimental Intelligence and Reconnaissance platoon, with a section of H Company's machine guns attached, raced north and entered Turin, which was held but not entirely subdued by the Partisans. While this had been going on, by-passed pockets of enemy had outdone each other in the race to surrender to the Americans.

At long last, on 2 May, the end came to the Wehrmacht in Italy. To the once great army that had fought so bitterly from Salerno to the Po, that had used every stratagem in the book to delay the inevitable, there were no tricks left; only the bitter taste of final defeat.

For the men of the Fifth, among them the 442d, the long hard years were over; with victory came the hope that now, if they were lucky, they might live out their lives in peace, peace that so many had suffered and died for.

Section VI

THE FORGOTTEN MEN

In any summary of this type it is impossible to cover adequately the contributions that individuals and supporting units make to the victories of an entire combat team.

To the infantryman, the combat aid men have been the unsung heroes of this war. There have been no other troops in the combat team who have suffered more casualties or earned greater respect than the "medics." These troops were unflinching in their treatment of the wounded. Unarmed, they exposed themselves to fire times without number, moving through barrages that pinned the infantry to the ground. Where the wounded were, no matter how far in front, there were the aid men and litter bearers. Nor were these activities limited to the medical detachment. When casualties were heavy and there were no roads, litter bearers came from Anti-Tank Company, Service Company, Regimental Headquarters Company, the 206th AGF Band, and from the battalion headquarters companies. These men laid down their arms and went forward to aid in the evacuation of the wounded. There was always danger. There was always the back-breaking labor of carrying a wounded man over hundreds of yards of broken ground. Still the litter teams went out and always the wounded came back. No single group of men deserves more recognition or greater praise.

Wire crews also worked night and day to keep communications operating. Theirs was a vital function, for without this lifeline, the regiment was lost. Under fire, they spliced wires, laid new lines, repaired equipment, worked 24 hours a day for days on end. To these men and to the radio crews only one tribute need be paid: communications worked when they were needed.

One of the great combinations that have been brought to perfection in this war is the infantry-artillery team. Between them, the 522d Field Artillery Battalion and the Regimental Cannon Company fired over 200,000 rounds of artillery in support of the infantry. Time and again the forward observers blasted a path for the doughboys through enemy positions. Not infrequently, they were able

to drive the enemy back or break up counterattacks by sheer weight of metal alone.

Credit also goes to the 232d Combat Engineers, who, more than any others, kept the supply routes open. They neutralized mines, repaired roads and bridges. At times they were called on to build roads where none existed before. When the situation demanded it, they laid aside their tools, took up their rifles, and coolly went into the lines as infantry.

And there were others: the Supply Sections of the various battalions, and Service Company, leading jeeps or mules with equal facility and carrying rations on their backs when grave emergencies arose. The men who kept the jeeps and trucks on the road deserve recognition here as do the cooks and supply sergeants. The clerks, though they did not fight, saw that the records of the fighting men were in order.

This, then, is what we mean by a combat team. Every man on that team is vital and necessary to it, from the regimental commander to the last Kitchen Police. If each man does his job, you have a team that will not be beaten. Such was the 442d Combat Team.

DECORATIONS

The following decorations have been presented to Japanese-American troops for action in the European and Mediterranean Theaters of Operations, as of 7 Aug 1945:

Distinguished Unit Citation	3
Distinguished Service Cross	42
Distinguished Service Medal	1
Legion of Merit	13
Silver Star	249
Oak Leaf Cluster to Silver Star	5
Soldiers Medal	11
Bronze Star	579
Oak Leaf Cluster to Bronze Star	24
Army Commendation	13
Division Commendation	62
. Total	<u>1002</u>

CASUALTY TABLE	KIA		DOW		MIA		WIA		WIA Not Hospitalized		IIA	
	O	EM	O	EM	O	EM	O	EM	O	EM	O	EM
NAPLES - FOGGIA (100TH BN, only) Sep 43-21 Jan 44	7	111		21		3	20	390			5	27
ROME - ARNO (100TH BN & 442d CT) 25 Jan - 8 Sept 44	16	192		31	2	15	64	771	18	119	6	38
SOUTHERN FRANCE (AT Co, 442d CT, only)								2			1	12
RHINELAND - VOSGES (442d CT) 10 Oct - 20 Nov 44	7	135	1	17	4	38	47	824	22	299	2	26
RHINELAND - MARITIME ALPS (442d CT) 21 Nov 44 - 17 Mar 45	1	7		3	1	1	4	49	4	39	2	4
PO VALLEY (442d CT, less 522d FA) 5 Apr - 8 May 45	4	89		8		3	20	442	10	392		58
TOTAL	35	534	1	80	7	60	155	2478	54	849	14	163

KEY: KIA -- Killed in action.
DOW -- Died of wounds.

MIA -- Missing in action.
WIA -- Wounded in action.

IIA -- Injured in action.

