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FIFTH ARMY HISTORY

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Lieutenant General Mark W. Clark, Army Commander (to 16 December 1944)

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FIFTH ARMY HISTORY



PART I

*From Activation to
the Fall of Naples*

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Foreword

SHORTLY after our landings in North Africa, on 8 November 1942, orders were received from the War Department directing the activation of the United States Fifth Army. This took place on 5 January 1943. This Army, created in the field and dedicated to offensive operations, has had a varied and glorious history since its earliest days in French Morocco. Even while its units were training, the Army staff was preparing plans for carrying the war to the Italian mainland. Then, when all was ready, we struck.

The American soldiers of Fifth Army who went ashore at Salerno on 9 September 1943 were the first Americans to plant themselves on the soil of Europe in this war. Our invasion virtually destroyed the Rome-Berlin Axis; yet more, for long months Fifth Army bore the entire brunt of our participation in the land war against Germany.

Our men fought the more valiantly and boldly for the knowledge that the prestige of our armed forces rested on their shoulders. The enemy dipped deep into the pool of his already strained resources, first to prevent our landings, and then to hold us south of Rome. The ensuing struggle in the rugged Italian mountains was bloody, protracted, and at times our advances were measured in yards; but Fifth Army was not stopped. On 4 June 1944 we entered Rome, and today, as I write, we are engaged in a bitter struggle south of Bologna—300 miles north of the Salerno beaches.

Field conditions do not encourage the writing of history. To my knowledge this work is the first attempt to set down the history of an American army while it is still engaged in active operations. Nevertheless I have considered it desirable to secure an authentic story of the action of this Army as we proceeded. A trained group of officers and men has been steadily occupied since our arrival in Italy, studying the terrain and operations, going over the records, interviewing commanders and staffs while events were still fresh. Though any history written so soon after the battle must necessarily be incomplete, I feel that the Fifth Army History possesses an immediacy and freshness which cannot

be gained later. Above all, it is a complete, straightforward story, so far as we know it, which gives due credit to the units of all the nations which have served in Fifth Army. The world knows the names Salerno, Cassino, Anzio, and Futa Pass; this History should explain why these names are glorious in military annals.

MARK W. CLARK
Lieutenant General AUS
Commanding

Headquarters Fifth Army
In the Field, Italy
27 October 1944

CONTENTS * * * * *

	<i>page</i>
CHAPTER I. <i>ACTIVATION OF FIFTH ARMY</i>	I
CHAPTER II. <i>TRAINING OF FIFTH ARMY</i>	5
A. Training Centers	6
1. Invasion Training Center	6
2. Airborne Training Center	7
3. Leadership and Battle Training Center	7
4. Field Officers Training Center	8
5. Tank Destroyer Training Center	9
6. Engineer Training Center	9
7. Air Observation Post Center	II
8. French Training Section	II
B. Completion of Training	I2
CHAPTER III. <i>PLANNING FOR INVASION</i>	I5
A. Early Planning	I5
B. Planning for Avalanche	I8
1. General Planning	I8
2. Plans for Airborne Support	23
C. Outline Plan for Avalanche	25
1. The Army Plan	25
2. Naval and Air Support Plans	26
3. The Invasion Beaches	26
4. Landing Plans	27
D. German Forces in Italy	28
E. Approaching H Hour	30

	<i>page</i>
CHAPTER IV. <i>INVASION OF ITALY</i>	31
A. D Day at Salerno, 9 September	31
1. The Landing	31
2. Fighting Inland	33
B. Consolidating the Beachhead, 10-11 September	34
C. The German Counterattacks, 12-14 September	37
1. The Loss of Altavilla	37
2. Shifts in the Center	38
3. Attacks and Counterattacks	39
4. Summary of the Situation	41
D. The Enemy Withdraws, 15-19 September	41
CHAPTER V. <i>THE DRIVE ON NAPLES</i>	43
A. Plans for the Advance	43
B. The Fall of Naples and Avellino, 21 September - 1 October	44
1. Breaking Through the Mountains	44
2. The Enemy Retreats	46
3. The Capture of Naples	47
C. Advance to the Volturno, 1-6 October	48
CHAPTER VI. <i>THE ACTION OF ALLIED ARMS</i>	51
A. Naval Action	51
B. Air Operations	52
C. The British Eighth Army	56

Annexes

* * * * *

	<i>page</i>
Number One. <i>Letters and Orders of Activation</i>	59
A. War Department Letter on Activation of Fifth Army, 8 December 1942	61
B. Fifth Army General Order No. 1, 5 January 1943	63
C. Fifth Army General Order No. 2, 5 January 1943	64
D. Fifth Army General Order No. 3, 11 January 1943	65
Number Two. <i>Orders and Instructions</i>	73
A. Outline Plan for Avalanche, 26 August 1943	75
B. Field Order No. 1, 25 August 1943	81
C. Change No. 1 to Field Order No. 1, 1 September 1943	83

	<i>page</i>
D. Field Order No. 2, 16 September 1943	84
E. Field Order No. 3, 18 September 1943	86
F. Field Order No. 4, 19 September 1943	87
G. Operations Instruction No. 1, 20 September 1943	89
H. Operations Instruction No. 2, 20 September 1943	90
I. Operations Instruction No. 3, 22 September 1943	91
J. Operations Instruction No. 4, 29 September 1943	93
Number Three. <i>Statistics</i>	95
A. Casualties, U.S. Forces, 9 September - 6 October 1943	97
B. Prisoners of War, 9-30 September 1943	98
C. Major Ordnance Losses, 9-30 September 1943	99
D. Supply	101
Number Four. <i>Troop List of Fifth Army, 29 September 1943</i>	103

Maps

* * * * *

opposite page

1. Plans for the Invasion of Italy	16
2. The Invasion of Italy	22
3. VI Corps Beaches at Paestum	26
4. Plans of Landing, D Day at Salerno	30
5. Consolidating the Beachhead, 10-11 September 1943	34
6. Fifth Army Hightide, 12 September 1943	38
7. Counterattacks against VI Corps, 13 September 1943	42
8. Advance to the Volturno, 16 September - 6 October 1943	50
9. Advance of the Allied Armies in Italy, 3 September - 6 October 1943	58

Paintings

* * * * *

Invasion beach at Paestum (Red Beach)	<i>opposite page</i>	15
Altavilla and Hill 424 in the background	<i>opposite page</i>	37
Looking across the olive groves to Altavilla	<i>opposite page</i>	47

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CHAPTER I * * * * *

Activation of Fifth Army

FIFTH Army was constituted effective 1 December 1942 by a War Department letter addressed to the Commanding General, European Theater of Operations. (See Annex No. 1A.) The letter stated that the following elements of the newly created force would be activated in the European Theater of Operations: Headquarters, Fifth Army; Headquarters Company, Fifth Army; and Special Troops, Fifth Army. It further directed that the foregoing units be organized and equipped in accordance with appropriate tables and that personnel and equipment be drawn from the Western Task Force (formerly Task Force A), II Corps (reinforced), and other available sources. The Western Task Force, which had sailed directly from the United States, had received its baptism in battle during the North African invasion at Casablanca, French Morocco, on 8 November 1942. On the same date II Corps had made its landing at Oran, Algeria, coming from England, where it had spent several months.

I Armored Corps was assigned to Fifth Army by the War Department letter, which called for reactivation of the Corps by transfer of units, personnel, and equipment from the Western Task Force. II Corps (reinforced) after reorganization as II Corps (non-reinforced) would likewise come under Fifth Army. By virtue of further authority given in the letter the Commanding General, European Theater of Operations, could assign additional units, personnel, or equipment to Fifth Army. Concurrently with the formation of the Army, headquarters elements and provisional units of the Western Task Force were to be disbanded.

On 12 December 1942, Headquarters, European Theater of Operations, published General Order No. 67, which constituted the United States Fifth Army in accordance with the War Department authority noted above and al-

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located the new army to the command of the Commander-in-Chief, Allied Force, North Africa. This order directed activation of Fifth Army at the proper time by its commanding general, who was announced as being Lieutenant General Mark W. Clark. Upon activation of Fifth Army General Clark was to be relieved as Deputy Commander-in-Chief, Allied Force.

Pursuant to further instructions contained in this order Allied Force Headquarters on 30 December 1942 addressed a letter to the Commanding General, Fifth Army, directing the activation of his command on or about 4 January 1943. The major elements of the United States Army then under control of the Western and Center Task Forces were transferred to Fifth Army, effective on the date of its activation; all units, however, under the Mediterranean Base Section and the new Atlantic Base Section (formerly SOS Task Force A) would remain with those commands. Initially the basic organization of Fifth Army would comprise I Armored Corps in French Morocco; II Corps in Western Algeria; and XII Air Support Command.

At this time the American and British forces in North Africa still retained a certain measure of supervision over the French territory. Fifth Army was assigned French Morocco and Algeria west of a north-south line through Orléansville; within this area General Clark was responsible for all matters involving relationships with local civil officials, including military police regulations, air raid precautions, health and sanitation, and similar responsibilities. Fifth Army had disciplinary jurisdiction over the entire district except within areas actually occupied by troops of Twelfth Air Force, the Atlantic Base Section, and the Mediterranean Base Section.

The initial missions of Fifth Army were laid down by the Allied Force letter. Fifth Army was to prepare a well organized, well equipped, and mobile striking force with at least one infantry division and one armored division fully trained in amphibious operations. It was to ensure, in co-operation with French forces, the integrity of all territory of French Morocco and of Algeria within its zone, to act with French civil and military authorities in the preservation of law and order, and to assist in organizing, equipping, and training French forces. Finally, Fifth Army was to prepare plans for and execute special operations under directives issued by the Commander-in-Chief, Allied Force.

To implement these instructions Lieutenant General Mark W. Clark established the Army headquarters in Oujda, Morocco, converting the buildings and grounds of a school for young women into the nerve center of a powerful army. Here on 5 January 1943, at one minute past midnight, he activated and assumed command of Fifth Army. General Order No. 1 of Fifth Army (see *Annex No. 1B*), dated 5 January 1943, actually created Fifth Army and

named its commander. It was followed on the same date by General Order No. 2 (see *Annex No. 1C*), which announced the following assignments to the staff of Fifth Army:

Chief of Staff	Brig. Gen. Alfred M. Gruenther
Secretary, General Staff	Maj. Ira W. Porter
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1	Lt. Col. Francis A. Markoe
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2	Col. Edwin B. Howard
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3	Brig. Gen. Arthur S. Nevins
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4	Col. Clarence L. Adcock
Adjutant General	Col. Cheney L. Bertholf
Air Officer	Col. Guy H. Gale
Artillery Officer	Col. Thomas E. Lewis
Chemical Officer	Col. Maurice E. Barker
Civil Affairs	Col. Charles E. Saltzman
Engineer Officer	Col. Frank O. Bowman
Headquarters Commandant	Lt. Col. C. Coburn Smith, Jr.
Provost Marshal	Col. Charles R. Johnson
Public Relations	Maj. Kenneth W. Clark
Quartermaster	Col. Joseph P. Sullivan
Signal Officer	Brig. Gen. Richard B. Moran
Surgeon.	Brig. Gen. Frederick A. Blesse

On 6 January 1943 General Clark dedicated his army to its tasks in the following brief words:

Our duty is clear— to be prepared for battle at the earliest possible moment. All else must be subordinated to that end. Every man and every officer of the Fifth Army, no matter what his job, must prepare at all times for that moment when we march into battle to destroy the enemy. This calls for peak mental and physical condition. It calls for complete devotion to duty, for long, tiring hours of work, for initiative, for resourcefulness, for staying power. Men make the army, and all of you, I know, will make this— the Fifth— a great army.

The preceding paragraph stated the training objective for subsequent months. Initial units assigned to Fifth Army (see *Annex No. 1D*) and those which later came under Fifth Army control were destined to undergo training well calculated to achieve the goal set forth by General Clark. These units later emerged as the great striking force which landed on the west coast of Italy on 9 September 1943.

CHAPTER II * * * * *

Training of Fifth Army

AT THE outset of its existence Fifth Army faced the prospect of undertaking operations of great difficulty and complexity. In its primary task it was committed to one of the hardest operations in modern warfare, an amphibious movement in force to land on a defended hostile shore. Aside from its routine responsibilities of controlling substantial portions of Morocco and Algeria its mission had initially been defined to be that of a mobile striking force with emphasis strongly placed on amphibious operations. Its ultimate employment in the first American landing on the mainland of Europe stemmed naturally from its careful preparation for just such a type of campaigning. Accordingly the Army very early in its career began a highly specialized program of training to develop the skills and to increase the mobility necessary for landing operations, building on the experience gained in the North African landing operations and grounding all the units in the complicated techniques of amphibious movements. These require both technical proficiency and the highest sort of discipline, physical hardihood, and initiative, and General Clark saw to it that thorough training should be undertaken in order that the men he sent into forthcoming battles would be ready for the test.

In addition to the training carried on within the units of Fifth Army, certain training centers were created to handle instruction in vital subjects and in new techniques throughout the Army, based on deficiencies observed in the Tunisian campaign and on the intended employment of Fifth Army. The office of the Director of Training Centers was established under the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, on 18 March 1943. Brig. Gen. William H. Wilbur was designated as director, and as the representative of General Clark he was charged with the operation of the Fifth Army training centers. In all, eight such centers were utilized by the Army.

A. TRAINING CENTERS

1. *Invasion Training Center.* To develop doctrines, technique, and instruction for invasion and to build up a reserve of trained troops for invasion operations, training of designated divisions was conducted by the Fifth Army Invasion Training Center, established on 14 January at Port aux Poules, Algeria. Brig. Gen. John W. O'Daniel organized the center and was assisted by Rear Admiral Andrew C. Bennett, U. S. Navy, in the amphibious part of the program. Units given this training included the 1st, 3d, 34th, and 36th Infantry Divisions and the 1st Armored Division, together with the staffs of several French divisions.

The training consisted of individual and unit instruction of the regimental combat teams and the armored combat commands which were to be used in prospective landings, and also covered combined operations of those troops with the U. S. Navy, the Army Air Forces, and the 1st Engineer Amphibian Brigade. It aimed to develop aggressive, fast-moving, hard-hitting, sustained action. All phases of landing and invasion were covered, including night attacks, infiltration, demolitions, destruction of armored vehicles and obstacles, air-ground communications, support fire and smoke, and supply, especially of operations involving sustained advances. The program prepared units for a ship-to-shore and shore-to-shore operation and gave them experience with the new landing craft.

Particularly valuable was the battle inoculation given by the training at this school. Using live ammunition in all types of weapons, the course offered practice in attacking under fire conditions which approximated action. Men became accustomed to being under fire and learned to take care of themselves and to work in teams effectively. Dummy houses were constructed to provide training in street fighting, and the activities of teams were timed so closely that soldiers advanced through the covering fire of their own supporting elements in perfect confidence. This exercise in timing produced remarkable results, and men grew battle-wise so successfully that few casualties occurred from the training with live ammunition. Similarly, pillboxes and other defensive works were built and were used in training in the reduction of field works. Again, the course gave practical experience under actual fire, and later operations proved the soundness of the training.

Some units remained at the Invasion Training Center for four months and more; one battalion of the 36th Division underwent training here from about 15 April until it embarked for the assault on the Italian mainland. This preparation gave the troops considerable experience in perfectly executed,

combined movements of a variety of military, naval, and air units, which in actual operation rarely last much over 24 hours. It might be, as one commanding officer said, that a great deal of training was being spent on an operation for 1 day out of the year and that officers and troops should not lose sight of the operations which they would be conducting for the remaining 364 days, but it must be pointed out in rebuttal that the necessary invasion lessons were soundly learned.

2. *Airborne Training Center.* To develop doctrines, technique, and equipment and to provide a reserve of units prepared for airborne operations, training of designated units was conducted by the Fifth Army Airborne Training Center, established 14 March at Oujda, French Morocco. Col. Rosenham Beam organized and commanded the center. One squadron of transport aircraft was made available for initial training.

The preparation covered individual and unit instruction of airborne and parachute troops and combined training of airborne, parachute, and transport organizations. It welded all units into an efficient, hard-hitting team, ready for day or night operations. In executing its training mission the Fifth Army Airborne Training Center was charged with the following activities:

- 1) Co-ordination of training schedules and procedures of airborne and troop carrier units engaged in combined training.
- 2) Providing training and administrative facilities needed by airborne units to carry out their air and ground training.
- 3) Development of technique and procedures for parachute, glider, and troop carrier units.
- 4) Development and testing of air-ground support methods.
- 5) Development of air-ground communication and also drop zone locator methods.
- 6) Qualification of parachutists.
- 7) Training of glider replacements.
- 8) Training of individuals and units in parachute delivery of supplies.

3. *Leadership and Battle Training Center.* The Fifth Army Leadership and Battle Training Center was set up 9 May to train platoon leaders and non-commissioned officers of the higher grades in leadership, to instruct them in battle procedures found to be effective in the Tunisian campaign, and to offer battle inoculation of all types. The program, which was designed to teach leaders how to train small units, comprised drills, physical hardening, and the tactical employment of squads and platoons. The principal effort was placed

on tactical training and battle inoculation. The latter consisted of requiring personnel to advance under all types of friendly as well as hostile fire, including field artillery. Live ammunition was used in all such instruction. Cooperation of the various arms was stressed. Instruction was given in combined operations of infantry and tanks, infantry and tank destroyers, infantry and artillery. Exercises were conducted in which infantry provided fire support for units clearing a minefield. In all training major emphasis was placed on "learning by doing" with a minimum of talks and lectures.

The site chosen for this center was a bivouac area three and one-half miles south of Slissen, Algeria, on the Chanzy-Magenta-Bedeau road, together with two training areas. The terrain of this area approximated in character the terrain of France and Italy, and the elevation (3000 feet) generally provided cool nights. The first personnel, including the commanding officer and three instructors, were assigned on 13 May. Between that date and 24 May additional officers for administrative and instructional staffs and enlisted men for the headquarters company were assigned. On the opening date 4 administrative officers and 14 instructors were present. This number was gradually increased to 14 administrative officers and 29 instructors.

The first class, consisting of 45 officers (platoon commanders) and 44 non-commissioned officers of the first three grades, was enrolled on 23 May, started the course of training the following day, and completed it on 21 June. The second class, consisting of 56 officers and 149 non-commissioned officers, was enrolled 15 June, began its training the following day, and was relieved 8 July. Instruction for this class was curtailed four days to permit the adoption of a different plan of training whereby cadres from divisions, rather than individuals, were designated to take the course. For a period of three weeks cadres were given intensive instruction and upon completion of the course acted as instructors for their respective units. The cadres from the 34th and 36th Divisions, consisting of 267 officers and 147 non-commissioned officers, began training on 10 July and were released to their respective divisions on 30 July. The first two regimental combat teams arrived in the area and commenced their training on 2 August in accordance with the plan which provided for a two weeks' period for each team. Combat teams of the 34th and 36th Divisions were given training at this school.

4. *Field Officers Training Center.* The Fifth Army Field Officers Training Center was established at Chanzy, Algeria, on 7 April under Col. D'Alary Fechet. The purpose of the school was to provide an intensive refresher course in tactics and in utilization of terrain. It was contemplated that students would be drawn from division staff officers, battalion commanders, and battalion and

regimental executives. The instruction was practical and applicatory. After each course a six-day trip was made to selected battlefields where officers from the troops that had fought over the ground explained the action and commented on the lessons to be learned. After two courses had been completed, the center was discontinued owing to shortage of qualified students who could be spared from other duties.

5. *Tank Destroyer Training Center.* The Fifth Army Tank Destroyer Training Center was activated 5 May. A location for the center, with headquarters at a point approximately seven miles south of Seb dou, Algeria, was selected. The site was a high plateau (3000 feet) bordering on the bunch grass country and offered a fine variety of terrain in sparsely occupied areas. Water in the area was limited, but a mobile water unit was installed at the source of the Tafna River, six miles north of Seb dou, with an auxiliary point located at El Gor.

The original staff consisted of Lt. Col. John W. Casey, Commanding; Capt. Charles F. Wilbur, Executive; Maj. John W. Dobson, S-3; Capt. Francis F. Kramer, S-2 and Co-ordinator of French Training. The headquarters detachment, commanded by Capt. Edward I. Kaufman, together with housekeeping facilities was moved from Mascara to provide the necessary enlisted personnel. Units trained at the center included the 636th, 701st, 776th, 804th, 805th, 894th, and 899th Tank Destroyer Battalions; and the 191st, 756th, and 760th Tank Battalions. The center also undertook the training of French tank destroyer battalions. French units attached for this purpose were the 8th, 9th, and 11th Tank Destroyer Battalions (Régiments des Chasseurs d'Afrique).

6. *Engineer Training Center.* The Fifth Army Engineer Training Center was activated 12 March. Lt. Col. Aaron W. Wyatt, Jr., was designated as commanding officer. Instruction in mine warfare and demolitions commenced 21 March. The original staff and faculty included Maj. Harold E. Wetzel, Executive Officer; Capt. Eric J. Schellenberger, Camp Executive. British instructors were Maj. Cecil L. Stephenson, R.E., Maj. Stanbury J. Hawkins, R.E., Capt. Eric H. Yeo, R.E., Capt. Robin R. Hoskyn, R.E. For French students two French officers were attached as instructors.

As originally established, courses were of seven days' duration. Many students were sent to the Tunisian front for a short period before the courses opened. Beginning with the seventh course, however, the period was increased to nine days. Student quotas were originally set at 20 officers and 40 non-commissioned officers. Subsequent quotas were increased to 40 officers and 60 non-commissioned officers; and finally 80 officers, 40 non-commissioned officers, and 20 French officers were allowed. In each course additional students were accepted

up to the capacity of the school by informal arrangement with unit commanders.

Training schedules included all phases of mine warfare with considerable instruction in military demolition. The greatest part of the students' time was spent in practical work. Battle conditions were simulated wherever possible. The final night problem was conducted under fire, using TNT, flares, and placed charges. Armed mines were employed throughout the course.

The object of the course was threefold:

- 1) To train officers and non-commissioned officers as unit instructors, so that they could go back to their units with sufficient knowledge, information, and enthusiasm to "put it across" to the men.
- 2) To train officers and non-commissioned officers in the recognition, arming, disarming, clearance, and laying of mines and booby traps, and in practical demolitions.
- 3) To train officers and non-commissioned officers to help save lives and to help speed up operations by minimizing the fear of mines which is naturally prevalent in the uninitiated.

Great stress was placed on military courtesy and discipline, physical conditioning, and alertness and cleanliness. Four engineer combat companies and one engineer armored company were attached to this center for demonstration, construction, and security. These units as well as two camouflage companies, two camouflage platoons, one bomb disposal squad, and one signal repair detachment were trained in mine warfare, military courtesy and discipline, and other basic subjects.

Up to and including the 16th class a total of 1350 officers and non-commissioned officers attended the school, of whom 1108 completed the course satisfactorily. Only those whose performance was satisfactory or higher were awarded certificates upon graduation. Of the 177 French students included in the figures above, 130 successfully completed the course. Despite the danger involved in most of the exercises there were but 27 student casualties, only 1 of which was fatal.

Shortly after the activation of the center a research department was added under the direction of Capt. Robert G. Reuther. Personnel were equipped and prepared to investigate, develop, and test mechanical devices and aids related to engineer operation, particularly in connection with mine warfare. Extensive experimentation was conducted with the Scorpion, technically known as the T-3 Exploder, and resulted in valuable suggestions for improvements.

7. *Air Observation Post Center.* The Fifth Army Artillery Air Observation Post Center was activated 22 March and filled a real need. When II Corps arrived in England in August 1942, the artillery units were lacking Air Observation Post Sections. Inasmuch as it was not known when the school at Fort Sill would be able to supply an adequate number of pilots and mechanics, the Corps Commander (General Clark) directed the establishment of The II Corps Air Observation Post School, to be commanded by Lt. Col. John D. Salmon, with a small group of trained personnel from Fort Sill acting as instructors. A cricket field near Andover served admirably for training, and the buoyant English air began "lifting" cubs that were then untried but later were definitely proved in combat. Upon arrival in North Africa the school was placed under the direction of Fifth Army and continued under Lieutenant Colonel Salmon at Sidi Bel Abbes, from which the first graduates were immediately sent to the Tunisian front. On 1 March 1943 the school moved to the friendly and fascinating town of Mascara, where the municipal airfield was given over completely to the Americans. By late March pilots and mechanics in sufficient numbers were arriving from the United States. The school then became a center and served to speed the movement of personnel and supplies to the fast-climaxing Battle of Africa. The center closed on 1 June.

8. *French Training Section.* On 23 April Fifth Army started its French Training Section. The section was not formally activated and so designated until 16 May, with Brig. Gen. Allen F. Kingman as its chief. The duties of the section were clearly defined, namely to teach and train French personnel in the technical handling of American equipment (less 3d and 4th echelon maintenance). To each of the five French divisions an American officer was assigned to act as adviser to the division commander and as a channel of communication between Fifth Army and the individual divisions. In carrying out its program the French Training Section secured technical training assistance for the divisions, conducted formal inspections of the units of the divisions, and co-ordinated the movements of French units with Fifth Army Headquarters.

Original divisions (as of April 1943) of the new French Army were:

- 1) 1st Armored Division (1ere Division Blindée), Rabat, Morocco: Brigadier General du Vigier, Commanding.
- 2) 2d Armored Division (2e Division Blindée), Rabat, Morocco: Brigadier General de Vernejoul, Commanding. (Inactivated July 1943 and reactivated the same month as the 5th Armored Division.)
- 3) 3d Moroccan Infantry Division (3e Division d'Infanterie Marocaine), Casablanca, Morocco: Major General Martin, Commanding. (Reorganized in June 1943 as the 4th Moroccan Mountain Division.)

4) 2d Moroccan Infantry Division (2e Division d'Infanterie Marocaine), Meknes, Morocco: Major General Dody, Commanding.

5) 3d Algerian Infantry Division (3e Division d'Infanterie Algérienne), Constantine, Algeria: Major General de Monsabert, Commanding.

Assigned to duty with General Kingman were the following officers: Lt. Col. John D. Salmon, Executive, French Training Section; Lt. Col. Robert W. Burke, Adviser, 5th Armored Division; Lt. Col. Robert Shaw, Adviser, 3d Algerian Infantry Division; Lt. Col. Roy A. Stephens, Adviser, 2d Moroccan Infantry Division; Maj. A. W. Green, Adviser, 4th Moroccan Mountain Division; Capt. J. G. Paterson, Assistant to Executive, French Training Section; and 1st Lt. D. H. K. Flagg. During the month of June the French Training Section received a detachment of 15 officers and 150 men, who had been on duty in the Middle East instructing British units equipped with American materiel. Upon assignment to Fifth Army its personnel was promptly sent as instructors to the various French units.

B. COMPLETION OF TRAINING

Fifth Army Headquarters moved from Oujda to Mostagenem, Algeria, during the latter part of July. This movement over a distance of some 480 miles was made by echelon, the forward echelon using motor and the rear echelon moving by rail. Here, near the Fifth Army Invasion Training Center at Arzew, General Clark minutely checked the training of his troops prior to the invasion of Italy and completed his staff for the operation. At the time of embarkation this staff was as follows:

Chief of Staff	Maj. Gen. Alfred M. Gruenther
Deputy Chief of Staff	Col. Charles E. Saltzman
Secretary, General Staff	Lt. Col. Ira W. Porter
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1	Col. Cheney L. Bertholf
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2	Col. Edwin B. Howard
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3	Brig. Gen. Donald W. Brann
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4	Col. Ralph H. Tate
Antiaircraft Officer	Col. Joseph S. Robinson
Adjutant General	Col. Melville F. Grant
Artillery Officer	Brig. Gen. Thomas E. Lewis
Chaplain	Lt. Col. Patrick J. Ryan
Chemical Officer	Col. Maurice E. Barker
Engineer Officer	Col. Frank O. Bowman
Finance Officer	Col. Clarence B. Lindner
Inspector General	Col. Irving C. Avery

Judge Advocate	Col. Claude M. Mickelwait
Ordnance Officer	Col. Urban Niblo
Quartermaster	Col. Joseph P. Sullivan
Signal Officer	Brig. Gen. Richard B. Moran
Surgeon	Col. Joseph I. Martin

The training of Fifth Army ended with an examination in the form of practice landing operations, carried out by the 36th Division under Maj. Gen. Fred L. Walker in the area between Porte aux Poules and Arzew. The 45th Infantry Division in Sicily and the British 10 Corps, which were to be part of Fifth Army in its first combat operations, had also conducted practice landings. The areas had been especially selected to duplicate or at least to approximate those to be found at Salerno. The example of the 36th Division may be cited. Its ships had been loaded, and everything except the last-minute touches had been given; the troops were embarked on their respective vessels, and the convoy put out to sea, soon to assemble for the dry run, Operation Cowpuncher. The same plans and orders for the invasion were used, wherever practicable, with a simple substitution of geographical names. During the night 26-27 August the practice operation was conducted against troops of the 34th Division, who had wired the beaches and manned the defenses. The assault troops came ashore in small craft, and a portion of all types of weapons and vehicles were landed. This rehearsal brought out a few changes in manner of loading and unloading, but above all it gave officers and men a feeling of confidence in their ability to carry out the task confronting them.



Invasion beach at Paestum (Red Beach)... painted by Technical Sergeant Mitchell Siporin