

CHAPTER V * * * * *

The Drive on Naples

THE first phase of the operation could now be considered complete, for the enemy withdrawal in front of VI Corps indicated clearly that the German High Command considered it impossible to destroy our bridgehead. The landing was a definite success. On 20 September Maj. Gen. John P. Lucas assumed command of VI Corps. The 36th Division was withdrawn to Army reserve to guard the Salerno beaches; the 3d Division took its place in VI Corps. Headquarters, 82d Airborne Division, under General Ridgway arrived at Salerno, and the units of the division which had previously been attached to VI Corps were ordered by Operations Instruction No. 2, 20 September 1943 (*see Annex No. 2H*), to concentrate in Army reserve on the right flank of Fifth Army at Controne.

A. *PLANS FOR THE ADVANCE*

See Map No. 8

With the Salerno plain in its possession Fifth Army could now proceed to its mission, the capture of Naples harbor and the nearby airfields. Available information suggested that the Germans intended to fight a delaying action up to the Volturno River, where enemy fortifications were reported in progress. As it turned out, the German High Command had ordered XIV Panzer Corps in front of Fifth Army to fall back toward the northwest in a vast pivot movement based on the Sorrento Peninsula. The forces on this flank were to hold the mountain passes as long as possible to permit a thorough wrecking of the port of Naples and to safeguard the enemy evacuation of the Campanian Plain. Then they too would fall back on the Volturno and link up with LXXVI Panzer Corps in front of Eighth Army to form a solid line across

the Italian boot. This plan called for stubborn resistance in front of 10 Corps and rearguard action in front of VI Corps; Eighth Army would have almost no contact with the enemy until it had pushed north of Foggia.

Field Order No. 4, 19 September 1943 (*see Annex No. 2F*), together with Operations Instruction No. 3, 22 September 1943 (*see Annex No. 2I*), were issued by Fifth Army to pave the way for the capture of Naples and to permit the planning of subsequent operations. The general plan required both corps to attack abreast, with 10 Corps on the left delivering the principal thrust. Accordingly 10 Corps was directed to secure the Vietri-Nocera and Salerno-San Severino passes, push on to the northeast to reach the flat Naples plain, and capture Naples; the next move was to drive the Germans north of the Volturno River. To carry out this order 10 Corps moved the 46 Division to Vietri and brought up the 56 Division to push north from Salerno itself. The main attack was assigned to the 46 Division, aiming at Nocera; when the division had reached this point, the 7 Armoured Division would pass through and strike for Naples. The Ranger Force, after assisting 10 Corps, was to revert to Army control for the protection of Naples. The Rangers and a force not to exceed one brigade were to furnish security in the city until the 82d Airborne Division could take over. VI Corps was directed to continue its advance, secure the line Avellino-Teora, and then be prepared on Army order to secure the line Benevento-Teora, moving the eastern end of the line forward as Eighth Army advanced.

The enemy retreat before these attacks did not at any time become a rout. In front of 10 Corps the German forces, consisting of the Hermann Goering Panzer Division with detachments from the 3d and 15th Panzer Grenadier Divisions, held tenaciously in positions which they had had two weeks to prepare. German routes of withdrawal before VI Corps were through mountain passes and across deep gorges where the use of small delaying forces and mines, coupled with the destruction of roads and bridges, allowed the enemy to retreat in comparatively good order.

B. *THE FALL OF NAPLES AND AVELLINO*

21 SEPTEMBER-1 OCTOBER

1. *Breaking Through the Mountains.* 10 Corps required two days to shift its troops for the impending attack. Meanwhile the 3d and 45th Divisions of VI Corps began their flanking push into the mountains. The 3d Division under Maj. Gen. Lucian K. Truscott, Jr., moved up the road from Battipaglia

through Acerno toward Highway 7, with the 15th Regimental Combat Team on the left crossing the mountains north of Curticelle to get into position for a drive on Avellino. The 45th Division advanced up Highway 91 through Contursi to secure the junction of Highways 7 and 91. Both divisions ran into opposition on the 21st which held up their advance guards for a day. The 30th Regimental Combat Team (3d Division) was stopped just south of Acerno by a blown bridge commanded by enemy rifle and machine-gun positions on the opposite side of the Tusciano Gorge, but by cross-country marches across the mountains the regiment drove out the enemy opposition and occupied Acerno on 22 September. The 180th Regimental Combat Team (45th Division) met enemy positions to the west of Oliveto, which it outflanked and captured on the 22d.

Field Order No. 4 had ordered a co-ordinated attack with the mission of securing the line Teora-Montemarano-Avellino-Castellamare preparatory to a further advance on Naples. This attack jumped off 23 September. The 3d and 45th Divisions pushed forward on the right flank of Fifth Army despite the rugged terrain, which canalized movements to a narrow road net. The Germans left a few delaying detachments in front of the 45th Division, but relied chiefly on extensive demolitions. Division engineers worked night and day to bulldoze by-passes where these were possible, or to build temporary bridges; and the 36th Engineer Combat Regiment of VI Corps followed up closely behind. The fall rains, which began the night of 26-27 September, washed down dirt and rocks on the roads, damaged several key bridges, and thereby slowed the advance of VI Corps.

On Highway 91 the 45th Division advanced on a two-regiment front, the 179th Infantry on the west bank of the Sele and the 157th Infantry on the east bank. Colliano was occupied on 23 September, Quaglietta and Valva on the 24th. By the morning of 26 September the 45th Division securely held Teora and the junction of Highways 7 and 91. The 3d Division on the left of VI Corps reached Highway 7 by 27 September, at which time its three infantry regiments were disposed in a wide arc about Avellino. The 15th Infantry was in the Sabato Valley south of the town, the 7th Infantry was crossing the mountains west of the Acerno road to take Volturara, and the 30th Infantry held Montemarano on Highway 7. Supply of some units in the 3d Division devolved on pack trains or even upon human pack trains from the reserve companies of the infantry regiments.

While VI Corps was moving ahead almost without opposition apart from that afforded by the terrain and demolitions, 10 Corps led the main effort on the left to secure the Nocera-Pagani Pass. When 10 Corps attacked at dawn

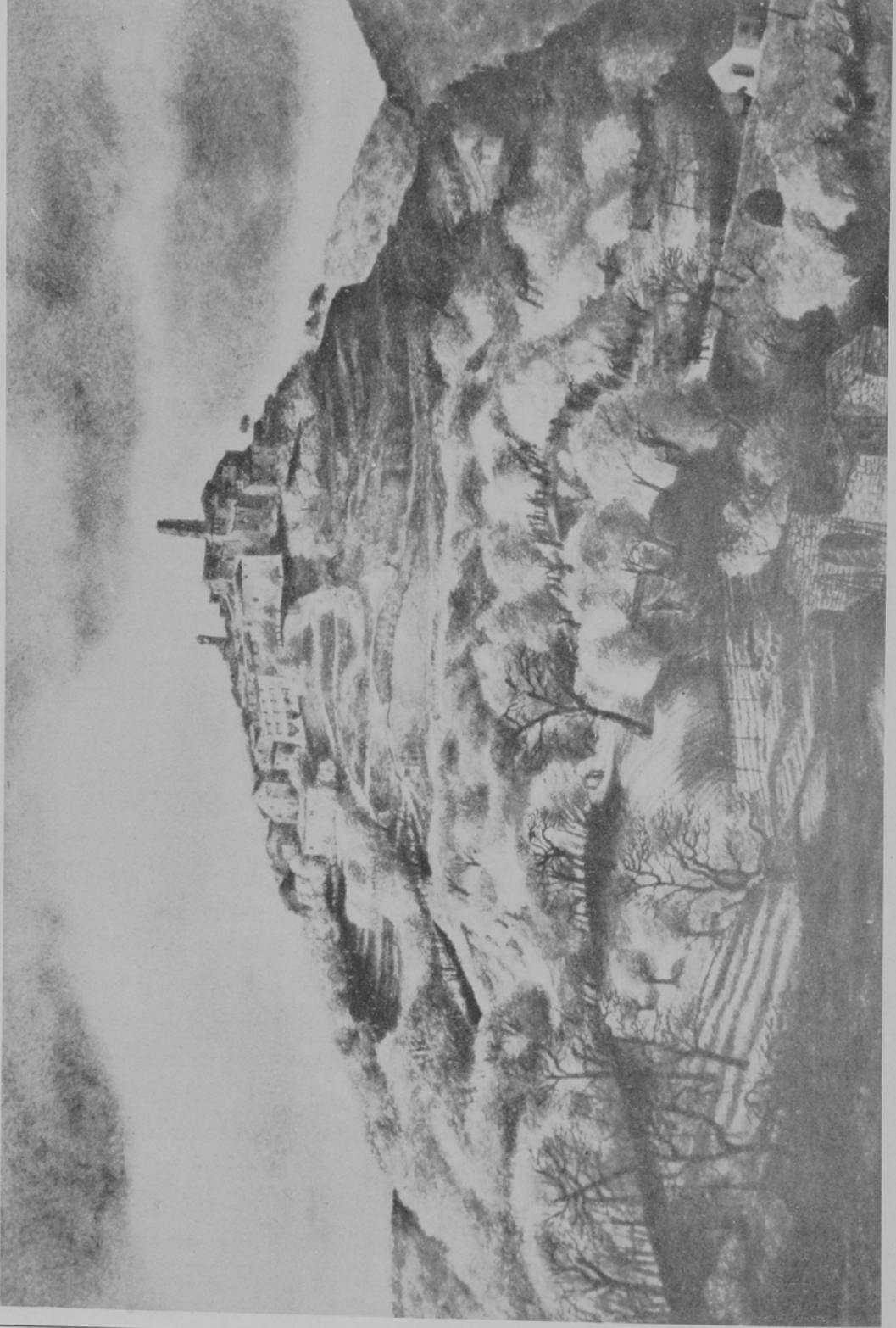
on 23 September, the Germans were making an orderly withdrawal and resisted stubbornly. A strong force held up the 46 Division near Cava, about two miles north of Vietri. The advance of the 56 Division bogged down short of le Cappelle, five miles north of Salerno. Only slight gains could be made on 24 September. The Germans had blown every bridge of any importance in front of the 56 Division and resisted with their usual annoying but effective rearguard actions. Mount Stella, a series of razorback ridges east of Highway 88, was held with particular determination, and it was not until 26 September that the 169 Brigade (56 Division) could dislodge the enemy. This action opened the way for further advance of the 56 Division. On 27 September the 201 Guards Brigade pushed patrols into Baronissi, six miles north of Salerno; at the same time elements of the 46 Division occupied the town of Camerelle near the Nocera Pass.

Command of the left flank of 10 Corps, including the Ranger Force, passed to the 82d Airborne Division on 26 September, following the transfer of the division by LCI's from the Paestum beaches to Maiori. The Rangers had held their positions, gained in the first rush of the original landings, against all attacks and now began to push forward so as to bring pressure on the German right flank.

2. *The Enemy Retreats.* By 28 September the east flank of Fifth Army had swung around to a point from which it could close in and threaten the German defenses pivoted on the Sorrento Peninsula. The left flank had been reinforced and had driven across the major barriers of that peninsula. The German forces all along the front started a withdrawal, and the tempo of our advance sped up.

For the drive on Avellino VI Corps was reinforced by the 133d Regimental Combat Team (34th Division) under Maj. Gen. Charles W. Ryder, which had begun landing 21 September. The three infantry regiments of the 3d Division closed in quickly on Avellino from the south and west while the 133d Regimental Combat Team drove west above Highway 7 to cut the main road from Avellino to Benevento; the 45th Division meanwhile guarded the right flank and kept contact with Eighth Army. After a night attack 29-30 September Avellino fell to the 3d Division on the morning of 30 September.

Fifth Army had already directed VI Corps by Operations Instruction No. 4, 29 September 1943 (*see Annex No. 2J*), upon taking Avellino to shift the mass of its forces to the left along the general line Avellino-Montemarano-Teora, leaving screening forces to cover its supply route east of Montemarano. VI Corps was further directed to prepare plans to attack west with a force not to exceed one reinforced division, seizing the line Nola-Avella, and then to



Looking across the olive groves to Altavilla... painted by Sergeant Frank D. Duncan, Jr.

assist 10 Corps in the capture of Naples. The Corps was also to prepare plans for the capture of Benevento, all plans subject to execution on Army order.

10 Corps itself was quick to follow up the advantages gained in the previous fighting. On 28 September the Ranger Force occupied Sala on the north-west side of the Sorrento Mountain chain, overlooking the plain of Nocera. The 23 Armoured Brigade debouched into the level country north of Sala and advanced to Castellamare while the 131 Brigade (7 Armoured Division) took Nocera. This brigade passed through the 46 Division and formed the advance guard for the 7 Armoured Division. On the 29th the bridge at Scafati was seized intact, although it had been prepared for demolition. By this action we secured the only bridge over the Sarno not destroyed by the Germans. Even so the many vehicles of the armored division were impeded by a bottleneck until three more bridges were thrown across the Sarno; then the British armor was ready for the dramatic plunge on Naples.

Pushing closely upon the heels of the retreating enemy, the King's Dragoon Guards and the 11 Hussars, both armored reconnaissance units, swept along leading the attack. Pompeii, Torre Annunziata, and many other cities fell without opposition. On the left patrols of the 82d Airborne Division reached Torre del Greco, where the Germans held for a short time. At nightfall on 30 September troops of 10 Corps were surrounding Mount Vesuvius. Naples, with its demolished port, was within our grasp.

3. *The Capture of Naples.* On 1 October General McCreery, commanding 10 Corps, sent the following welcome message to General Clark:

Today has given us one of the highlights of the campaign and Naples has fallen to 10 Corps. Armoured patrols of the First Kings Dragoon Guards were the first to enter the city at 0930 hours, followed by the Greys later reinforced by troops of the 82d Airborne Division.

Naples had paid a very heavy price. Allied air raids had destroyed most of the harbor installations, and the damage was augmented by German destruction. In an attempt to deny dock and harbor facilities to Fifth Army the enemy scuttled ships at the piers and sank others in the harbor. Between Allied bombings and German demolitions the docks and storehouses along the waterfront of Naples were left a mass of ruins, crumbled stones, and fire-twisted steel. A normal port capacity of 8000 tons daily had been cut to a mere fraction of that figure, but clearing away of debris was so rapidly accomplished that 3500 tons daily were coming in at the port only 12 days after its capture.

Enemy destruction was not confined to the port. A determined effort was made to wreck all public utilities. Naples was a city without electricity, transportation, or a sewage system. The Germans had destroyed the aqueduct

which supplied most of the water to the city. Water was available at only a few hydrants from two emergency reservoirs. Engineers of Fifth Army established water points at various places throughout the city where the 600,000 people who had remained behind during the general exodus could fill their bottles, pans, and jugs. So great was the demand that armed guards had to be placed at these water points to prevent the larger and the stronger from driving the women and children away. This system of water supply was continued until about 9 October, when the engineers had rebuilt 160 feet of the Napoleonic Aqueduct.

Visible destruction was merely a part of the havoc wrought by the Germans. They planted powerful time bombs in public buildings in anticipation of their occupancy by Fifth Army troops. Despite the efforts of sappers and engineers, who removed many of these hazards, there were a number of explosions, one of which killed 14 and wounded 58 American soldiers quartered in an Italian artillery barracks. A time bomb in the Naples Post Office took a horrible toll of civilians.

C. *ADVANCE TO THE VOLTURNO*

1-6 OCTOBER

The capture of Naples gave General Clark a much needed port, but mere possession of the city itself did not fully constitute a fulfillment of the Fifth Army objective. The airfields at Capodichino and Pomigliano were not yet in Allied hands, and the enemy must be driven well away from Naples harbor. Troops of Fifth Army, accordingly, did not pause with the capture of the city. The usual delaying tactics of the Germans were in evidence along the entire front during the next five days, as Fifth Army drove to the Volturno River; but there were now indications that the enemy was running short of explosives. Some structures prepared for demolition were discovered to be lacking explosive charges. Tellermines were used in lieu of TNT, and artillery shells were converted to use for prepared demolitions. Further evidence of at least a temporary shortage in mines was given by reports that the enemy was taking up his own minefields. Road blocks were numerous, however, and some were elaborately prepared. Booby traps also continued to make their appearance in varied forms. In one instance a tempting bunch of grapes was wired to an antipersonnel mine.

On the 10 Corps front the 7 Armoured Division pressed on north across the Campanian Plain, while the 56 Division secured the edges of the high ground overlooking the plain from the east. Forward units of the 7 Armoured Division were in Piazzolla and Somma by the evening of 1 October, and the 56 Division had reached Palma. On 2 October the 56 Division occupied Nola; the following day the badly demolished Pomigliano Airfield was taken. In swinging toward Cancellò to aid the 3d Division attack on that town the 56 Division was held up by demolitions on 4 October, but Aversa and Qualiano fell to the 7 Armoured Division. The Volturno River, along which the Germans prepared strong defensive positions, was the next major obstacle before 10 Corps. The Greys, a reconnaissance unit of the 23 Armoured Brigade, reached this barrier on 5 October opposite Cancellò ed Arnone; the 169 Brigade (56 Division) took Caserta without opposition; and by 6 October the 56 Division had occupied the town of Capua.

On the right VI Corps had slower going in the mountains, but by 6 October the 3d Division had driven through Cancellò and Maddaloni into the mountains above Caserta. The 34th and 45th Divisions moved on Benevento, which the 45th Reconnaissance Troop entered at 1210, 2 October. The 3d Battalion, 133d Infantry (34th Division), occupied the city at 2330 on the same day and secured a bridgehead over the Calore River. The 45th Division passed through the 34th Division on 4 October, preparatory to advancing on the high ground north of the junction of the Calore and Volturno rivers. The 34th Division, thus relieved, went into assembly areas to prepare for the crossing of the Volturno.

By 6 October both corps of Fifth Army were on the general line of the Volturno River, and paused briefly to regroup their forces before crossing the river. The past month, which had tested Fifth Army in combat, had been extremely successful. The combined American and British forces had accomplished one of the most difficult military operations— a landing on hostile shores. They had beaten off a severe enemy counterattack, and had pushed forward relentlessly to their objectives despite every obstacle of terrain and enemy opposition. They had completed their mission: “To seize the Port of Naples and to secure the airfields in the Naples area with a view to preparing a firm base for further offensive operations.”

MAP N° 8
ADVANCE to the VOLTURNO
 16 September - 6 October 1943
 SCALE
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 Miles
 Elevations in Meters



CHAPTER VI * * * * *

The Action of Allied Arms

A. NAVAL ACTION

THE task of the U.S. and Royal Navies in *Avalanche* was twofold: to transport and convoy an army from several foreign ports to the invasion beaches, and to support the ground forces on the beaches with supply and with gunfire. The transport of thousands of troops meant anxious days of loading and reloading. The army's demands were often heavy and unexpected, but the navies met them. The crowded voyage to the coast of Italy was made expeditiously, and the thousands of troops were landed on the beaches designated in the plans. In addition to their duties in manning landing craft and sweeping mines, the sailors worked through the dawn of D Day to set up communications and beach installations.

The effectiveness of naval gunnery against targets set a new high. A few hours after daylight on the morning of 9 September 1943, when destroyers were able to come in towards the shore, their supporting gunfire was employed with considerable effect in the destruction of guns in position and in the destruction of assembled German fighting vehicles. The fire was accurate and was tied in with the maneuver of ground troops. This co-ordination was made possible to a great degree because of previous practice and training by combined army and navy artillery observer-spotter parties. Naval gunfire was an important factor in breaking up many German tank attacks from D Day on during the whole operation. It was also instrumental in repelling the counterattack, which aimed to drive our forces into the sea. Following the counterattack, General Clark on 16 September sent a message to General Alexander which read in part:

For the splendid and wholehearted cooperation and support given by the allied navies during our operations in this area, please convey to Admiral Cunningham my deep appreciation. Naval gun-fire support has

been most effective. I have been favorably impressed by the eagerness of all naval commanders to give this support. Admiral Hewitt has done everything in his power to assist us. He usually anticipates our needs and always executes his support missions promptly and efficiently.

With observers ashore and air spotters communicating with the ships during the establishment of the beachhead, cruiser and destroyer fire searched out enemy defenses, batteries, and strongpoints. Five-inch naval gunfire penetrated with great accuracy and effectiveness observation posts and machine-gun nests which the enemy had set up in stone buildings and houses inland beyond the range or striking power of the light and medium artillery. The big guns of the battleships were our chief weapon for blocking roads and defiles and for destroying defenses at long distances.

At the conclusion of the Salerno operations General Clark cabled the Naval Commander in Northwest African Waters:

Amphibious operations require closest cooperation between naval, air and ground forces. The Allied landings in Salerno were an outstanding example of such coordination. Air, naval or ground forces alone could not accomplish a beachhead and then drive the enemy out of heavily defended positions, on the beaches, in the mountains, on the plains. The Allied Navies, British and American, deserve the highest commendation for the brilliant support of the Fifth Army landings. All those who took part in the landings will long remember and honor what the U.S. and Royal Navies did in contributing so brilliantly to the success of the Salerno operations.

B. *AIR OPERATIONS*

Air support for Avalanche was summed up briefly in the Outline Plan as:

1. Fighter protection from hostile air interference.
2. Direct and indirect support of ground operations by:
 - a) Prearranged strategic missions.
 - b) Tactical missions, prearranged or on call.
 - c) Reconnaissance and photo missions.

Prior to D Day the Northwest African Air Forces were engaged in two missions of importance to the success of the landing: to neutralize the enemy aircraft in the area and to disrupt the lines of communication necessary to a proper defense of the landing area.

Weather conditions limited the accomplishment of the first mission, but beginning on the night of 3-4 September a co-ordinated series of attacks were made on fighter bases at Capua, Capodichino, and Foggia. Two of the landing grounds at Grazzanise were rendered unserviceable; Capodichino and the other landing ground at Grazzanise were damaged. At Foggia no attempt was made to destroy the fields and runways, since they were desired for our own use. Instead, fragmentation bombs were directed against enemy personnel and aircraft on the ground. To carry out the second mission of destroying communications leading to the Salerno area the marshalling yards at Villa Literno and Battipaglia were bombed, and many roads and bridges in the Naples area were attacked with good results.

On D Day the Northwest African Air Forces did not face an extreme enemy air effort. Five raids by formations of eight fighter-bombers were made against our troops on the beach during the morning of 9 September, and several attacks of small formations were sent against our ships offshore. During the week following the landing the limited amount of enemy air action was almost entirely devoted to raids on the beach and on our shipping. The Germans flew from 75 to 120 sorties daily, but by D plus 5 our planes had established effective cover over the occupied area. Enemy fighter action opposing our 40 strategic missions during this period was almost negligible. During 9-17 September the Tactical Air Force was used to a great extent on the roads and railroads leading into the Salerno area, with particular attention to the crossings over the Volturno River, Eboli, and Battipaglia. In order to provide for the most effective use of the Tactical Air Force in co-operation with the Fifth Army ground plan, XII Air Support Command was set up with its headquarters adjoining the headquarters of Fifth Army, where close liaison was maintained in conformance with the methods employed by other supporting arms. Air officers were furnished to corps and divisions to provide liaison with these units. An organization was perfected whereby air missions could be accomplished within one and one-half hours from time of call.

During the critical days of 12-14 September the entire effort of the air forces was used in support of the ground operations. To accompany the counterattack the enemy appeared to be concentrating his fighter forces against our troops in the Salerno area. In reply our air forces dropped hundreds of tons of bombs on the roads and areas surrounding the beachhead and on enemy concentrations and supplies. On the night of 13-14 September 90 aircraft of the Troop Carrier Command dropped approximately 1300 troops of the 504th Parachute Infantry to reinforce the 36th Division, some four miles behind the right flank of Fifth Army. On 14-15 September 40 aircraft dropped 638 troops of the 2d Battalion,

509th Parachute Infantry, over a wide area about Avellino to assist 10 Corps. On the same night the 505th Parachute Infantry was dropped near Paestum in the VI Corps zone.

On 17 September General Alexander, commanding 15th Army Group, wrote in part to Lt. Gen. Carl Spaatz, commanding Northwest African Air Forces:

I have just returned from an extensive tour of the Fifth Army front during which I talked with the Army and many subordinate commanders, their staffs and other ranks.

General Clark has asked me to convey to you and to the officers and men of the North West African Air Force whom you command, the sincere thanks and appreciation of Fifth Army for the magnificent air support which has been given them. It has greatly heartened the ground forces and has contributed much to the success of their operations. All were most enthusiastic in their acclaim of the close and continuous support which has been given them by the Air Force.

After Fifth Army had recovered from the German counterattack and the beachhead was secure, our Tactical Air Force was engaged in surrounding the enemy with transport blocks to prevent his escape from within and assistance from without. To carry out this task the major effort was given to the destruction of all road and railroad bridges over the Volturno River from Benevento to the sea. Additional efforts were made to destroy the roads and railroads farther to the north to interfere with supply. To accomplish this plan roads and railroads at Formia and Frosinone were selected as the most suitable targets. These road blocks served to create traffic jams and allowed our air force to inflict heavy casualties on the enemy motor transport columns.

The Strategic Air Force with its heavy bombers and long-range fighters was first employed in the destruction of the enemy air force, landing fields, and installations. During this phase the airdromes at Cisterna-Littorio, the twin Ciampino fields near Rome, the Practica di Mare field, and the bomber base at Viterbo were heavily bombed and some 270 enemy aircraft destroyed. After these missions the important enemy harbor at Leghorn on the western coast was well covered, and attacks were made against the railroads and marshalling yards in northern Italy. In these attacks the marshalling yards at Civitavecchia, Bologna Mestra, Pisa, and Bolzano were temporarily crippled.

The following table shows the purpose of air attacks and tons of bombs dropped in the critical areas in support of Avalanche:

To interfere with the German forces withdrawing in front of Eighth Army.	
Auletta (<i>roads and bridges</i>)	243
Sapri (<i>roads and bridges</i>)	310

In support of ground troops in the Salerno area.

Battipaglia	435
Castelnuovo	268
Eboli	980
Pompeii	390
Salerno	359
Torre Annunziata	398
Torre del Greco	190

Attacks against enemy air.

Capua Airdrome	408
Capodichino Airdrome	134
Ciampino Airdrome	264
Foggia Airdrome	180
Frosinone Airdrome	323
Grazzanise Landing Ground	444
Practica di Mare Airdrome	214
Viterbo Airdrome	486

Destruction of routes in rear of the enemy in the Fifth Army area.

Cancello	382
Grazzanise	161
Capua	172
Triflisco	116
Amorosi	120
Guardia	104
Benevento	852
Isernia	403

Marshalling yards.

Bologna	367
Bolzano	164
Civitavecchia	84

Road nets.

Formia	819
Mignano	564
Leghorn	107

Against numerous other targets of lesser importance, including troop concentrations, motor transport, and gun positions, over 7000 tons of bombs were used. A total of 435 missions were flown and 17,667 tons of bombs dropped.

C. *THE BRITISH EIGHTH ARMY*

See Map No. 9

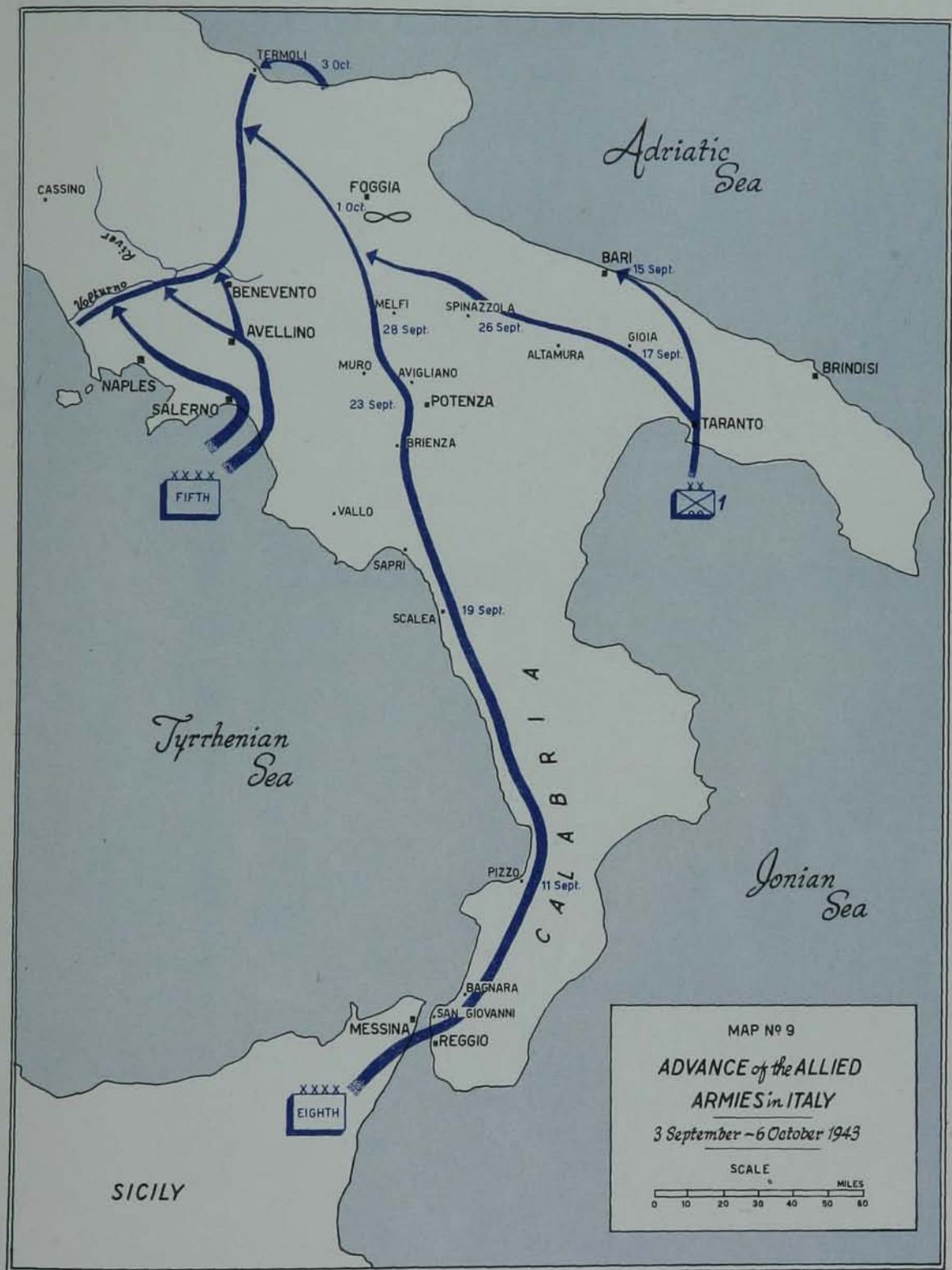
The British Eighth Army opened the Allied invasion of the Italian mainland with Operation Baytown, an amphibious assault across the Straits of Messina. The landing was to precede Avalanche, the main Allied attack of Fifth Army, by six days. The initial objective of Eighth Army was to capture Reggio and San Giovanni, establish itself in the Calabrian peninsula, and be prepared to advance north through the toe. It was hoped that this operation would draw German forces to the south before the main operation at Salerno or, failing that, create a threat to the enemy south flank, should he heavily oppose the Salerno landing by Fifth Army.

After landing the major portion of its force at Reggio against slight resistance on 3 September, Eighth Army fought small delaying groups of the Italian Army until it reached Bagnara, where some opposition was encountered. German withdrawal was accelerated on the 9th, when Fifth Army landed below Salerno and the British 1 Airborne Division came in by sea at Taranto. Troops of the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division, facing the danger of being cut off, moved northward rapidly to reinforce the German XIV Panzer Corps on the Fifth Army front. The 26th Panzer Division was left originally to block the advance of Eighth Army but withdrew towards the Salerno beachhead, leaving one battle group to face Eighth Army and prevent the junction of Fifth and Eighth Armies. The Italian government in the meantime had surrendered to the Allies, and hostile action by the Italian Army in the south ceased.

Eighth Army, lacking its full complement of motor transport, continued its advance to the north by using vehicles turned over by Italian divisions. It also pushed reconnaissance units to the north and west well in advance of the main body, and by 1800, 14 September, its patrols were some 65 miles south of the beachhead at Paestum, where Fifth Army had just sustained a severe counterattack. The next day elements of Eighth Army were about 40 miles to the south. On the 15th and 16th reconnaissance patrols of the two armies met south of Agropoli at Laureana, Vallo, and Mercato. Fifth and Eighth Army

patrols also met on the 19th at Rocca d'Aspide. At this time the main western column had reached Scalea, some 75 miles to the south of Paestum.

The Eighth Army move on the left to threaten the rear and left flank of the enemy force at the Salerno beachhead was delayed by demolitions prepared by the retreating Germans. On the 20th, however, the 15 Brigade (5 Infantry Division) reached Brienza, some 24 miles to the southeast of the right flank of the 45th Division at Oliveto. Potenza, the most important road center in the enemy's rear, was occupied on the 20th; Avigliano on the 23d, Muro on the 26th, and Melfi on the 28th. On this date reconnaissance patrols reached Foggia and by 1 October the 78 Division had occupied the plain about Foggia in force and controlled its important airfields. With the capture of the airfields at Foggia and the fall of Naples the invading Allied armies had accomplished their missions and were beginning their co-ordinated advance to the north.



MAP No 9
**ADVANCE of the ALLIED
 ARMIES in ITALY**
 3 September - 6 October 1943

SCALE
 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 MILES

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 46 SURVEY COY. S.A.E.C. FOR ENGR. HQ. FIFTH ARMY.