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CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS

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Canadian Operations in Sicily, July - August 1943

Part II: The Execution of the Operation by 1 Cdn Inf Div
Section 1: The Assault and Initial Penetration Inland

AMENDMENT NO. 1

(a) P. 5 para 16. For "west of ROGER BEACH" read "east of ROGER BEACH".

(b) P. 6 para 21. After the third sentence add:

These patrols reached a point about three and one-half miles inland (893953) where in taking 22 Italian prisoners they freed two American paratroopers (W.D., H.Q., 2 Cdn Inf Bde, Appx 1, Int Log, 10 Jul, serial 37).

(c) P.18 para 90. After "Achille J'Hovet" insert the following footnote:

The name is correctly Achille d'Havet; he was a Florentine nobleman (Information from Historical Section, War Cabinet Secretariat).



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Section 1: The Assault and Initial Penetration Inland

1. Report No. 126 dealt with the preliminaries of the invasion of Sicily, known as Operation "HUSKY". Since the general plan for the operation and the particular plan of the 1st Canadian Infantry Division were dealt with in considerable detail in that report, it should be read in conjunction with the present report. This and a subsequent one will deal primarily with the operational side of the campaign of 1 Cdn Inf Div from "D" day, 10 Jul, until the Division was withdrawn into Army Reserve on 9 Aug. The present report will cover the assault phase while the next will treat the operations against the Germans in the interior of the island. The 48-hour rest which the division enjoyed between RAGUSA and GIARRATANA, 13-14 Jul, seems the logical place to make the division.

CAPTURE OF BARK WEST BEACH

2. Forty-eight minutes after midnight 9/10 Jul 43, the 1st Canadian Division headquarters ship, H.M.S. "Hilary", dropped anchor approximately seven miles off the coast of Sicily. For the past hour and a half, medium bombers had been softening up the defences of PACHINO airfield and the gun emplacements in the vicinity; flares and flak were visible from the ships as they approached their anchorage, but anti-aircraft fire seemed to be casual. It was reported that the enemy had detected the convoy's approach by R.D.F. (War Diary, G.S., H.Q., 1 Cdn Inf Div, 10 Jul. For the events up till D day see Report No 126 .)

3. The wind which had caused such apprehension during the afternoon had subsided about sunset (Report No 126 para 275). The sea off the south coast of Sicily was now calmer, but there was still enough swell to make transferring from the transports into landing craft a tricky business. The assault troops were ready and waiting, eager for the suspense to be broken by the action they had so long awaited. The landing craft were loaded as the ships dropped anchor--the noise of the anchor chains seemed to the tense soldiers to scream out news of their arrival to the enemy on shore. At 0110 hrs the Landing Craft Assault (L.C.A.), carrying the first flight of Commando troops, were lowered into the water. Twenty-four minutes later the first flight of 2 Cdn Inf Bde were off, bound for SUGAR BEACH, the more westerly of the two beaches allotted to 1 Cdn Inf Div. During this journey shorewards, H.M. monitor "Roberts" bombarded PACHINO airfield and its defences with salvo after salvo from its two 15-inch guns. (ibid. and battalion Diaries).

4. The journey inshore is best described by a participant:

As we approached closer to shore, flares could be seen being put up by an enemy even more uncertain than ourselves as to what to expect. Machine gun tracer made very attractive patterns against the sky in the distance while on the shore every once in a while would appear a bright flash followed by quite a loud report as though someone were tossing grenades about.

The shore gradually became more clearly defined and the order was given for the craft to deploy. From this time on the

followed by quite a loud report as though someone were tossing grenades about.

The shore gradually became more clearly defined and the order was given for the craft to deploy. From this time on the small arms fire was almost negligible, but on touchdown when the doors of the craft were let down the men were disembarked into water well above their waist. In a few instances men landed in water six feet deep and had to abandon weapons and equipment and swim for it....

(W.D., P.P.C.L.I., 10 Jul, Appx 12, account by Major D. Brain)

5. As already indicated, 2 Cdn Inf Bde was landing on a two-battalion front with P.P.C.L.I. and Seaforth of C. the assault battalions. The Seaforths were supposed to land on the left but the naval officers in charge got some distance off their course, with the result that this battalion actually landed to the right of the P.P.C.L.I. There was also some confusion within the battalions, as the L.C.A. got mixed up in the swell approaching the beaches. First touchdown was made at 0245 hrs. Lack of any real resistance ashore was a pleasant surprise. The Seaforth of C. came under some fire from a lone mortar while the P.P.C.L.I. had a few grenades thrown at them, but the effect was insignificant. Some wire was encountered and dealt with by Bangalore Torpedoes and by cutting. A few machine gun posts manned by bewildered Italian soldiers were quickly disposed of. About 0300 hrs battalion headquarters and the remaining companies of each battalion quickly followed the assault companies ashore. The P.P.C.L.I. second flight had come under some heavy fire from coastal batteries which were eventually silenced by naval guns. Shortly afterwards, between 0350 and 0400 hrs, success signals were received from these two battalions by Brigade headquarters which were still afloat. (War Diaries, H.Q., 2 Cdn Inf Bde, P.P.C.L.I. and Seaforth of C., 10 Jul: Hist Sec File Sicily/1 Cdn Inf Div/ C/H Jul: 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serials 12, 14 and 15.)

6. Meanwhile at 0300 hrs the Special Service Brigade had landed west of PUNTA CASTELLAZZO (at 874890 and 872889), rather further to the left than was intended. Otherwise this assault went according to plan, for the Italians left their beach defences as soon as they were seriously threatened. At the cost of a few casualties, 41 Commando quickly destroyed the defences at PUNTA CASTELLAZZO and CASTEL DELLA MARZA and captured some snipers in the area north of PANTANO BRUNO, while 40 Commando completed their tasks to the west with no opposition. At 0530 hrs the Brigade reported all defences east of PUNTA MURA captured. Contact was made with the Seaforth of C. at 0640 hrs. The latter, according to plan, had turned west through sandhills and vineyards and, advancing parallel to the shore, had reached PANTANO LONGARINI. A sorry looking group of Italian soldiers at the causeway had quickly surrendered after firing a few shots, and at 0520 hrs the Seaforth of C. reported Phase I completed. (W.D., H.Q., S.S. Bde, Jul, Appx "A": W.D., Seaforth of C., 10 Jul; 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log op. cit. 10 Jul, serials 24, 25 and 31. For map see Appendix "B".)

7. The P.P.C.L.I., after the initial confusion of

landing in the dark on strange beaches, proceeded to move inland towards their objectives without further opposition (W.D., P.I.C.L.I., 10 Jul).

8. 1 Cdn Inf Bde was to attack ROGER BEACH on the right. This formation had more trouble in getting away from the transports. It will be remembered that a few days previously, on receiving last minute information regarding a false beach off ROGER, the G.O.C. had ordered the use of three Landing Craft Tank (L.C.T.) by one company of Hast and P.L.R. and two of R.C.R. (See Report No. 126 para 272) Due, however, to the ships anchoring out of position the L.C.T. failed to appear on time. At 0135 hrs, accordingly, 1 Cdn Inf Bde was ordered to use L.C.A. if the L.C.T. did not turn up. Delay ensued, causing considerable exasperation on board the headquarters ship. At 0315 hrs Rear Admiral Vian signalled his Senior Naval Officer Landing (Roger) asking "Will your assault ever start?" Twenty minutes later General Simonds signalled the Commander of 1 Cdn Inf Bde: "You must get your assaults away in either LCTs or LCAs." (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log op. cit. 10 Jul serials 7 and 11) Actually at 0316 hrs, the two assault companies of the Hast & P.L.R. had got away in L.C.A. Due to the roughness of the sea, however, the R.C.R. had failed to do so. The L.C.T. had turned up by this time, so the assault companies of the R.C.R. (and possibly one company of Hast and P.L.R.) reverted to the former plan. They were further delayed according to Major Powers, second in command of the R.C.R., who later gave the following description of the situation:

2 LCTs were therefore brought alongside and they were loaded with much difficulty and much loss of time as these craft proved to be quite awkward to handle..... These LCTs had aboard them seven Dukws each, and as the LCTs grounded the Dukws drove up the beach laden with troops.

The R.C.R.'s first flight finally got away from the transport "Farnix" at 0400 hrs, two and a half hours late. (W.Ds., R.C.R. and Hast & P.L.R., 10 Jul; Hist Sec File Sicily/1 Cdn Inf Bde/C/D, Accounts by Maj. T.M. Powers, R.C.R., and by Maj A.C. Campbell and Capt. R.R. Waugh, L.C., Hast & P.L.R.; 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, op. cit., 10 Jul, serials 2, 4, 5, 7, 11 and 13.)

9. While approaching the shore, the R.C.R. came under occasional shelling from the coastal defence battery just behind MAUCINI, but this was soon silenced by Naval fire. The first flight touched down at 0530 hrs and the second, in broad daylight, at 0600 hrs. There was no opposition on their beach, for the weight of the Naval bombardment and the success of the earlier landings further west had easily induced what Italian troops were present to withdraw from the beach defences. Within the space of a few minutes, therefore, the battalion reorganized and moved off towards MAUCINI, its first objective. (W.D., R.C.R., 10 Jul.)

10. The first flight of the Hast & P.L.R. touched down shortly before 0445 hrs (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, op. cit., 10 Jul, serial 22; an intercepted message reported that the right Company had landed, at 0420 hrs, serial 17, but a later message, serial 21, said: "Hast & P.L.R. still afloat".) The assault companies, "B" and "C", landed rather to the east of their beach (ROGER KLD and ALBER). They were unopposed and blew up the wire in their way without diffic-

ulty. A few snipers were spotted and disposed of. "A" Coy, followed by battalion headquarters, landed some 5000 yards too far to the west and experienced some M.M.G. fire. According to their diarist, they cut a gap through the wire with Bangalore torpedoes and in conjunction with a party of commandos captured an enemy machine gun position with 20 German and Italian prisoners and four M.M.G.s.¹ (W.D., Hast & P.L.R., 10 Jul; Account by Maj. Campbell, op. cit.)

11. At 0645 hrs. Divisional Headquarters were able to report to Corps that first objectives, as laid down by Corps, had been captured. It was now time for the assault brigades to land their reserve battalions, which had been offshore in Landing Craft Infantry (L.C.I.) for the past few hours. The Edmonton Regiment were landed on SUGAR GREEN, the most easterly of the 2 Cdn Inf Bde beaches at 0630 hrs, and took up a defensive position to the east of FANTANO LONGARINI in square 9191 (W.D., Edm Regt, 10 Jul). The 48th Highlanders, who had had difficulty in transferring into their L.C.I. and L.C.A. were ordered to land on ROGLER GREEN I, the R.C.R.'s beach. They went in about 0730 hrs, but their L.C.I. grounded on the sandbar, and in a second attempt on a reef. Some strong swimmers brought a line ashore, but this fouled two L.C.M. which had broken down near the shore. Eventually the troops were transferred to L.U.K.Ws. and L.C.A. and carried across the intervening deep water to the beach itself where they landed with their pipes playing. By this time there was of course no enemy opposition. The battalion proceeded inland to its objectives. (W.D., 48 Highrs, 10 Jul; Hist Sec File Sicily/1 Cdn Inf Bde/C/L, Account by Lt.-Col. I.S. Johnston, O.C. and Capt. P.F. McInchren, Adj., 48 Highrs; 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serials 109, 110 and 118.)

12. The headquarters of the two assault brigades landed about 0800 hrs, and at the same time 3 Cdn Inf Bde was warned to be ready to land at 1100 hrs (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serials 121, 127 and 133; W.D., 1 Cdn Inf Bde, 10 Jul).

13. At 0900 hrs the first tanks of the 12th Canadian Tank Regiment went off their L.S.T. in approximately six feet of water about 180 feet off ROGLER RLD, the left flank of the Hast & P.L.R. beach. By 1015 hrs their Commanding Officer reported that "C" Squadron was available for use. (W.D., 12 Cdn Tks, 10 Jul.)

1 The Hast & P.L.R. War Diary relates that "A" Company's landing was 5000 yards to the west but Maj. Campbell's account says it was 500 yds and in 2 Cdn Inf Bde's area. In the latter case, however, it would have been P.F.C.E.I. and not the Commandos that they would have contacted. The S.S. Bde area was 5000 yards to the west and there is no mention of contact in the P.F.C.E.I. Diary so it is to be presumed the battalion's war diary version is correct. At 0620 hrs Hast & P.L.R. reported, "ROGLER RLD O.K. for vehicles", but two hours later corrected themselves, signalling "Cancel description of ROGLER RLD. We were placed on SUGAR by mistake." (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, op. cit., 10 Jul, serials 59 and 104). Some of the S.S. Bde and Hast & P.L.R. were on the same ship, "Derbyshire", which may have caused the confusion, but there was no intention of their operating together.

14. Ever since the first touchdown early in the morning, landing craft had, of course, been plying backwards and forwards from ship to shore. From the earliest hour beaches were being reconnoitred by the Navy and Army personnel responsible, with a view to deciding how and where they might be best exploited. Sappers and pioneers with bulldozers and other equipment had been rushed ashore to prepare the necessary exits. (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serials 27, 35, 45, 70, 72, 73, 80, 107, 129 and 139.). A passage was blasted through the sandbar off SUGAR AMBER, but this beach was later given up in favour of ROGER BEACH to the east. (ibid., serial 139; W.D., 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 10 Jul.) The Commander of the divisional R.C.A.S.C. had come ashore before 0700 hrs and was supervising the landing of commodities and establishing a vehicle concentration area. (W.D., H.Q., Comd 1 Cdn Div R.C.A.S.C., 10 Jul).

15. A map indicating all the points of landing of the various battalions and their routes inland from the beaches will be found in Appendix "B".

THE FIRST ADVANCE INLAND FROM THE BEACHES AND THE CAPTURE OF PACHINO AIRFIELD

16. The anxiety of the Naval and Military Commanders on board the "Hilary" regarding the delay in the landing of 1 Cdn Inf Bde may be well appreciated as this formation had the most important task of capturing PACHINO airfield. Once ashore, however, no time was wasted. The R.C.R. immediately proceeded towards MAUCINI and the coastal defence battery behind it. At 0650 hrs MAUCINI was cleared and twelve prisoners taken. "B" Company, covered by "A", then advanced on the battery at about 0815 hrs. At first there was some desultory machine gun fire but on reaching the area it appeared to be deserted. Then some voices were heard coming from a dug-out. A sergeant fired a shot in their direction which resulted in the whole garrison - a captain, two lieutenants and 35 other ranks - trooping out in surrender! The rest of the gun positions were deserted. The whole battery was captured in less than 20 minutes with no casualties to the attackers and the guns destroyed by the R.C.E. according to plan. The advance now continued to the airfield which was reached about 0900 hrs and found to be ploughed up but apparently deserted. "C" Coy crossed to the north-east corner of the field and there contacted some tanks of 51 (H) Div which had landed to the east on the tip of the PACHINO peninsula, and was by now moving west through PACHINO. (Contact with this division had previously been made at 0640 hrs, just east of ROGER BEACH at 953877 - W.D., 51 (H) Div, 10 Jul; 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serial 69.) "A" Coy in the meantime was crossing to the other end of the field and encountering some rifle and L.M.G. fire from barrack buildings held by the enemy on the north-west corner of the field. Some elements of the Hast & F.E.R. were now approaching the field from their sector and gave the R.C.R. company covering fire. The latter closed in and cleared out the barracks. (W.D., R.C.R., 10 Jul, and Appendices 5 and 6; Account of Maj. Powers, op. cit.; 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, serials 75, 76, 82, 85, 88, 89, 91, 92, 94, 97, 103, 114, 115, 134, 143, 147 and 174.)

17. While crossing the field both "A" and "C" Coys had been shelled -- very inaccurately -- by the enemy battery located to the north at point 969934, but this was silenced by Naval fire. "A" Coy now turned toward this battery and came under machine gun fire of considerable intensity which

forced them to use what cover was afforded by the vineyards through which they were passing. Five privates succeeded in getting inside the battery perimeter and putting two M.M.Gs. out of action, thereby letting the rest of the Company enter. 130 Italians surrendered with four 6 inch howitzers, four M.M.Gs. and a large number of L.M.Gs. and rifles. The position was well sited and if defended with determination could have held the battalion up for a long time. "A" Company casualties here were two killed and two wounded. (ibid.)

17. In the meantime "C" Company had reached its objective, the high ground to the north-east of the airfield, and taken 100 prisoners. Further contact was made with 51 (H) Div at 1305 hrs just north of PACHINO at 975924. At 1400 hrs "D" Coy was sent forward to occupy some high ground covering the enemy's line of approach in square 9592. Despite heavy machine gun fire which wounded one officer and several other ranks they reached their objective and captured 30 more prisoners. (ibid.), serials 245 and 283 of Int Log.)

18. By 1800 hrs the battalion had consolidated to the north and west of the airfield, patrols had been sent out and the troops were able at last to dig into their 48-hour rations for the first meal since they had left the ship. During the afternoon transport began to arrive. The anti-tank guns came as early as 1330 hrs and the carriers for the mortar platoon soon afterwards. The mortars themselves had been landed very successfully in handcarts in the initial assault. (ibid.)

19. Hast & P.E.R., operating to the left of R.C.R., had occupied their objectives with little opposition, one company as already noted having co-operated with the R.C.R. in the capture of PACHINO airfield. "D" Company encountered a fortified position two miles inland containing three M.M.Gs. and two 75 mm field guns, and succeeded in capturing it. This is probably the barracks that R.C.R. had claimed to have taken with Hast & P.E.R. support. "A" Company, which had landed away to the west with battalion headquarters, on their way inland to rejoin the battalion had come upon an Italian gun at 927912 and had captured it along with the crew. This company made contact with the rest of the battalion by 1600 hrs. By 1800 hrs the unit had consolidated in a defensive position covering the PACHINO airfield on the left of R.C.R. (W.D., Hast & P.E.R., 10 Jul; Account of Maj. Campbell and Capt. Waugh op. cit.; 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serials 99, 162, 166, 167, 177, 221, 226, 240 and 243.)

20. Since the assault battalions had secured their objectives so easily, there was little left for the 48th Highlanders to do when they landed. They took up their positions in the area through which Hast & P.E.R. had already passed, between the salt marsh called PANTANO CUBA and PACHINO airfield, without meeting any opposition. (W.D., 48 Highrs, 10 Jul; 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serial 172 and 281.)

21. Further west, 2 Cdn Inf Bde was progressing according to plan with even less difficulty. The P.F.C.L.I. had taken up their proper positions, just to the north of the salt marsh called PANTANO LONGARINI by 1000 hrs. Patrols were sent out and many Italian prisoners taken without offering any fight. The Seaforth of C., after their early morning contact with the S.S. bde, had likewise taken up their position just to the north-west of the marsh and within sight of ISHICA. The Edmn R., as already indicated, were just

to the east of the marsh. They captured 35 Italian prisoners in a nearby winery after the latter had put up some feeble opposition. (W.Ls., P.F.C.L.I., Seaforth of C., and Edmn R., 10 Jul; 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serials 125, 126, 130, 140, 158, 168, 178, 183, 190 and 315.)

22. At 1640 hrs the Special Service Brigade were reported holding positions along the road leading north-west from PANTANO LONGARINI, slightly to the south-east of the Seaforth of C. About two hours earlier the Seaforth of C. had reported enemy cavalry in the area 878914 and that they suspected a Blackshirt unit of trying to penetrate between them and the S.S. Bde. The advance of the latter was held up by heavy mortar and anti-tank gunfire of this Italian unit in square 8593. The ensuing incident is best described by Brigadier Laycock, commanding the S.S. Bde, who later wrote Major-General Simonds an account of the action "in which", he said "one of your Div Mortar officers rendered us most timely and effective assistance and was partly responsible for the liquidation of an unpleasant threat to our right flank". The account is as follows:

On the afternoon of 10th July, Nos. 40 and 41 Commandos, who were in the line on the left flank of 1 Canadian Division, were heavily engaged by enemy Mortars and anti-tank guns from a crossroads to their right front.

Lack of heavy supporting weapons made it difficult for the Commandos to cope within effective range of the enemy with anything but automatic weapons and rifles.

By coincidence a Mortar officer (subaltern) of The Saskatchewan (sic) Regiment, commanding a detachment of the Div Mortar Coy (4" Mortars) was encountered on the road by an officer of No 41 Commando, who asked him if he could assist the Commandos by fire. He at once agreed and brought his Mortars into action in an extremely short time, engaging the target with devastating accuracy.

The Commandos took advantage of this covering fire to close with the enemy, and at the end of the action it was found that the anti-tank guns had been abandoned, the horse killed, and quantities of Anti-tank and Mortar ammunition were left in our hands.

The mortars in question belonged to 2 Cdn Inf Bde Sp Gp who reported firing a total of 160 rounds². At 1845 hrs Divisional Headquarters informed Corps that the counter-attack had petered out. This was the only active counter-attack attempted by the enemy in the 1 Cdn Div sector during the

² Naval fire from Destroyers inshore was also brought down, but there is no information available regarding its effect.

initial assault on Sicily. (W.D., H.Q., S.S. Bde, July, Appx "A"; 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serials 259, 286, 293, 298, 312, 335 and 338; C.M.H.Q. file 24/Sicily/1, Story of Operations, 1 Cdn Inf Div by Lt.-Col. G. Kitching, G.S.C. 1, 1 Cdn Inf Div; Hist Sec File Sicily/1 Cdn Inf Div/G.O.C., Brig. Laycock to Maj.-Gen. Simonds, 14 Jul 43; W.D., 2 Cdn Inf Bde Sp Gp, Sask L.I., 10 Jul.)

LANDING OF THE DIVISIONAL RESERVE AND REORGANIZATION

23. Phase I of the Divisional Plan - "the capture of BARK WEST sector, the destruction of coast defence artillery and beach defences, the clearing of high ground immediately overlooking the beaches and the capture of LACHINO airfield" - was now completed, and Phase II had already begun, with the landing of 3 Cdn Inf Bde, which started at 1100 hrs. Troops of the Royal 22e Regiment and the Carleton & York Regiment began to arrive on ROGLER BEACH at noon and immediately proceeded to the general assembly area less than one mile to the north. The West Nova Scotia Regiment followed at about 1600 hrs. (W.Ds., R. 22e R., Carlt & York R. and West N.S.R. for 10 Jul.) At 1750 hrs Carlt and York R., supported by a squadron of tanks from 12 Cdn Tks, moved up to occupy BURGIO, 9293, reporting "no opposition or casualties". (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serials 328 and 347, the West N.S.R. War Diary says the move was at 1330 hrs and that there was slight opposition, but the Intelligence Log is more likely to be correct since the diary shows signs - by its skimpiness - of having been written some time after the event.)

24. A subsequent account of the campaign by an officer of the Brigade Headquarters describes a situation that must have been fairly typical throughout the Division during that day due to the lack of fighting:

The first task of the Brigade on landing was the assembly of all troops and available transport in an area known on the map as 'Square 9389' (Map 277-111). The troops, heavily laden with full marching order and some of them very wet - pushed up an ankle-deep sandy slope behind the beach toward this area. The day was very hot and the men had been aboard ship for nearly four weeks - two factors that made the short trip to the assembly area a disagreeable one. However, the location was finally reached and the Brigade settled down to the task of assembling the boatloads into units again. Traffic control was established, signs were erected and the various headquarters, working at top speed, were soon organized and functioning smoothly. There was however, one serious problem: the shortage of transport was acute. Some of the battalions had lots of transport, but so far as the Brigade Headquarters was concerned, apart from two vehicles due to be landed later, all transport was at the bottom of the Mediterranean.

(Account by Capt. D.H. Cunningham, 3 Cdn Inf Bde Transport Officer during the Sicilian campaign, in Historical Section files.)

25. Divisional operational headquarters remained on board the "Hilary" all day, since an elaborate Signals set-up enabled

it to function more efficiently from there. Rear Divisional headquarters, however, began landing on SUGAR BEACH at 1100 hrs. Touchdown was made in four feet of water so that all ranks had to wade ashore carrying equipment and documents on their heads. "Divisional Headquarters was set up in a civilian hovel, 12 x 16, inhabited by an old woman, 11 guinea pigs, 4 dogs, a goat and 4 gals of wine all of which were quickly cleared out." The A.A. & C.M.C. remained on board the "Hilary" with the "G" Staff. (W.D., A.A. & C.M.C., Rear H.Q., 1 Cdn Div, 10 Jul.) The loss of the three ships previously mentioned had, of course, an adverse bearing on the initial functioning of Divisional Headquarters, for they landed "with no vehicles, no office supplies except those carried aboard the "Hilary" by clerks, a serious depletion in W/T vehicles" and without the services of seventeen first class drivers. By the next day, however, they had acquired a bare minimum of transport from the Brigades and from C.R.A.S.C. This, as time went on, was gradually added to from various sources. (Hist Sec File Sicily/1 Cdn Inf Div/O/D, Account of Maj. C.F. Richardson, Camp Comd, 1 Cdn Inf Div.)

26. It would be a fruitless task to enumerate the time and place of landing of every other unit and sub-unit in the division. A large proportion of the divisional troops - artillery, service corps, signals, engineers, medicals, etc. had been brigaded and landed in due course with their respective brigades. Others, as already indicated, were in the follow-up convoy and did not arrive until 13 Jul. Due to a surely over-zealous observance of time schedules, the Navy carried many personnel including some much needed service corps drivers off to Malta before they had a chance to disembark. (W.D., H.Q., 1 Cdn Div R.C.A.S.C., 10 Jul.)

27. By midafternoon communications were improving as vital signal equipment arrived (W.D., H.Q., 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 10 Jul). Although at times there were difficulties with some stations, communications from battalions, through brigades back to Division had been well maintained throughout the day, as is attested by the 350 operational messages recorded in the Divisional Intelligence Log. Companies and platoons, however, were from time to time out of touch with their headquarters, for communication is generally more difficult on that level.

28. According to the Diary of H.Q., Comd 1 Cdn Inf Div R.C.A.S.C., for 10 Jul, supplies were coming ashore rather slowly, partly because the ships were so far offshore. About noon some of them moved inshore two or three miles, which improved the situation somewhat; but still "there could have been a great speeding up of this. Much layover time seems to be absorbed while away from shore".

29. The War Diary of H.Q., 2 Cdn Inf Bde stated that most of the first line vehicles were ashore by 1600 hrs on 'D' day, but the shipping losses on the way through the Mediterranean had left some headquarters very short of transport. The diary of 1 Cdn Inf Bde Coy, R.C.A.S.C., for 10 Jul, gives a typical picture of the transport situation during these first few days:

Owing to the loss of vehicles by all units it was necessary to pool all A.S.C. vehicles and allot them where most urgently needed as we were not intended to function until D 3. Units were maintaining themselves from beach dumps, D.I.D. etc; consequently, a vehicle landed, dewaterproofed and was sent to join a Bde, Bn or Div

initial assault on Sicily. (W.D., H.Q., S.S. Bde, July, Appx "A"; 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serials 259, 286, 293, 298, 312, 335 and 338; C.M.H.Q. file 24/Sicily/1, Story of Operations, 1 Cdn Inf Div by Lt.-Col. G. Kitching, G.S.C. 1, 1 Cdn Inf Div; Hist Sec File Sicily/1 Cdn Inf Div/ G.O.C., Brig. Laycock to Maj.-Gen. Simonds, 14 Jul 43; W.D., 2 Cdn Inf Bde Sp Gp, Sask L.I., 10 Jul.)

LANDING OF THE DIVISIONAL RESERVE AND REORGANIZATION

23. Phase I of the Divisional Plan - "the capture of BARK WEST sector, the destruction of coast defence artillery and beach defences, the clearing of high ground immediately overlooking the beaches and the capture of PACHINO airfield" - was now completed, and Phase II had already begun, with the landing of 3 Cdn Inf Bde, which started at 1100 hrs. Troops of the Royal 22e Regiment and the Carleton & York Regiment began to arrive on ROGER BEACH at noon and immediately proceeded to the general assembly area less than one mile to the north. The West Nova Scotia Regiment followed at about 1600 hrs. (W.Ds., R. 22e R., Carlt & York R. and West N.S.R. for 10 Jul.) At 1750 hrs Carlt and York R., supported by a squadron of tanks from 12 Cdn Tks, moved up to occupy BURGIO, 9293, reporting "no opposition or casualties". (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serials 328 and 347, the West N.S.R. War Diary says the move was at 1330 hrs and that there was slight opposition, but the Intelligence Log is more likely to be correct since the diary shows signs - by its skimpiness - of having been written some time after the event.)

24. A subsequent account of the campaign by an officer of the Brigade Headquarters describes a situation that must have been fairly typical throughout the Division during that day due to the lack of fighting:

The first task of the Brigade on landing was the assembly of all troops and available transport in an area known on the map as 'Square 9389' (Map 277-111). The troops, heavily laden with full marching order and some of them very wet - pushed up an ankle-deep sandy slope behind the beach toward this area. The day was very hot and the men had been aboard ship for nearly four weeks - two factors that made the short trip to the assembly area a disagreeable one. However, the location was finally reached and the Brigade settled down to the task of assembling the boatloads into units again. Traffic control was established, signs were erected and the various headquarters, working at top speed, were soon organized and functioning smoothly. There was however, one serious problem: the shortage of transport was acute. Some of the battalions had lots of transport, but so far as the Brigade Headquarters was concerned, apart from two vehicles due to be landed later, all transport was at the bottom of the Mediterranean.

(Account by Capt. D.H. Cunningham, 3 Cdn Inf Bde Transport Officer during the Sicilian campaign, in Historical Section files.)

25. Divisional operational headquarters remained on board the "Hilary" all day, since an elaborate Signals set-up enabled

it to function more efficiently from there. Rear Divisional headquarters, however, began landing on SUGAR BEACH at 1100 hrs. Touchdown was made in four feet of water so that all ranks had to wade ashore carrying equipment and documents on their heads. "Divisional Headquarters was set up in a civilian hovel, 12 x 16, inhabited by an old woman, 11 guinea pigs, 4 dogs, a goat and 4 gals of wine all of which were quickly cleared out." The A.A. & C.M.G. remained on board the "Hilary" with the "G" Staff. (W.D., A.A. & C.M.G., Rear H.Q., 1 Cdn Div, 10 Jul.) The loss of the three ships previously mentioned had, of course, an adverse bearing on the initial functioning of Divisional Headquarters, for they landed "with no vehicles, no office supplies except those carried aboard the "Hilary" by clerks, a serious depletion in W/T vehicles" and without the services of seventeen first class drivers. By the next day, however, they had acquired a bare minimum of transport from the Brigades and from C.R.A.S.C. This, as time went on, was gradually added to from various sources. (Hist Sec File Sicily/1 Cdn Inf Div/O/D, Account of Maj. C.F. Richardson, Camp Comd, 1 Cdn Inf Div.)

26. It would be a fruitless task to enumerate the time and place of landing of every other unit and sub-unit in the division. A large proportion of the divisional troops - artillery, service corps, signals, engineers, medicals, etc. had been brigaded and landed in due course with their respective brigades. Others, as already indicated, were in the follow-up convoy and did not arrive until 13 Jul. Due to a surely over-zealous observance of time schedules, the Navy carried many personnel including some much needed service corps drivers off to Malta before they had a chance to disembark. (W.D., H.Q., 1 Cdn Div R.C.A.S.C., 10 Jul.)

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HQ and so on. This went on for three or four days with no records maintained as to who had our vehicles or how many they had.

30. There are constant references in the various diaries to the requisitioning of mules and carts to provide transport until the regular M. T. arrived, or to supplement the scanty resources of those headquarters which lost heavily in the sinkings. I. J., 3 Cdn Inf Bde were very badly off, as was indicated in the account of their landing quoted above. The same account described an amusing sequel to this situation:

One vehicle attached to Brigade Headquarters had, however, been landed. This was a six wheel Ordnance Breakdown lorry, a very high ungainly vehicle. The Brigadier receiving a call for a G.O.Cs. conference, decided that "makeshift" was the order of the day and appropriated the vehicle as his staff car. Later he used it for a reconnaissance and for two days this mechanical monster had the honour of being an Infantry Brigadier's staff, reconnaissance and office truck.

(Account of Capt. Cunningham, op. cit.)

31. The divisional engineers had some work on the beaches constructing exits, laying army track ³ and lifting some mines that were found, but most of this work was done by Army field companies and pioneer units (W.D., 1 Cdn Fd Coy, R.C.E., 10 Jul). A few small minefields totalling some 200 Teller mines were found by the R.C.E. in the vicinity of MAUCINI (square 9588) and another 200 stored in a nearby cellar. A 50 foot wide belt was also found on ROGLER BEACH. (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serials 144, 164, 165 and 185.)

32. No mines were found on TACHINO airfield and work was quickly got under way to put it in use. The officer commanding the 15th Airfield Construction Group arrived there at 1100 hrs and at 1235 hrs word was sent to Divisional Headquarters for transmission to Corps that the landing ground could now be used as a "Belly Landing Strip". (ibid., serials 230, 234 and 235.)

33. All the guns and most of the vehicles of 142 Fd Regt. (S.P.) were ashore by 1800 hrs while the Canadian Field Regiments began to receive their guns and quads during the evening. The gunners, it may be noted, entered into the general spirit of the day when "F" troop of 142 Fd Regt captured 300 Italians. (W.Ds., 142 Fd Regt (S.P.) and 3 Cdn Fd Regt, for 10 Jul: the diary of 2 Cdn Fd Regt for July is missing.)

34. Only one section of the Divisional Provost Company came ashore on D-day since there were two British beachhead

³ A considerable amount of Sommerfeld track had been lost at sea according to the A.D.M.C. diary.

sections whom the one Canadian section assisted. The A.A. & Q.M.G.'s diary for 10 Jul states that "the beach provost proved leaderless, inadequate and inefficient, in the early stages of traffic control. Div H.Q. Def and Empl Pl and Div H.Q. Dvrs were organized as a Traffic Control squad, and passed and directed traffic through the one road bottleneck."

35. During the evening 2 Cdn Inf Bde moved forward about three miles to the north-west to take up their "Second Phase" positions according to the Divisional plan (W.Ds., Edm R., 10 Jul and P.P.C.L.I., Jul; Appendix II of the latter being a very good trace showing the positions of all the battalions. See map Appendix "B"). At 0245 hrs Brigade Headquarters reported: "Seaforth of C. and P.P.C.L.I. now in 2 C.I.B. objective, Edmn R. just reaching objective..." The movement was completed by 0520 hrs. P.P.C.L.I. had been held up for a short while by small arms fire. Three or four guns with ammunition, and 40 fully equipped Army horses and mules were taken.⁴ Prisoners of war captured during this move were identified as 72 Blackshirt Battalion and 54 Artillery Regiment. During the morning, patrols were still reporting contact with scattered enemy elements. (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 11 Jul, serials 351, 353, 354, 355, 364, 367.)

36. 1 Cdn Inf Bde was left in the vicinity of the airfield and 3 Cdn Inf Bde ordered to carry out the task of capturing the high ground three to four miles north of SUGAR BEACH (square 8995 - bridge 917967 - track junction 917947) to complete Phase II. These moves were begun about midnight but not completed until after daylight the following morning. (See accompanying map, Appendix "B".) In fact the Carlt & York R. did not report themselves in position until 1425 hrs on the 11th. The West N.S.R. was fired on while en route from 892958. The opposing force, consisting of one officer and 24 other ranks, was quickly rounded up without any casualties being sustained. Four M.M.Gs., ten motorcycles and a large quantity of ammunition and grenades were also captured (W.D., H.Q., 3 Cdn Inf Bde, 10-11 Jul and Appendix I, marked map; W.Ds., Carlt & York R., West N.S.R. and R. 22e R., 10-11 Jul).

37. The S.S. Bde advanced in conformity with 2 Cdn Inf Bde covering the latter's left flank and patrolling towards the sea. During 11 Jul they were brought into Army Reserve and withdrawn to BURGIO. Their total casualties for the operation were nine killed and 32 wounded while they had captured 100 Italians and killed 60 more. (W.D., S.S. Bde. Appendix "A".)

38. During the night 10/11 Jul there was an enemy air raid on beaches and shipping which was met by a very heavy A.A. Barrage. Little damage was reported⁵ but troops in

4 An attempt was made the following day to equip 92 Fd Bty, which had lost all its guns at sea, with this horse-drawn artillery. However the project was given up when it was found that they could not keep up with the fast pace set in the following days. Moreover the range of these antiquated weapons was considered too short to be useful. (W.D., 3 Cdn Fd Regt, R.C.A., 11 Jul.)

5 Off another beach, however, it was reported that a hospital ship, fully lighted up, was hit and sunk. (Current Reports from Overseas. No. 12, Part I.)

the beach area, many under enemy fire for the first time, hastened to deepen their slit trenches, the digging of which hitherto had seemed one of the drudgeries of soldiering. (W.D., 1 Cdn Inf Bde Coy R.C.A.S.C., 10-11 Jul, and other diaries.)

39. Total Canadian battle casualties for this first day of the invasion, as reported by the A.D.M.S., were only two officers and thirteen other ranks (W.D., A.D.M.S. 1 Cdn Div, 10 Jul; the diary does not break the figures down into killed and wounded). Enemy casualties were much higher. At 1535 hrs the S.S. Bde reported 20 enemy killed, and 100 prisoners of war, while at 1725 hrs 1 Cdn Inf Bde estimated it had killed and wounded 50 and taken 500 prisoners. 2 Cdn Inf Bde had a total of 150 prisoners for the day. At 1845 hrs Divisional Headquarters reported a total of 650 but by the end of the day it was over 700. Two American paratroops were released from the enemy after a few hours' captivity. Only 20 of the prisoners were German, mostly Air Force personnel; most of the Italians were from the 206 Coastal Division and decidedly inferior troops. Some of the prisoners indicated that concentrations of both German and Italian troops had retreated to the ISFICA area that morning (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 Jul, serials 191, 251, 269, 291, 309, 315, 324, 335; W.D., H.Q., 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 10 Jul.).

40. At the end of the day, General Simonds was able to despatch the following report to General McNaughton then at Advanced Headquarters, 15 Army Group:

Landings effected with very little opposition and by 1200 hrs today all objectives for phase one were in my hands (.) Ineffective counter attacks in afternoon were repulsed (.) Casualties very light and first reports indicate do not exceed total of seventy-five killed and wounded including 40 and 41 Marine Commandos (.) We took over 700 prisoners and some material (.) Morale high and troops very confident of themselves (.) Details will follow (.) Success mainly due to excellent co-operation Royal Navy and RAF (.)

(File P.A. 1-14-1, Tel G.S. 1623 General Montague to General Murchie containing a message from General Simonds to General McNaughton, 10 Jul.)

At the same time General McNaughton and Stuart sent their congratulations saying "Canada will be very pleased at your achievement." Two days later Prime Minister King cabled similar sentiments saying "All Canada rejoices at the news of the initial success of Canadian troops in Sicily... Canada will not fail her fighting men." (ibid., Tel G.S. 1623, also containing message from Generals McNaughton and Stuart to General Simonds, 10 Jul; Tel G.S. 788 Prime Minister King to General McNaughton for Canadian Force Commander, Sicily, 12 Jul 43).

41. Thus ended for the Canadians the first day of the Sicilian campaign. The ease with which the day's objectives were attained probably came as a great surprise to the average Canadian officer or soldier. Although Intelligence forecasts had indicated only limited defences, he probably had the hard fighting of DIEMLE in the back of his mind. The veteran of DIEMLE, or this same soldier some months later, would have looked on this day's work around PACHINO as a picnic compared to their grimmer experiences of attacking

the German in a position he was well prepared to hold. Actually, many of the Canadian troops never fired a shot this first day, and the landing seemed to be more in the nature of an exercise, and rather a pleasant one at that; for wherever they took up positions there were fruit trees nearby which were being constantly raided ⁶.

42. The following vivid description of the country in which the Canadians found themselves is taken from the diary of the Commander, Royal Canadian Army Service Corps:

.....PACHINO with its airfield, slightly northwest from our landing point, is of fair size, covering an area of $1\frac{1}{2}$ kilometers (E to W) by $\frac{3}{4}$ Kilometers (N to S). There are no slums in Britain to compare with the squalor found here. Whether this has existed for all times or not, is not at present known by us, but one could readily believe that they are living in the times of Abraham from the layout of the streets and byways, and from the facades of the buildings, the mode of life of the people and animals. There is a biblical beauty and setting of the whole place. Roads are very poor, the main street only being second class and in very poor condition. This road extends from the main square, westward past the airfield on toward BURGIO. This area is slightly less under cultivation of vines, but crops and olive groves occupy most of the surface in long open sweeping valleys. The sun has full play over the surface all day. On the south side of the road, in a field of crops, half way from PACHINO to BURGIO, had been stationed a horse battery of Italian Artillery which had come into pin-point range of our guns. The remains of the battery, animals and personnel had not been fully cleared and gives one an impression of the deadliness of our artillery fire. This is not an isolated instance. This was later cleared by this firm H₂ personnel aided by Italian Prisoners of War. At BURGIO was noticed the first modern farm buildings. It was a winery of considerable size with the overseers quarters, large courtyards and storage spaces all in excellent condition. This is in the centre of vast healthy olive groves and on the fringe of the orange country. Very few of the inhabitants have returned to this area, but hordes of natives were returning from further inland by foot and donkey wagon which added very considerably to the already heavy road congestion. It was noticed however, that in all cases, they most willingly gave way to military traffic, great clouds of dust not appearing to bother them.

6 This was a source of worry to the medical authorities who insisted that fruit must be at least washed or peeled before eating. (W.D., A.D.M.S., 1 Cdn Div, 10 Jul.)

One noticeable point, was that infants in arms had their faces covered to prevent dust settling on them. The weather remains hot and sunny, the ground being very dry.

(W.D., H.A., Comd 1 Cdn Div
R.C.A.S.C., 12 Jul 43.)

ADVANCE TO THE LINE ROSOLINI-ISFICA-POZZALLO

43. The third phase of the assault as envisaged in "1st Canadian Division Operation Order No. 1" (Outlined in Report No 126) was to consist of "the advance by 1 Canadian Division in conformity with 51 (Highland) Division to general line ROSOLINI H 8502 - SPACCAFORNO (ISFICA) N 8099 - POZZALLO N 7592". While still on board ship the G.O.C. had issued a further "Outline Plan for Securing Corps First and Second Objectives after Capture of Beachhead" (See Appendix "D"). The 30 Corps' first objective was the line NOTO-ROSOLINI-ISFICA-POZZALLO and the second objective the high ground covering the convergence of the roads in the area PALAZZOLO (8030) - RAGUSA (6514). The inter-divisional boundary between 51 (H) Div on the right and 1 Cdn Inf Div on the left was to be the road PACHINO-ROSOLINI-cross track 734140, inclusive 51 (H) Div, up to the capture of the Corps First Objective, and then the River TELLARO, up to the Second Objective. The Canadian Divisional Commander's "intention" was in succession to:

- (a) Capture Corps First objective and take ISFICA and POZZALLO.
- (b) Capture the ridge cross tracks 734140 - pt 537 in 7008 and take MODICA from NE.
- (c) Capture the high ground cross rds 7320 - pt 599 in 6915 and take RAGUSA from the EAST.
- (d) Reorganize in area cross roads 7320 - cross tracks 734140 - pt 599 in 6915 and patrol WEST of R IMMINO to make contact with 2 U.S. Corps.

44. Prisoners of war captured during the night 10/11 Jul stated that ISFICA was already empty of military and civilians. The previous evening, and again during the morning of the 11th, this town and ROSOLINI had been shelled by the Navy and bombed by the Air Force preparatory to the projected advance by our troops (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 10 and 11 Jul, serials 301, 342, 380, 386 and 406). This advance was made on a two-brigade front with 1 Cdn Inf Bde taking the northern road from PACHINO to ROSOLINI and 2 Cdn Inf Bde the southern route to ISFICA. 3 Cdn Inf Bde, still remaining in reserve, was to consolidate on the high ground to the east of these places. (W.Ds., H.A., 1, 2 & 3 Cdn Inf Bdes, 11 Jul. For map see Appendix "C".)

45. The 2 Cdn Inf Bde advance started at 1220 hrs with the Edm R. in the lead. A brigade fighting reconnaissance penetrating to the outskirts of ISFICA reported sniping and hand grenades being thrown from houses by civilians so street fighting was expected (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log 11 Jul, serial 411). However, when the Edmontons reached the town after a hot and dusty march, they occupied it at 1450 hrs with no opposition. "The only difficulties encountered", says the regiment's Diary, "were enthusiastic greetings

of the civilian population and the frantic endeavours of the military population to surrender". 200 prisoners were taken initially and more rounded up later. The battalion took up a defensive position in square 7800 about two miles to the north-east on the highway to MODICA. (W.D., Edmn R., 11 Jul.) The Seaforth of C. passed through at 1730 hrs and reported: "Many natives stood in the streets waving and clapping their hands at us. Wine and fruit were passed out to the troops, the hatred of Mussolini and the Germans always being expressed time and time again" (W.D., Seaforth of C., 11 Jul).

46. All accounts agree that due to its natural strength and defences this place could have held out for a long time. One of the diarists gives a vivid picture of it:

The town of SPACCAFORNO (ISPICA) is built on a rock cliff towering sheer to a height of 150 feet and heavily defended by extensive barbed wire fields. The groundworks on approaches to the town are good but artillery and tanks have completely ruined them. The town is old world, with a population of about 2000 souls. It is built on stepped-up terraces well up on the crest of the rocky cliff. Towering above all is the town church in the early Italian Renaissance style of architecture. It is unfortunate that this town had to have a baptism of the effectiveness of the Allied Air Forces and deadliness of their efficiency is clearly seen.

(W.D., H.Q. Comd, 1 Cdn Div
R.C.A.S.C., 13 Jul).

47. The P.P.C.L.I. moved off at 1715 hrs to take up positions north of the town. But as the enemy were on the run, orders were issued for the pursuit to continue towards the high ground east of MODICA. At midnight the battalion was still marching, having met little opposition. After a march of 22 miles, new positions were finally taken up at 0500 hrs the next morning on the heights overlooking MODICA. Patrols were immediately sent forward and returned with large numbers of prisoners of war. (W.D., P.P.C.L.I. 11-12 Jul.)

48. The Seaforth of C. had also pushed on through the Edmn R. in the same direction. At midnight they came upon a carefully prepared roadblock about 5 miles beyond ISPICA (730016) but the Italian patrol defending it surrendered without firing a shot. Further on, the leading company came under some enemy machine gun fire but this was soon neutralized. They finally halted for a few hours rest in a concentration area about two miles north of MODICA some time the next morning. (W.D., Seaforth of C., 11-12 Jul and Appx 1, being a set of marked maps.)

49. "C" Company of the Seaforth of C. had been given the separate task of occupying POZZALLO, a little town on the coast south-east of ISPICA. The Navy had fired 160 rounds just to the north and east of this place shortly before noon, 11 Jul, and at 1315 hrs had sent a party ashore to receive the surrender of two officers and 96 other ranks (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 11 Jul, serial 444).

During the afternoon "C" Company took over. They reported taking 250 prisoners plus ten officers, along with much equipment. A German A.A. unit, they were told, had just left the town. Deserted by their Fascist Mayor and corporation, the people were starving, so with the help of the local priest and postmaster the Canadians broke open a granary and organized the distribution of grain, bread and macaroni. Lt.-Gen. Loase, the Corps Commander, visited them during the day and seemed well pleased with their arrangements. (W.D., Seaforth of C., Appx 27, "C" Company Account.)

50. On the northern sector of the advance 1 Cdn Inf Bde were in touch with 51 (H) Div, which had been ordered to take over north-east of AVOLA from 13 Corps, while keeping in touch with the Canadians on their left. Units of this division proceeded along the same road to the north-west out of IACHIO but later turned to the right in the direction of NOTO (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 11 Jul. serial 425; W.D., 51 (H) Div, Appx "A", O.C. No 64; W.D., R.C.R., 11 Jul). At 1150 hrs one of their carrier troops had entered ROSOLINI, where again the Italian soldiers surrendered with no resistance and the civilians came out in the streets to greet them. 300 Germans were reported to have left the previous day. Early in the afternoon two carrier platoons from 12 Cdn Tks were sent to relieve the British troops, since ROSOLINI was now in the Canadian sector. As in ISHICA, much Italian equipment was acquired, including army mules and horses, and Benholi tricycles and motor bicycles which, as always, were very helpful in solving transportation shortages. (Hist Sec File Sicily/1 Cdn Arm Bde/C/D, Account of Lt. J.L. Steinbuckl, I.O., 12 Cdn Tks.)

51. 1 Cdn Inf Bde remained resting in the FACHINO-LUNGIO area until the afternoon when they received their marching orders. 48 Highrs led and reached ROSOLINI without any opposition except some slight enemy air activity. They spent an uncomfortable night in the town which was partly on fire and pervaded by a horrible stench (W.D., 48 Highrs, 11 Jul; Hist Sec File Sicily/1 Cdn Inf Bde/C/D, Account of Lt.-Col. Johnston and Capt. McEachren, 48 Highrs). These and other Canadian troops were soon to realize that stench was far from unusual in Italian towns.

52. The R.C.R. passed through the town during the evening. That same night they were sent on by motor transport in the direction of RAGUSA. All sorts of vehicles from the rest of the brigade, tanks from 12 Cdn Tks and captured transport were pressed into use. At 0530 hrs the battalion deployed four miles east of RAGUSA. (W.D., R.C.R., 11-12 Jul.) The Hast & P.L.R. reached ROSOLINI at 2300 hrs and bivouacked for the night one mile beyond it (W.D., Hast & P.L.R., 11 Jul).

53. During the evening 3 Cdn Inf Bde in reserve took up the positions allotted them - the R. 22e R. in square 8497 one and a half miles south-east of ISHICA, the West N.S.R. in 8896 and the Carlt & York R. in 8896 (W.D., H.Q., 3 Cdn Inf Bde, Appx 1, map showing positions). The only incident of note during the night occurred when some two dozen American paratroops landed in the Brigade area. At first each side mistook the other for the enemy, but fortunately a string of plain English profanity from an approaching Canadian made the Americans realize the situation just as they were about to open fire, and needless bloodshed was averted (Account by Capt. Cunningham, op. cit.).

54. Back on the beaches, according to the diary of the Commander of the Divisional R.C.A.S.C., for 11 Jul, transport was coming ashore much too slowly. At 1900 hrs the divisional R.C.A.S.C. had only 18 vehicles in the assembly area. Main Divisional Headquarters came ashore during the day and set up in the vicinity of BURGIO, although personnel of "G" Branch stayed on board ship until the following day. The G.O.C. came ashore at 1000 hrs and visited the three brigade headquarters and the forward areas of the P.P.C.L.I. and R.C.R. during the day. He spent the night north of ISPICA. Corps and Army tactical headquarters were established in the area just north of PACHINO Airfield, which the R.C.R. had left that afternoon. (W.D., G.S., H.Q., 1 Cdn Inf Div, 11 Jul; W.D., G.S., H.Q., 30 Corps, Appx "B". Sitrep, 11 Jul.)

55. During the morning and early afternoon enemy aircraft attacked ground forces and ships at anchor but were driven off by A.A. fire. No reports have been found indicating damage or casualties. Canadian battle casualties for 11 Jul as reported by the A.D.M.S. were one officer and 18 other ranks. (W.Ds., G.S., H.Q., 1 Cdn Inf Div, and A.D.M.S., 1 Cdn Inf Div.)

THE ADVANCE INLAND - MODICA-RAGUSA-GIARRATANA

56. The three phases of the original Divisional plan had been completed ahead of schedule on 11 Jul; accordingly as already indicated, orders were given to continue the advance in the direction of MODICA and RAGUSA to attain the Corps "Second Objective". There was practically no fighting at this stage but the infantry suffered a good deal from heat and fatigue since the advance was much quicker than expected, and very little transport was yet available. Moreover the men were not yet acclimatized to the semi-tropical conditions and were soft from over three weeks on board ship. All diaries stress these difficulties and pay tribute to the way in which the troops stood up to them. Some also add that the 48-hour rations were not very satisfying to hungry soldiers (W.D., P.P.C.L.I., Jul, Appx 14, which notes that "The march had been very difficult owing to the tiredness of the men; every time they stopped they fell asleep").

57. As we have already observed, the early morning of the 12th found the P.P.C.L.I. and the R.C.R., the two forward battalions of their respective brigades, deployed outside MODICA and RAGUSA. During the night, 2 Cdn Inf Bde informed Divisional Headquarters that MODICA was seeking terms of surrender, and at 0125 hrs Div H.Q. sent a message ordering the P.P.C.L.I. to accept the surrender (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 12 Jul, serials 468 and 475). After a fifteen-minute bombardment by a battery of 142 Fd Regt (S.P.) during which 575 rounds of H.E. were poured into the town a fighting patrol from the P.P.C.L.I. entered MODICA and took a considerable number of prisoners. Two Patricia N.C.Os. entered one building and discovered the G.O.C. of the local Italian Division⁷ inside. He agreed to surrender to an officer of equal rank so the matter was referred back to Brigade Headquarters. Eventually the surrender was carried out as related in para 60 below. (W.D., P.P.C.L.I., 12 Jul

7 The 206 Coastal Division; the P.P.C.L.I. account states that it was the 54th NAPOLI Division but all other accounts refer to 206 Div, which included troops from 54 Napoli Div.

and Appendix 14; Verbal evidence of Lt.-Col. Lindsay, then commanding the P.P.C.L.I., who helped the writer to straighten out apparent contradictions between the P.P.C.L.I. and other accounts.)

58. It appears that MODICA was left without any occupying troops. A corporal from Seaforth of C., who took a wrong turning while trying to catch up with his battalion, arrived in this town by mistake. He was surrounded by citizens and soldiers who sought to surrender the place to him, doubtless fearing the consequence of another artillery bombardment. Somewhat nonplussed, he brought a delegate back to battalion headquarters with him on the pillion of his motor cycle. However, on the matter being referred back, Division recommended it be dropped and the representative was left "still looking for someone to surrender the city to." (W.D., Seaforth of C., 12 Jul.)

59. Later in the morning, however, some enemy elements with a little more spirit must have reappeared in the town. Two small detachments, one from the R.C.R. and one from the Seaforths⁸, both seeking their respective units, entered the town under the impression that it had already been taken. Approaching the central square they were ambushed and lost several vehicles. Retiring to cover, they planned and delivered an attack on the enemy position, but were driven back. At this juncture the Commander of 2 Cdn Inf Bde came upon the scene and procured them some artillery support from a nearby troop of S.F. guns. After five minutes' bombardment the party, numbering about fifteen, again advanced and this time cleared all the surrounding houses, taking four officers and 78 other ranks prisoner and capturing seven field guns, five medium guns, and one Anti-Tank gun, which were in position in the central square covering all roads. Several hundred more enemy came forth to surrender from other parts of the town. The prisoners were taken over by the Edmn R, who advanced past the town during the day and left a platoon to keep order there. (W.D., R.C.R., Jul, Appx IX written by Lt. Atkinson gives a very detailed account of this incident; W.D., Edmn R., 12 Jul.)

60. The final and formal surrender of MODICA took place about 1100 hrs on 12 Jul under circumstances best described by quoting the War Diary of 12 Cdn Tks:

Lt.Col. E.L. Booth and Lt. Roberts, I.O. were making a recce in front of MODICA when they encountered the naval and military chiefs of staff of the General Commanding the 206 Coastal Division. They stated that their General wished to surrender with all

⁸ The account is by the A. Tk Pl officer of the R.C.R. who said he met an officer from the Seaforth of C. with a ration party which was ambushed in the town. There is no record of the incident in the Seaforth Diary which does give the previous story of the Corporal who entered the town by mistake. Nor is there any mention of the incident in the diary of H.Q., 2 Cdn Inf Bde but since this diary is by no means exhaustive its silence has little significance.

honours of war. Col. Booth tried to get in touch with Brigadier Vokes, Commanding 2nd Cdn Inf Bde, but could only contact his Brigade Major, so together they accompanied the Italian Aides to the headquarters of the 206 Coastal Division in MODICA. They travelled in the General's car through lines of Italian troops with their arms laid down in the streets. Lt.-Col. Booth accepted on behalf of General Simonds, the unconditional surrender of Generale di divisione, Achille J'Hovet and what was left of the 206 Coastal Division, and then escorted General J'Hovet, his naval and military chiefs of staff and the Mayor of MODICA back to 1 Cdn Div Headquarters.

On the way back... they met the 30th Corps Commander, Lt.-General Sir Oliver Leese, who chatted with the Italian General for a few minutes, and in this conversation, General J'Hovet revealed that he had been decorated with the Military Cross in the Great War by the Duke of Connaught.

On arrival at 1 Cdn Div headquarters, General Simonds accepted the formal surrender of General J'Hovet who had expressed his wish to be allowed to make his own formal surrender to an officer of equal rank.

In the meantime, Lt.-Col. Booth instructed "C" Squadron to occupy MODICA. There were some casualties among our infantry in approaching the town early in the day. A convoy of 3 ration and 3 petrol lorries went too far ahead towards the front line and were fired upon by MG and snipers.

The first troops which entered MODICA saw practically the whole supply of white clothing of the town's population hung in every conspicuous spot as a sign of surrender and the civil population greeted the troops with cheers and yells of approbation.

There is very little resistance in this area now and the only hindrance to our advance is the speed of the infantry.

(W.D., 12 Cdn Tks, 12 Jul, and Account by Lt. Steinbuckl, op. cit., which in places has the same wording as the diary.)

61. It will be noticed that some gaps are left between these disconnected stories. The P.I.C.L.I. were first to enter the town and to come upon the Italian divisional commander whom they erroneously referred to as the G.O.C. 54 NAPOLI Div. Despite this and the fact that they remained in the vicinity of the town most of the day no other account seems to be aware of their presence. Later in the morning according to an R.C.R. account detachments from R.C.R. and Seaforth of C. entered the town, ran into opposition and took many prisoners whom they handed over to the Edmonton Regiment who passed by and left a platoon to occupy the town. Then the 12 Cdn Tks account gives a detailed description of the occupation of MODICA and the surrender of the G.O.C., 206 Coastal Div, without referring to either the P.I.C.L.I. or the Edmonton R. A message from 2 Cdn Inf Bde in the divisional Intelligence Log supports the 12 Cdn Tks story,

but another message purportedly from 1 Cdn Inf Bde further complicates it. The latter reads in part; "2 i/c and 13 Offrs General Staff 206 Coastal Div captured at Div H.Q. 686094 (half a mile north of the town) and now at 1 Bde. Please advise method of disposal". (1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 12 Jul, serials 14 and 16.) The P.P.C.L.I. diary confuses the Commander of 54 NAPOLI Div with the Commander of 206 Coastal Div, but this is understandable since there was a connection between the two divisions which is revealed in the following message that was sent to Corps:

169 Blackshirt Militia Bn has been destroyed (detached?) from 173 Bl Mil Legion....This Legion was the div legion of 54 Napoli but about 6 weeks it was detached from Napoli and attached to 206 Div. The Comd of this Legion says that tactical surprise was complete. He says that Inf of 54 Napoli were at Ragusa plus German services.

(1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log, 13 Jul, serial 1.)

62. The incident reflects the limitations of the source material from which this narrative is written. At the best, there will be gaps, at the worst inaccuracies and errors. Unit War Diaries are uneven in quality and frequently incomplete. Nor do the Intelligence logs seem to be complete. There is a great deal of information in them, but the answers given to messages which are recorded sometimes do not appear while on the other hand answers are given for messages not themselves recorded.

63. The Edmn R., which had left the vicinity of ISFICA that morning, now passed through the P.P.C.L.I. in the direction of RAGUSA, less the platoon of occupation left in MODICA and "B" Company. The latter, supported by a troop of tanks, was sent off to the south to occupy the town of SCIOLI (in square 6399). The tanks fired three shots over the town whereupon 1100 enemy soldiers emerged and gave themselves up. They were ferried back to ISFICA in their own vehicles. On the advance to RAGUSA, tanks and light-scale unit transport available were utilized to ferry the marching infantry. On entering the town American troops were found to be in occupation, so the battalion moved through and took up a defensive position on the RAGUSA-IELA road at 668148 about 1800 hrs. (W.D., Edmn R., 12 Jul; Hist Sec file Sicily/2 Cdn Inf Bde/C/D, Account of Capt. Fritchard Adj. Edmn R.)

64. The same evening most of P.P.C.L.I., following the Edmontons, moved to the high ground east of RAGUSA where they were joined by the remainder of the battalion the following morning (W.D., P.P.C.L.I., 12-13 Jul).

65. The Seaforth of C. did not go through MODICA, but as we have seen, by-passed it during the night and halted for a few hours in a position to the north-east. During the day they continued on up a narrow rocky mule track to a position on a hill north-east of RAGUSA with battalion headquarters at 696162. According to the diary, they "moved through a continuous cloud of fine white dust which, when mixed with the perspiration of the body, made a white layer of dust over each man. It seemed to work into every nook and cranny, into your boots and up to the hair on

our heads." Early in the march they were fired on by one machine gun but this was soon neutralized. (W.D., Seaforth of C., 12 Jul.)

66. During the day, 2 Cdn Inf Bde altogether sent back some 1200 to 1500 Italian prisoners, including 30 officers, to Divisional Headquarters. "They were herded into a field", says the Divisional G.S. Diary, "where the Divisional Intelligence Officer took over and segregated them according to their regiments and formation. The vast majority were of the Blackshirt Militia but there were also some regulars from the Royal Italian Army and some bersaglieri. They seem to be extremely happy and docile captives." (W.D., G.S., H.Q., 1 Cdn Inf Div, 12 Jul; 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log 12 Jul, serial 17.)

67. While 2 Cdn Inf Bde were operating in the area MODICA-RAGUSA, 1 Cdn Inf Bde continued to lead the advance still further north towards GIARRATANA with the R.C.R. in the lead. As previously related, this unit had deployed some miles to the west of RAGUSA in the early hours of the morning. After five minutes shelling a carrier patrol was sent in to demand the surrender of the town while the rest of the battalion resumed the march to the north. When the patrol eventually caught up about five miles beyond the town, it explained its delay by the fact that there had been great difficulty in finding any officials, for all had hidden from fear of the shelling. Some American soldiers had just penetrated the town from the west but fortunately were not injured, although somewhat shaken by the Canadian bombardment. It will be remembered that the Edmonton Regiment found U.S. troops in occupation here later in the day. (W.D., R.C.R., 12 Jul.)

68. Meanwhile, the Hast & P.L.R. and the 48 Highrs had been marching from the vicinity of ROSOLINI since early morning, meeting no opposition but finding the heat and dust very trying. During the afternoon, all three battalions rested, resuming their advance in the evening. The Hast & P.L.R. took the lead with three companies mounted on tanks and all available wheeled transport, while the others followed on foot. They passed through GIARRATANA before midnight and took up positions just to the north. Early the following morning, the R.C.R. and the 48 Highrs arrived and occupied positions to the south and east of the town. Some enemy were contacted during the morning and more prisoners taken without difficulty. (W.Ds., R.C.R., Hast & P.L.R., 48 Highrs, 12-13 Jul; 1 Cdn Inf Div Int Log 13 Jul, serials 11 and 13.)

69. 3 Cdn Inf Bde, still the Divisional reserve, followed along the same route approximately a day behind the leading brigades. During the night of 12/13 Jul they moved into positions about five miles north-west of ISICA on the MODICA road. (W.D., H.Q., 3 Cdn Inf Bde, Appx 2, marked map.)

70. The remainder of "G" Branch of Divisional Headquarters which, up till now, had been operating on board the "Hilary" came ashore during the 12th and joined the Tactical Headquarters about three miles west of ISICA on the MODICA road, forming a complete Main Divisional Headquarters for the first time. (W.D., G.S., H.Q., 1 Cdn Inf Div, 12 Jul.)⁹ At the same time, Rear Division

⁹ With the forward brigades getting into the more mountainous area around RAGUSA, communications were becoming more difficult. (W.D., Sigs 1 Cdn Inf Div, 12 Jul.)

moved to BURGIO (928961) occupying a large winery. All Services had by now landed and established offices in this area; medical installations were nearing completion of light-scale of vehicles and equipment. (W.D., A.A. & Q.M.G., 1 Cdn Inf Div, 12 Jul.) The Commander R.C.A.S.C. was still worried about the slowness in unloading. His diary for 12 Jul notes: "Constant supervision of the dumping programme is necessary. Landing from ship to shore has slowed up considerably and it was necessary that C.R.A.S.C. interview the P.M.L.O. to ensure speed-up if the progress of operations was to be maintained efficiently. There was improvement later in the day". The Service Corps Commander also had to make strong representations to P.M.L.O. (Principal Military Landing Officer) and A.A. & Q.M.G. regarding the misuse of DUKWS and the commandeering of Service Corps vehicles by senior officers. Transport was strained to the very limit and many personnel were on the go practically the whole time with very little sleep. "Yet the morale is very high and the men show an eagerness to do their job efficiently." (W.D., H.Q., Comd 1 Cdn Div R.C.A.S.C., 12 Jul.)

71. The assault convoy, less some ships that had already sailed, left under circumstances described as follows in the Diary of the A.A. & Q.M.G., 12 Jul:

By evening of 12 Jul all that it was possible to land from the original Tactical Convoy was ashore. This convoy departed about 1600 hrs 12 Jul, taking with it essential stores also vehicles and personnel ... Due to causes at this time unknown, some 250 to 300 men awaiting landing on the beaches, were taken on these ships for discharge at an unknown port and return later to Div.

(W.D., A.A. & Q.M.G., Rear H.Q., 1 Cdn Inf Div, 12 Jul.)

72. Battle casualties for 12 Jul were only two officers and 24 other ranks (W.D., A.D.M.S., 1 Cdn Inf Div, 12 Jul). Of these, six were killed and 15 wounded when low-flying enemy fighters strafed a convoy of Artillery and Signals personnel who were proceeding along the road between the beaches and ISPIC. (W.D., G.S., H.Q., 1 Cdn Inf Div, 12 Jul). Actually there had been very little daytime air activity by the enemy, only a few planes being sighted during the first few days, and this was the first incident of its sort. On 13 Jul the Hast & P.L.R. reported that two ML 109s were seen and both were hit by a L.A.A. battery, one being brought down (W.D., Hast & P.L.R., 13 Jul). At night, however, raids on the beaches and the shipping were quite usual (W.D., Div Tps Coy R.C.A.S.C., 1 Cdn Inf Div, 10-15 Jul).

REST AND REORGANIZATION -- INSPECTION BY GENERAL MONTGOMERY

73. 1 Cdn Inf Div had by now stretched its supply lines to the maximum for the vehicles available. "It was therefore directed" in the words of the R.C.R. Diary for 13 Jul, "that the present position be occupied for the next 36 hrs to allow administration to catch up to operations, and to give the men a rest.¹⁰ They have had, in most cases, an average of eight

10 Some other reasons for this rest were given by General Montgomery to General McNaughton two weeks later. While praising the conduct of the Canadian division in their fighting to date he said that when they first landed they were a "bit soft" and that their "operational discipline was not too good", so he "pulled them out of (Cont'd.P.23.

hrs. sleep since landing". 51 (H) Div, which had been advancing on a parallel route from NOTO through PALAZZOLO on the Canadian right flank, continued to advance in the direction of VIZZINI. The Canadians were to be ready to advance through them at this point to engage the enemy in the more strongly defended area to the north. (W.D., G.S., H.Q., 1 Cdn Inf Div, 14 Jul).

74. During the rest period 3 Cdn Inf Bde caught up with the other brigades, taking up positions south of GIARRATANA with brigade headquarters at 727199 (W.D., H.Q., 3 Cdn Inf Bde, Appx 3, marked map), and 12 Cdn Tks moved into the same area (Account by Lt. Steintuckl, op. cit.). On 13 Jul, Divisional Headquarters moved to an area about eight miles north of MODICA at 737207 while on 14 Jul, Rear Div moved up to a farm house at 739099 a few miles east of the town (Hist Sec file Sicily/1 Cdn Inf Div/C/H, Location State; W.D., A.A. & Q.M.G., 14 Jul).

75. The Service Corps of course remained busy. Their diary records:

The vehicles are never empty. Rations and supplies are brought forward and prisoners and salvage sent back. Transport is on the move 24 hours a day... It had been impossible to give the vehicles any maintenance at all, and the personnel have been able recently to snatch only the barest of rest. Their health seems not to have suffered in any way. In all their dirt and grime, they seem very happy and willing to work themselves to the limit. The run from this point back to the beach is approximately 40 kilometres over the worst possible dirt roads and tracks. It speaks very highly for the driving personnel that they have been able to keep their vehicles on the road continuously without accident and practically without the slightest breakdown. Any breakdowns have been immediately attended to by vehicles of the workshops sections which have been stationed at strategic points along the route with instructions to help all and sundry

(W.D., H.Q. Comd, 1 Cdn Div
R.C.A.S.C., 13 Jul).

76. A shuttle service was instituted for Service Corps supplies on 13 Jul and petrol and supply points began operating for brigade and divisional troops. By the following day they had built up a divisional reserve of 8400 rations, 3840 gals of petrol and 'a good stock' of ammunition. By 1030 hrs on the 14th, 89 R.C.A.S.C. vehicles were reported landed but 43 of these were attached out as first line transport. However, the follow-up convoy, Herrick II, had arrived the previous day and more vehicles were expected ashore immediately. (ibid., 14 Jul). By this time, most of the fighting troops seemed to have obtained their light scale transport (W.Ds., 48 Highrs, West N.S.R., etc., 13 Jul).

the fighting for two days". (C.M.H.Q. File 3/Sicily/1/4, Gen. Montgomery to Gen. McNaughton, 26 Jul 43.)

77. On 15 Jul the railway at PACHINO was brought into operation and some supplies sent to the forward area by rail. However, this railway led to NOTO in 51 (H) Div's area and so at this stage it was probably of little use to 1 Cdn Inf Div. (W.D., 103 Sub Area, Beach.)

78. Herrick II convoy landed on Beach 56, BARK SOUTH where the Royal Engineers had constructed a temporary pier. Because of the false beaches, stores had been coming ashore very slowly over BARK WEST, so it was closed down on the 13th in favour of BARK SOUTH, 51 (H) Div's beach (W.D., A.D.C.S., 1 Cdn Inf Div, Appx 1, report to D.O.S., C.M.H.Q.). Among units arriving in Herrick II were 1 Fd Regt, R.C.H.A.; 1 & 2 Cdn Inf Bde W/S, R.C.O.C.; 2 Cdn Inf Bde Coy, R.C.A.S.C.; "A" Sqn, 4 Cdn Recce Regt (W.Ds. of these units). 1 Cdn Army Tk Bde disembarked in SIRACUSA the same day but they were Army troops and did not come under command of the Canadian Division (C.I.G.S. Summary of Operations, Sicily).

79. While there was little military opposition and the majority of the population seemed to be quite friendly towards the Allies, there was some trouble from the odd civilian sniper. The "C" branch war diary observed:

It is felt that these snipers are members of an organization known as "Squadrismi" which is a sort of vigilante organization to keep the population in hand under Fascist rule. Very few of these snipers have been actually seen or captured, although there have been some shots fired at lone vehicles passing through quiet areas. The shots that have been heard in and about Divisional headquarters are believed to be the indiscriminate discharge of weapons on the part of our own troops.

(W.D., G.S., H.Q., 1 Cdn Div,
13 Jul).

A company of Edmn R. was sent into RAGUSA, a former Fascist headquarters, where the population was proving restive, a curfew proclaimed and all arms confiscated. Some sniping had been reported by American troops who had been in the town (W.D., Edmn R., 13-14 Jul).

80. The big event of these two days for the Canadians was the visit to the Division of Lt.-Gen. Sir Bernard L. Montgomery, the Army Commander. He inspected them in four or five different areas where they were assembled to meet him. At each place after meeting the senior officers he called the troops around his car and addressed them in an informal manner, welcoming them to the Eighth Army, praising their performance to date and telling them that he had every confidence they would stand up to the fighting ahead. All the accounts stress the great enthusiasm with which he was received. (W.D., G.S., H.Q., 1 Cdn Inf Div, 14 Jul and all battalion diaries.)

81. Divisional battle casualties reported for 13 Jul were two officers and 23 other ranks, for 14 Jul nil (W.D., A.D.M.S., 1 Cdn Inf Div, 13-14 Jul).

GENERAL PROGRESS OF THE CAMPAIGN

82. Before concluding the account of the assault phase of the Canadian operations it is desirable to consider the progress of the Sicilian campaign as a whole. 1 Cdn Inf Div was but one member of a strong team, and it should be remembered that there were four British divisions, not to mention several independent brigade groups, fighting to the right of the Canadian Division and five American divisions fighting to the left. 13 Corps had made successful landings on the east coast of the island between AVOLA and SIRACUSA but had run into stiffer opposition than did 30 Corps on the PACHINO peninsula. By 1000 hrs on 10 Jul, 5 Div and 50 Div after sharp engagements had captured their initial objectives of AVOLA and CASIBILLI, respectively. The following day 5 Div captured SIRACUS which had been surrounded by paratroops and commandos in the initial assault. AUGUSTA was captured on 13 Jul and the advance continued towards the important city of CATANIA. A key bridge seven miles south of the city was captured that night by the 1st Parachute Brigade, lost again and retaken on 15 Jul. Enemy resistance outside CATANIA had become very stubborn. (C.I.G.S. Summary of Operations, Sicily. For map see Appendix "A".)

83. 30 Corps, as we have seen, progressed with less opposition. 23 Armd Bde, under command of 51 (H) Div, captured PALAZZOLO, ten miles south-east of VIZZINI, by 1810 hrs, 12 Jul. The following day they continued towards VIZZINI but were held up at this town where they were joined by 231 Bde. Other elements of the Division advanced through BUCCHERI to FRANCOFONTE, 9 miles north-east of VIZZINI. Fighting for these two places continued throughout the 14th. 152 and 153 Bdes joined in the final attack on VIZZINI that evening. Meanwhile an American force, approaching from the south-west, cut the road to the west of VIZZINI. This was the situation when 1 Cdn Div came back into action. (W.D., H.Q., G.S., 51 (H) Div, 10-14 Jul and Appx; W.D., H.Q., 231 Bde, 10-14 Jul).

84. On 14 Jul, 30 Corps Headquarters set up about two miles south-east of PALAZZOLO while Main Eighth Army Headquarters opened at SIRACUSA on 15 Jul. The port was in working order the same day; accordingly the west beach was closed at PACHINO. (C.I.G.S. Summary of Operations in Sicily.)

85. To the west, the Seventh (U.S.) Army had landed with little initial opposition. 3 (U.S.) Inf Div had captured LICATA and its airfield by midday 10 Jul, while 1 (U.S.) Inf Div and 82 (U.S.) Airborne Div had taken GELA and its airfield. This was the only place where the Germans were able to get in a quick counter-attack supported by tanks, but the Americans, with the help of a naval bombardment, soon restored the situation. The following day 45 (U.S.) Inf Div landed in the vicinity of SOGLITTI, 15 miles south-east of GELA and extended the bridgehead on down the coast to MARINA di RAGUSA. Stiff opposition was encountered as they moved inland in the BISCARI-COMISO area, but on 12 Jul COMISO airfield was captured and 1 Cdn Inf Div contacted (as already mentioned) at RAGUSA eight miles to the west. The following day, 45 (U.S.) Inf Div reached a point six miles south-west of VIZZINI, while to the west 3 (U.S.) Inf Div reached the important junction of CANICATTI. By 13 Jul the Americans had taken 8761 prisoners of war at a cost of 1260 casualties. (Ibid; C.M.H.Q. file 4/Gen Aprec/3 War Office "General Note" for July 1943.)

86. The Allied Armies enjoyed continued and effective Naval and Air support during this phase of the operations. During the first day about 1000 sorties were made and 17 enemy planes brought down. TAORMINA, north of MOUNT ETNA, thought to be the main Axis headquarters on the island was reported destroyed by Allied bombers on 12 Jul, while 75 Fortressés bombed CATANIA the same day. Enemy fighters were neutralized by attacks on their airfields with the result that on 15 Jul none were encountered in the air and only 190 observed on all the airfields of Sicily and the toe of Italy. The captured field at PACHINO was in full operation by 14 Jul, while the one at LICATA was ready for use. Advance of the ground troops was facilitated by continued air attacks on enemy depots, communications and troop concentrations. A considerable increase in enemy road movement was reported by air reconnaissance on 15 Jul, indicating that the Germans were withdrawing from the west and centre to concentrate their opposition in the eastern end of the island around CATANIA and MOUNT ETNA. (ibid.)

87. It may be noted that the airborne forces of some 352 aircraft plus gliders carrying approximately 5000 troops engaged on the 9/10 Jul carried out the largest operation of its type ever attempted at night up to that time. Despite mistakes in navigation both the British and American forces succeeded in most of their tasks. (Current reports from Overseas, No 12, Part II has a detailed and interesting report on these operations.)

88. It is obvious that much of the initial rapid success, especially in the west, was due to the low morale and poor fighting quality of the Italian troops. Another important factor however, was the success of the measures taken to confuse the enemy. The Allied Air Forces which had been pounding Sicily heavily for three weeks previous to "D" Day had concentrated the greater part of their effort on the north-west corner of the island, while on the actual day of assault the Royal Navy had also carried out a diversionary bombardment in the same vicinity. It seems fairly certain that the Germans expected the Allied assaults in that direction and were caught on the wrong foot when they landed in the south-east. ("General Note," July 43, op. cit.) A diversion was also carried out in the CATANIA area where dummy parachutes were dropped on the night of the invasion (W.D., Main H.Q., Eighth Army, July Narrative).

89. From the testimony of prisoners of war it appears that tactical surprise was also attained on the actual landings, for the enemy had judged the weather too bad on 9 Jul for invasion to be practicable. 15th Army Group's official account of these operations makes the following observations in respect to this matter:

One advantage accrued from the unfortunate turn of the weather, however unpleasant the rough sea was for the troops in the assault craft as they approached the hostile shore. The enemy garrison had become wearied by false alerts and invasion scares for several weeks past and, believing the bad weather afforded security and respite from the constant alerts, had relaxed its vigil. When the first waves of our assaults reached the shore at 0245 hours the enemy was caught off guard and complete tactical surprise was achieved. So great was the confusion and disorganisation of the enemy that he was

able to muster no serious resistance to our landings...

(Hist Sec File/15 Army Group/C/F,
"The Conquest of Sicily").

90. After his capture the G.O.C. of 206 Coastal Division told Allied interrogators that the earliest he was informed of an Allied convoy approaching Sicily was 2220 hrs, 9 Jul. His naval adviser, however, assured him that it was much too rough for a landing to be effected. Actually British landing craft casualties were only 1% although allowance had been made for 50% casualties! on the American beaches, where weather conditions were considerably worse, losses were 12%.¹¹ (Transcript of Lecture by Chief of Combined Operations, delivered at the Staff College, Camberley, 10 Aug 48, a copy of which was seen by the writer in the files of the British Historical Section, War Cabinet Secretariat.)

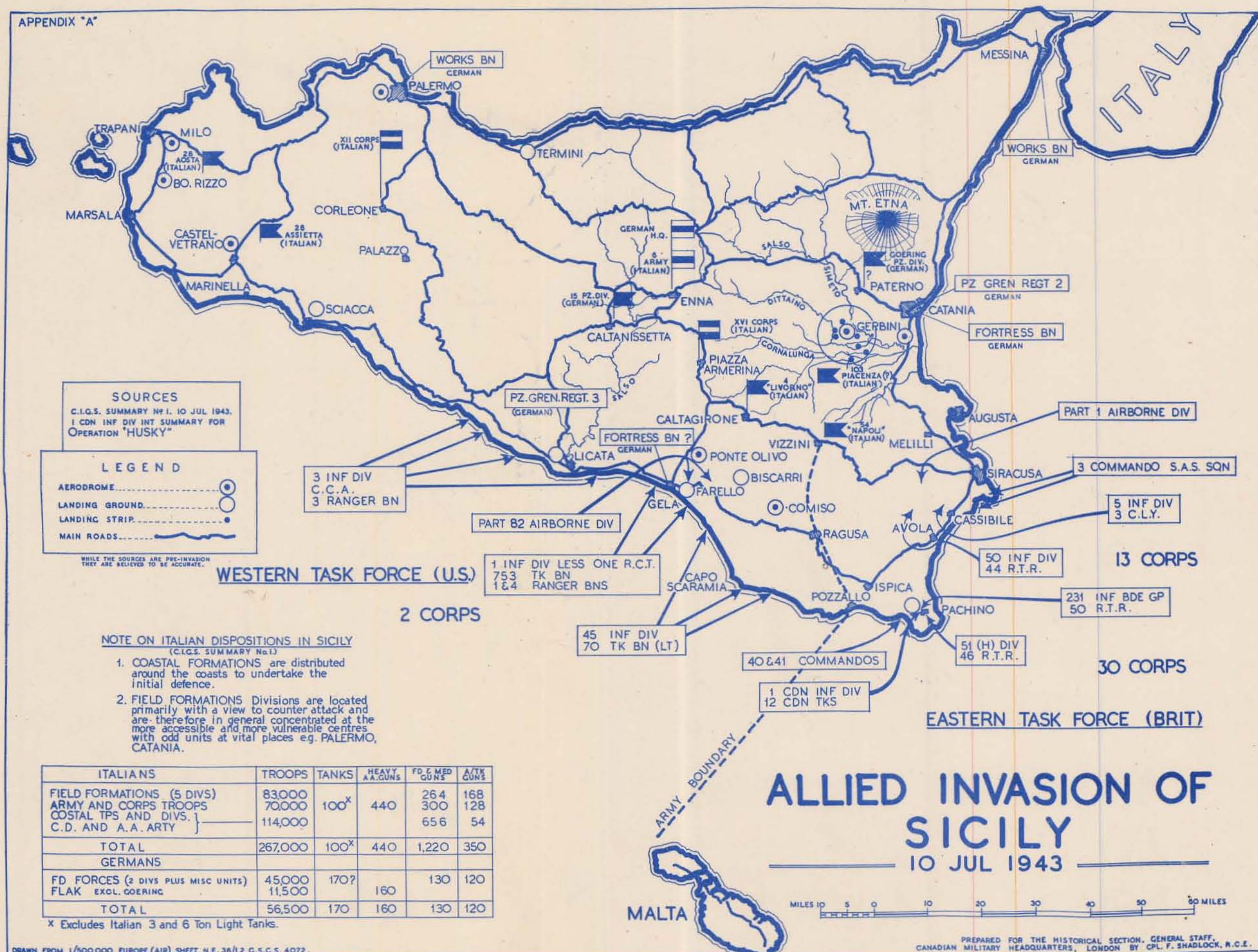
91. In the lecture referred to in the preceding paragraph the Chief of Combined Operations cited several instances which seemed to indicate that the Italians were not interested in opposing the invasion. They had laid a minefield on BARK SOUTH beach but none of the mines were primed, while in other places signs were left indicating the presence of mines. A multi-barrelled 20 mm gun had recently been installed in the same area but it had never fired a round and the only two Germans with the gun were found dead with their throats cut. He also reported that Italian labour had been very useful in getting stores ashore over the difficult beaches of BARK WEST.¹² Certainly the attitude of the civilians in the captured towns of Sicily was very much more friendly to the Allies than was generally expected.

92. The pre-invasion intelligence regarding the enemy order of battle proved to be fairly accurate. The five Italian coastal divisions turned out to be very ineffective, 206 Coastal Div which disintegrated in front of the PACHINO landings being typical of these formations. The four Italian field divisions were rather better manned and better equipped, but they did not last much longer. 54 Napoli Div and 4 LIVORNO Div were in the eastern half of the island when the invasion took place. The former was pretty well broken up by 51 (H) Div and 1 Cdn Inf Div and its G.O.C. captured with his staff near VIZZINI. The remnants were withdrawing on the right flank of the Germans "leaderless and disheartened," their presence "a source of anxiety rather than reassurance to their axis partners". 4 LIVORNO Div had lost heavily to the Americans near GELA, but "preserved rather more cohesion than NAPOLI". In short the defence of Sicily was pretty well left to the small German core of the reformed HERMANN GOERING Division, 15th Armoured Division, several Fortress battalions and a large

11. According to the Chief of Combined Operations only 12 ships were lost off Sicily in the first fortnight of the invasion.

12. There is no reference to this in Canadian accounts.

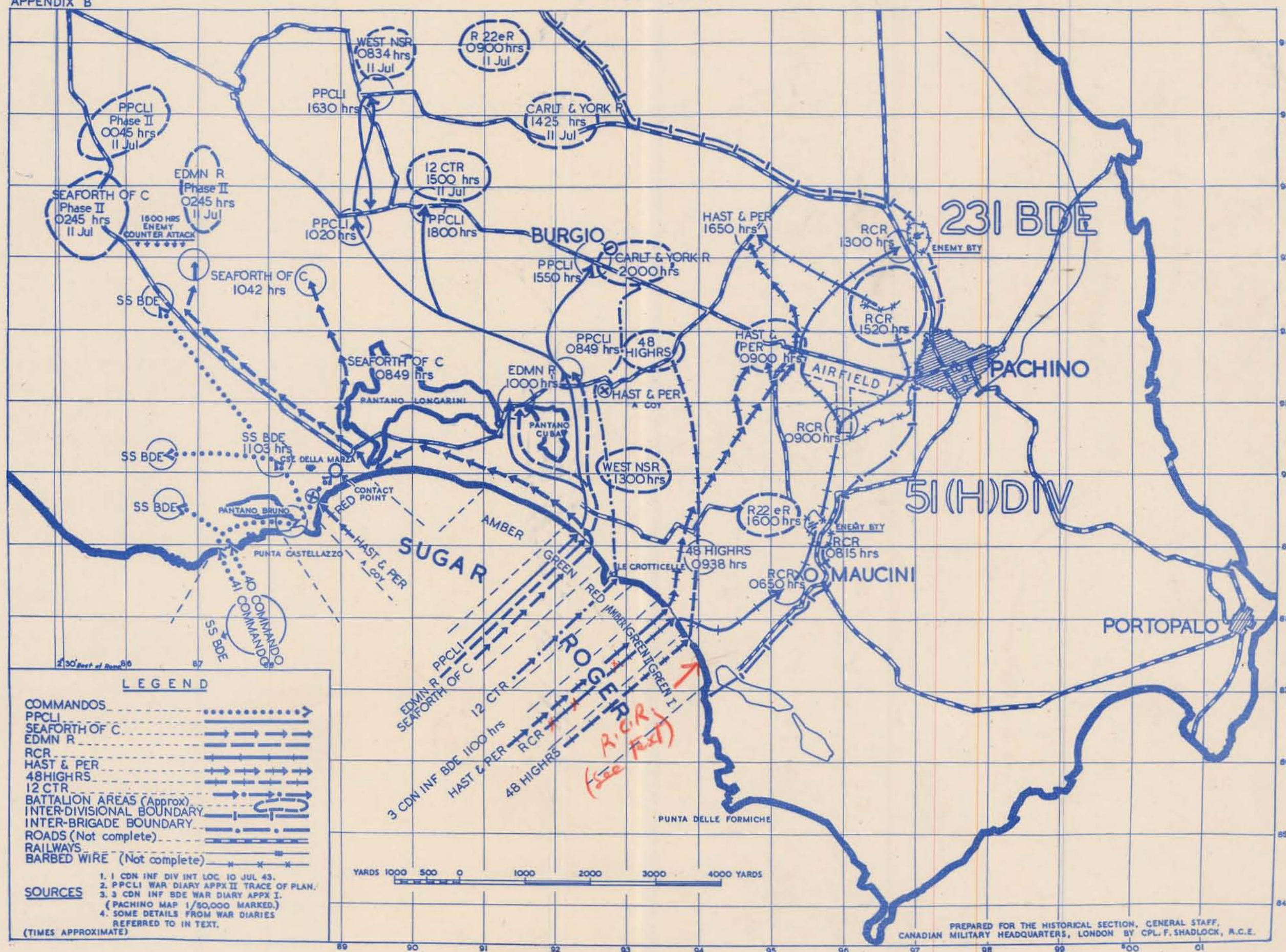
APPENDIX "A"



LANDING OF 1 CDN INF DIV ON PACHINO PENINSULA

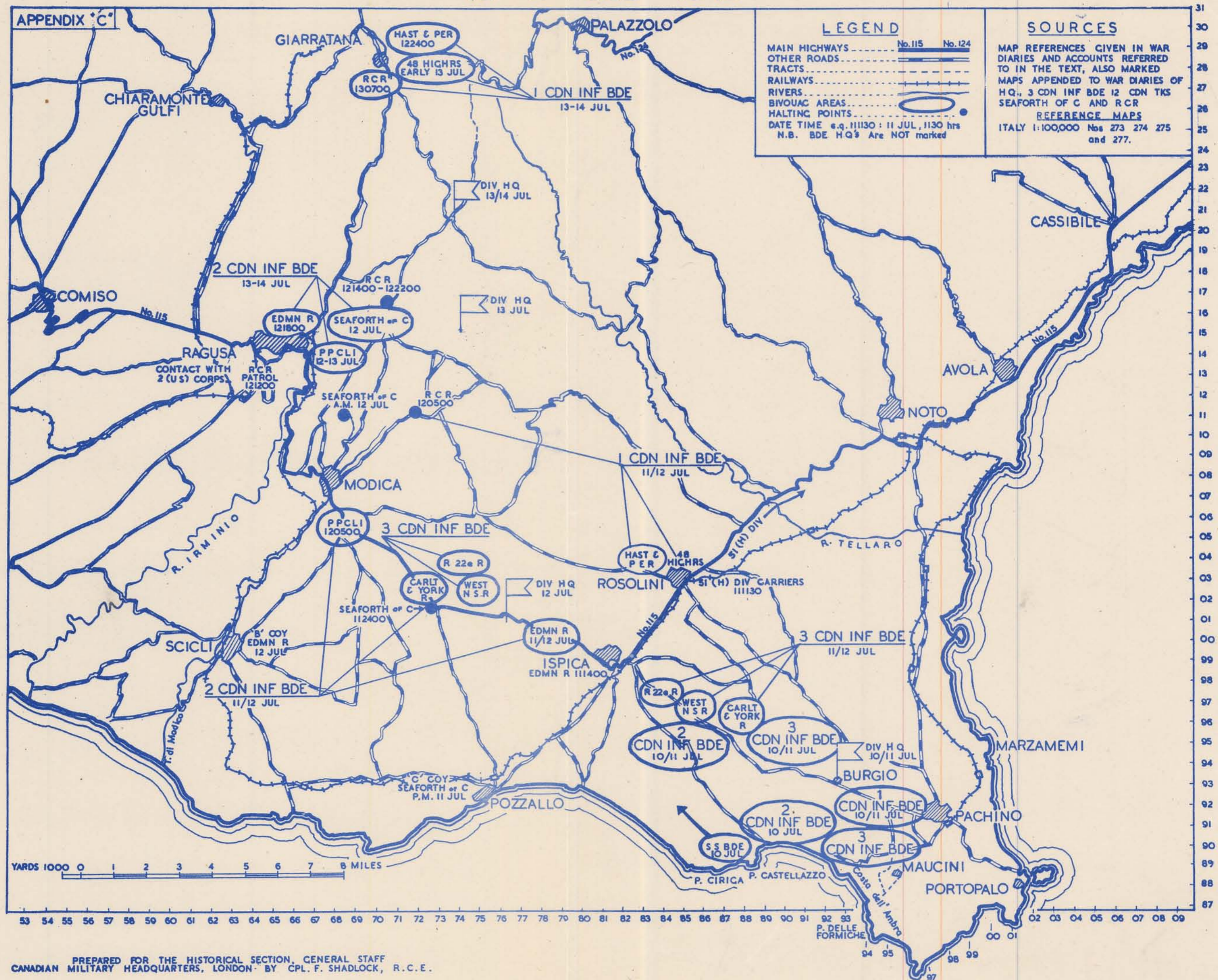
10 JUL 1943

APPENDIX 'B'



MOVEMENTS OF 1 CDN INF DIV, S.E. SICILY

10 - 14 JUL 1943



number 13 of Flak (A.A.) Troops. Elements of a parachute division (3 & 4 Para Regts) were arriving from France and shortly afterwards units of the 29th Motorised Division were also appearing. The HERMANN GOERING Division was concentrating on the CATANIA plain and soon the 15th Armoured Division was also to be faced with the necessity of withdrawing eastward from the centre of the island. Before doing so, however, they were first to meet the Canadians in battle. ("General Note", July 1943, op.cit.; Hist Sec File Sicily/L/F (1), G.H.Q., M.L.F. Intelligence Summaries, 13 and 20 Jul 43: A.F.H.Q. Int Summary for week ending 24 Jul.)

CONCLUSION

93. The two days of rest and reorganization in the vicinity of RAGUSA and GIARATANA brought to an end the first phase of the Canadian Division's campaign in Sicily. The landing and subsequent enlargement of the bridgehead - the operation for which most of their training had been directed - was successfully accomplished and a good deal more easily than expected. The next phase would consist of more straightforward land fighting, but through a hot and mountainous country differing greatly from the tranquil downs of Southern England where they had spent three and a half years. During the first phase the enemy had been all Italian troops but from Vizzini onwards the fighting was mostly against Germans, weaker in numbers but much more determined and using the terrain to good advantage to fight a delaying action. This fighting will be dealt with in a further report.

94. This Report was prepared by Capt. J. B. Conacher, R.C. Sigs.

Signed - J.B. Conacher
for (C.P. Stacey) Colonel,
Historical Officer,
CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS

13 The "General Note" referred to gives the figure of 115,000 which is obviously much too high; it may be a misprint for 11,500.

~~SECRET~~
CANCELLED

APPENDIX "D"

(Hist Sec file Sicily/1 Cdn Inf Div/C/1)

Copy No. 18

OUTLINE PLAN FOR SECURING CORPS FIRST AND
SECOND OBJECTIVES AFTER CAPTURE OF BLACHHEAD

Corps First Objective

1. Line of rd NOTO 9511 - ROSOLINI 8503 - ISFICA 8199 - POZZALLO 7592.

Corps Second Objective

2. High ground covering the convergence of rds in area PALAZZOLO 8030 - RAGUSA 6514.
3. 30 Corps is advancing with 51(H) Div right and 1 Cdn Div left. Task of 51(H) Div is to assist adv of 13 Corps by relieving it on high ground WEST and N.W. of AVOLA, then securing high ground N.W. of PALAZZOLO.

Boundaries

4. Inter-Div

- (a) Up to capture of Corps First Objective all incl 51(H) Div rd FACHINO 9791 - ROSOLINI 8503 - cross tracks H.734140.
- (b) For adv from First to Second Corps objectives

River TELLARO

Between 30 Corps and 2 U.S. Corps all incl 30 Corps - POZZALLO 7592 - RAGUSA 6414 - CHI. RAMONTE GULMI 6326 - VIZZINI 6640

APPRECIATION

5. It is probable that the enemy's object will be to gain time until the results of initial assaults can be assessed and his reserves launched in a counter offensive.
6. Along the line of adv of 1 Cdn Div N.W. of the FACHINO peninsula the posns on which the enemy may make a stand are:-
 - (a) The ridge generally parallel to and immediately NORTH of the ROSOLINI - ISFICA rd.
 - (b) The high ground EAST and NE of MODICA 6807.

The ridge following the general line track junc 825959 - track junc 850968 - br 918968 may be held by hostile outposts covering a main line of resistance along the ROSOLINI - ISFICA rd.

7. If the enemy have reserves available for local counter offensive action they will likely be employed in the area between the ROSOLINI - ISFICA posn and the high ground EAST and NE of MODICA to counter attack our tps which penetrate the former posn. It is of great importance that A Tk guns should be well fwd in every adv.

Once the ROSOLINI - ISFICA posn has been taken it seems likely that our adv to M A will be resisted by rear parties only, until the high ground EAST and NE of MODICA is reached. A mutually supporting def system may be developed in the latter area.

DISPOSITION OF 1 CDN DIV ON CONCLUSION ASSAULT PHASE

On conclusion of the assault phase 1 Cdn Div will be positioned as follows:-

- (a) One inf bde on high ground area 8896 - 9196 - 9094.
- (b) One inf bde on high ground area 8596 - 8795 - 8693.
- (c) S. S. Bde protecting left flank about 8592.
- (d) One bde in divisional res area 9293 - 9693 - 9490.
- (e) One tk regt in Div res in area 9092 - 9192.
- (f) Div fd arty less 142 (S.P.) Regt will be grouped under comd CRA and deployed in the area 8595 - 8895 - 8792 to cover an arc both incl ROSOLINI - POZZALLO.
- (g) Fwd bdes will maintain contact with the enemy by fighting patrols or battle gps of cyclist coys, carriers, mortars and MMGs if enemy withdraws beyond range of fighting patrols.

ATTENTION

G. 1 Cdn Div will in succession:-

- (a) Capture Corps First objective and take ISFICA and POZZALLO.
- (b) Capture the ridge cross tracks 734140 - pt 537 in 7008 and take MODICA from NE.
- (c) Capture the high ground cross rds 7320 - pt 599 in 6915 and take RAGUSA from the EAST.
- (d) Reorganize in area cross rds 7320 - cross tracks 734140 - pt 599 in 6915 and patrol WEST of R. IRMINIO to make contact with 2 U.S. Corps.

METHOD

PHASE I (To capture of MODICA)

1. 1 Cdn Div will adv on a two bde front leading bdes finding their own adv gds and one sqn 4 Cdn Recce Regt covering the SOUTHERN flank.

(a) Right

One Cdn Inf Bde with under comd:-

142 (S.P.) Regt less one bty and one tp.
 One A tk bty
 One LAA bty
 One coy of a Fd Amb
 Div traffic control parties (for movement only)
 and with in support:-

One fd regt
 Recce parties and route clearance parties, R.C.E.
 (details Appx "A").

(b) Left

One Cdn Inf Bde with under comd:-

One bty and one tp 142 (S.P.) Regt
 One A tk bty
 One LAA bty
 One coy of 2 Fd Amb
 Div traffic control parties (for movement only)
 and with in support:
 One fd regt
 Recce parties and route clearance parties, R.C.L.
 (details Appx "A").

Boundaries

12. Inter-Bde - excl right bde rd IASSO CORRALDO 8993 - ISHICA 8199
 thence CAVA D'ISHICA to br 748062 thence all incl right bde rd br
 748062 - rd junc 720111.
13. A Sqn 4 Cdn Recce Regt will maintain touch with SOUTHERN
 flank of left fwd bde and patrol to line POZZALLO - SCICLI 6299 -
 MODICA as adv proceeds.

Bounds

14. POIPY - rd ROSOLINI - POZZALLO
 PRIMROSE - rd - rd junc 797121 - br 748063 - rd junc
 725024
 BUTLERCUP - rd from 758156 - MODICA.

Div Reserves

15. (a) One Cdn Inf Bde with under comd:-
 One A tk bty
 One coy of 2 Fd Amb
 Recce parties, R.C.L. (details Appx "A").
- (b) 12 Cdn Tk Regt
- (c) S.S. Bde when adv commences will withdraw to area BURGIO
 9293 and reorganize.

Arty

16. Div fd and med arty, less 142 (S.P.) Regt, all under comd
 CRA will be prepared to sp with all guns, either fwd bde.
17. Four F 00 parties from each of two fd regts will accompany
 each fwd bde.
18. Four FCC parties from one fd regt will be in readiness to
 join inf bde in Div res.
19. 1 Cdn A tk Regt less three btys and 2 Cdn LAA Regt less two
 btys will be under comd CRA for Div tasks.
20. Fd and Med Regts will be bounded fwd as adv proceeds on
 orders from CRA.

AA

21. Special instrs on employment of LAA at Appx "B".

Engineers

22. Recce and route clearance parties will be detailed to accompany

each bde, in accordance Appx "A".

13. Priority of tasks:

- (a) Clearing mines and booby traps.
- (b) Repairing and developing comms.
- (c) Developing water supply.

14. A.F.

14. Air Recce tasks in general to locate:-

- (a) Hostile colns converging on area RAGUSA - ROSOLINI - POZZALLO from NORTH, NW or WEST.
- (b) Hostile btys.

15. Forecast of pre-arranged air sp tasks:-

- (a) Bombing attacks on:-

ISFICA
POZZALLO and locality centred about 757938
MODICA

Prior to assaults on above places.

- (b) Fighter or Fighter Bomber attacks on hostile colns located by Tac R converging on area RAGUSA - ROSOLINI - POZZALLO from the West, NW or NORTH.

16. One tentacle with each fwd bde. If res bde is committed a tentacle will be att to it from one of original fwd bdes.

FORECAST OF ACTION IN CERTAIN EVENTUALITIES DURING PHASE I. BASED ON GROUND AND ENEMY DISPOSITIONS AS KNOWN AT PRESENT

17. It is the intention during this phase to strike with the left and follow up on the right.

18. If enemy hold outpost posn along the line track junc 825959 - track junc 850968 - br 918968 and fwd bdes are unable to dislodge enemy with sp initially allotted, left fwd bde will attack on axis 845960 - 826977 supported by whole Div arty.

objective: high ground in 8397 and exploitation to line railway from bend 822990 - br 801972 thence line of stream to 802953.

19. Right fwd bde will take advantage of attack of left fwd bde to gain line of rd ROSOLINI - ISFICA within bde boundaries.

20. If enemy hold the ROSOLINI - ISFICA posn:

- (a) Div reserves will be launched on axis rd junc 825959 - rd junc 765963 - rd junc 730016 to take POZZALLO and high ground around convergence of rds in 7301.
- (b) Original left fwd bde will prepare to attack on axis 806970 - 803990.
- (c) Converging attack will be made on ISFICA from SOUTH and NW when ordered by Div Comd.

PHASE II - To capture of RAGUSA

31. From ridge cross tracks 734140 - pt 537 in 7008 adv will continue on a one bde front on axis rd junc 728131 - rd junc 705152 - rd junc 738207.

Objectives:- (a) High ground about pt 599 in 6915
(b) High ground about 720200 and rd junc 738207.

32. 1 Cdn Div will be positioned on the high ground rd junc 738207 - cross tracks 734140 - pt 599 in 6915 and RAGUSA attacked from the EAST.

33. Patrols will be despatched WEST of R IFFINIO to gain touch with 2 U.S. Corps.

III

34. Div traffic control parties will be under comd fwd inf bdes for movement and will move in rear of bde adv gds. Details in Adm Instrs.

35. Adm Instrs will be issued separately.

INTERCOMN

36. Div H Q centre line rd PACHINO - ISITICA - ROSOLINI - rd junc 750064 - rd junc 720111 - cross tracks 734140.

(G.G. Simonds)
Major-General
GOC 1 Cdn Div

GGS/E
5 JUL 43.

DISTRIBUTIONCopy No.

Brig H.D. Graham Comd 1 Cdn Inf Bde	1
Brig C Vokes Comd 2 Cdn Inf Bde	2
Brig M.H.S. Penhale Comd 3 Cdn Inf Bde	3
Lt-col. G. Kitching GSO.1.	4
Capt A. Chambers GSO.3 (Int)	5
Lt-col W.P. Gilbride AA & MG	6
Brig A.B. Matthews CFA	7
Lt-col. G. Walsh CRE	8
Lt-col. J.H. Laman O.C. Sigs	9
Wing.Comd.R.J. Abrahams RAF	10
GOC	11
30 Corps	12
Maj I.A.G. Davy (L.O. 51(H) Div)	13
2 U.S. Corps (BF L.O.)	14
Col. A.W.B. Becher 103 Sub Area	15
War Diary	16 - 18
Spares	19 - 25

1 Cdn Div (GS)

Receipt is acknowledged of "OUTLINE PLAN FOR SECURING CORPS FIRST AND SECOND OBJECTIVES AFTER CAPTURE OF BEACHHEAD" dated 5 JUL 43