

Yank Paratroopers Slash Way Through Pillboxes to Spearhead Sicily Invasion

By JOHN THOMPSON
Chicago Tribune Correspondent
Representing the Combined
United States Press

WITH AMERICAN AIRBORNE TROOPS IN SICILY, (Delayed)—Spearheading the invasion of Sicily, an American parachute troop combat team has just completed a brilliant and tough mission, fulfilling the expectations of this the largest airborne combat operation ever attempted by the U. S. army.

Since late Friday night, when they landed by the light of a waning moon, they have been fighting crack German and Italian troops, killing and capturing hundreds and hundreds. They have fought as small guerrilla bands, attacking pillboxes and strong points with grenades, anti-tank weapons and knives and they have fought as a small but rugged team against the Herman Goering grenadiers and tanks.

Take Losses

They have taken rather heavy losses but they never gave ground. And it was largely through their slashing, demoralizing attacks on strongly prepared enemy positions that the advance of the much larger seaborne force coming in behind them was accomplished in the area around Vittoria.

It would take a book to tell the full story of this operation and it will be days before all details are even learned, for almost every man who jumped did a job worthy of an army medal. But this much at least can be told by a correspondent who jumped with them to make his second combat jump and this by night.

Started Badly

Actually this mission started under most inauspicious circumstances for the entire team was dropped by troop carriers 30 to 50 miles from the planned objectives. Instead of jumping inland in front of the center force to cut off enemy reinforcements, destroy strong points and otherwise soften up the seaborne landing, the entire group of paratroopers jumped in front of another force farther out.

While the moon was dipping low along the western horizon we came in over the sea, a mighty armada of transport planes flying in perfect formation. The terrain looked unfamiliar to the team commander, a colonel from Mount Carmel, Pa., but a red light flashes from the pilot controls.

Heavy Loads

We had been standing for several minutes in our heavy parachutes, the soldiers weighted down with loads of ammunition, guns and demolitions and this reporter sagging under his own load of noncombatant equipment.

The red light meant that we would be over our objective in a few minutes.

They passed quickly. The green jump light flickered, there was a rush down the aisle toward the door and in a moment we were hurling through space. Then there was the snap of shoulders as the chute opened.

Plane Down

A brilliant glare illuminated the ground revealing an olive grove instead of the expected wheat field. For a moment most of us thought that ground troops had sent up flares and were opening fire. Then the sickening realization came that the flare was from one of our transports

which had broken in two and had burst into flames.

The next moment we were landing.

Thirty feet from the ground the oscillation swung my body horizontal as I smashed through an olive tree and then to the ground. It was a good landing, all things considered. The others didn't fare as well.

Your correspondent emerged from his tangled shroud with a wrenched knee, skinned knuckles and bruises, and what was not to appear until later—a cracked rib.

Wrong Locality

That night we went prowling about in small groups, trying to reach some ground that we could recognize. Before dawn as it turned out later, everyone realized, we had landed in the wrong locality and we had to check to find out in what part of southern Sicily we were. Then we started a general movement to the northwest toward our original objective.

Many men jumped into the fight right away, landing on machine gun nests or pillboxes. Others soon found their hands full as they ran into Italian strong points along the coast or further inland along strange highways.

Loss Men

We began to lose men, but not many, as the tough wily troopers rushed the pillboxes. These emplacements were designed with three-foot cement walls, slits commanding all approaches, 47-millimeter guns and machine-guns, and a great deal of wire.

But the troopers had come to kill and they did. Their anti-tank weapons and grenades drove the pillboxes to be slits. Well-aimed Garand rifle fire often accomplished the same purpose and within a short while each pillbox surrendered its load of Italians or a few Germans.

That was along the beaches. Inland the fighting continued throughout the day.

Group Increases

Our own group by daylight had increased, including this correspondent and two medical officers, also unarmed, who had been "sweated out" in the dark hours together, to 25 assorted troopers.

And here it might be pointed out that every man who jumps, with the above exceptions, jumps ready to fight, whether he's a cook, company clerk, a rigger or one of the service command, and they fought hard and viciously.

Our executive officer had joined up with us and at his command we moved off in column, with flanking scouts, intending to swing north around Vittoria. That was a day we won't soon forget, particularly this reporter, who had seldom walked more than two miles at a time at home.

First Rush

Our first rush moved the enemy back up and over the hill altogether. He outnumbered us then about three to one. The troopers had him on the run, but he came back strong with more artillery fire and then tanks, not only Mark IV's but his huge Mark VI Tiger tanks mounting 88 millimeter guns in the turret.

The next hour was our worst. Everyone expected an attack by the tanks in force and it looked as if there were a good chance that we would be over-run. The colonel had sent word by a runner

to task force headquarters, saying:

"If you want this position held we must have more fire power. But whatever happens we aren't moving off this hill."

Dig Into Fox Holes

He and his staff were dug into fox holes while the command post was under heavy fire. One staff member, Capt. A. W. Ireland of Baltimore took 10 men to the right flank with orders to hold at all costs.

Another held the left flank. We waited, this reporter being some 100 yards to the rear sheltered by a culvert while the roar of enemy tank engines grew louder.

Out in front the paratroopers kept up a constant fire. The crews knocked out two Mark IV's, but other crews were blown up. One youngster after capturing a small Italian tank similar to the British Bren gun carrier charged off in it with the avowed purpose of "scaring those blanks." A direct hit killed him.

Called "Last Hope"

Then the colonel called on his last hope and ordered three available Howitzers wheeled up for direct fire. I saw one gun come up this hill into position.

One trooper rode its barrel while others muscled the piece up the slope to a ridge beside a small white stone house. The tanks began registering hits all around the gun almost immediately, but with the coolness of veterans these men placed their guns.

They opened fire at 1800 yards, knocking out two tanks.

By this time higher headquarters had brought up some 105's which were firing rapidly and the tank attack was stopped. By evening more troopers had arrived and the colonel ordered a counter-attack in order to recover our dead and wounded. Then, like in the last minutes of a Hollywood ending, came our General Sherman tanks and some half-track towing anti-tank guns. You could hear the parachute troopers' cheers even above the clatter of the tanks.

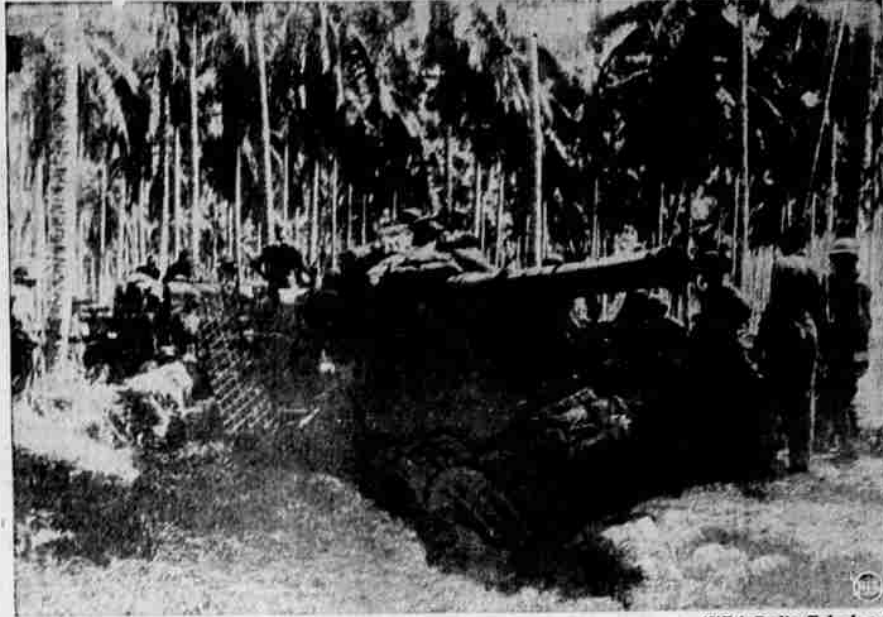
Charge Into Waves

At 8:10 our tanks opened fire and we charged in two waves while the Germans replied with intense mortar fire and sweeping machine-gun fire. Overhead their Messerschmitts prowled to observe or strafe.

Ricocheting bullets sang their bee-like song of death past my culvert while shell fragments whirled through the air. Half an hour later it was quiet. And in the gloom of the gathering night our men came back to their lines while the tanks withdrew, having destroyed from the rear a huge Tiger tank.

We counted many dead and

American Artillery Stuck in Rendova Mud



In the tropical jungle of Rendova in the Solomon Island group, this large American field gun became bogged down in deep mire. Yankee soldiers are shown placing a large piece of wire netting under the wheels of the weapon to get it rolling.

wounded but it was a victory beyond question.

Drives Off Enemy

The attack had driven the enemy off his hill back through the village and he had abandoned tons of equipment. In fact, reconnaissance later showed he retreated completely from this sector.

As a result the combat team of this task force which had been held up by the enemy's strong point was able to push on through in the same manner as the paratroopers' attack on pillboxes and the rear areas had enabled the combat team on the southern flank to advance.

Naval Guns Help

There was another contributing element. The enemy's huge pillboxes and strong points protecting high ground from the west had during the height of the battle come under fire of heavy naval guns and one of our warships.

Fire of these guns was directed by radio from two young naval ensigns who had jumped with us and who had been out in front in the worst fighting all day.

That was yesterday and today the men are resting, reorganizing and often eating for the first time. You find during the fierce throes of battle that hunger is non-existent, but it comes back once you've had a chance to relax.

New Umatilla Dam Project Rejected

PORTLAND, July 16 (AP)—The proposed Umatilla Rapids dam is frowned upon by the army engineers and the war production board as a solution to the anticipated Columbia river power shortage in 1945, the Bonneville administration reported last night.

ENROLLMENT RISES FOR SUMMER PLAY

The summer recreation program has risen to a total of 827 with the last check on July 13. Enrollment for the high school is now 453 with 274 boys and 174 girls taking part in the program there. At Mills school there have been 299 enrolled, with 174 boys and 125 girls receiving the benefits of the recreation school.

In swimming classes 42 boys and 33 girls had enrolled by July 13 to make a total of 75.

Average age of the summer program participants has been lowered with the average age of the youngsters set at 8 years and 8 months. Average age of the boys is 9 years and 2 months, and for the girls it is 8 years and 4 months.

New Budget Ruling May Affect Counties

McMINNVILLE, July 16 (AP)—Yamhill county officials pondered today a circuit court ruling that county budgets should be published in full—a decision that may affect several Oregon counties.

Judge George P. Duncan said the summarized budget ordered published by the Yamhill county court was inadequate. The purpose of publication, he held, is to inform taxpayers of various items of proposed expenditures and their relation to past expenditures.

Classified Ads Bring Results.

Buy Bonds to Buy Bombs For Pelican Bomber During Women's Clubs July Drive

By EMMA CARTER
BPW Club
July is half gone and Klamath county still has many more bonds to buy before the quota of \$300,000 is reached.

Klamath hasn't failed to make any set quota yet, so the BPW and Soroptimist clubs have great faith in our citizens' continued loyalty to their country, as shown by their continuous buying of bonds.

This month is "Bonds for Bombs" for our Klamath Pelican bomber. July MUST be still another red letter month in our all out war effort on the home front. To fail to meet our quota of bonds this month would be to fail our courageous boys who are giving their all each

day they are in the service of their country. We can surely do no less than to deny ourselves some of the luxuries we still enjoy here at home.

Since the schools have closed for the summer there has been a noticeable decrease in stamp and bond sales to our young people of school age. During vacation these young people should be buying more stamps and bonds than ever, since many of them are now earning money of their own. Parents will do their children, as well as their country, a great service if they will instill thrift in these young folks by insisting they invest their savings in War Stamps and Bonds. This saving will provide an education backlog for the post-war years.

Remember, citizens, our slogans this month are, "Pass the Ammunition," "Bonds for Bombs" or "Eggs for the Pelican." These will cost us many dollars' worth of bonds but they are needed grave for that fine bomber we've already bought. We can't send the Klamath Pelican out without the ammunition!

Let's all buy bonds and help to "Pass the Ammunition!"

CONTAGIOUS ILLS ON DOWNWARD PATH

Contagious diseases were recorded as on the downward trend, according to the Oregon state board of health bulletin for the week ending July 10, and Klamath county came through with but one case of measles for the week. Eighty-eight per cent of the county's physicians reported to the health unit.

Measles, mumps and whooping cough led the state report on the communicable disease chart. Klamath kids seemed relatively free from the two latter ailments.

Crowded Areas Get Additional Funds

WASHINGTON, July 16 (AP)—Expenditure of another \$200,000 for community facilities in crowded war production areas was authorized in legislation signed into law by President Roosevelt yesterday.

Congress previously provided \$300,000,000 for construction of such facilities as schools, waterworks and health improvement projects.

MEDICATED POWDER 40 YEAR FAVORITE

Skin rash torture relief hailed by millions

For the itching of minor skin rashes—heat rash, baby's diaper rash, thousands everywhere are turning to a kind of medicated powder specialists often recommend for these miseries. It's called Mexsana, formerly Mexican Heat Powder. And this cooling, soothing powder which has been a favorite for over 40 years, costs very little. It's especially economical when you buy the larger sizes. You'll want to have a supply handy for cooling the heat out of heat rash, the burn out of sunburn, and the itch out of itchy mosquito bites. Today be sure to get Mexsana.

Start Wearing Them Now —

Right Into FALL!

Better DRESSES 8⁹⁵

- BLACKS
- TRAVEL PRINTS
- JERSEYS

SUIT DRESSES AND ONE-PIECE STYLES



BUY WAR BONDS

CRAIG'S

617 MAIN

About My Life Insurance Business--

Since being asked to help out on the farm labor problem and having accepted the appointment as labor assistant to work with the Klamath county labor committee, the question might have come up as to the status of my insurance business.

Myrle C. Adams

While the job of securing volunteer labor to harvest Klamath's large crops is taking a good deal of my time temporarily, I definitely am looking after and continuing my life insurance business.

I accepted this temporary appointment only in a desire to cooperate in the war effort. Life insurance is my business.

MYRLE C. ADAMS

WESTERN LIFE INSURANCE CO.

830 Pine St. Phone 8138

Ask Yourself This Question...

"WHY DO MORE PEOPLE GO TO CHEVROLET DEALERS FOR SERVICE

than to any other dealer organization?"

...and you'll find yourself supplying these answers:

Because Chevrolet Dealers ARE SKILLED IN SERVICING ALL MAKES OF CARS

Because Chevrolet Dealers EMPLOY TRAINED MECHANICS

Because Chevrolet Dealers USE QUALITY PARTS

Because Chevrolet Dealers GIVE GOOD SERVICE

For years Chevrolet dealers have had more trade-ins than any other dealer organization. . . . Therefore, they have had broader experience in servicing all makes and models. . . . They're "America's Service Specialists." . . . They're the men to see when you want good, dependable service on your car!



CHEVROLET DEALERS HAVE DEDICATED THEMSELVES TO THIS TASK: "SAVE THE WHEELS THAT SERVE AMERICA"

SEE YOUR LOCAL CHEVROLET DEALER SERVICE ON ALL MAKES OF CARS AND TRUCKS

TURNER CHEVROLET CO.

410 So. 6th St.

Phone 4113