

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
WASHINGTON



DEPARTMENTAL RECORDS BRANCH, A.G.O.

HISTORICAL RECORDS SECTION

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100th Inf Bn (Sep)

HEADQUARTERS 442D REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM
APO #782, U. S. ARMY

20 October 1945.

SUBJECT: Historical Information.

TO: Commanding General, 34th Infantry Division, APO
34, U. S. Army. (Att: Historical Section).

1. In accordance with letter file 314.7, Headquarters 34th Infantry Division, 9 September 1945, there is inclosed narrative history of the 442d Regimental Combat Team for the period 9 June 44-15 Aug 44; and of the 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate) for the period 2 September 1943-11 June 1944.

2. Not included are regimental field orders, overlays and photographs, inasmuch as copies of same are not available. Neither have copies been inclosed of General Orders published by the 34th Infantry Division subsequent to August 1944, awarding decorations to members of this organization.

3. There is inclosed a copy of booklet "442d Combat Team", published by this headquarters through the Information and Education Section, MTOUSA.

For the Commanding Officer:

T. M. KOBAYASHI,
1st Lt, Infantry,
Adjutant.

6 Incls.

- Incl 1 - History of 100th Inf Bn (Sep) ✓
from Aug 43-June 44.
- Incl 2 - History of 442 RCT for June 44, *See INRG-442-0.2*
with list of casualties for month. *etc.*
- Incl 3 - History of 442 RCT for July 44, "
with casualties and awards for month. "
- Incl 4 - History of 442 RCT 1 Aug-15 Aug 44, "
with awards for period.
- Incl 5 - Rosters by company of personnel as-
signed to 100th Bn and 442 RCT while ✓
attached to 34th Inf Div.
- Incl 6 - Historical booklet. *See INRG-442-0*

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Staten Island Bay, New York, on the sultry afternoon of 21 August¹⁹⁴³ was a bustling collecting-point of ocean-going ships of every type. Masses of men, guns, fuels and other varied implements of war were Europe-Africa bound and all decks and hatches fully-rented with battle-garnished soldiers and supplies.

Aboard a troop transport several thousand close-quartered men, including the 100th Infantry Battalion, spent the last hours before departure lining the rails for a glimpse of Manhattan's skyline. Then a little before dusk the USS James Parker made its slow way out into the open and became part of one of the largest convoys ever to sail from the bay.

With destroyers and escort vessels pointing the way, the convoy ran the seas well. Days and distance slipped past with life aboard ship becoming drab at times. Men slept in rotating shifts, some on deck and some below and with such an excess of troops only two meals were served daily. The old army custom of "sweating it out" was habitual of this voyage, for movies and other entertainment admitted only a portion of the huge group.

For other pleasure seekers, card games and dice games filled the day quite amiably, interrupted only by daily life boat drill and the scramble for meals.

Almost a fortnight later on 2 September the anchor was dropped at Oran, North Africa and the 100th hastily disembarked. Convoying to a staging area, under a hot African sky and through arid wastelands located in the vicinity of Fleurus, Algeria, the men camped for the first time on foreign soil.

The seventeen day-stay in Africa had distasteful memories. In the staging area, strong day winds blew sand and settled in in

tents, mixed it with the food and was responsible for many tongue-lashings when rifles became jammed. At night, intolerable sand fleas caused unending scratching and loss of sleep. Aside from these disturbances, drinking water presented the real problem. Black sluggish water, with a high content of alkali was ill-tasting. To insure health precautions everyone took unpalatable tablets. Many suffered diarrhea until they substituted better tasting wines. Bathing and washing was at a minimum for resistant water made it impossible to draw suds from any soap, including reliable GI soap.

Several days expired here, then the battalion shifted 12 miles away to a cool sprawling cork forest where training program was initiated.

On 8 September the 100th Infantry Battalion, (per General Order, number 35, Headquarters, 34th Infantry Division) was assigned to this unit and moved to the division bivouac area in the region of Bou Tlelis, Algeria. A further attachement was made to the division's 133rd Infantry Regiment for tactical purposes to replace the 2nd Battalion of the 133rd Regiment which at that time and in the African Campaign was the security guard of AFHQ in Algiers.

This tie-up met with strong approval. Throughout the North African Campaign--in particular the division's notable part in the capture of strategic Hill 609 in Tunisia the 34th had established a fine battle record. Theirs was also the claim of being the oldest overseas division in the European Theatre of Operations. Now that the 100th had come under the wing of the 133rd Regiment, it spiked strong rumors that MATOUSA officials wanted to "laborize" the battalion to guard rail installation. No longer were they orphaned soldiers but now members of the "Red Bull" Division.

Divisional commander, Major General Charles W. Ryder welcomed Colonel Turner and his staff. A little later he spoke to the officers and non-commissioned officers informing them of his division's battle experiences learned in the previous campaign. He also promised to stand by the 100th under all circumstances, giving it exactly what would be given his own men. No one could expect anything more.

Before the battalion arrived, General Ryder dispatched a self-authored memorandum to his troops stating that the new men were not to be called or referred to as "Japs"--the one name that they would not tolerate. This consideration and fore-thought created a warm feeling for this commander, which shall always be remembered.

Colonel Ray C. Fountain, Commanding Officer of the 133rd, also signified the same thought to his officers and men when the 100th came into the bivouac area.

"They are not Japanese," he said, "but Americans born in Hawaii. They don't ask any special consideration and we won't give them anything that isn't given to all other units. The battalion will be fighting with the rest of us taking its regular turns".

As another friendly gesture the band greeted the men and after this cheery welcome the 100th at last realized the end of its wanderings. By nightfall soldiers of the 133rd drifted into the 100th's area, listened and sang Hawaiian songs, and shared the same bottles of wine. Here was the beginning of a mutual friendship that became more intense at the battlefield where men of this regiment lived, fought and died holding no petty qualms about pedigree.

The same day that the 100th became a part of the 34th Division, 8 September 1943, Italy surrendered to the United Nations. On the

following day a powerful convoy neared the Gulf of Salerno landing General Mark Clark's American Fifth Army forces on the beaches of Paestum and Salerno. As originally scheduled the 34th Division was to go to Italy as part of the reinforcement group after the Salerno landing. They were to arrive on D plus 21/25 convoy but heavy counterattacks were launched against the beach-head which brought about a premature move.

VI Corps, commanded by Major General John P. Lucas, immediately sent a communique to the 34th to land as part of the D plus 12 convoy, so on the 19 September the battalion boarded the USS Frederick Funston. Its destination was Salerno Beach. Morning of 22 September, the convoy carrying the 133rd Infantry Combat Team (the 135th and 168th Infantry Regiments of the division were not combat-loaded at the time and came in shortly afterwards) less the 151st Field Artillery Battalion, arrived in the Bay of Salerno near the mouth of the Sele River. Four vessels, three carrying battle-prepared soldiers and one with supplies and field guns, sailed in under a heavy coverage of protecting aircraft. Two hours later the first assault boats were lowered into the water and troops were taken ashore in echelon, all ships were unloaded simultaneously. In a short time the sandy beach swarmed with activity, completely filled with troops carrying their gear. Afterwards heavier equipment, including peeps, trucks, 57mm Anti-tank guns and 75mm Pack Howitzers were taken in. Within 24 hours the ships were bare.

From the beach to an assembly area a short distance inland, troops footed five more miles cross-country to reach the regimental bivouac area by late afternoon. Immediately two companies (E and F) were placed under Fifth Army control for use in guarding airfields

and supply dumps. It was a recurrent problem of what to do with these extra companies during the campaign, since committing them in the line made the battalion tactically inflexible and was therefore prohibited by General Ryder. Later heavy casualties simplified this problem and the 100th's Table of Organization was reorganized from five rifle companies to four and finally to the regular three. While in this area, news came that the Fifth Army had held up under the counterattacks, consequently the combat team was temporarily dissolved.

On 25 September Colonel Fountain received orders to reform the combat team under the command of Assistant-Divisional Commander, Brigadier General Caffey. Movement was to be made to the vicinity of Montecorvino-Rovella a distance of about 25 miles. Ready for the "go" signal were three infantry battalions, including the following other units: 1st Platoon, Company A, 109th Engineers; one platoon, 105th AA Battalion; one unit, Reconnaissance Group, 776th Tank Destroyer Battalion; Battery C, 151st Field Artillery Battalion; 17th Field Artillery Battalion and one unit of the 109th Medical Battalion.

As of this date the 100th Battalion Staff and company commanders consisted of the following officers: Commanding Officer, Lt. Colonel Turner; Executive Officer, Major Lovell; S-3, Major (then Captain) John A. Johnson, Jr; S-2, Captain (then 1st Lt.) Robert J. McKelvy; S-1, Major (then Captain) Oscar King; S-4, Captain (then 2nd Lt.) George E. Grandstaff; Company A, Captain Charles E. Arnold; Company B, Captain Taro Suzuki; Company C, Captain Kenneth S. Raeder; Company D, Captain Jack E. Mizuha; Company E, Major (then Captain) Alex E. McKenzie and Company F, Captain Victor J. Bonin.

That day Headquarters VI Corps distributed the following message to the men of the Corps:

HEADQUARTERS VI CORPS
A.P.O. 306, U. S. Army

25 September 1943

SUBJECT: Additional Unit Assigned to Fifth Army.

TO : Commanders, All Units and Organizations.

1. There has recently arrived in this theater a battalion of American Soldiers of Japanese ancestry. The troops take particular pride in their American origin.

2. Your command should be so informed in order that during the stress and confusion of combat, cases of mistaken identity may be avoided.

By command of Major General LUCAS:

/s/ H. S. Alcorn
H. S. ALCORN
1st Lt., A. G. D.,
Asst Adjutant General

The battalion had settled in the new area when additional orders moved them to the vicinity of Oliveta Citra in the 45th Infantry Division sector. About noon 26 September, Colonel Turner and other unit commanders were called to the regimental command post and briefed on the new change of plans which would commit the regiment in the 45th Division area ready for action. The group was also informed that the Commanding General, 34th Division, General Ryder, was to be Task Force Commander.

Major General Lucas placed the 34th Division on the right of the 3rd Infantry Division to establish contact with the German Army and secure the Montemarano-Avellino route leading northwest in the sector. The task force was to motor roundabout via Eboli-Contursi and San Angelo, since the direct route was demolished. From there they were to advance west and seize the high grounds in the vicinity of Chiusano and be prepared to assist the 3rd Division's 7th Infantry Regiment in the attack on Avellino.

After two alerts, on the night of 26 September, the 100th prepared to enter combat. Completing movement, 15 kilometers northwest of Lioni, they marched diagonally southwest to an area near Montemarano through the heaviest downpour of the month. The rain continued throughout the night; mud and wet earth offered the only bed for soaked troops.

Early morning of 27 September, the 133rd Task Force was moving slowly due to blown-bridges and heavily-mined roads. Two blown spans across the Calore River impeded the use of vehicles so troops crossed on foot and set out in open formation for Montemarano. By mid-afternoon this old town was occupied, the only opposition coming from harassing SP fire of the German 26th Panzer Division.

Here the 100th bivouaced for the night in stables and barns, while outside the rain continued its steady beat.

The battalion's first meeting with the Wehrmacht came on 28th September in the vicinity of Montemarano.

An Italian civilian reported a lone German in a farmhouse up the road who wanted to surrender. This information was passed on to Company B and Lt. Andrew H. Krivi with a squad brought the prisoner back. The German armed with a Luger Pistol (it was given to Major Lovell as the first prize of captured enemy equipment) and a machine pistol was interrogated. Quite surprised at his captors he asked if these men were Chinese but received a curt reply that they were Japanese. Without catching the sequel to the explanation as he was led away, he misinterpreted the facts and had the false impression that Japan, as well as the rest of the world, was fighting Germany.

During the afternoon of the same day the battalion's first casualty was sustained. Lt. (then Sgt.) Conrad C. Tsukayama, squad leader in Company D's Mortar Platoon suffered a fragment wound in the face when a passing jeep set off an anti-tank mine. His injury was not serious and shortly after he returned to action by doing a "reverse AWOL" from the hospital.

At 0600 hours, 29 September, the 100th, with an Anti-tank platoon attached, pulled its vehicles out of the mud and took over the advance guard of the task force. It moved toward Castlevenero on the Chiusano road. Company B, led by Captain Taro Suzuki, set the pace on the route march and hit no resistance until about 1000 hours when intermittent fire from enemy SP guns forced a temporary halt. Third Platoon headed by Captain (then Lt.) Paul Froning

pressed forward nearing a road bend until an enemy machine gun threw several bursts to scatter the group.

Knowing they must continue and seize their objective before enemy artillery commenced, Sergeant Shigeo J. Takata volunteered to silence the gun. Taking a squad he led a flanking movement which eventually surrounded the nest. With his approach covered he moved forward to a vantage point and fired several burst from his tommy-gun forcing the enemy to move back. In the pursuit which gradually closed the gap, Sgt. Takata advanced alone. Then enemy artillery began searching the area and one shell burst near and fatally wounded him. Just before death Sgt. Takata told the whereabouts of the enemy gunners. With this vital information the position was later silenced. Sgt. Takata was posthumously awarded the 100th's first battle medal--the Distinguished Service Cross.

Around noon the advance retarded again near a blown-bridge until a bypass could be constructed. A bridge under repair offered a natural target and enemy artillery and SP guns began shelling. Fortunately there were no casualties. This was a dual example--demolition of water spans and harassing fire--of the delaying methods that the enemy employed to frustrate an advance. His way was to impede approaching troops with small detachments of tanks, infantry in half-tracks and mobile SP cannons, thus forcing a breakdown. When in close contact the Germans mined roads and paths of approach heavily and demolished bridges, houses and electrical and gas plants. Here the enemy confined his actions to the roadways, however, beyond the Volturno River he resorted to his favorite tactics of falling back to commanding grounds which afforded good observation.

That afternoon G-3 ordered the 100th to swing 2 kilometers west to cut off a German body retreating before the 7th Infantry through the junction at Chiusano. The mission was to quickly seize the junction and establish a road-block. As the troops swung westward over the rough terrain they were countered by heavy 75mm fire. It was through the courageous deed of Staff Sergeant Masaichi Goto, a company aid-man, that several wounded were saved under this barrage. For his gallantry he was given the Silver Star.

The risk of moving down the rough slopes against such fire was too great so the battalion delayed and planned a dawn attack. A little after the appointed hour on the 30th, Company B, together with Company C commanded by Captain Kenneth C. Raeder, moved into the valley without opposition under concealment of thick grape vines. In the afternoon they cautiously approached the outskirts of Chiusano. By 1700 hours resistance had stiffened from a line of enemy defenses. Deployed on the rim the 100th pushed aside these defenses and moved into town. Two hours later the Germans were in retreat and the high ground to the west was completely occupied by the two companies. Company A, led by Captain Charles E. Arnold was left here to establish the road-block while the rest of the 100th moved several kilometers up the road from Chiusano to the vicinity of Farolise where they established flanking cover for the advance of the rest of the 133rd. The battalion had accomplished its first mission at a cost of 18 casualties.

Montemarano having been liberated, small delaying contingents in the town of Montefalcione were cleared out. At an outpost Corporal Yoshiharu E. Yoshida spotted the lead vehicle, let it come within 35 yards, then fired upon it and inflicted considerable damage.

The other cars were turned back. Despite enemy shells that fell about his post he prepared to fire in the event the armored cars returned. Corporal Yoshida was rewarded with a Silver Star.

Meanwhile elements of Field Marshall Albert Kesselring's 10th German Army, fighting a delaying action, slowly withdrew to the high grounds northwest of the city of Benevento, key road and rail center on the Fifth Army's right flank. At the same time 133rd's 1st Battalion was on its way to set up a road-block at Pratola and by midnight of the 31 September the 3rd Battalion had seized Montimiletto and pushed beyond it. Now the way was clear for an assault on strategic Benevento.

Before dawn next day the 1st Battalion launched an enveloping drive near Pratola but enemy half-tracks of the 67th Panzer Grenadier Regiment laid down strong fire to halt them. However, on the other flank the 3rd Battalion made a rapid advance and released pressure on the 1st Battalion sector. By 1900 hours friendly troops were on the road at Pratola establishing a road-block. Striking ahead of La Serra the 3rd Battalion was up so far that the 100th was ordered to take the road to Montimiletto to support the drive on Benevento. Late that evening the battalion arrived and sent out patrols but failed to contact the forward battalions.

In the midst of a downpour the following afternoon, the 100th moved north to Pietradefusi but was shifted in the direction of San Giorgio to a roadway on the left of the 3rd Battalion. With this unit moving up on a parallel road the 100th was to assault Benevento. The 3rd Battalion was to secure the city while the 100th was to swing through the city afterward making for the high grounds to the northwest.

B Both units slogged along mudded roads for hours. Meanwhile the 776th Reconnaissance Company scouting ahead reported by radio at 1600 hours that they had entered the city. It was empty. Behind this screen the 100th and 3rd Battalion made a 20 mile forced march, most of the time hand-carrying their heavy load of equipment, weapons and ammunition. Cold rain beat down as enemy artillery fell on the 100th's rear column. Shells traced the entire route of approach and followed every left or right turn and fell with a thud in the deep, soft mud. Fortunately a large percentage of the shells were duds. During the 18 hour march there were no casualties.

Shortly after midnight the 3rd Battalion entered Benevento's streets. An hour later the 100th marched through the rubble caused by previous Allied bombings, and went on to organize defenses facing west along the railroad south of town.

An element of the 45th Infantry Division then passed through the 133rd's bridgehead over the Calore River and took up the pursuit while the latter entrenched in place as support for this operation until the evening of 5 October. That night the 133rd went into Corps Reserve, near the village of San Martino.

In the course of these engagements with the enemy the 100th's casualties mounted to 3 enlisted men killed, 1 officer and 22 enlisted men wounded and 1 officer and 7 enlisted men injured. The latter list was swelled on 2 October when a jeep accident injured the Assistant-Surgeon, Captain Richard T. Kainuma, M.C. and 4 enlisted medical aid-men.

Off the line, the 100th anticipated a short rest but renewed smashes at the enemy caused the men to spend their "off days" in following up the frontal drive. On 7 October the regiment began

to move through the never-ending rains and mud, making its way to the division assembly area in the vicinity of Montesarchio. Three days later the 100th displaced forward south of Limatola in division reserve so as to be on hand if needed during the first crossing of the Volturno and so on the following day the 34th Division crossed at midnight in the vicinity of Limatola between the 3rd and 45th Division sectors.

Mid-month found the troop near Bagnoli. At this encampment E and F companies returned from Fifth Army control to relieve B and A companies from the line. During a lull the first praise of their initial actions became known. The 34th Division Commander distributed 100 copies of the Division News Bulletin containing a message quoted from General Clark to General Dwight D. Eisenhower praising the 100th Infantry Battalion. This note of appreciation put the men in high spirits.

An all-out attack for the second crossing of the Volturno, which now winded northeast and southeast, was to begin on 19 October. The day before all three regiments made ready for the crossing. The 133rd would occupy the middle sector of the divisional layout assaulting to the north and northwest to secure the bridgehead across the river on the Dragoni-Alife road. The 1st Battalion would point the drive; the 100th was to protect the rear of the other battalions, then cross.

During the afternoon of 18 October the 1st Battalion forded the Volturno behind a smoke screen. Meanwhile the 100th advanced north to the river, then traveled northeast along the bank meeting only scattered resistance from pockets of the 3rd Panzer Grenadier Division. Having secured the rear the Volturno crossing was safely

made by the 100th around midnight of the next day. Other units did not fare so luckily.

At a forward assembly area in the flats south of Alife there was a pause for the coming attack on this town and neighboring Sant Angelo d'Alife, 3 miles to the northwest. Reconnaissance patrols skirted near Alife and Dragoni and told of encountering many mined areas and machine gun pits, established to give interlocking fire. Division G-2 and G-3 staffs had already reported that the opposing forces consisted of the tough 29th Panzer Grenadier Regiment of the 3rd Panzer Grenadier Division.

On the night of 20 October, the 133rd moved out in a column of battalions toward San Leonardo. Leading the offense Company A fanned out over the open terrain, hoping to hit the high ground by dawn. About midnight they were stopped by a stubbornly-defended defense perimeter where the German command had ordered determined delaying action. On the flats that night casualties were costly. Many were caught in murderous fire, unable to defend themselves and those who were more fortunate picked good defilates and stayed there powerless.

Since the 100th stalled, Regimental Commander, Colonel Fountain directed his 1st Battalion to move right of the 100th and advance along the upper road to relieve some of the pressure. The Germans sensed this move and the next morning directed their multi-barreled "screaming meemie" mortars on the 1st Battalion area. Some shells landed in the 100th's area adding more casualties. Finally the battalion was ordered to safer grounds after this harsh pounding.

Heroic deeds are the byword in every action as exemplified in the battle for Alife. PFC Thomas I. Vamanage, BAR man of a lead rifle squad exposed to heavy shelling silenced an enemy machine gun

ultimately resulting in the freedom of his pinned-down platoon. After killing the entire crew, he was mortally wounded. He was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

When his platoon became separated, Lt. James C. Vaughn though targeted by heavy machine gun fire on each flank, crawled 50 yards to encourage his men. Then he crawled back 300 yards under the intense fire to his company CP. There he asked for supporting artillery fire but received orders to withdraw his platoon. Retracing the same route he withdrew them although being wounded after silencing an enemy gun with his pistol. He was awarded the Silver Star.

Technician Fifth Grade Satoshi W. Kadota, aid-man to a trapped unit moved into the open to administer first-aid to twelve wounded comrades. Under heavy fire he evacuated a large number of casualties and for such gallantry T/5 Kadota was awarded a Silver Star.

During the same hour, Private Ted S. Shikiya, despite his own severe wounds struggled from his place of safety to drag a wounded comrade from the shelled area. In doing so he received a fatal wound. Private Shikiya was awarded the Silver Star posthumously.

Corporal Donald S. Hayashi, another Silver Star winner, commanded a squad when his leader was hit and administered aid to several of the wounded. By also holding their position single-handed for over one hour and forty minutes, he effected their safe evacuation by litter squads.

On 21 October, Lt. Colonel Marshall was placed in command of the combat team for a renewed charge on Alife. The next morning, under the cover of fog, the 100th and 3rd Battalions attacked. Companies A and C, with strong mortar and artillery support tried

going across the flats, but made only slow progress in the face of machine gun and sniper fire. By nightfall they had advanced half-way and halted until the following day.

On 23 October the assault continued. Both companies tried to outflank the village of Alife but were stopped by enemy tanks which had rolled onto the northwest flats. One Mark II was targeted with bazooka fire by Private Masao Awakuni and his assistant, Private Ichiro Obara and destroyed. Of eleven tanks which harassed the attack, five others were damaged by artillery fire after being spotted by an observing Piper Cub.

Another telling factor which helped route the line of enemy ground forces was the act of Staff Sergeant Louis K. Sakamoto. In the face of heavy enemy fire he effectively threw hand grenades killing several Germans and forced the others to retreat. Thus the platoon could move up and seize vital ground so that in the final phase the 60mm mortars could displace forward and pump devastating fire on the enemy.

Forty-eight hours after jumping-off, A and C companies had seized Alife. It was reported that the Germans had fallen back several kilometers so to press this withdrawal Regiment ordered the seizure of "Castle Hill"--known also as Hill 529, a dominating height west of the town of Castello d'Alife.

Companies E and F relieved A and C companies and started working through wooded terrain to the hill site. A low hanging mist rendered enemy OP's inoperative but still they engaged stubborn clusters of the 8th Panzer Grenadier Regiment and it required a slow wiping-out process at the cost of many casualties. At 0900 hours of the next morning a flank movement was executed across the

lower grounds to the south placing both units only 1000 yards south-east of the crest of "Castle Hill". To cut further losses in a frontal drive up the high-angled hill, the battalion was ordered to dig-in while the 1st Battalion which had met no resistance in its occupation of San Angelo came around on the enemy's left rear in a surprise move. This plan forced the Germans back.

About noon the enemy made a last sortie. To the rear six 81mm mortars went into action upon the commands of Captain Mizuha and platoon leader Lt. Neill M. Ray. Spotting from an OP they called for over 200 rounds of mortar shells which battered the enemy force. Later, Italian civilians related that over 50 enemy were either killed or wounded.

For three days the regiment consolidated positions here while other units of the division took up the chase. Action was limited to daily patrols and on the night of 24th October a 100th patrol captured several prisoners.

The fight for, and capture of Alife and San Angelo d'Alife, cost the 100th 21 killed and 66 wounded including Major Lovell,-- A and C companies suffering the most. It was a high price to pay for the capture of these small towns.

Two days before October expired, Lt. Colonel Turner was relieved of his command and replaced by Lt. Colonel (then Major) James J. Gillespie. Colonel Turner's relief was a cruel blow to the officers and men. In sixteen months he had organized, trained, and led the 100th in combat, exemplifying the highest qualities of a leader. Ever-mindful of the welfare of his troops when they were committed, his thoughts were first and always for them.

The new commander, Colonel Gillespie, had been transferred

from the 168th Infantry Regiment, where he had risen from the ranks. A concurrent opinion held that Colonel Gillespie was one of the most outstanding commanders that the 100th ever had. He was a brilliant strategist and an accurate judge of military situations and those judgments were seldom questioned.

The final days of October found the 100th in regimental reserve, trailing gains through Ailano, Pratella and Ciorlano made by the 1st and 3rd Battalions and the 135th Infantry Regiment. During those three days enemy planes came over, presumably reconnoitering allied territory for the purpose of noting movement towards the Volturno River. After the sweep through these three towns the regiment was now on the adjacent heights overlooking the Volturno and also controlled most of the level approaches to the water. Here a fording was sought where the Volturno stretched almost north and south.

Dawn of 1 November, Companies A and C, moving up the ridge line to clear remaining opposition to the river bank, were strafed by six Messerschmitts which caused 12 casualties.

Critiques held during the next few days brought out a plan for the third crossing of the Volturno. On 3 November Colonel Marshall explained to his staff the pending assault which was to take place that night. The 3rd Battalion was to cross the river first with the town of San Maria Olivetto as its objective; the 1st Battalion was to follow the 3rd and echelon to the left after the crossing to seize Hill 550; and the 100th was to cross east and take the low ground to the left and rear of the 1st Battalion to secure the division rear and left flank, next to the 45th Division. An artillery concentration was planned from 2330 hours to 2400 hours.

Patrols had previously reconnoitered the entire area between Ciorlano and the river and found as expected that the olive groves and valley on the other side were heavily mined and booby-trapped but that there were few German positions on the low ground. Enemy artillery fire became heavy and accurate as the guns traversed throughout the areas and roads to try and offset the looming attack which was planned for midnight.

In the wake of a two hour daylight air bombardment on Route 85, and a half hour divisional barrage, the 133rd at midnight commenced the last crossing of the Volturno River. In the 100th's sector Company F was the first unit to move out. They were to secure the line of departure on the opposite side for an attack by B and E companies. At close interval, along the mudded valley they filed down the banks, slipped into the cold waters and quickly went across. The fording of the river was completed without meeting any enemy resistance but in the thick undergrowth and olive groves of the valley floor the men ran into cleverly laid-out minfields. The area was strewn with S and Teller Mines and booby-traps with trip wires attached, covering all the trails, ravines and likely approaches. Parachute flares were set to go off by trip wire to reveal the positions of those who stumbled on them.

Several men stepped on anti-personnel mines. In the darkness they dispersed and became disorganized. Squad leader, Sergeant Matsutada Makishi and his assistant squad leader, Corporal Haruyoshi H. Tateyama realizing the importance of their mission and with full knowledge of the attendant dangers, combed the area and located each member and reorganized the squad. Then the two men led the squad forward single file through the minefield locating the outpost line

finished

and while performing another operation to insure the safety of the attacking companies who were to pass through, both men stepped on mines and were mortally wounded. For their heroism Sgt. Makishi and Corporal Tateyama were posthumously awarded Silver Stars.

Into this valley the 100th drove, knowing it would be death to be caught in the vulnerable low grounds during the coming morning hours. The enemy controlled all the high grounds of the valley and would pummel them with artillery and mortars. During the advance through the minefields, members of the Communications Platoon was caught in machine gun cross-fire. All three were killed. A few minutes later two squads from Company E silenced the positions.

Four of the wire-laying squad were decorated with Silver Stars for their courageous actions in laying vital wire lines for battalion intra-communications; three caught by the cross-fire received the award posthumously. Staff Sergeant Melvin T. Tsuda, battalion wire chief, led his squad in the successful wire communications to the forward elements and was decorated for unstinting devotion despite grave dangers. Private Harushi Kondo, Edward Y. Ide and Himeo Hiratani were given posthumous honors for their unselfish act to aid the battalion's cause.

Around 0230 hours of the 4th, Company B moving parallel to a road several hundred yards past the river, was halted by machine pistols firing from the right flank across the road. Captain Suzuki taking Captain Young O. Kim, went to reconnoiter. A few minutes later Staff Sergeant Ozaki, squad leader in the 2nd Platoon, ordered "fix bayonets". Then the entire platoon charged across the road, yelling, screaming in loud defiance. Startled, the enemy fled leaving two wide-eyed prisoners in their positions. Going

several hundred yards the platoon finally met up with Captain Suzuki and Kim. According to some stories this bayonet charge by Company B was the Fifth Army's first one against the Germans.

By the hour of 0740 the 100th was astride the railroad about 2000 yards from the river. Some skirmishes occurred but the enemy withdrew to the hills. The other two battalions also reached their objectives on the morning of the 4th but encountered more resistance. There was sharp reaction to this thrust by the regiment and in the mopping-up procedure, all fronts throughout the day met with active opposition.

By midnight the 100th counted 8 killed and 42 wounded. Lt. Kurt E. Schemel, Company E, was the first officer killed in the battalion when in the morning he was shot by a sniper. Thirty wounded had to be evacuated by retracing through the minefields and Chaplain Israel A. S. Yost, while aiding in the removal of a body from the minefields, was injured when he set off a trip-wire mine. Several days later he returned to his post at the aid-station to assist the wounded. That night A and C companies in reserve were given the mission of sending out night patrols to keep contact with the 45th Division on the left.

At daybreak of the 5th, the 1st Battalion was counterattacked and thrust off Hill 550 by a fanatical bayonet charge of the enemy. However, it still held the small hill to the right. To restore the situation, a coordinated assault was planned with 1st Battalion attacking Hill 550 again while companies E and B of the 100th were to move around to the left against Hills 590 and 610 on the next ridge line to the northwest.

The battalion launched an attack against these two hills in

daylight in the face of heavy artillery barrages. In this action Captain Kawasaki, M.C. and Major Johnson were wounded. In their follow-up Company F also caught a pounding of enemy shells. Company E ran into an extensive minefield directly in the point of advance and Lt. Lewis A. Key and his platoon were called upon to act as a point for the battalion's attack. With his scout, T/Sgt. Kenso Suga, he proceeded through the minefield cutting trip wires and neutralizing dangerous mines. A few days later Lt. Key was killed and his Silver Star was awarded posthumously, while T/Sgt. Suga also was awarded a Silver Star.

Progressing behind close artillery support and concealed by thick brushes, the 100th sprung forward in a surprise move and finally captured the prominitories. So quickly did the battalion strike that the enemy started calling to the troops in German as if in friendly manner. The 1st Battalion also retook its objective.

Further exploiting the situation by the capture of Hills 590 and 160, the 100th went ahead against heavy 75mm self-propelled guns and machine pistol fire to capture Hill 600 in the vicinity of Pozzilli. Enemy fire accounted for more casualties as German observation posts were set on the high bluffs that gave excellent view on forward-moving troops.

Two men in Company F, which again caught enemy fire, were cited with Silver Stars for action on this hill. PFC Kazunobu Yamamoto, although wounded and bleeding about the ears and nose, insisted on remaining at his 60mm mortar firing with accuracy and devastating effect to inflict heavy casualties on a German company. He left his post only when ordered to do so when it was learned that he was suffering a serious wound which needed immediate attention. Another

who excelled, PFC Michael M. Enga, on three occasions, dragged wounded comrades to a safer position. Then he braved falling shells to get the medics after he had administered aid himself.

The Germans launched two more counterattacks in desperate effort to retake these hills. On the night of the 5th, a combat patrol led by Captain Kim with two scouts, Sgt. Masaharu Takeba and PGC Yukio Takaki routed four adjacent machine gun nests. After a short firefight, seven enemy were forced to surrender.

On the morning of the 6th the second counterattack took place. An advance was attempted up the draw between Hills 510 and 610 and even with their preparatory barrage the main body was repulsed with heavy casualties. Three forward observers for Company D's mortars, Platoon Leader, Lt. Neill M. Ray and Corporals' Katsushi Tanouye and Bert K. Higashi were at an OP located beyond the advance infantry elements. Despite intense and continuous shelling, the three adjusted mortar fire on an estimated two companies. Each time the enemy was observed forming for a counterattack, Lt. Ray and his two aides directed as many as forty rounds upon them, breaking up their columns. All morning, they held the enemy down until a tree burst killed them instantly. For such courage in the face of death, all three were posthumously awarded Silver Stars.

Filtering behind the lines on the murky and overcast day of the 7th, three platoons of the 2nd Company, 9th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, ran into patrols dispatched by companies B and E. Captain Kim leading Company B's patrol observed one assault party of considerable strength coming towards his lines. He ordered his men to hold fire until the enemy was only 20 to 30 yards away, then they cut loose. The panicked Germans ran about in confusion. Several

were killed and over 30 prisoners were taken after being driven into another battalion's area.

To guard against further flank threats, A and C companies were formed into a "provisional battalion" and set out patrolling on the left flank to maintain contact with the 179th Infantry Regiment, 45th Division. The counterattacks of the previous day were the last determined resistance in the sector, however, that night under the false move of patrols to hide his movement the enemy withdrew. Their defense lines retreated, but long range enemy guns shelled the areas.

On 11 November, it was back to Pozzilli for temporary rest and reorganization after suffering days on the line. Pay day--the first since coming overseas--came on the 12th but no peace was to be had. Harassing enemy fire killed one man and wounded another, both of Company E. Payments were therefore made in slit-trenches. On the 13th, all privates of companies E and F were transferred to the other companies to help strengthen the depleted ranks but still each rifle company averaged about 150 men instead of the regular 187 men.

Those first days of November had been critical for the 100th. The casualty list showed 3 officers and 75 enlisted men killed or died-of-wounds, 18 officers and 239 enlisted men injured or wounded and one man missing in action. Throughout the month to that time, the weather-Italy's wettest season--was dismal with days on end of rain and fog and now cold weather was beginning. The troops suffered severely from the cold having only summer under-clothes since their supplies had not caught up with them. Supplies of food and ammunition, had to be hand-carried at times for miles, up and

down mountains and through mined areas while the vehicles were constantly bogged down in mud.

The Medical Detachment cared for by Captains' Kainuma, Dahl and Kometani, worked day and night with the evacuation of patients. It sometimes required hours and several relay stations to get the wounded down to the aid-station by litter squads. Aid-men did wonders throughout. At one time near Hill 600 they lost eleven men when three litter squads were caught in a barrage going to the rescue of Company B. Four were killed and seven were wounded. Up in the rough and bare terrain, men of the 100th died from cold exposure after suffering wounds and also from loss of blood because it was not humanely possible to evacuate them for sometimes as much as 30 hours. Battle fatigue became another waster of men and nothing in the books of medicine could stem it.

Before moving up to the lines again, Chaplain Yost conducted services for their fallen comrades. His generous words lifted their hearts as he told the story of the American soldier who lay flowers in humble thanks besides the dead body of one of their men who had fallen.

"On 15 November 1943, Fifth Army troops held a line running along the west slopes of Mount Nassico, through Mignano and up past the steep peaks overlooking Venafro. Before them lay a jumble of mountains, valleys and plains, varying in character from the wide coastal plain on the left to the crags and peaks which soared more than 6000 feet in height on the Army's right." (Page 19-Road to Rome)

Here was the German Winter Line which loomed ahead and in the difficult terrain on the right boundary it fell the task of the VI Corps and in turn the 34th Division to press an assault against the enemy. The weather remained poor; foot soldiers would battle

rain and cold besides a well-lodged enemy. The Germans, master of trickery, were now using new devices to halt the Allies; G-2 advised all troops that the enemy was using a booby-trap with a delayed fuse which set off a charge at any time up to a week after the wire was tripped. Also the flame thrower was being used to disorganize and demoralize patrols.

Toward the end of November, the 133rd Regiment displaced to the front again taking over the sector held by the 504th Parachute Infantry in the vicinity of Colli-Rochetti on the upper Volturno. Here they took a broadside position along the front of the 5th Division, British Eight Army which was to the right and north.

The 100th and 3rd Battalions were committed to the first actions while the 1st Battalion was in reserve. Relief was accomplished by Thanksgiving Day and the forward companies, B and C occupied Hill 1017 with the rest of the battalion settled a little behind. Riflemen moved up the steep slopes heavily loaded with ammunition, food, and water rations doing wishful thinking about a turkey meal. The next day out of their foxholes they came to welcome cold turkey sandwiches brought up the trails part way by pack mule trains.

From Hill 1017 it was the 100th's mission to secure Hills 801 and 900 to the front by the 28th as a line of departure for a renewal of an attack around 1 December embracing the entire Fifth Army. A quick reconnaissance was necessary and Company B was designated to send out a combat-reconnaissance patrol.

A ten-man patrol led by Lt. Masanao Otake set out on the 26th to observe on Hill 905 which lay in the path of the twin-objectives. The patrol picked its way through a heavy minefield at the base of

c the hill without casualty and proceeded to climb the mountain. After a few hours of slow-going, Lt. Otake spotted three Germans armed with machine pistols. He maneuvered to a position affording flanking fire and opened up with his sub-machine gun killing all three. The noise drew other enemy machine gun fire to his position. Ascertaining their direction, he reorganized his patrol and placed them in strategic posts to cover his advance. Going within ten yards of one machine gun nest, he lobbed a hand grenade into the pit, sprayed with his sub-machine gun and the nest was destroyed. Later in the midst of an enemy mortar barrage, he personally checked each slit trench for the wounded and under his leadership litters were improvised for their evacuation. For this action Lt. Otake was awarded the Silver Star.

While moving forward to Hill 905, Company B was shelled by enemy mortars and suffered 12 casualties. By the following day Company C had outposted two platoons on Hill 920, still fortified by the enemy, and with B Company, part-occupants of Hill 905, the 100th extended its line to the west. Company A moved on to parts of Hill 801. This brought the battalion to the established line that the regiment had planned for a line of departure.

q The Fifth Army plan of attack for December was a renewal of the assault by the 10th British Corps and the American II Corps in the Camino-Maggiore sector, while the American VI Corps would advance west through the mountains of Atina-St. Elia, intent on flanking the enemy positions in the Liri Valley. The Allies thought that the Germans would make a determined stand at Cassino and hoped by flanking the enemy, he might give way. In this latter operation, the 34th Division was to attack on the Colli-Atina road, running in