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# A FRAGMENT OF VICTORY

In Italy During World War II

1942 — 45

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A Special Study  
concerned with the 92d Infantry Division and  
its principal attachments, including the 473d and  
442d (Japanese-American) Infantry Regiments

Prepared at the  
Army War College

by

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ARMY WAR COLLEGE  
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA  
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## FOREWORD

This is the story of the accomplishments and the failures of a unique military force. Originated in our nation's concept of justice to all races, colors and creeds, this force developed, through rigorous training, trial and experience in combat, to a degree that resulted in victory in battle. To the student of history, this narrative reveals that the training and battle efficiency of the personnel concerned were influenced by deep psychological factors.

In July of 1942, when I was appointed to command the newly activated 92d Infantry Division, I immediately began a search for everything to be found concerning its history in World War I so as to avoid the mistakes of that period and profit by the experiences of those who were responsible for the training and operations of the first 92d Division. My search revealed only a few meager documents. None of them gave the details to clarify my hazy concept of the old division's activities. As a result I determined then that if it was possible, I would see to it that the activities of the division would be recorded fully and objectively, and that the record would be made available to the various military services. The study that follows was initiated with this goal in mind.

To those officers and men of all ranks who contributed so much to the training and to the combat accomplishments in the fighting along the Ligurian Coast in Italy, I record my everlasting thanks and appreciation. My memory of the gallant contribution of those who made the supreme sacrifice for their country will never fade.

Our efforts to create a combat force were long and tedious in both basic and advanced training, and there were many obstacles and discouragements to overcome. The fact that they were overcome made possible this fragment of victory on the battlefields of Europe. Those who participated in the victory in Italy came to realize that positive effort is essential to success in battle. They became convinced that the motto, "Deeds, not Words," that I set for myself and for those in my command, meant action and not promises. They should take great pride in their efforts and should realize, with much satisfaction, that each one who did his duty faithfully played a part in the Allied victory over the Axis powers in World War II.

Although the basic organization with which this story is concerned was the 92d Infantry Division, as time went on there were many distinctive and distinguished units attached to the division, so that its strength was raised to almost 25,000. The performance of these attached units was outstanding; and in the final days of victory, they

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sharpened the cutting edge that knifed the path from Massa in Central Italy, to Turin and Ventimiglia. The troops which participated in the military operations described herein created an episode of warfare that might well be called the "Ligurian Campaign in Italy," by first occupying the defensive sector which protected the vital supply line from Leghorn to the units of the Fifth Army, and then by advancing along the Ligurian coast in a zone which included the maritime provinces, the naval base of La Spezia, and the important port of Genoa.

The operations recounted herein testify to the value of perseverance and resolution when the goal is the attainment of worthwhile military accomplishments. They indicate the necessity for everlasting patience and understanding on the part of leaders at all echelons of command. Further, they demonstrate the need for a full response in battle of the rank and file. In the last analysis, these operations emphasize the fact that the rifleman must use positive actions in order to defeat the enemy. In combat these actions require from the soldier valor, character, and a full sense of responsibility to do his utmost for his nation.

There is no bond so close as that which is born of long periods of working together for a common purpose under conditions of hardship and danger. From such experiences come sympathy and understanding. The mention of the names Huachuca, Massa, Strettoia, "Georgia," Serchio, Hill "X," Porta, and Genoa all arouse thoughts that are sometimes sad but always warm and satisfying to those who were there.

I salute you who were my comrades in battle; and I offer my sincere wish and hope that this story serves to recount your noble efforts in the defense of the democratic principles for which our nation has always fought.

EDWARD M. ALMOND  
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November, 1952

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### PREFACE

The preparation of this history of the 92d Infantry Division in World War II has been motivated by three major factors. First it was felt that there was a need for a clarification of the haze of reports, rumors and legends that have come to be identified with the division; second, there was a desire to delineate the behavior pattern of the division after all the details of its activities were recorded and examined; third, there was the hope that this contribution might enrich the record of the war. In addition it was realized that this might well be a record of the last Negro infantry division in the United States Army. All these considerations are founded on the belief that through knowledge comes understanding. All are based on the conviction that a record of the past is of value only if it can be useful in the present and in the future.

There is a belief in secular circles that if you can learn the history of an undertaking you can achieve its final and total explanation. This is a kind of intellectual arrogance that ignores the varied facets of human behavior. Although this volume aims to provide perspective by developing a clear and evolutionary narrative of the military activities, all the time it was being prepared it was realized that a mere chronology of military events excludes the psychological and sociological factors. Such a report, it was recognized, envelopes the issue of the aptitude of the men; and minimizes the effects of discipline, morale, esprit de corps, and efficiency--the important results of leadership and training.

However, every attempt to branch off in pursuit of psychological and sociological tangents clouded the picture of the military performance of the division. The events were overshadowed by the interpretations; and clarity was sacrificed for an air of seeming all-inclusiveness.

Thus, in order to limit the length of this account and to achieve coherence and balance, the scope had to be confined and the focus narrowed. Attention was directed to military and operational factors rather than to social and psychological ones. The primary emphasis was placed on recording the military events as they occurred; and, wherever they were significant to a better understanding of the tactical situation, the social threads were woven in. Although this account deals with some of the problems that arose during the training period, and some of the tensions that are a part of command and command decision, these and other problems were touched only lightly with the hope that they will be developed more fully by another writer.

Organized in the United States in October 1942 and continuing

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through three official Campaigns in Italy from August 1944 to May 1945, the life of the 92d Division, under the command of Maj.Gen.Edward M. Almond, falls into five distinct phases: the training period; the combat activity of one regimental combat team; the combat activity of the entire division; the reorganization of the division; and finally the three-pronged thrust into northwest Italy by the reorganized division. All are interrelated, like the fingers of one hand.

The highest degree of satisfaction to the earnest soldier comes from the knowledge that he has done his best in the face of great difficulties. The 92d Infantry Division, augmented to almost 25,000 men after the inclusion of the 442d and the 473d Infantry Regiments, tanks, tank destroyers, and medium and light artillery, was part of the diverse Allied force that finally achieved victory in the Italian theater. The area in which the division fought covered over 3,000 square miles from Pontedera on the Arno River east of Pisa, thence west and north along the coast of the Ligurian Sea to the famous old port of Genoa. From there the operations continued westward, along the coast to Imperia and Ventimiglia near the French border. The other thrusts carried the action to Cuneo, through Alessandria to the headwaters of the Po River near Turin (Torino); and northeast from Aulla through Cisa Pass towards Parma on highway No. 62, and towards Reggio on highway No. 63.

Because the division was a Negro unit with a mixture of White and Negro officers, and because as the situation developed the division came to include Japanese-American and White soldiers, this account becomes a human interest story of the moulding of heterogeneous elements to pass or fail, as they might, the severe test of war. It reflects the achievements, the failures, and the group accomplishments of the men who made their contribution to the victory in Europe. Thus it is the story not of a typical American Infantry Division, but rather of a diverse military force with a particular combination of problems.

Although most of the attention in this account has been focused on the infantry, the supporting units have not been forgotten. Their uniformly good performance was a constant source of satisfaction at all levels.

The pursuit of the various threads of the division's activities has led to the examination of many sources. Official and unofficial records, published and unpublished documents, after-action reports, personal papers, letters, and captured documents were all explored. But not all the references have been cited. Instead the documentation has been selective, aimed at supporting disputed facts and opinions, and to point

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the way to additional material for those who want to proceed further.

In preparing this volume the author has accumulated an indebtedness to many people. Limitations of space preclude the mention of each individual who helped in the preparation of this volume. It is only possible to extend sincere thanks generally and to include the reminder that without outside help this book, like any record of the achievement of others, could hardly have been written. Special thanks are extended to Col. William J. McCaffrey for his encouragement and help while the work was in progress.

Each generation must interpret history anew; and no interpretation can expect to gain universal acceptance. The writer of this history has no personal military record to justify. As Assistant G-2 in the 92d Division for almost two years he was in the fortunate position of being able to participate and to observe at the same time. In addition, he had at his disposal information of the enemy as well as of Allied troops. Almost seven years away from the division has provided the perspective necessary for the comprehension of many of the larger significances. In the account that follows every effort has been made to present, with as much critical objectivity as possible, what the writer has found after searching the pertinent documents and his own and other men's memories.

Different readers will find in this volume different things. The soldier and officer who was a member of the division will find an account of the activities in which he or his friends participated; the Army officer at all levels who has no personal interest in the division will find varied examples of small and large unit action, of the quasi-independent action of patrols, of battlefield improvisations, and of the techniques involved in the execution of established dogma. The social scientist will find clues for further consideration, or evidence to support studies now in progress. The casual reader will find examples of the pathos and the excitement that are a part of every war. For all who read this account it is hoped that there is enough information to provide a clear picture of the activities of the 92d Division and its companion units so that an intelligent evaluation of its performance can be made.

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### CHAPTER I

#### THE FORMATIVE DAYS

##### Activation and Individual (Basic) Training

World War II was in full swing when the 92d Infantry Division was activated at Fort McClellan, Alabama on Thursday, 15 October 1942. Lend-lease had begun, and American planes were streaming onto English airfields while shiploads of tanks unloaded on the Persian Gulf for transit to Russia. United States troops were already in Ireland, England, Iceland, Bermuda, and on the shoulder of South America. Allied plans for the invasion of North Africa were to go into operation in a little over three weeks. Russia clamored for a second front while its troops halted the Nazis at Stalingrad. Manila, Bataan, and Corregidor had been lost to Japan. United States troops landed in the Solomons as the first step on the road to Tokyo. The British had flanked Rommel's Africa Corps at El Alamein, while the Luftwaffe rained bombs on England; and the Nazis War Machine rolled through the Balkans and across the rim of North Africa.

In the United States, plants were expanding as the "Arsenal of Democracy" undertook its gigantic task. Blackouts, air-raid wardens, civilian defense, censorship, draft boards, and ration books were all part of the American scene.

At the time of activation, the 92d Division headquarters and special troops, and each of the three combat teams were located in four widely separated camps. The 365th Infantry and 597th Field Artillery Battalion were at Camp Atterbury, Indiana; the 370th Infantry and 598th Field Artillery Battalion were at Camp Breckenridge, Kentucky; and the 371st Infantry and the 599th Field Artillery Battalion were at Camp Robinson, Arkansas. All other units<sup>1</sup> were at Fort McClellan. The Division was assigned to III Corps, Second Army; and appropriate activation ceremonies were held at all four camps simultaneously.

A cadre of 128 officers and 1200 enlisted men, selected from the 93d Infantry Division, the first Negro combat division to be organized in World War II, formed the nucleus of the 92d. Additional officers and enlisted men came directly from officer candidate schools, from other units, and from reception centers as the division grew.

<sup>1</sup> 92d Div Hq; 92d Div Hq and MP Co; 92d Rcn Tp; 92d Sig Co; Hq, Hq Btry and Band, 92d Div Arty; 600th FA Bn (155 How); 317th Engr Bn; 317th Med Bn; 317th QM Bn.

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The prescribed pattern for the activation of new infantry divisions was followed for the 92d. On 8 July 1942, about three months before the date of activation, Major General Edward M. Almond was appointed to command the division. Shortly thereafter, Brigadier General John E. Wood was designated as Assistant Division Commander; Brigadier General William H. Colbern was assigned as Division Artillery Commander; and Colonel Frank E. Barber, was appointed Chief of Staff. Except for Colonel Barber, who was killed later by enemy artillery fire while touring the Fifth Army front in Italy, these officers remained with the division throughout its formative and operational period.<sup>2</sup>

The 92d Division entered World War II with some of the reputation and tradition of the 92d Division of World War I. There was an air of expected failure in some circles, mixed with a hope for success in others.

In World War I, the 92d Division was established and organized in October and November 1917. Composed of about 25,000 colored selective service enlisted men, and about 1,000 colored and white officers, the division was trained in small units at seven camps. It was first united as a division at Camp Upton, New York from where it moved to Hoboken, New Jersey on its way to France in June, 1918. After a short period of training in France, and a baptism of fire in the quiet St. Die Sector of the Vosges Mountains, it was moved to the Argonne in time for the all-out Meuse-Argonne offensive beginning on 24 September 1918.

On 28 September 1918, one company of the 368th Infantry disintegrated and fell back when it was within 200 yards of its objective. It was reorganized hastily and recommitted, but it fell apart again. The word of this failure spread, and the pattern for the 92d's reputation for failure began. Generalizations and hearsay reports grew; and although there were some successes in the Marbache Sector and Woevre Plain operation in October and November following the failure in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, none of these were significant enough to overshadow

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<sup>2</sup>General Almond and his two general officer assistants reported to the Commanding General, Army Ground Forces in Washington on 22 Jul 1942, for a four-day conference in connection with the activation and training of the division. Following the conference, they went to the Holabird Quartermaster Motor Base in Baltimore, Maryland for a five-day course of instruction; then, on 2 Aug, along with members of the division staff, General Almond began a special course for officers of newly formed divisions at the Command and General Staff School. General Wood went to the Infantry School, and General Colbern to the Field Artillery School. Other officers and enlisted men of the cadre received special instruction at various service schools and replacement training centers. These courses were completed early in September, and the officers and enlisted men proceeded to their assigned stations to await the arrival of the remainder of the division.

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GENERAL ALMOND, 1942.

the already established reputation. Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker (1916-21) pointed out that there was no evidence to justify many of the negative assumptions regarding colored troops, and that it should be noted that many colored officers were decorated with Distinguished Service Crosses for extraordinary heroism under fire. General Pershing, when reviewing the division at the end of the war, referred to it as one of the best of the AEF and stated that its officers were up to the average of the other units. But the words of these two leaders had little effect on the opinion that had been formed already.

After the Armistice, the division remained overseas until the middle of December 1918, when it returned to the United States to be demobilized in February and March 1919.<sup>3</sup>

General Almond and his staff were especially hopeful for the World War II division. In his remarks at the activation ceremony, General Almond said, "The 92d division is primarily a combat division. In many ways the division is like a great giant; a defect in the structure of any

<sup>3</sup>"92d Division Summary of Operations in the World War (I)"; Davis, "The Negro in the Armed Services."

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part reflects on the whole. . . . All parts must work together in order to perfect the division. One of my principal aims is to produce a first class battlefield unit. I promise fairness to every officer and man; the best leadership of which your officers and noncommissioned officers are capable; and adequate, modern equipment with which to train. High battlefield morale involves the ability to endure hardship with a smile; success on the battlefield hinges on spirit, courage, and cooperation. Stonewall Jackson said, 'You may be whatever you resolve to be.' You are the 92d Division. What you become depends on your resolution."

The division slogan in World War II was "Deeds not Words," and its shoulder patch was circular, with a black border and a black buffalo on an olive drab background. This symbolic insignia dated back to the Indian Warfare days when Negro soldiers of the regular Negro regiments, especially the cavalry, were known as "Buffalo Soldiers" by the Indians.<sup>4</sup>

The official mascot was a yearling buffalo, the scion of a famous Oklahoma herd, that was presented to the division by the Department of the Interior and christened "Buffalo Bill." In a letter announcing the acquisition of the buffalo, Colonel Oliver F. Marston, the executive officer of the division artillery wrote, ". . . . The buffalo is normally like the 92d Division, peaceful. However, when aroused to anger, he is a very dangerous and powerful opponent. When he raises his tail to the vertical, immediately take the nearest cover. . . ."

Fillers for the division began to arrive at each of the four camps on 23 November 1942, and 14,945 men were added over a two week period. By the time the Mobilization Training Program (MTP) began, the division was overstrength about 7 percent in officers and 15 percent in enlisted men.

Plans for the augmentation of the Army contemplated that newly activated infantry divisions would be trained and ready for combat in a period of from ten to twelve months after activation. The training period for the 92d division lasted for over nineteen months.

The MTP, as prescribed by Army Ground Forces directives, began with an Individual Training Program (ITP). The 92d began this training on 14 December. Emphasis was placed on physical fitness and on

<sup>4</sup>One story concerning the origin of the buffalo as an insignia relates that many years ago, when the US Army was concerned with hostile Indians, a detachment of colored soldiers was assigned to the area that is now Fort Huachuca. To keep warm during the cold winter on the prairies, the soldiers killed buffaloes and clothed themselves with the hides. The startled Indians began to call them "Black Buffaloes."

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the thorough training and indoctrination of each recruit.<sup>5</sup> Realism was stressed as each soldier was taught to fire his weapon, to throw a grenade, to crawl under machine gun fire, to pitch a tent, to march, to salute, to cook, to identify aircraft, to wear a gas mask, and to take care of his own needs. There was mine and booby trap training, training in close combat, first aid and sanitation, and malaria control. Speed marches, inspections, physical training, and special schools were included in the schedule; and intra-division athletic programs were begun.

An examination of the Army General Classification Test Score (AGCT) percentages for the 92d Division at the end of January 1943 reveals that none of the men were in Class I (the upper group), 10 percent were in Class II, 15 percent in Class III, 41 percent in Class IV, 21 percent in Class V, and 13 percent received no score because of illiteracy or a low literacy rate. This distribution is interesting when compared to the expected distribution as determined by pre-tests of Army and Civilian Conservation Corps personnel. With 100 as the average score, 7 percent were expected to fall in Class I; 24 percent in Class II; 38 percent in Class III; 24 percent in Class IV; and 7 percent in Class V.

Reflected in the Army General Classification Test Scores are differences in education and environment. In essence, the Army General Classification Test was designed to test "general learning ability," not native intelligence. Thus it was, as its name implies, a classification tool devised to facilitate the assignment of soldiers.

Of significance to anyone who is examining the activities of the 92d Division is the fact that its Army General Classification Test score percentages reveal that men of the division came into the Army with fewer educational and cultural opportunities, and came from homes with lower socio-economic status than the men in other divisions. Thus the training problems of the division were markedly different from the problems encountered by other combat divisions that were being trained in the United States at the same time.

Illiteracy was among the first major problems attacked by the division. Special schools were established at each of the four camps; and the training was superimposed on the prescribed training program, classes being conducted at night so that there would be no interference with training. Over 2000 men were assigned for training; and both commissioned and enlisted men of the division served as instructors.

<sup>5</sup>Ninety-two percent of the division marched 25 miles in 8 hours in the 11th and 12th week of the ITP, and about 20% of the division were tested in physical fitness with an average score of 90.9%.

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In addition, casual camps were established at each of the four stations for personnel who seemed unable to participate in the prescribed training program. Each one of the camps consisted of from 500 to 800 men in the early stages of training. Special exercises were administered so that the men might be prepared to take their place in the regular units.

On 27 April 1943, the division began to move by rail to assemble at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, where it came under the control of Third Army. The consolidation was completed on 10 May. Units procured vehicles, weapons and other equipment, and the intensive training program was resumed.

Fort Huachuca is an established pioneer post located about 100 miles southeast of Tucson. Here, a new training cantonment had been constructed; while the 93d Infantry Division used the fort, and the 92d filled the almost new buildings as it arrived. Mile upon mile of arid plain surrounded by rugged but colorful mountains offered opportunities for many new and varied experiences and problems. The terrain included mountains and desert, so that it lent itself well to both close-in training and to broad tactical problems. However, the fort was frequently whipped by strong winds that raised the desert dust in high spirals; and because of its location, it was devoid of any town amusements. On the fort there were the usual mobilization-type barracks, a USO center and other housing and recreational buildings; but recreational facilities away from the post were very inadequate. Distance was a barrier to many.

Tombstone, a deserted town of some historic significance, is 26 miles away from Fort Huachuca; Bisbee and Naco are 42 miles away; Douglas, 62; and Nogales, Mexico, 68. A community called Fry, where civilian construction workers had lived while the fort was being built, was just outside the main entrance. Here, prostitutes and their procurers gathered in unsanitary hovels to share the wealth of the soldiers and spread venereal disease. One section of the settlement, known as "the Hook," was inhabited by approximately 100 prostitutes who were reinforced by about 200 others on pay day and weekends. Those women, who could not procure the quarters of the regular occupants for their activities, sold their wares from the rear seats of large, shiny sedans. An amusement casino known as "The Green Top," that had been built by commercial interests, was a disappointment to the post military authorities because it never reached the proper standards of sanitation or genteel conditions that had been expected of it.

Thus, it became apparent early in the training period that a con-

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centrated effort was needed to combat the venereal disease problem and to provide wholesome entertainment for the troops on the post itself. Mass intra-division athletic programs that included football, baseball and basketball games were begun. Each major organization presented programs in the theater within its area. Supervised company parties were encouraged. Ceremonies that grew to elaborate proportions became part of the regular program. The first "All-Division Review" was held in June, and it was here that the Military Police (MP) first attracted attention by the size of the men composing the MP company and the excellence of their training and appearance.

A weekly division newspaper, "The Buffalo," edited by Captain Larry V. Birleffi, which had begun publication on 19 December 1942, now intensified its efforts to focus attention on the activities of individuals and units. Besides contributing to the development of esprit de corps, it became a semi-official training organ which gave the troops a mirror-like picture of their training. Pictures of outstanding soldiers, training activities and material of an unclassified official nature were always evenly balanced in the paper with a mixture of cartoons, jokes, and the usual soldier "chit-chat" columns.

Competitions to select the best soldier, squad, platoon, company mess, company at parade, day room, and vehicle provided motivation for many; while the spiritual program went beyond the routine activities of the chaplains to include cultural and educational activities as well as strictly religious ones.

### Unit and Combined Training

The mission of the training period was "to create a tough and aggressive battle unit, proficient in the use of its weapons and imbued with a desire to close with and destroy the enemy." Individual training ended on 15 April 1943, and it was followed immediately by unit training. The training week was 48 hours long; and usually there was one ceremony each week.

The Unit Training Program (UTP) was the second part of the Mobilization Training Program and was designed to develop each unit into a fighting team capable of fulfilling its own particular role in the division team and in battle. While the program provided for a review of individual and small unit training, the emphasis was placed on the training of companies, battalions, and regiments; and on the training of technicians. Platoons were made out of squads, companies out of platoons, and battalions out of companies. The focus was on the cohesion of the separate units. Training was progressive. Standing Operating Pro-



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TRAINING.

cedures (SOP's) were developed and practiced.

There were 25 mile marches, instruction in the handling of land mines and booby traps, and movement through the infiltration course under machine gun fire. In June and July, combat firing proficiency tests were conducted by Army Ground Force teams and by the III Corps commander. Because of failures, nine of the eighteen infantry battalion combat firing tests were repeated, and two artillery battalions repeated the Army Ground Force Artillery Battalion Firing Tests.

The UTP lasted from 16 April to 15 August, 8 weeks longer than prescribed.

The Combined Training Program (CTP) began on 16 August, and lasted until 15 January 1944. In general, this program was aimed at welding the several units of the division into a team capable of acting as a concerted whole and of maintaining itself under battle conditions. Emphasis was placed on battalion exercises, battalion combat firing problems, and regimental combat team exercises. Additional unit

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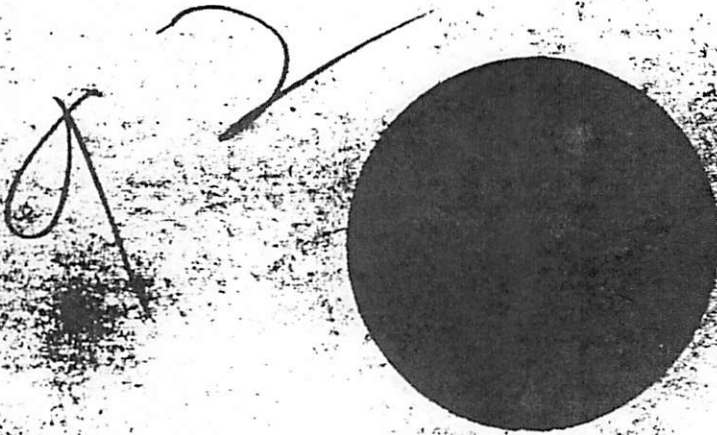
training was conducted concurrently. Exercises were repeated when necessary in order to attain proficiency. Training was conducted in the combined arms. The infantry began to work with artillery support. Unit SOP's were perfected. Training aids were used; and a critique followed every exercise. There was one surprise alert each month. Drivers were given special attention. There was a continuation of the training of leaders, and every effort was made to improve discipline and perfect the chain of command. Much of the training was done at night. Tests included platoon combat firing, physical fitness, infantry battalion field exercises, infantry battalion combat firing, air ground liaison, and the division ("D") exercises. Except for Platoon Combat Firing, all tests were conducted by higher headquarters.

A consolidated school for over 800 illiterates was opened in May 1943, when the division was concentrated at Fort Huachuca. In addition, each major organization in the division maintained its own casual camp for the inept for about two months. But at the end of this time, it was obvious that the program was interfering with the regular training programs of the units. As a result, a casual camp was begun under the supervision of division headquarters. A field officer was placed in charge of the camp, and a special program was initiated to include physical training, military discipline, and military courtesy. Other schools were conducted to provide training in the handling of mines and booby traps; air ground coordination; the assault of land fortifications; and advanced tactics for the division staff, organization commanders and their staffs.

In an effort to employ every possible means to improve morale, and to develop a "will to fight," a comprehensive program was initiated to meet the off-duty needs of the enlisted men. The program included physical training, drill competitions, entertainment, and spiritual development. The Special Services officer was directed to supervise the program. The field house at Fort Huachuca became the center of much of the activity until baseball diamonds and other outdoor facilities were made available.

"D" Exercises began on 3 December 1943, and lasted until 23 December. The casual camp was moved to a tent area while the division participated in the exercise. Day and night problems were conducted by XVIII Corps Headquarters in the rocky hills and cold, wind swept desert near Fort Huachuca. The exercises were designed to improve concerted action and control by the division. Maneuver was free in the exercises. Logistical training was given equal weight with battle training. Stress was given to secrecy and blackout discipline, the use of cover and concealment during the day, the avoidance of

# HQ 92<sup>D</sup> INF DIVISION



371 INF REGT

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### Activation

On 15 October 1942, the 371st Infantry Regiment was activated at Camp Joseph T. Robinson, Arkansas. At that time, the Regiment was commanded by Colonel Sterling A. Wood. Other members of the staff were Lieutenant Colonel James C. Horne, Executive Officer; Captain Maurice R. Taus, Adjutant; First Lieutenant Laurens G. Gillam, Intelligence Officer; Major Clarence F. Gooding, Plans and Training Officer; Major Byron C. Jolly, Supply Officer.

Lieutenant Colonel Theodore R. Kimpton was commanding the First Battalion. The Second Battalion and Third Battalion were under the command of Lieutenant Colonel William G. Barrett and Lieutenant Colonel Walter J. Procter, respectively.

The majority of the cadre were former members of the 93d Infantry Division.

### Basic Training

By the 21st of October, the entire Regiment had begun a vigorous 13 weeks training program under the provisions of MTP 7-1. An amendment extended the period to comprise 17 weeks. At the completion of that time, the Legionnaires passed successfully both the Division and Corps tests.

The accent, from the outset, was placed on weapons training and physical fitness. With basic training completed, the Regiment made preparations to join the parent unit, the 92d Infantry Division, at Fort Huachuca, Arizona.

### Advanced Training

Arrived at Fort Huachuca, Arizona on 2 May 1943, the Legionnaires undertook more complex training. Squad and platoon exercises evolved into company and battalion problems. RCTs followed.

On 1 July 1943, Colonel James Notestein assumed command of the Regiment and Lieutenant Colonel Procter became his executive officer. The rest of the staff consisted of Captain Taus, Adjutant; Captain Gillam, Intelligence Officer; Captain Harry Morris, Plans and Training Officer; Major Jolly, supply Officer.

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It was under the direction of the above staff that the Regiment completed successfully the EGTs. From 3 December 1943 to 23 December 1943, the Legionnaires engaged in the "D" Series. Having completed this phase satisfactorily, the Regiment began preparations for accompanying the Division to the Louisiana Manuever Area.

#### The Louisiana Maneuvers

In mid-February, the 371st Infantry began its most grueling tests to date. Under simulated war conditions, troops were drilled with the phrase "fire and movement". Drivers gained practical experience in blackout driving and blackout repairing. Weapons men saw, for the first time, the practical value of "Blind-fold" instruction.

Water discipline was enforced. Anti-malaria measures were mandatory. The testing continued, even during the "breaks".

With many valuable lessons learned, the Legionnaires turned westward, towards Huachuca and Preparation for Overseas Movement.

#### PCM

The Louisiana Maneuvers had revealed many, expected, weaknesses and it became the prime concern of the Regiment to correct those deficiencies. In addition, the Legionnaires had received numerous replacements who had not fulfilled the requirements prerequisite to overseas movement.

Physical qualifications were a primary consideration and the Medical Detachment began a thorough weeding-out of undesirables.

The S-3 Section set up the various ranges necessary for qualification and familiarization firing of all personnel who were deficient. Day and night infiltration courses were run. Specialized training was given to communications personnel, mine experts, the antitank and cannon men.

S-2 supervised map reading for all personnel, in accordance with TC #6. The Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon was also guided by S-2. Both German and Japanese tactics were studied.

Under Division supervision, the Legionnaires furnished infantry elements for infantry-tank problems. They attacked fortified positions, practiced street-fighting, ran the close combat course, hiked, marched, did calisthenics.

Personnel and S-1 checked records and made recommendations.

Then began the packing and crating. The Legionnaires had prepared for overseas movement. The move from Fort Huachuca to Camp Patrick Henry, Virginia was without incident.

On 21 September 1944 at 0800A hours, the 371st Infantry, minus Cannon and Antitank Companies and the Second Battalion, embarked from the Hampton Roads Port of Embarkation.

### Arrival

Advanced elements of the Legionnaires arrived and disembarked at Livorno, Italy on 18 October 1944. At 0800A hours 19 October 1944, the Regimental CP opened at La Bigattiera with Colonel James Notstein, Commanding; Lieutenant Colonel Walter J. Proctor, Executive Officer; Major John E. Horton, S-1; Captain Richard L. Hildwein, S-2; Major Sanford P. Sussell, S-3; Captain Leo B. Virant, S-4.

Activity within the Regiment accelerated with attention directed to unpacking and distributing among the troops the equipment necessary for combat operations. The first indication of immediate participation in combat came with the receipt of Field Order Number 2, Headquarters 92d Infantry Division Task Force at 1600A hours 20 October 1944 which directed that the 371st Infantry be prepared to move to the 92d Infantry Division concentration area. Forty Officers and eighty enlisted men were to be sent to IV Corps front line units for orientation and battle indoctrination.

The consensus of opinion seemed to be that the Regiment would relieve the 370th Combat Team, another regiment of the 92d Infantry Division, which had been in action approximately sixty-five days without relief. This proved to be correct when all troops of the Division, which were present in the Staging Area, were addressed by Major General E. M. Almond, Commanding General of the 92d Infantry Division at 1400A hours 23 October 1944.

At 1800A hours 26 October 1944, the First Battalion under the command of Lieutenant Colonel George O. Weber was placed on a one hour alert status for movement to the 92d Infantry Division concentration area. The remainder of the Regiment was to be prepared

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**INFANTRY DIVISION**

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Photos Courtesy: "THE BUFFALO" and APS.  
Drawings - Sgt. Ted Shearer; Maps - S/Sgt. Rodney Evans  
Booklet has been passed by the Field Censors and may be  
mailed home.

Major General EDWARD M. ALMOND  
Commanding General, 92d Infantry Division

Major General, U. S. Army  
W. L. ...  
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... I extend my sincere appreciation to the officers and  
of the 92d Infantry Division for their loyalty and  
the nations recounted in this booklet. Likewise, I  
of the past years contributed so much to individual and  
I understand so needed for the future welfare of our  
of us who remain are obliged to help insure the peace  
and deep reverence. I salute those officers and men  
other cooperation and mutual understanding that will  
All view his own efforts in relationship to those  
tions to the success achieved and that each indi-  
is hoped that every member of the 92d Division will  
and a formative date at four widely separated camps  
it records for the officers and enlisted men of the  
on August 1944 to May 1945 in Italy  
on on 15 October 1942 and through the Italian  
After history of the 92d Infantry Division since

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at Leghorn. From there they joined Combat Team 370, which had been attached to the 1st Armored Division (US) under IV Corps on 24 August; and had participated in activities in connection with seizing and crossing the ARNO River, the occupation of LUCCA, MONTECATINI, and SAN MARCELLO, and the penetration of the GOTHIC LINE. Battle indoctrination was gradual and progressive.

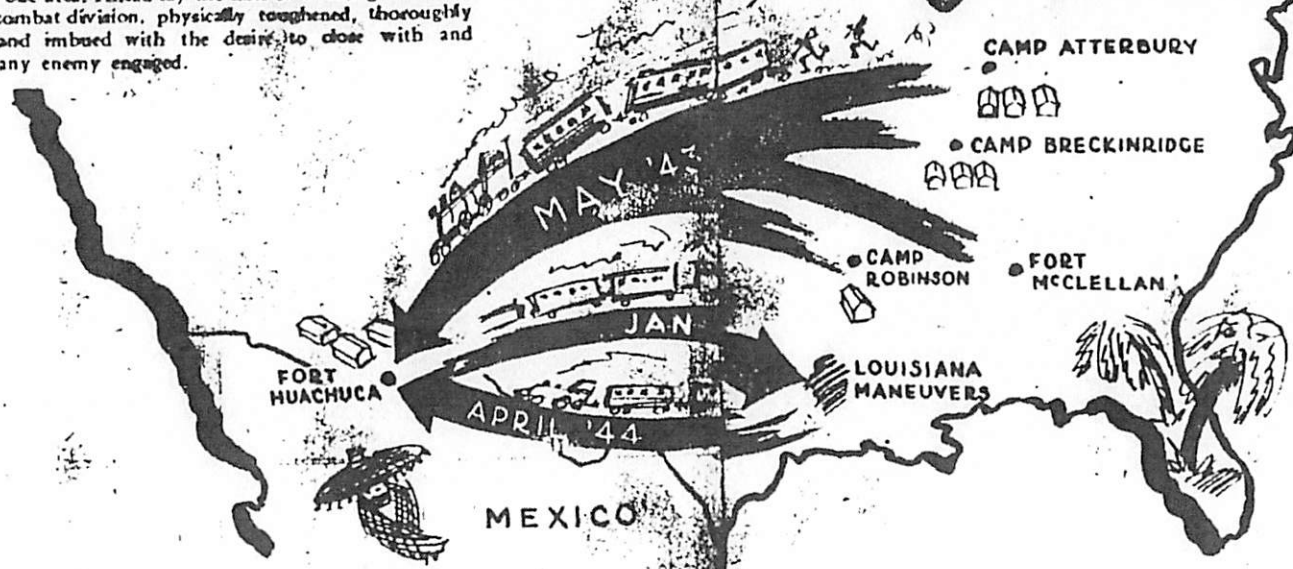
Major elements of the Division left Fort Huachuca in successive stages throughout the month of September. When the troops arrived at Leghorn, Italy, they were assembled in a Staging Area, where they prepared themselves for movement into the line.

Major General E.M. Almond assumed command of Task Force 92 on the Ligurian coastal flank of the Fifth Army on 5 October 1944. The Task Force was composed of the 2d Armored Group and CT 370. On this date the initial assignment was announced by IV Corps. The Task Force was ordered to attack to the NW at 0600, 6 October, 1944 with initial objectives of Mt Cauala and Mt Castiglione and an ultimate objective of Massa.

The attack jumped off as scheduled and throughout the day slight gains were made in the face of considerable enemy machine gun, mortar, and small arms fire. Rain made the crossing of the Serra River very difficult and further hindered the advance. At 0600 on the 7th the attack was resumed and during the day the first ledge on Mt Cauala was reached.

# ROUND-UP TIME for the BUFFALOES

Early in May 1943, troop trains carrying men and officers from Fort McClellan and Camp Robinson, Atterbury and Breckinridge journeyed westward. Their destination was Fort Huachuca in Arizona where for the first time since activation, the entire division was concentrated in one area. Ahead lay the task of building a unified, efficient combat division, physically toughened, thoroughly skilled, and imbued with the desire to close with and destroy any enemy engaged.



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