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The purpose of this study is to describe and analyze the requirements which resulted in the organization of the field artillery group; its employment in support of the corps and field army in World War II and the Korean Conflict; and the evolution of doctrine and organizational structure from 1942 to 1953. Few changes were made in the organizational structure of the field artillery group from 1942-1953. Likewise, doctrine with regard to its employment changed very little. The concepts upon which the unit had been built were sound and presented to the corps and army artillery commanders a tactical headquarters with a high degree of flexibility in organization and tactics. These commanders were limited only by their own skill in using the field artillery group to provide effective artillery support for the corps and field army.

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THE FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP IN SUPPORT OF THE  
CORPS AND FIELD ARMY, 1942 - 1953

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U. S. Army  
Command and General Staff College in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements of the  
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

RUSSELL A. WEATHERBY, Major, USA

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
1965

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U. S. ARMY COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the individual student author and do not necessarily represent the views of either the United States Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

The purpose of this study is to describe and analyze the requirements which resulted in the organization of the field artillery group; its employment in support of the corps and field army in World War II and the Korean Conflict; and the evolution of doctrine and organizational structure from 1942 to 1953.

The adoption of the triangular infantry division in 1940 eliminated the fixed field artillery brigade with its organic field artillery regiments as the division artillery. The new division artillery consisted of a headquarters and headquarters battery and four separate field artillery battalions. This new structure was more responsive in providing field artillery support to the maneuver units and complemented the combat team concept of the new division. By contrast, the nondivisional field artillery retained a fixed brigade organization. Organic to the nondivisional brigades were a headquarters and headquarters battery, an observation battalion, and three field artillery regiments. The battalions of the regiments were rigidly tied to the regimental headquarters by administrative and logistical strings. While it became readily apparent that the nondivisional field artillery organization lacked the flexibility and responsiveness of the divisional artillery organization, no formal action was taken to correct these deficiencies until 1942.

In 1942, Army Ground Forces, under the leadership of Lieutenant General Lesley J. McNair, reviewed the organizational structure of all nondivisional units. As a result of this review, it was recommended that a reduction be made in the number and size of headquarters within

the nondivisional force structure of the Army. To replace the fixed organizations of corps and army it was advocated that nondivisional units be organized into self-contained battalions which could be allocated to an army and further attached to the corps as required by the situation. This tailoring concept followed General McNair's convictions that by eliminating unnecessary control headquarters greater flexibility and economy could be achieved.

This recommendation, insofar as nondivisional field artillery is concerned, was approved by the War Department in December 1942. The field artillery regiments were to be converted to separate battalions and the regimental organization abandoned entirely. To provide a control headquarters for the separate battalions, the field artillery group headquarters was organized. This headquarters, like the nondivisional field artillery battalions, was to be assigned to the army and attached to the corps to function under headquarters, corps artillery. Organized to tactically control three or four battalions, the field artillery group headquarters originally was provided only a limited capability for administrative functions.

While the new organizational structure was being implemented in 1943, the first field artillery group headquarters was committed in the North African Campaign. Since it had been decided to delay the reorganization of the field artillery units already committed in combat, the arrival of the field artillery group headquarters in North Africa combined the new organization with the fixed field artillery brigade. The presence of the field artillery brigade resulted in the field artillery group headquarters and its attached separate battalions being used almost exclusively as a pool from which to draw additional field artillery

to attach to the divisions and thereby weight the divisions' effort.

As the battle shifted to Sicily, the hybrid corps artillery organization continued and the use of the field artillery group changed very little. While the field artillery group performed well in North Africa and Sicily its capabilities were not fully utilized nor tested.

The fixed field artillery brigade continued to serve as corps artillery during the early phases of the Italian Campaign; however, all newly arriving nondivisional field artillery units were organized along the new concept. By March 1944, all regiments of the fixed field artillery brigade in Italy had been converted to field artillery group headquarters and separate battalions. The reorganization did not change the highly centralized employment of nondivisional field artillery, but it did provide a uniform corps artillery structure for the first time in Italy.

The soundness of the field artillery group was vividly portrayed in the war of movement in Western Europe. Field artillery battalions were rapidly shifted from group to group, from corps to corps, and even from army to army in order to add weight to success or to strengthen a weakness. Likewise, the field artillery group headquarters, with or without attached battalions, was rapidly moved from one command to another. Many different techniques were utilized by the nondivisional field artillery commanders in providing the necessary support; however, all relied heavily on the flexibility of the field artillery group, both in tactics and organization, to meet these requirements.

In the Pacific Theater limited use was made of nondivisional field artillery during the first two years of the war. As the size of the operations expanded and techniques of field artillery employment

improved, the field artillery group was used extensively. The operations in the Philippines and on Okinawa, although more centralized and involving less rapid movement than those operations in Western Europe, provided ample opportunity for the field artillery group to function effectively.

Between World War II and the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, the field artillery group organization remained under close study. Various proposals for changes in the structure of nondivisional field artillery were made; however, no major changes were adopted and the organization remained basically the same.

The entire Korean War was characterized by a lack of sufficient nondivisional field artillery units and only one field artillery group was employed. Even with the limited number of battalions, there still existed a definite need for the group headquarters to assist the corps artillery commander in controlling the units spread across the extremely wide front.

Few changes were made in the organizational structure of the field artillery group from 1942-1953. Likewise, doctrine with regard to its employment changed very little. The concepts upon which the unit had been built were sound and presented to the corps and army artillery commanders a tactical headquarters with a high degree of flexibility in organization and tactics. These commanders were limited only by their own skill in using the field artillery group to provide effective artillery support for the corps and field army.



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## CHAPTER I

### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP

Prior to the reorganization of the infantry division in 1940, nondivisional field artillery units were organized within a command structure which paralleled the division artillery organization. Field artillery brigades were organized for employment with both the corps and division. The corps brigade consisted of a headquarters battery, two 155 mm howitzer regiments, one 155 mm gun regiment, and an observation battalion.<sup>1</sup> The 155 mm howitzer regiments each contained a headquarters battery and two battalions.<sup>2</sup> The organization of the 155 mm gun regiment was the same as the 155 mm howitzer regiment.<sup>3</sup> The field artillery brigade organic to the infantry division at this time was organized with a headquarters battery, two regiments of 75 mm guns, and one regiment of 155 mm howitzers.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U. S., War Department, Table of Organization 6-50: Field Artillery Brigade, Corps (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940), pp. 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> U. S., War Department, Table of Organization 6-41: Field Artillery Regiment, 155 mm Howitzer, Truck-Drawn (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940), p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> U. S., War Department, Table of Organization 6-51: Field Artillery Regiment, 155 mm Gun, Motorized (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940), p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> U. S., War Department, Table of Organization 6-10: Field Artillery Brigade, Truck and Horse-Drawn, Infantry Division (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1939), pp. 2-3.

Each of the headquarters in the artillery chain of command - brigade, regiment, and battalion - exercised tactical command of its subelements; yet only the regiment was organized as both an administrative and tactical unit. The regimental staff of divisional artillery units dealt directly with division and the regimental staff of nondivisional artillery dealt directly with corps or army in administrative matters.<sup>5</sup> The organization differed only slightly from that which had proven successful in World War I with massed troop formations and limited mobility.

The first major changes to field artillery organization came about as a result of the field exercises of 1937 and 1939 in which War Department plans for tactical reorganization of the infantry division were tested. The 2d Infantry Division conducted these field exercises at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Under the close supervision of the 2d Infantry Division Commanding General, Major General J. K. Parsons, and the 2d Infantry Division Chief of Staff, Brigadier General (later Lieutenant General) Lesley J. McNair, the proposed division organization was tested from squad-level through each command echelon. Nothing concerning the proposed organization was accepted without thorough examination and study. The requirement for artillery as to calibers and organization was examined in detail. The degree to which the division should be dependent upon corps and army for supporting services and reinforcing weapons was the major consideration in determining the units to be made organic to the division. As a result of these tests the War Department reduced the square division of approximately 22,000 men to a triangular division of

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<sup>5</sup>U. S., War Department, FM 6-20: Field Artillery Field Manual: Tactics and Technique (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940), pp. 80-95.

approximately 15,000 men.<sup>6</sup> In the new division organization the field artillery brigade and regiments were eliminated. The division artillery consisted of a headquarters battery, three 105 mm howitzer battalions, and one 155 mm howitzer battalion.<sup>7</sup>

In the old division organization the battalion had depended upon the regimental headquarters for administrative support. With the elimination of the regiment and brigade headquarters (coupled with the decision to make the new division artillery headquarters basically nonadministrative), it became necessary to organize the battalions to perform administration. Thus, in the new division organization the established policy of making every other tactical headquarters also administrative was maintained and administration passed from battalion to division. The division artillery headquarters was to perform as a tactical command headquarters in much the same manner as the eliminated brigade headquarters.<sup>8</sup> These changes were made to eliminate unnecessary headquarters and to provide responsive and adequate fire support to the maneuver elements of the division. The impact of this divisional reorganization was to be later felt in all artillery organization.

Accompanying the changes in organization of the infantry division artillery was a period of major expansion in the field artillery of the regular army. The enlisted strength increased almost three-fold from

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<sup>6</sup>Dr. Robert R. Palmer, "Reorganization of Ground Troops for Combat, Study Number 8", Unpublished report prepared for the Army Ground Forces, 1946, pp. 4-5.

<sup>7</sup>U. S., War Department, Table of Organization 6-80, Division Artillery, Truck-Drawn, Infantry Division (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940), p. 1.

<sup>8</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, "Report of the General Board - The Field Artillery Group", 1945, p. 1.



28,885 on June 30, 1940, to 77,305 on June 30, 1941.<sup>9</sup> The effect of the reorganization of the division on field artillery units is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1  
CHANGES IN FIELD ARTILLERY UNITS DUE TO EXPANSION  
AND REORGANIZATION OF THE INFANTRY DIVISION\*

Unit	30 June 1940	30 June 1941	Net Change
Brig Hq & Hq Btrys	2	4	+2
FA Det Div Hq	7	0	-7
Inf Div Arty Hq Btrys	0	9	+9
Regt Hq Btrys	23	18	-5
Bn Hq Btrys	61	92	+31
Firing Btrys	161	275	+114

\*Taken from: U. S., War Department, Office of the Chief of Field Artillery, "Annual Report of the Chief of Field Artillery for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1941", 1941, p. 37.

The expansion of the field artillery was typical of the expansion of the entire army at this time. To provide supervision of the training of tactical units of the army in the continental United States, General Headquarters, U. S. Army was activated on 26 July 1940. Created to decentralize the activities of the War Department, this headquarters was placed in the chain of command between the War Department and the four armies. General George C. Marshall, War Department Chief of Staff and commanding general of the Field Forces, commanded the General Headquarters. General Marshall selected Brigadier General Lesley J. McNair to be his chief of staff for the newly formed headquarters. At this time

<sup>9</sup>U. S., War Department, Office of the Chief of Field Artillery, "Annual Report of the Chief of Field Artillery for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1941", 1941, p. 37.

General McNair was Commandant of the Command and General Staff College.<sup>10</sup> From this beginning was to evolve the Headquarters, Army Ground Forces, which was activated as part of a reorganization of the War Department on 9 March 1942. The mission of the Army Ground Forces was "to provide ground force units properly organized, trained, and equipped for combat operations." As part of the reorganization, Army Ground Forces assumed the tasks of preparing tables of organization for the field artillery from the Chief of Field Artillery whose office had been suspended.<sup>11</sup>

The efforts of the Army Ground Forces in influencing tactical organization early in 1942 were directed to minor modifications of existing organizations with emphasis on the reduction of the number of motor vehicles and other measures of economy. However, on 31 July 1942 Army Ground Forces was directed by the War Department to review all units of the "type" army and "type" corps and to present recommendations for revisions and deletions of these units.<sup>12</sup> This directive launched the Army Ground Forces, under the able leadership of General McNair, into a period in which the structure of the forces used by the United States to fight World War II was to a great extent determined.<sup>13</sup>

The emphasis upon the smaller triangular division and the work of Army Ground Forces to reduce overhead of divisional units had a tendency to increase the size of the corps and army. Troop planning in 1942

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<sup>10</sup>Dr. Robert R. Palmer and Lt. Col. Kent Roberts Greenfield, "General Headquarters, United States Army, 1940 - 1942, Study Number 1", Unpublished report prepared for the Army Ground Forces, 1946, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup>U. S., War Department, Circular 59, War Department Reorganization (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1942), pp. 1-4.

<sup>12</sup>Palmer, "Reorganization of Ground Troops . . .", p. 49.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

was based on a fixed corps of three divisions and a fixed army of three corps. It was policy at this time that all nondivisional troops of the Army Ground Forces would be assigned to armies and corps. The means of achieving flexibility and economy of manpower usage lay in a corps and army organization which could be tailored as required by the situation. General McNair believed that even in the troop planning phase, the non-divisional components of corps and army should possess a flexible organization, capable of being organized into task forces to accomplish specific missions. His paramount ideal in tactical organization was to reduce the number of non-tactical personnel and to eliminate or pare down tactical staffs. For these reasons, the Army Ground Forces proposed on 21 September 1942 that the concept of the fixed corps and army be abandoned as a doctrinal principle. The proposal submitted to the War Department recommended a corps and army without organic troops except those major headquarters necessary for command. Nondivisional combat units were to be organized into the smallest size possible, normally a battalion. These battalions were to be assigned to an army and subsequently attached to corps as necessitated by the situation. General McNair visualized divisions and battalions being the basic building blocks from which corps and armies would be built. The brigade and regiment were to be abandoned as fixed nondivisional units. In place of the regiment the recommendation advocated the use of the group: a tactical headquarters with a limited administrative capability and a variable number of administratively self-sufficient attached battalions. The group concept had previously been used to a limited degree to organize nondivisional armor elements.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 8-9, 49-51.

Artillery doctrine had previously advocated the grouping of two or more batteries, battalions, or regiments to perform a common mission. The groupments were temporary in nature and would be organized to achieve greater convenience.<sup>15</sup> Groupments for counterbattery, for reinforcement of a division artillery, or for long-range fire were recognized as routine. Many artillery officers advocated greater use of groupments in order for corps artillery to be able to provide adequate support to the lighter and more mobile triangular divisions. One article published in The Field Artillery Journal envisioned a reinforcing artillery organization made up of many batteries of different caliber weapons. As the need arose, the batteries would be attached to the organic battalions of the division. In this manner the weight of reinforcing artillery would be placed where needed and with little disruption of existing command and liaison channels.<sup>16</sup> The Field Artillery School recognized that a greater use of groupments by corps artillery was necessary. In the Advance Class (Special) conducted in 1941, groupments were cited as necessary for the direct support of committed infantry regiments, for reinforcing a division artillery, and for counterbattery.<sup>17</sup>

The Army Ground Forces proposal to abandon the fixed corps and army was returned without action by the War Department; however, one feature of the proposal was immediately approved. On 24 December 1942 the War Department authorized the conversion of nondivisional regiments of

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<sup>15</sup>U. S., War Department, FM 100-5: Tentative Field Service Regulations: Operations (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1939), p. 13.

<sup>16</sup>Captain Richard C. Carter, "A Suggestion for Reinforcement," The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXI (April, 1941), pp. 204-205.

<sup>17</sup>Lt. Col. Ross B. Warren, "Advance Course (Special) Number Two," The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXI (August, 1941), pp. 556-557.

antiaircraft artillery, field artillery, mechanized cavalry, and combat engineers to separate battalions. Authority was also given for the activation of group headquarters on a ratio of one for each four battalions. This reorganization brought about by Army Ground Forces eliminated the fixed field artillery brigade organization. The new brigade was patterned after the group and contained only a headquarters battery as an organic component with varying numbers of groups being attached. In practice only limited use was made of the flexible brigade organization since corps artillery headquarters could and did establish direct control over the groups attached to the corps.<sup>18</sup>

The changes brought about by the 24 December decision were slow to be enacted for several reasons. The transition from regiments to groups required the reorganization of battalions to provide administrative self-sufficiency. Reorganization of artillery units employed in the North African Campaign was not desirable during battle.<sup>19</sup> However, the reorganization did proceed slowly and, except for artillery regiments committed in combat, was gradually accomplished in 1943. The organization of nondivisional units into flexible groups and brigades without fixed structure brought about the elimination of the fixed corps and army proposed by General McNair in September 1942.<sup>20</sup> Table 2 portrays the effects of this reorganization.

The concept of the new tactical organization was explained in detail in a directive from the Army Ground Forces on 21 July 1943. This

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<sup>18</sup>Palmer, "Reorganization of Ground Troops . . .", pp. 50-52.

<sup>19</sup>In this text, the use of the term - artillery - refers to non-divisional field artillery unless specified otherwise.

<sup>20</sup>Palmer, "Reorganization of Ground Troops . . .", p. 52.

TABLE 2

NONDIVISIONAL ARTILLERY ORGANIZATION WITHIN THIRD ARMY  
BEFORE AND AFTER ESTABLISHMENT OF THE  
FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP\*

1 October 1942	10 November 1943
<p>Army Troops One Brigade of: One 155 mm Gun Regt Two 155 mm How Regt One 155 mm How Regt One 105 mm How Regt Four 105 mm How Bn</p>	<p>Army Troops One Group Hq Two 155 mm How Bn</p>
<p>IV Corps One Brigade of: One 155 mm Gun Regt Two 155 mm How Regt One FA Obsn Bn</p>	<p>VIII Corps Hq, VIII Corps Arty One Obsn Bn</p>
<p>VIII Corps One Brigade of: One 155 mm Gun Regt Two 155 mm How Regt One FA Obsn Bn</p>	<p>IX Corps Hq, IX Corps Arty Two Gp Hq One Obsn Bn Four 155 mm Gun Bn One 155 mm How Bn Five 105 mm How Bn</p>
<p>X Corps One Brigade of: One 155 mm Gun Regt Two 155 mm How Regt</p>	<p>X Corps Hq, X Corps Arty Four Gp Hq One Obsn Bn Four 155 mm Gun Bn Eight 155 mm How Bn Two 105 mm How Bn</p>
	<p>XVIII Corps Hq, XVIII Corps Arty Two Gp Hq One Obsn Bn Two 155 mm Gun Bn Two 155 mm How Bn Four 4.5 in Gun Bn</p>
	<p>XIX Corps Hq, XIX Corps Arty Four Gp Hq Two 155 mm Gun Bn Four 155 mm How Bn</p>

\*Taken from: Dr. Robert U. Palmer, "Reorganization of Ground Troops for Combat, Study Number 8", Unpublished report prepared for the Army Ground Forces, 1946, pp. 75-76.

directive was a basis for Circular 256 published by the War Department in October 1943 which implemented the new organization concepts army-wide.<sup>21</sup> These two documents were the instruments which gave meaning to the group organization and provided guidance for its effective employment. Pooling of administratively self-sufficient battalions to be employed under the tactical control of a group headquarters was the underlying principle behind the reorganization.<sup>22</sup> Since the Army Ground Forces directive was the basis for War Department Circular 256 and was of basic importance in the adoption of the group organization, it is reproduced as Appendix.

The first table of organization for the group headquarters was published in April 1943. The table of organization provided only the bare essentials to allow the group commander, a colonel, to exercise tactical control of the battalions to be attached to his headquarters. Provisions were made for only limited administrative supervision in that an S-1 was not authorized.<sup>23</sup>

In 1943 field artillery was competing with the emerging Air Corps for the allocation of resources and priority of the nation's production facilities. The Army Ground Forces recommendation to the War Department in September 1942 called for 101 battalions of heavy artillery and 140 battalions of medium artillery to be activated in addition to the organic artillery of the divisions. General McNair recognized the value of the

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 57.

<sup>22</sup>U. S., War Department, Circular 256, Reorganization of Corps, Headquarters, and Organic Troops (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, October 16, 1943), pp. 1-3.

<sup>23</sup>U. S., War Department, Table of Organization, 6-12, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, Motorized, Field Artillery Group (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1943), p. 2-3.

Air Corps but felt success lay with the older force of artillery to support the ground gaining infantry. The War Department in 1943 drastically curtailed the planned artillery forces by authorizing only 54 heavy and 81 medium battalions. This action made impossible the planning figure of 3.93 battalions of nondivisional artillery to each division, as desired by Headquarters, Army Ground Forces. In fact, at no time during World War II did the ratio of nondivisional artillery exceed 2.89 battalions per division. Even with the War Department imposed reductions, the field artillery expanded greatly in 1943 and the first half of 1944. From 85 active battalions on 31 December 1942 the nondivisional artillery was expanded to 136 battalions on 31 December 1943 and to 228 battalions by 30 June 1944.<sup>24</sup> By 31 March 1943, 45 field artillery group headquarters had been activated. During this period of expansion it was quickly recognized that the group headquarters was well organized for use as a training headquarters for the newly activated battalions. Not being organically tied to the battalions, the group headquarters could train several installments of battalions. As more battalions were activated the group headquarters was able to accept the attachments without disrupting the training cycles of the previous attached units. In that the group headquarters was organized without extensive administrative facilities, the group commander and his staff were able to devote their entire effort to the supervision of the tactical training of the battalions.<sup>25</sup>

Some problems developed in the initial utilization of the group.

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<sup>24</sup>Dr. Robert R. Palmer, "Organization and Training of New Ground Combat Elements, Study Number 9", Unpublished report prepared for the Army Ground Forces, 1946, pp. 6-7, 35-36.

<sup>25</sup>Major Bell I. Willey, "Problems of Nondivisional Training in the Army Ground Forces, Study Number 14", Unpublished report prepared for the Army Ground Forces, 1946, p. 12.



These were usually brought about by differences in activation schedules of battalions and problems with range facilities. However, the battalions were uniformly trained by the use of a standard training program and testing procedures. If at all possible, the battalions were retained within the same group during the training period to gain the maximum in continuity and unity of effort. The greatest obstacle presented at this time was the lack of doctrine on the employment of the group. The organization had not been tested in combat and the service schools had been unable to prepare fully for the change in organization and to publish doctrine for its employment. This led to a wide variance in its use in training exercises and maneuvers with each commander establishing his own doctrine and technique as he progressed.<sup>26</sup> Publication of doctrinal manuals lagged far behind almost explosive changes in tactics and techniques. Articles published in The Field Artillery Journal dealt in detail with the changes in organization; but these lacked official sanction and served primarily to generate thought and discussion. One article dealt in some detail on the technique to be used in forming groupments of corps artillery battalions for similar missions.<sup>27</sup>

The field artillery group served well in several aspects of the early phases of World War II. It was readily adaptable to the new corps and army concepts and to the technique of tailoring which was used in those organizations. Additionally, the group fulfilled exceptionally well the task of training the large number of nondivisional battalions mobilized during this period. Furthermore, the group organization exemplified

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<sup>26</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, ". . . The Field Artillery Group", p. 6.

<sup>27</sup>Colonel John T. Burns, "The Employment of Corps Artillery", The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXIII (March, 1943), p. 210.

the efforts of the Army Ground Forces to reduce both the number and size of headquarters within the force structure. The fixed regimental organization did not have the degree of flexibility built into the group organization which allowed attachment of several battalions of nondivisional artillery without an increase in the overhead of the control headquarters. In February 1945 there were 329 nondivisional field artillery battalions containing 182,000 men. By 1942 standards this number of personnel would have manned 260 battalions. The economy measures, such as the reorganization of nondivisional artillery, brought about by the Army Ground Forces made possible an additional 69 battalions of nondivisional artillery.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Palmer, "Reorganization of Ground Troops . . .", pp. 4-5.

## CHAPTER II

### THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP IN NORTH AFRICA AND SICILY

On 8 November 1942 the Allied invasion of North Africa was launched under the direction of General Eisenhower. This offensive thrust, called TORCH, was to attempt to drive east through Tunisia to link up with Allied Forces in the Middle East. After joining the two forces, the Allies would have complete control of North Africa from the Atlantic to the Red Sea.<sup>1</sup>

The first landings and early fighting in North Africa involved over 100,000 Allied troops and included elements of six U. S. divisions. The planning for the operation had evolved about the early seizure of key objectives by regiment and battalion size forces.<sup>2</sup> For this reason the artillery with the invasion forces had been attached to the regiment or task force it supported and offered little opportunity for centralized control by the division artillery commanders.<sup>3</sup> Nondivisional artillery units were not included in the initial landings in North Africa. The II (US) Corps had command elements with the assault forces, but none

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<sup>1</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War in North Africa, Part 2 - The Allied Invasion (West Point, New York: USMA Printing Office, 1950), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 8-13.

<sup>3</sup>U. S., War Department, 1st Infantry Division Artillery, "Unit Report No. 1, 0700 Hours 8 November 42 to 1800 Hours 10 November 42", 16 November 1942, pp. 2-3.

of the assault waves were accompanied by nondivisional field artillery units at Oran.<sup>4</sup> The landings by the Western Task Force (I (US) Armored Corps) at Casablanca were similar to those of the Center Task Force at Oran and did not employ nondivisional field artillery units. The composite United States and British forces making up the Eastern Task Force and landing at Algiers also utilized only the organic divisional field artillery for initial support.<sup>5</sup>

Immediately after the North African landing by the Allies, the Germans began to reinforce the Tunis and Bizerte area. After securing the initial TORCH objectives of Casablanca, Oran, and Algiers the United States forces were grouped in the Casablanca-Oran area while the First (British) Army attacked from its landing area at Algiers toward Tunisia. General Eisenhower recognized that the success of the drive by the Allied forces depended upon speed in its advance to Tunisia and link up with General Montgomery's Eighth (British) Army. Speed was necessary to secure Tunis and Bizerte prior to an effective build up of forces by the Germans and to conclude the operation prior to the onset of less favorable weather in December. The rapid advance by the First Army almost succeeded in its attack through Tunisia, but its drive was halted by increasingly heavy resistance on 28 November just sixteen miles west of Tunis. In the interest of speed the First Army had employed very light forces, short on personnel and equipment, in its attack. The United States forces employed in the attack had been battalion and regiment size task forces attached to

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<sup>4</sup>U. S., War Department, North African Theater of Operations, "Composition of TORCH Invasion Forces", 7 April 1943, pp. 1-5.

<sup>5</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War in North Africa . . ., p. 53.

the British elements. With the arrival of poor weather and increasing counterattacks by the German Forces, General Eisenhower approved a British plan on 8 December to withdraw to more defensible terrain.<sup>6</sup>

Except for small units committed to bolster the attack of the First Army, the United States forces of the I Armored Corps and II Corps had remained near their landing sites in Casablanca and Oran. On 1 January 1943 II Corps was ordered to move to the Kasserine-Tebessa area to participate in a renewed attack for Tunis. This offensive strike was not launched and late in January the II Corps was assigned a defensive sector south of Fondouk as part of the First Army. In this sector the II Corps bore the brunt of the renewed Axis offensive in February. Terrain was lost but the enemy's attack was halted short of Tebessa and Thala. On 23 February the enemy forces withdrew to more defensible terrain in II Corps sector and turned its offensive effort toward the Eighth Army in the south. With the enemy defending along good terrain within its sector, the II Corps paused to reorganize and regroup its forces.<sup>7</sup>

The field artillery group organization was employed for the first time in the North African Campaign. The first group so employed, the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group, was activated at Camp Young, California on 5 September 1942. The activation of the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group was directed by Headquarters, Army Ground Forces, which further specified that it would be attached to the 5th Armored Division. Groups had been used since early 1941 in the Armored Force. This new concept in artillery organization was probably initiated with an artillery

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 16-21.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 24-32.

organization in the Armored Force because of its prior experience.<sup>8</sup>

The 5th Armored Field Artillery Group Headquarters was actually a detachment formed with personnel of the 5th Armored Division and organized in accordance with the table of organization of the Armored Division Artillery Command.<sup>9</sup> This organization provided for a strength of six officers and twenty-eight enlisted men. Only those personnel and items of equipment necessary to operate a tactical command headquarters were provided.<sup>10</sup> The 65th Armored Field Artillery Battalion was taken from the 5th Armored Division and attached to the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group to provide it with the necessary mess, administrative, and medical support.<sup>11</sup>

After its activation the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group Headquarters trained at Camp Young until it entrained for movement on 14 December to North Africa by way of Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. The 5th Armored Field Artillery Group Headquarters arrived at Casablanca on 25 January 1943 and was assigned to the I (US) Armored Corps. The 58th and 62d Armored Field Artillery Battalions were attached to the group upon its arrival.

While at Casablanca, a provisional table of organization was approved by Headquarters, North African Theater of Operations, for the 5th

<sup>8</sup>Major Kenneth Hechler, "The Armored Force Command and Center, Study Number 27", Unpublished report prepared for the Army Ground Forces, 1946, pp. 44-48.

<sup>9</sup>The Odyssey of the 5th F. A. Group (1946), pp. 1-2.

<sup>10</sup>U. S., War Department, Table of Organization 17-1-2, Headquarters Division Artillery Command, Armored Division (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, The Armored School, "The Fifth Division in the FALAISE-ARGENTAN Sector", Unpublished research report, Committee Number 2, Armored Officers Advance Course, May 1950, p. 22.

Armored Field Artillery Group Headquarters. This table of organization authorized a strength of eight officers and seventy-six enlisted men for the group headquarters battery. Mess, maintenance, and supply sections, as well as twenty-one vehicles, were authorized for the unit. This reorganization made the group headquarters administratively self-sufficient and not dependent upon an attached battalion.<sup>12</sup>

During the month of February 1943 the group headquarters carried out an extensive training program with the 58th and 62d Armored Field Artillery Battalions. Both of these units had been trained initially with towed weapons but now were utilizing the new M-7 105 mm Howitzer. The M-7 was a full-tracked, self-propelled weapon. The 65th Armored Field Artillery Battalion remained attached to the group, but was required to perform dock details at Casablanca and did not participate in this training period.<sup>13</sup>

On 6 March the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group, in accordance with orders from I Armored Corps, began movement to the vicinity of Tebessa. This 1200 mile trip from Casablanca was accomplished partially by rail and partially by motor. Upon arrival in the area the group came under command of II Corps and the group commander reported to the II Corps Artillery Officer to work out details for the assembling of the battalions in the Tebessa area and the employment of the group.<sup>14</sup>

The II Corps was now beginning offensive operations toward Maknassy. The II Corps' attack was in conjunction with the renewed offensive action of the Eighth Army in the south. The II Corps was now employed as an independent corps under the 18th Army Group. General

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<sup>12</sup>The Odyssey . . ., pp. 4-5.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 5-6.

Alexander, Commanding General of the 18th Army Group, hoped that the II Corps attack toward Maknassy would draw off enemy reserves facing Eighth Army. Success by II Corps would also provide advanced airfields and support areas from which the Eighth Army could be supported.<sup>15</sup>

As the battalions of the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group closed into the Tebessa area, the attack by II Corps was launched. The 58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion was attached to the 1st Armored Division and participated in its attack on Sened Station on 19 March. The 62d Armored Field Artillery Battalion was attached to the Benson Force, a task force of 1st Armored Division formed to provide flank security. The 65th Armored Field Artillery Battalion was attached to the 178th Field Artillery Regiment which supported corps elements defending against an attack through the Faid Pass. The group headquarters was left in the Tebessa area without a mission until 27 March when it moved into the vicinity of Maknassy to assume control of the 58th and 62d Armored Field Artillery Battalions. Both of these units had been moved into this area by the 1st Armored Division during its attack toward Maknassy.<sup>16</sup>

The 13th Field Artillery Brigade, consisting of one 155 mm gun regiment, two 155 mm howitzer regiments, and an observation battalion, had been attached to II Corps since the beginning of the North African Campaign. For the attack of the corps in March, the brigade formed a groupment of one 155 mm howitzer battalion, one 155 mm gun battalion and a detachment from the observation battalion. This groupment, under command of a regimental commander (178th Field Artillery Regiment), was

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<sup>15</sup>U. S., War Department, II Corps, "Report of Operations", 10 April 1943, pp. 3-4.

<sup>16</sup>The Odyssey . . ., p. 6.



supporting the 34th Infantry Division in its attack on Fondouk in the north of the corps zone. The remainder of the brigade was in the southern part of the corps zone. In the south the two divisions making the main attack were each given additional artillery support by attaching a battalion to one division and having a battalion reinforce the other division artillery. The 65th Armored Field Artillery Battalion had been released from the 178th Field Artillery Regiment and was now operating with the 13th Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters. This provided three battalions under brigade control to be placed in general support of the corps. Counterbattery missions were fired most frequently by corps artillery; however, countertank fire was given precedence over any other mission. On one enemy force of thirty-two tanks, four battalions of artillery were concentrated. Sixteen of the enemy tanks were disabled or destroyed.<sup>17</sup>

The 5th Armored Field Artillery Group (58th and 62d Armored Field Artillery Battalions) in the Maknassy area had been attached to a task force which had the mission of insuring that the gains in the Maknassy area were not lost when the bulk of corps forces were shifted south to attack along the Gafsa-Gabes road.<sup>18</sup> This was the first action for the group headquarters and largely consisted of organizing a counterbattery program for its sector. The German forces held the dominating ground and subjected the group headquarters and its two battalions to intensive artillery fire. Some of the German artillery had a greater range than the

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<sup>17</sup>Brigadier General A. J. Rance, "Corps Artillery, How It Was Employed", The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXIII (December 1943), pp. 886-888.

<sup>18</sup>U. S., War Department, II Corps, "Report of Operations", 10 April 1943, p. 9.

105 mm howitzer of the group so it was necessary to obtain one 155 mm gun from the 36th Field Artillery Regiment to augment the counterbattery efforts of the group. While in this area the Commanding General of II Corps commended one of the battalions of the group for its efforts. This battalion had fired over 150 missions despite repeated air attack and over 600 rounds of enemy artillery which fell into its area.<sup>19</sup> The 5th Armored Field Artillery Group Headquarters in its first employment in combat had operated the fire direction center and organized observation for its assigned sector. Its counterbattery program had been successful with 825 rounds being fired by the attached 155 mm gun in one day.<sup>20</sup>

The II Corps attack had been successful to some extent; however, it was not until the Eighth Army forced a withdrawal of enemy forces in the south that the II Corps could break through the defenses in the Maknassy-Sened-El Guettar area. American patrols were able to first make contact with the Eighth Army on 7 April, forty miles east of El Guettar.<sup>21</sup>

As the II Corps was conducting operations in southern Tunisia, plans were being completed for the final assault on Axis forces in North Africa. The II Corps was to move to the north and take positions on the left flank of the First Army. In this coordinated attack, the mission assigned to II Corps was to cover the left flank of the First Army and to prevent an enemy withdrawal into the Cap Bon Peninsula. The First Army in the center was to make the main attack to seize Tunis. In order to complete the move to the north and to be in position for the attack

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<sup>19</sup>Major Edward A. Raymone, "Under Fire", The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXIII (December 1943), pp. 891-892.

<sup>20</sup>The Odyssey . . ., p. 7.

<sup>21</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War in North Africa . . ., p. 38.

on 22 April II Corps elements began the 150 mile trip on 11 April.<sup>22</sup>

The II Corps attacked on 23 April with the 1st Infantry Division in the south and the 9th Infantry Division in the north of the II Corps zone. By the 26th of April all elements of II Corps were attacking against strong enemy resistance. The capture of the dominating terrain in the zone of the 1st and 34th Infantry Divisions on 3 May forced a general withdrawal of the enemy and the 1st Armored Division was able to move into Mateur. It was now only a matter of time and on 7 May elements of the 9th Infantry Division entered Bizerte. At 1200 hours on 9 May the German Commander accepted terms of unconditional surrender and organized resistance in front of II Corps came to an end in North Africa.<sup>23</sup>

In this attack, II Corps attached one battery of 155 mm guns to the 9th Infantry Division in the north. The remainder of the 13th Field Artillery Brigade, the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group (58th and 65th Armored Field Artillery Battalions), and three battalions of the 1st Armored Division supported the 1st Infantry Division in making the corps' main attack in the south. The eleven battalions were all controlled by one headquarters and could lay down over ten tons of artillery rounds per minute during a preparation. After the 34th Infantry Division and 1st Armored Division were committed on 25 and 26 April, a battalion of 155 mm howitzers reinforced the artillery of each of these divisions. The 155 mm gun regiment was still able to fire into the zones of all three

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<sup>22</sup>U. S., War Department, II Corps, "Report of Operations Conducted by II Corps to Capture Bizerte and Surrounding Territory", 15 May 1943, pp. 1-4.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., pp. 5-12.

divisions in the south.<sup>24</sup>

During the II Corps offensive on Bizerte, the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group (two battalions) was attached to the 13th Field Artillery Brigade. As the attack progressed the group was attached to the 34th Infantry Division. The 62d Armored Field Artillery Battalion, meanwhile, was attached to the 9th Infantry Division in the north of the corps zone and was being utilized in general support of the division.<sup>25</sup> When the 1st Armored Division began its rapid advance, the 58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion was attached to provide additional fire support.<sup>26</sup>

When fighting ended in North Africa with the surrender of Bizerte, the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group moved to Gastu where amphibious training was conducted.<sup>27</sup> The end of resistance in North Africa allowed a two month period for the training, planning, and logistical build-up of the forces to make the assault on Sicily.<sup>28</sup>

The invasion of Sicily had been planned since January 1943. The specific purposes of the campaign were to secure the Allied lines of communications in the Mediterranean, to divert German forces from the Russian front, and to establish a final steppingstone for the invasion of Italy. Consideration had been given to an operation against Sardinia but: the obscure situation in North Africa in early 1943 had dictated the more

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<sup>24</sup>Rance, The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXIII (December 1943), pp. 887-888.

<sup>25</sup>U. S., War Department, 9th Infantry Division, "Field Order No. 21", 4 May 1943, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup>The Odyssey . . . ., p. 9.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>28</sup>Allied Force Headquarters, "Commander-in-Chief's Dispatch - Sicilian Campaign" (1943), pp. 17-18.

easily supported invasion of Sicily.<sup>29</sup>

The tactical invasion plan of Sicily provided for a combined operation of the 15th Army Group composed of the Eighth Army and the Seventh (US) Army. The assault landings by the Seventh Army were to be made by two forces, "Shark" and "Joss", along the coast from Licata to Scoglitti. The II Corps, consisting of the 1st Infantry Division, 45th Infantry Division and elements of the 82d Airborne Division, made up the "Shark" force. The "Joss" force was the 3d Infantry Division, reinforced with Combat Command "A" of the 2d Armored Division and the 3d Ranger Battalion.<sup>30</sup>

Nondivisional artillery to support the landing forces consisted of the same units which had closed out the campaign in North Africa. For the invasion the 13th Field Artillery Brigade, less one 155 mm gun battalion and one battery of the observation battalion, was attached to the II Corps. The 3d Infantry Division had the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group (58th, 62d, and 65th Armored Field Artillery Battalions), one 155 mm gun battalion, and one observation battery attached. The 18th Field Artillery Brigade and the 6th Armored Field Artillery Group had arrived in North Africa and were designated as force troops.<sup>31</sup> However, neither of these two units nor any of their elements would see action in Sicily.

The control of the organic and attached artillery of the 3d Infantry Division was necessarily decentralized in order to support the

<sup>29</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations In Sicily and Italy (West Point, New York: USMA Printing Office, 1945), pp. 2-3.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 5-7.

<sup>31</sup>U. S., War Department, Headquarters Force 343, "Field Order No. 1", 20 June 1943, p. 1.

multiple assault landings. Each of the three infantry regiments had a divisional artillery battalion attached for the landing. Additional artillery was provided in the assault landings to reinforce the artillery attached to the infantry regiments.<sup>32</sup> The 5th Armored Field Artillery Group, with two battalions attached, remained in Bizerte until the 12th of July, two days after the first landings had taken place on the 10th. To provide the divisional artillery greater mobility the M-7 howitzers of the two battalions attached to 5th Armored Field Artillery Group had been given to the organic units attached to the assault forces. The 5th Armored Field Artillery Group (58th and 65th Armored Field Artillery Battalions) landed in Licata on the 14th and occupied positions near the command post of the 3d Infantry Division Artillery.<sup>33</sup>

The Provisional (US) Corps was established by Seventh Army on 15 July to command the 3d Infantry Division (reinforced), the 2d Armored Division, and the 82d Airborne Division for the action in Western Sicily. The senior artillery officer on the staff of the Provisional Corps was Colonel John M. Willems who had been the commanding officer of the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group when it was activated at Camp Young, California. The highest nondivisional artillery headquarters with the Provisional Corps was the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group Headquarters; but it remained attached to the 3d Infantry Division and did not function as an artillery headquarters for the corps.<sup>34</sup>

The attack by the divisions of the Provisional Corps moved

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<sup>32</sup>U. S., War Department, 3d Infantry Division (Reinforced) (JOSS), "Field Order No. 5", 28 June 1943.

<sup>33</sup>The Odyssey . . ., p. 11.

<sup>34</sup>U. S., War Department, Provisional Corps, "Historical Record, Report of Operations, 15 July - 20 August 1943", 1943, p. 1.

northward toward Palermo against decreasing resistance. In the attack the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group was used entirely by the 3d Infantry Division to reinforce the direct support or attached artillery of the main effort. For the first time, the flexibility of the group headquarters was used. For the attack on Casteltermini the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group (58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion and one of 3d Infantry Division's artillery battalions, the 9th) supported the 15th Infantry Regiment. As the 3d Infantry Division and 2d Armored Division neared Palermo, the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group Commander recommended the use of the 58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion to seize Termini Imerese and cut off the withdrawal of enemy forces from Palermo to the east. This recommendation was approved by the commanding general of the 3d Infantry Division and the 58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion was detached from the group for its separate mission. Thus for the final assault on Palermo the group headquarters commanded only one battalion, the 9th Field Artillery Battalion. The 58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion in its attack to seize Termini Imerese captured over 2700 prisoners.<sup>35</sup>

With the fall of Palermo, the 3d Infantry Division turned east and came under control of II Corps. The Provisional Corps assumed control of the 45th Infantry Division and began to administer and garrison western Sicily.<sup>36</sup>

The advance of the II Corps across Sicily had been similar to that of the Provisional Corps on its west flank. Because of the

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<sup>35</sup>The Odyssey . . ., pp. 11-12.

<sup>36</sup>U. S., War Department, Provisional Corps, "Historical Record, . . .", pp. 8-9.

restricted road nets and the rapid pursuit action of regimental size task forces, it was necessary to decentralize employment of the 13th Field Artillery Brigade units by attaching the majority of them to the divisions.<sup>37</sup>

On the 23d of July the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group (58th, 62d, and 65th Armored Field Artillery Battalions) was attached to II Corps and moved to the vicinity of Petralia. The II Corps was preparing for its advance eastward to operate in close conjunction with the Eighth Army to seize Messina.<sup>38</sup>

The II Corps attack to Messina began with the 45th Infantry Division attacking down the north coast and the 1st Infantry Division attacking toward Troina. One battalion of the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group was attached to the 45th Infantry Division while the group headquarters and the remaining two battalions supported the 1st Infantry Division in its capture of Cerami and Capizzi. The group continued to support the 1st Infantry Division until Troina was captured.<sup>39</sup> Another of the battalions, the 65th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, had been attached to the 9th Infantry Division and was used to support the 60th Combat Team in its attack to Mt. Camolator and the town of Floresta.<sup>40</sup> The group headquarters with its one remaining battalion supported the 9th Infantry Division on its attack against Randazzo. In this attack

<sup>37</sup>U. S., War Department, Allied Force Headquarters, "Training Memorandum Number 50", 20 November 1943, p. 29.

<sup>38</sup>Allied Force Headquarters, "Commander-in-Chief's Dispatch . . .", p. 29.

<sup>39</sup>The Odyssey . . ., pp. 13-14.

<sup>40</sup>U. S., War Department, 9th Infantry Division, "Field Order Number 7", 5 August 1943, pp. 1-2.



the group headquarters saw its last action in Sicily. Before it was given another mission, the 3d Infantry Division (58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion attached) had linked up with British elements in Messina and the battle of Sicily had ended.<sup>41</sup>

To evaluate properly the effectiveness and the employment of the field artillery group in North Africa and Sicily it is necessary to review the artillery organization in being at that time. The 5th Armored Field Artillery Group was activated prior to the reorganization of non-divisional artillery which eliminated the regiment and fixed brigade. The 13th Field Artillery Brigade was an organic unit composed of a headquarters battery, three regiments, and an observation battalion. The howitzer and gun battalions within the regiments were organic and dependent upon the regimental headquarters battery for administrative support. The 5th Armored Field Artillery Group had three armored field artillery battalions attached at the time of its attachment to the brigade. These administratively self-sufficient battalions complemented the group headquarters, which did not possess an independent administrative capability. Thus the brigade commander was assigned another package designed to function well together but not designed for cross assignment with the other elements of the brigade. The armored field artillery battalions, being separate battalions, were ideal for attachment to a division to augment the division's organic artillery. The group headquarters, while capable of tactically controlling the battalions of the regiment, could not support these units over an extended period. Furthermore, the brigade commander had three major subordinate commanders with complete staffs and command facilities to assist in the tactical control of brigade units.

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<sup>41</sup>The Odyssey . . ., pp. 15-16.

The command and staff relations between the brigade and these regiments were well defined since the entire organization was one organic unit.

As a result of this organization, the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group was habitually associated with the three armored field artillery battalions throughout the operations in North Africa and Sicily. When a division needed additional artillery the armored field artillery battalions were attached to the division. Two armor groups employed in North Africa experienced the same tactical use whereby the battalions were detached to divisions and the group headquarters were used solely in an advisory capacity.<sup>42</sup> Unlike the armor groups, the field artillery group headquarters normally was also attached to a division with the armored field artillery battalions and continued to exercise tactical control over these battalions.

There were other valid reasons for the attachment of the group headquarters and the armored field artillery battalions to divisions. The battalions were extremely mobile in that all three were equipped with M-7 self-propelled howitzers. The three armored field artillery battalions were the only nondivisional 105 mm howitzers with the II Corps. With these light artillery battalions attached to the divisions, the 155 mm gun and howitzer regiments were utilized in reinforcing and general support roles. The commanding general of the 13th Field Artillery Brigade felt very strongly that the corps artillery had the responsibility for the general support within the corps sector and could not fulfill this responsibility if the units were attached to the divisions and were not controlled by the brigade commander. He also advocated the establishment of pools of armored artillery battalions to supplement

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<sup>42</sup>Hechler, "The Armored Force . . .", pp. 48-49.

organic divisional artillery.<sup>43</sup>

There were exceptions to the normal decentralized employment of the group headquarters by the 13th Field Artillery Brigade. Occasionally, it operated under the brigade headquarters in a general support or reinforcing role. For example, in the final days of the North African Campaign the brigade headquarters retained eleven battalions, including the 5th Armored Field Artillery Group with two battalions, to support the attack of the 1st Infantry Division toward Mateur.<sup>44</sup>

In summary, the field artillery group in North Africa and Sicily was employed primarily as a force of "augmenting artillery." The battalions which were assigned to the group at the time it joined II Corps were regarded as organic to the group due to their organizational compatibility with each other and lack of compatibility with the organic elements of the 13th Field Artillery Brigade. The administratively self-sufficient battalions, with their short range but extremely mobile weapons, were ideally suited for attachment to augment the divisions. The tactical headquarters provided by the group headquarters was not needed by the 13th Field Artillery Brigade; therefore, the group headquarters was often attached to a division with one of the battalions.

The 5th Armored Field Artillery Group was reorganized two days after the close of the Sicilian Campaign under a new War Department Table of Organization and became Headquarters Battery, 5th Field Artillery

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<sup>43</sup>U. S., War Department, Allied Force Headquarters, "Training Memorandum Number 50", 20 November 1943, p. 30.

<sup>44</sup>U. S., War Department, Army Ground Forces, "Report of Artillery (II Corps) in North Africa, 21 April to 26 April 1943, Inclusive", 26 June 1943, p. 3.

Group.<sup>45</sup> The 5th Armored Field Artillery Group had possibly made its greatest contribution in the North African and Sicilian Campaigns by serving as a pilot model. The commanders had been able to observe, evaluate, and employ the unit which soon would be the basic tactical headquarters for the control of all nondivisional artillery battalions.

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<sup>45</sup>The Odyssey . . ., p. 16.

## CHAPTER III

### THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP IN ITALY

After the fall of Sicily, the next Allied operation was the invasion of the mainland of Italy. Planning for this operation had been conducted by the Fifth (US) Army since the middle of June 1943 at its headquarters in North Africa. This invasion was to open a "second front" in Europe, to maintain the initiative against German forces, to secure more advanced air bases, and to insure complete control of the Mediterranean. The assault by Fifth Army was part of a combined British-United States effort under the overall direction of the 15th Army Group Headquarters. This was the same army group headquarters that had been organized for the invasion of Sicily under General Alexander.<sup>1</sup>

The invasion of Italy began on 3 September 1943 with the Eighth (British) Army landing on the toe of the mainland. The main attack by Fifth Army was launched on 9 September with landings at Salerno by the X (British) Corps and the VI (US) Corps. The assault landings of the VI Corps were made by the 36th Infantry Division (reinforced).<sup>2</sup>

Since the initial assault objectives were scheduled to be taken by regimental combat teams, the division artillery battalions were attached to these units. The 105 mm howitzers were landed early in

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<sup>1</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations in Sicily and Italy (West Point, New York: USMA Printing Office, 1945), pp. 26-30.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 31-33.

amphibious 2½ ton vehicles (DUKW) to provide immediate artillery support. The value of this technique was proven in that one weapon was credited with destroying five enemy tanks during a German counterattack against the assault elements of the 142d Infantry Regiment.<sup>3</sup> In order to insure surprise, naval gunfire was not utilized prior to the assault. Once the units were ashore, observed naval gunfire was used extensively and proved highly satisfactory for attacking the more distant and larger targets.<sup>4</sup> The additional support by naval gunfire was especially needed since the division was not accompanied by corps artillery for the invasion. The 13th Field Artillery Brigade had remained in Sicily with orders to join VI Corps as soon as shipping became available.<sup>5</sup>

By 14 September the fierce German resistance had been overcome and the beachhead at Salerno was secure. Link up by Fifth Army elements and the Eighth Army was accomplished on 16 September. Sizable advances were made by the VI Corps in late September and by the 29th the corps was in a position to envelop the German forces east of Naples.<sup>6</sup>

As shipping was made available, elements of the 13th Field Artillery Brigade were brought into Italy and immediately employed to support the VI Corps attack. Since the field artillery regiments arrived prior to the brigade headquarters, they were initially attached to the committed divisions. For example, on 24 September the 3d Infantry Division

<sup>3</sup>U. S., War Department, 36th Infantry Division, 142d Infantry Regiment, "Recommendations Made as a Result of the 'Avalanche' Operation", 23 October 1943, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>U. S., War Department, 36th Infantry Division Artillery, "Comments and Conclusions on Operation Avalanche", 18 October 1943, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup>U. S., War Department, 5th Army, "Outline Plan, Operation AVALANCHE", 26 August 1943.

<sup>6</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., pp. 34-44.

had a groupment of one 155 mm howitzer battalion and one battery of 155 mm guns attached for its attack in the Sabato Valley.<sup>7</sup>

By the time VI Corps launched its attack toward Naples on the 29th of September, the entire 13th Field Artillery Brigade was in Italy as the corps artillery.<sup>8</sup> The employment of the field artillery did not change for this attack since nondivisional units continued to be attached to the divisions. Specifically, the 3d Infantry Division had a battalion of 155 mm howitzers and a battalion of 155 mm guns for this period.<sup>9</sup>

With the VI Corps keeping pace on its east flank, the X Corps seized Naples on 1 October. Continued pressure was exerted on the German forces and by 6 October the Fifth Army had possession of the south bank of the Volturno River. Because the river presented a formidable obstacle, it was necessary for the Allied forces to pause prior to continuing the attack northward.<sup>10</sup>

During the army build up on the Volturno River the artillery carried out an aggressive program of harassing and interdiction missions. To confuse the enemy as to attack plans a simulated preparation was fired just prior to daylight on 12 October.<sup>11</sup>

As part of the army attack on 13 October the VI Corps attacked

<sup>7</sup>U. S., War Department, 3d Infantry Division, "G-3 Report No. 7", 25 September 1943, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup>Major Chester G. Star et al, Fifth Army History, From Activation to the Fall of Naples, Vol. I (Florence, Italy: L'Impronta Press, 1944), p. 110.

<sup>9</sup>U. S., War Department, 3d Infantry Division, "G-3 Report No. 17", 5 October 1943, pp. 1-2.

<sup>10</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., p. 44.

<sup>11</sup>U. S., War Department, 3d Infantry Division, "G-3 Report No. 24", 12 October 1943, p. 1.

across the Volturno with three divisions. The initial success of the divisions caused the Germans to withdraw before the corps. This began a delaying action by the German forces over extremely rough terrain. The poor roads, demolished bridges, and difficulties encountered in re-supply were as much a problem as the enemy resistance to the attacking forces. By 4 November, the 34th and 45th Divisions were making their third crossing of the Volturno. This crossing was made without great difficulty; however, once the lower slopes of the mountainous terrain near Mignano, Venafro, and Colli were reached the advance slowed. In this operation the corps had advanced approximately forty miles on the east axis and some twenty miles on the west axis. After approximately two weeks of further fighting in the mountains with little progress, the VI Corps halted to give the divisions a much needed rest.<sup>12</sup>

To support the attack on 13 October across the Volturno, a preparation lasting one-half hour was fired. This preparation was coordinated by the Fifth Army Artillery Officer and concentrated fourteen battalions on one of the initial objectives.<sup>13</sup> The attacks following the preparation were separated to such an extent that it was necessary to attach the 155 mm howitzer battalions to the divisions and retain the 155 mm gun units in general support of the corps.<sup>14</sup> The limited road net, rugged terrain, and scarcity of suitable position areas made control by the field artillery brigade commander difficult and attachment

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<sup>12</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., pp. 49-52.

<sup>13</sup>U. S., War Department, Army Ground Forces, "Observers Report - Second Orientation Conference at Fifth Army Headquarters", 5 January 1944, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup>U. S., War Department, 3d Infantry Division, "G-3 Report No. 27", 15 October 1943, p. 1.



or reinforcement a more desirable method of employment. While firing missions in support of the division was first priority for the nondivisional battalions with a reinforcing mission, these battalions were also given missions by their parent brigade organization.<sup>15</sup>

While VI Corps had been conducting its attack in late October and early November, additional nondivisional artillery units had been arriving in the theater. On 15 November when the offensive was halted, there were within Fifth Army the following nondivisional artillery units: three field artillery brigade headquarters and headquarters batteries, three field artillery group headquarters and headquarters batteries, four regiments, and thirteen separate battalions. The nondivisional field artillery units now in Italy were of the old and the new organization. The 13th Field Artillery Brigade and its organic field artillery regiments retained the old organization while the newly arrived battalions were separate battalions. The bulk of these units had only recently arrived and had not participated in operations of Fifth Army. The 18th Field Artillery Brigade with three battalions attached was still under Fifth Army control. The II Corps, which had just been moved from Sicily and had not been committed, had one field artillery group headquarters and headquarters battery, one regiment, and three separate battalions attached to it. The nondivisional artillery with VI Corps consisted of two brigade headquarters and headquarters batteries, two group headquarters and headquarters batteries, three regiments, and five separate battalions. Two separate battalions and one battery from a 155 mm gun regiment had been

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<sup>15</sup>U. S., War Department, North African Theater of Operations, "Training Memorandum Number 3, Lessons From the Italian Campaign", 10 March 1944, pp. 73-80.

attached to the X Corps.<sup>16</sup> With this build up of corps artillery, the corps artillery commanders possessed, for the first time in Italy, sufficient artillery to provide adequate support to the corps maneuver units.

Typical of the nondivisional artillery units being brought in as part of this build up was the 977th Field Artillery Battalion. This battalion had been activated on 10 February 1941 as the 2d Battalion, 35th Field Artillery Regiment. The regiment was reorganized on 1 March 1943 as the 35th Field Artillery Group with the regimental headquarters and headquarters battery becoming the headquarters and headquarters battery of the group. The 1st and 2d Battalions were reorganized as the 976th and 977th Field Artillery Battalions. After further training and maneuvers the 35th Field Artillery Group (976th and 977th Field Artillery Battalions attached) departed for a staging area in North Africa. In North Africa the 977th Field Artillery Battalion was attached to the 194th Field Artillery Group and departed for Italy on 7 October. The battalion arrived in Italy on 10 October but did not receive all of its equipment until 31 October. On that date, the 977th Field Artillery Battalion occupied its first firing position approximately two kilometers east of Pietrovairano.<sup>17</sup> This battalion, like the majority of the nondivisional artillery units, had arrived in Italy during the Fifth Army attack across the Volturno. Before it and the artillery tactical headquarters which were also arriving could be committed, the attack had been slowed and the

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<sup>16</sup>Captain William D. McCain et al, Fifth Army History, Across the Volturno to the Winter Line, Vol. II (Florence, Italy: L'Impronta Press, 1944), pp. 100-115.

<sup>17</sup>U. S., War Department, 977th Field Artillery Battalion, "Historical Record, 977th F A Bn, October 1943", 14 November 1943, pp. 1-7.

build up phase had been ordered.

The last two weeks of November were utilized by Fifth Army to regroup and to plan a renewed offensive. The II Corps was given a sector in the middle of the army sector overlooked by the Mount Camino hill mass.<sup>18</sup> This period was characterized by falling rains and artillery shells - both coming down regularly. Harassing and interdiction missions as well as a very active counterbattery program were performed by artillery units across the II and VI Corps front. In this counterbattery duel, the artillery in II Corps fired over 95,000 rounds during the last two weeks of November.<sup>19</sup>

The renewed offensive by Fifth Army called for simultaneous attacks by the X Corps to seize Mount Camino and the II Corps to seize Mount La Defensa and Mount Maggiore. On the Fifth Army right flank, VI Corps was to conduct feints and demonstrations along its entire front. The army attack was planned to overrun the southern portion of the enemy's defensive belt and permit opening the Liri Valley for further attacks toward Rome.<sup>20</sup>

On 1 December Fifth Army was ready to initiate attacks against the dug-in German forces. The artillery preparation was started at 1630 hours on 2 December. Against Mount Camino more than 800 artillery pieces fired the most intense preparation thus far in Italy. During a one hour period the artillery with II Corps fired 22,508 rounds - an average of 65 rounds per weapon. By 4 December more than 200,000 rounds of ammunition

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<sup>18</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., p. 57.

<sup>19</sup>Captain Harris G. Warren, Fifth Army History, The Winter Line, Vol. III (Florence, Italy: L'Impronta Press, 1944), pp. 18-19.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

had been fired by the artillery with Fifth Army for this preparation and in support of the attack.<sup>21</sup>

The intensity of the artillery fire during the period 2 to 4 December emphasized the amount of nondivisional artillery that was then present in Italy. It also is indicative of the control that could be executed through the artillery chain of command to mass the fires of many units on critical enemy positions. The artillery support for the army attack on 2 December was coordinated and planned at Headquarters, Fifth Army. Conferences had been held on 26 and 27 November by Brigadier General Lewis, the Fifth Army Artillery Officer. At these meetings, arrangements had been made with artillery representatives from each corps as to the details of fire support for the attack.<sup>22</sup> Three groupments were formed within II Corps to coordinate the artillery in the initial phase of the attack. Groupment "B" consisted of the 71st Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters, the 194th Field Artillery Group (two eight inch howitzer battalions), and three separate battalions. Groupment "B" performed counterbattery, interdiction, harassing, and fortification destruction missions. Groupment "M" was made up of the 18th Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters, one regiment, and three battalions. This groupment was assigned the mission of reinforcing the fires of the 36th Infantry Division Artillery. Groupment "D" contained the 1st Armored Division Artillery, the 6th Armored Field Artillery Group (two 105 mm howitzer battalions), and a tank destroyer battalion.<sup>23</sup> Groupment "D" was placed in direct

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<sup>21</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., p. 58.

<sup>22</sup>U. S., War Department, VI Corps Artillery Section, "Notes on Conferences Held 26 & 27 November on Artillery Plans for Contemplated Attack by Fifth Army", 27 November 1943, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup>U. S., War Department, II Corps, "Annex No. 1 to Field Order No. 14, Artillery", 27 November 1943, p. 1.

support of the elements of the 36th Infantry Division making the attack on Mount Defensa.<sup>24</sup> To coordinate the fires of the three corps, a time schedule was published by the Fifth Army Artillery Officer for the preparation.<sup>25</sup>

The attack following the lengthy artillery preparation encountered well fortified positions and dug in German forces; however, by 10 December the initial objectives had been taken. This gruelling fighting continued against enemy resistance in front of both the II and VI Corps until 21 December. The attack was halted, with Fifth Army in possession of the Mignano Gap, to allow for some necessary reorganization. During this period the 36th Infantry Division, which had been instrumental in the success of the recent attack, was replaced on line. What had been the VI Corps zone was reassigned to the French Expeditionary Corps, and the VI Corps was pulled out of battle to begin preparation for the Anzio landing being planned for January 1944.<sup>26</sup>

While the forces to make the Anzio assault were being assembled, the II Corps and the French Expeditionary Corps attack on 5 January 1944 was to drive the enemy across the Rapido River. With the 34th Infantry Division making the main attack in the II Corps zone, Mount La Chiaia was secured. The hard fighting continued until 15 January when Mount Trocchio was taken by II Corps. The French Expeditionary Corps had been able to keep up with the advance of II Corps and seized Sant' Elia on 15 January.

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<sup>24</sup>U. S., War Department, 1st Armored Division Artillery, "Field Order No. 1", 1 December 1943, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup>U. S., War Department, Fifth Army, Office of the Artillery Officer, "Time Schedule of Artillery Fires in Support of Attacks", 2 December 1943, pp. 1-2.

<sup>26</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . . ., pp. 58-59.

These losses caused the Germans to withdraw across the Rapido River and brought to a close what was known as the "Winter Line" Campaign.<sup>27</sup>

When the French Expeditionary Corps assumed responsibility for the zone of the VI Corps the 13th Field Artillery Brigade was attached to the French Corps. The brigade had a total of seven United States battalions and two regimental headquarters with it but was unable to keep a group headquarters.<sup>28</sup> In order to provide a subordinate tactical headquarters, the system of forming groupments under a regimental headquarters was utilized by the 13th Field Artillery Brigade Commander.<sup>29</sup>

Allied plans in January 1944 were for the Fifth Army to make a strong attack in its zone to draw in as many enemy forces as possible. The Eighth Army was to make attacks in its zone to prevent the movement of enemy reserves from their portion of the front. In conjunction with these actions, Fifth Army was to make an amphibious landing south of Rome to cut communication routes of German forces facing the Fifth Army in the south.<sup>30</sup>

The operations by the Fifth Army against the "Winter Line" in January were performed as part of the overall plan supporting the Anzio assault. The offensive was continued by the X Corps on 17 January with an attack which secured a bridgehead across the Garigliano River. The II Corps launched an attack on 20 January with the 36th Infantry Division

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., pp. 60-62.

<sup>28</sup>U. S., War Department, North African Theater of Operations, "Army Ground Forces Board Report, Field Artillery", 2 February 1944, pp. 33-34.

<sup>29</sup>U. S., War Department, 977th Field Artillery Battalion, "Historical Record and History, 977th Field Artillery Battalion, January 1944", 1 February 1944, p. 3.

<sup>30</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., p. 64.

making the main effort. The 36th Infantry Division secured a bridgehead across the Rapido River; however, the unit was forced to withdraw two days later. On 22 January, the day of the Anzio landing, Lieutenant General Mark W. Clark, Fifth Army Commander, directed that II Corps attempt to seize Cassino from the north rather than continue the efforts which had been futile from the south. This attack was made by the 34th Infantry Division and succeeded in gaining a firm bridgehead over the Rapido. Since Cassino barred entrance into the Liri Valley, the German forces held on to the commanding terrain and the battle evolved into a slow, costly, and difficult operation. Although II Corps reached the outskirts of Cassino and captured commanding terrain, the city was not occupied. A New Zealand Corps was assigned to the Fifth Army in early February and took over that portion of the front from the II Corps.<sup>31</sup>

The plan for conducting the amphibious landing at Anzio envisioned little artillery support in the early phases. The 3d Infantry Division had the 69th Armored Field Artillery Battalion (105 mm howitzer) and Battery B, 1st Battalion, 36th Field Artillery Regiment (155 mm gun) attached for the assault landings. The 1st (British) Infantry Division had one light regiment and one medium regiment, each comparable to an American battalion, to augment its organic artillery. All artillery in the assault waves was under the control of the divisions making the assault. As follow up landings were made, the VI Corps Artillery Officer was to assume control of the 155 mm gun battery from the 3d Infantry Division and the medium regiment of the 1st Infantry Division. These twenty artillery pieces would constitute VI Corps Artillery until the 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment (155 mm howitzer) and the

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 65-72.

remainder of the 1st Battalion, 36th Field Artillery Regiment could be landed. After the landing of these two units it was anticipated that groupments could be formed and controlled by the VI Corps Artillery Officer.<sup>32</sup>

When the VI Corps had been removed from the Fifth Army front to prepare for the Anzio landing, the 13th Field Artillery Brigade had stayed with the French Expeditionary Corps as its corps artillery. The VI Corps Artillery Officer had managed to bring the counterbattery section along to the Anzio beachhead. This decision proved to be a wise one as the VI Corps Artillery Officer was to coordinate naval gun fire, ground artillery, and air support in the counterbattery duel at Anzio.<sup>33</sup>

Artillery with the assault forces landed as scheduled at Anzio; however, it was not until 27 January that the VI Corps Artillery Officer could take control of the nondivisional units which had been attached to the divisions.<sup>34</sup> Nondivisional artillery was brought in rapidly to Anzio with the 35th Field Artillery Group and three separate battalions being attached to VI Corps on 31 January.<sup>35</sup> The tactical control facilities within the corps were further strengthened on 4 February when Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 18th Field Artillery Brigade, was attached to VI Corps.<sup>36</sup> The need for the brigade headquarters had been apparent

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<sup>32</sup>U. S., War Department, VI Corps, "Annex 7 to Outline Plan - Operation Shingle, VI Corps Artillery Plan", 7 January 1944, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup>U. S., War Department, North African Theater of Operations, "Army Ground Forces Board Report No. 126, Field Artillery", 2 March 1944, p. 18.

<sup>34</sup>U. S., War Department, VI Corps, "G-3 Report No. 146", 27 January 1944, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup>U. S., War Department, VI Corps, "G-3 Report No. 150", 31 January 1944, p. 1.

<sup>36</sup>U. S., War Department, VI Corps, "G-3 Report No. 154", 4 February 1944, pp. 1-2.



with the increase of nondivisional units in the beachhead to counter the German artillery. In addition, the problems of coordination encountered in planning and directing the naval gun fire and air support had been growing.<sup>37</sup>

The VI Corps assault on 22 January met only minor opposition and the assault elements moved rapidly inland. Moderate opposition continued to be encountered and by the 24th of January the initial beachhead line, seven miles inland, had been secured. After failing to move inland against the initial moderate resistance, the assault forces were stopped short of their objectives of Campoleone and Cisterna on 28 January. Even with two additional divisions then available within the beachhead, the strong German defenses could not be breached. The VI Corps continued to try to break through the defenses to enlarge the beachhead with a strong attack on 1 February. After this attack proved futile, VI Corps was ordered on 2 February to consolidate the beachhead and to prepare for defense.<sup>38</sup>

The German attempts to reduce the beachhead were carried out in three phases. A series of attacks from 3 to 12 February were partially successful in the Campoleone area. On 16 February a German counterattack involving ten divisions pushed the Allied forces back three miles. This attack was stopped on 19 February and one mile of the valuable space was regained by Allied counterattacks on 20 February. The Allied superiority in artillery and airpower plus the inability of the Germans to employ tanks on the unfavorable terrain were instrumental in the defeat of these

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<sup>37</sup>U. S., War Department, North African Theater of Operations, "Army Ground Forces Board Report No. 126 . . .", p. 6.

<sup>38</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., pp. 69-71.

attacks. Prior to launching the third and final major attempt to reduce the beachhead, the Germans greatly increased the volume of their artillery fires. An average of 1500 rounds per day fell on VI Corps elements. The VI Corps countered these fires with a daily average of 25,000 rounds. The third phase of attacks by the Germans started on 29 February but was unsuccessful. On 4 March, having failed, the German forces began to organize a defense of the area to contain the VI Corps. From 4 March until 22 May, the beachhead line remained relatively static without major offensive efforts by either VI Corps or the German forces.<sup>39</sup>

In the Anzio beachhead, the artillery was centralized under the control of corps artillery to a degree neither needed nor previously possible in Italy. The centralized control was necessary in order to effectively counter the German artillery which covered the entire beachhead. The centralized control was possible due to the lack of offensive action by VI Corps in the area. The counterbattery program was of such importance that several conferences had been conducted at the direction of the VI Corps Commander to determine means of improving this effort. The outgrowth of this centralization was a counterbattery program which made all the artillery within the beachhead immediately responsive to the corps artillery headquarters. The artillery of the divisions remained in support of their units; however, counterbattery missions were passed to these units by the corps artillery.<sup>40</sup>

Headquarters, 18th Field Artillery Brigade, functioned as corps artillery headquarters under the command of Brigadier General Baehr at

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., pp. 73-74.

<sup>40</sup>U. S., War Department, North African Theater of Operations, "Army Ground Forces Board Report No. 148", 25 April 1944, pp. 2-3.

Anzio. General Baehr had strong feelings about the capabilities and proper utilization of the field artillery group headquarters. He felt that the group headquarters was ideally suited for the control of up to four battalions and for operation apart from the corps artillery headquarters in a reinforcing role. He also felt that the group was fully capable of conducting its own counterbattery program on an extended front if augmented by elements from the observation battalion.<sup>41</sup> At Anzio this delegation of the counterbattery effort to the group was not necessary.

The only group employed at Anzio, the 35th Field Artillery Group, had four battalions attached and was in general support of the corps. With fire direction so closely controlled by the corps artillery headquarters, the group commander did not experience any difficulty in controlling the four battalions but felt that in a rapidly moving situation he might encounter problems.<sup>42</sup>

There was a definite need for an additional group headquarters at Anzio despite the close control exercised by the 18th Field Artillery Brigade. As the build up of nondivisional artillery progressed it became necessary to form battalion groups. This need was especially apparent toward the end of the beachhead phase when eight inch and 240 mm howitzer batteries were received. On 16 May, the 977th Field Artillery Battalion had organic or attached elements at eleven separate firing locations.<sup>43</sup>

On 5 March 1944, the 36th Field Artillery Regiment was reorganized. The 1st and 2d Battalions were constituted as separate battalions

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>43</sup>U. S., War Department, 977th Field Artillery Battalion, "Historical Record and History 977th Field Artillery Battalion, May 1944", 10 June 1944, p. 2.

and designated the 36th and 633d Field Artillery Battalions. The regimental headquarters became Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 36th Field Artillery Group.<sup>44</sup> This was the last of the regiments of the 13th Field Artillery Brigade to be reorganized and for the first time there existed a standard nondivisional artillery organization in Italy.

The existence of two different forms of nondivisional artillery organizations in Italy influenced the employment of the artillery in the Italian Campaign. For this reason, it is appropriate to analyze at this point the artillery employment from the invasion until the reorganization of the regiments.

Field artillery group headquarters were not provided in the early stages of the invasion. The corps artillery which supported the VI Corps in its initial fighting in Italy was the 13th Field Artillery Brigade. This brigade, organized along the old organization system, consisted of organic regiments. When there was a need for the combining of two or more battalions of different caliber to perform a mission, a groupment was formed and controlled by one of the three regimental headquarters. In the latter days of October and in early November 1943, there was a build up of nondivisional artillery. Two additional brigade headquarters and headquarters batteries were provided, but these two units did not have organic elements. The battalions arriving in Italy were separate battalions. Three group headquarters were provided to assist the brigade commander in the tactical employment of the battalions.

The 194th Field Artillery Group arrived in Italy with two eight inch howitzer battalions attached. For a short period the group head-

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<sup>44</sup>U. S., War Department, 36th Field Artillery Battalion, "History of 36th Field Artillery Battalion, March 5, 1944 to March 31, 1944", 1944, p. 1.

quarters was utilized by the 71st Field Artillery Brigade to control only these two units. These were the first eight inch howitzers to arrive in Italy and proved to be very effective for counterbattery.<sup>45</sup> However, after a short time the special treatment accorded to these units was discontinued and the group headquarters was used more effectively.

After the initial decentralized operations necessitated in the invasion phase, the corps artillery brigade commanders had been able to exercise extremely tight control of the nondivisional artillery battalions, though occasionally a corps battalion was attached to a division to add to the division's artillery support. However, the rugged mountain terrain slowed offensive operations to such a degree that the additional artillery support needed by divisions could best be provided by reinforcing artillery kept under corps control. With this high degree of centralized control many refinements in fire direction and massing of artillery fires were implemented. To facilitate command functions the group headquarters were used to control two to four battalions. With fire direction centrally handled by the brigade fire direction center, the group fire direction center served primarily as a back up facility. The need for group headquarters within the corps artillery brigade was felt continually. Even with the centralized control, the group commanders and their staffs were invaluable in relieving the brigade commander of details of command, inspection, and other functions not directly relating to fire missions. A great need was met in reconnaissance by the group headquarters which made possible greater flexibility in movement,

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<sup>45</sup>U. S., War Department, North African Theater of Operations, "Army Ground Forces Board Report No. 107", 10 January 1944, p. 31.

displacement, and occupation of positions.<sup>46</sup> In the rugged terrain with limited roadways, the group commander was able to make general position area reconnaissance in preparation for the movement of his attached battalions. In this manner he could select position areas appropriate for the calibers, coordinate with division for the areas, and determine special security requirements.<sup>47</sup> The group headquarters served effectively as a communications link between the brigade and the battalions and greatly reduced the wire requirement of the brigade. One brigade commander felt that the group commander's inspection of battalion fire direction centers, police, and sanitation, as well as the assistance rendered to the battalion in displacement, made the group headquarters absolutely necessary. The group commander relieved the battalion commanders of many duties and at the same time assisted the brigade commander in many ways. This brigade commander had two groups at this time and had planned to improve another from a regimental headquarters.<sup>48</sup>

The 35th Field Artillery Group Headquarters was the only organization of that type at Anzio. Its effective employment in controlling four battalions contributed greatly to the artillery battle that was waged continually. The commander of this group felt that it was a definite disadvantage in not knowing the officers in the various battalions which continually changed in a group organization. However, he felt that the advantages in flexibility far outweighed any disadvantage in the group

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<sup>46</sup>U. S., War Department, North African Theater of Operations, "Training Memorandum Number 3: Lesson From the Italian Campaign", 10 March 1944, pp. 79-81.

<sup>47</sup>Col. N. P. Morrow, "Employment of Artillery In Italy," The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXIV (August, 1944), p. 500.

<sup>48</sup>U. S., War Department, North African Theater of Operations, "Army Ground Forces Board Report No. 126 . . .", p. 17.

organization.<sup>49</sup>

Even though the group organization had proven to be invaluable during these first months of the Italian Campaign, it did so in a period of extremely centralized artillery control. The group's capability for controlling its attached battalions in all respects with little assistance from corps artillery headquarters had not been tested extensively.

The relative static lines of battle were broken on 11 May 1944. The Allied offensive was initiated with an attack across the whole of Italy; but most of the significant gains were made in the zone of the Fifth Army south of the Liri Valley by the French Corps and the II Corps.<sup>50</sup>

In this attack by the Fifth Army, artillery support was planned and centrally controlled to the highest degree. Time was available to plan in great detail all aspects of the artillery support of the attack. Enemy targets were well defined, observation was thoroughly established throughout the zone, reconnaissance had been conducted, and artillery movement to support the early success of the attack was planned.<sup>51</sup> Available to II Corps were three field artillery groups with a total of eight battalions attached; while the French Corps had the 13th Field Artillery Brigade with three field artillery groups and eight battalions attached. The Fifth Army planning for the attack included coordination of observation across the front, establishing ammunition ceilings, and in general

<sup>49</sup>U. S., War Department, North African Theater of Operations, "Army Ground Forces Board Report No. 148 . . .", p. 15.

<sup>50</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., pp. 78-79.

<sup>51</sup>U. S., War Department, North African Theater of Operations, "Army Ground Forces Report - Field Artillery", 22 May 1944, pp. 1-2.

extremely detailed coordination of artillery support.<sup>52</sup>

Within II Corps the 77th Field Artillery Group was used to reinforce the division artillery of both divisions in the attack, the 36th Field Artillery Group was given the mission of conducting counterbattery, destruction, and long range harassing and interdiction missions, while the 6th Field Artillery Group was placed in direct support of the 88th Infantry Division. The artillery portion of the operation order for II Corps was very detailed and covered all aspects of the artillery support of the attack.<sup>53</sup>

The plans were equally as comprehensive for the French Corps. The 194th Field Artillery Group was given the mission of furnishing counterbattery, interdiction, harassing and protective fires for the corps while the 17th and 178th Field Artillery Groups were placed in general support.<sup>54</sup> The artillery within Fifth Army fired over 180,000 rounds of ammunition in the first twenty-four hours of the operation.

This attack overcame the German resistance and, by 22 May, the advance elements of the II Corps, on the west flank of Fifth Army, were within thirty miles of the VI Corps elements in the Anzio beachhead. Since this was the opportune time for the VI Corps to break out of the beachhead, VI Corps launched an attack on 23 May toward Cisterna. On 25 May Cisterna was secured by VI Corps. Also accomplished on 25 May was the link up of advance elements of the VI and II Corps at Borgo Grappa.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>U. S., War Department, Fifth Army, "Annex 5 to FO 6, Field Artillery", 7 May 1944, pp. 1-5.

<sup>53</sup>U. S., War Department, II Corps, "Annex No. 3 to FO No. 21, Field Artillery", undated, pp. 1-5.

<sup>54</sup>U. S., War Department, 13th Field Artillery Brigade, "Field Order No. 14", 8 May 1944, pp. 1-5.

<sup>55</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., pp. 78-80.



To support the VI Corps breakout of the Anzio beachhead the 35th Field Artillery Group (four battalions attached) was in general support of the corps.<sup>56</sup> Planning had been conducted for this attack since mid April; therefore, plans were detailed and well coordinated in all respects. Artillery had been very active during the period within the Anzio beachhead so the loss of surprise was not a factor in planning an extensive artillery preparation prior to the attack on 23 May 1944.<sup>57</sup>

The successful attacks by elements of Fifth Army from the south and from the Anzio beachhead joined and continued toward Rome. Enemy resistance was overcome late in the afternoon of 4 June and American forces entered the capital city.<sup>58</sup>

Without pausing in Rome, the II and VI Corps continued the Fifth Army attack toward the north. By 9 June the advance had progressed almost fifty miles as Viterbo had been secured.<sup>59</sup> On 11 June the VI Corps was relieved by the IV Corps. The pursuit by the IV Corps was continued until 24 July 1944, a period of forty-three days in which the enemy was driven back 140 miles.<sup>60</sup>

During the pursuit against disorganized resistance from 11 to 20 June, the corps artillery provided one group (two 155 mm howitzer battalions and one 155 mm gun battalion) in general support, reinforcing the

<sup>56</sup>U. S., War Department, VI Corps, "Annex 3 to FO 26, Field Artillery", 6 May 1944, pp. 1-2.

<sup>57</sup>U. S., War Department, VI Corps, "Outline Plan - BUFFALO, Field Artillery", 18 April 1944, pp. 1-2.

<sup>58</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., pp. 80-81.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>60</sup>U. S., War Department, IV Corps Artillery, "IV Corps Artillery in Pursuit", 1 December 1944, p. 1.

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<sup>58</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., pp. 80-81.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>60</sup>U. S., War Department, IV Corps Artillery, "IV Corps Artillery in Pursuit", 1 December 1944, p. 1.

36th Infantry Division Artillery. The 36th Infantry Division was the only division committed. The 91st Reconnaissance Squadron was screening the right flank of the 36th Infantry Division and maintaining contact with the II Corps on the east. To support the 91st Reconnaissance Squadron the 6th Field Artillery Group (three 105 mm howitzer battalions) was placed in direct support.<sup>61</sup>

By 20 June the IV Corps front had widened and enemy resistance had stiffened. Additional artillery was attached to the IV Corps and the corps artillery reorganized to provide better support to the two divisions and the 91st Reconnaissance Squadron which were now committed in the attack. The 77th Field Artillery Group, now controlling only two battalions, continued its mission of general support, reinforcing the fires of the 36th Infantry Division Artillery. The 6th Field Artillery Group (one 155 mm gun battalion and one eight inch howitzer battalion) was used as general support, reinforcing the 1st Armored Division Artillery. Since the advance was then on a very broad front three corps battalions were attached to the 1st Armored Division. The corps artillery commander felt that the attachments were necessary but noted that the attached weapons were "extravagantly used on inappropriate targets" and were not pushed well forward to take advantage of their range.<sup>62</sup>

By 1 July IV Corps elements were deployed from the seacoast eastward on a front of approximately twenty-five miles. In order to provide adequate corps artillery support over this distance the control of the artillery was decentralized to the groups which spread the batteries but still maintained the capability of massing fires in critical areas. Enemy rear areas were well covered, denying him the use of roads and cutting

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., pp. 2-3.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., pp. 3-4.

his escape routes. Enemy resistance stiffened on 8 July and the corps reorganized the artillery giving both field artillery groups missions of general support, reinforcing the committed division artilleries and retaining two 240 mm howitzer battalions under corps artillery as general support. The IV Corps attack continued until 22 July by which time the enemy had been driven north of the Arno River.<sup>63</sup>

In a report concerning the artillery support of the IV Corps in its operations in June and July the IV Corps Artillery Commander submitted the following conclusions:

a. Field artillery group headquarters and headquarters batteries and separate field artillery battalions make possible the rapid, flexible, efficient organization for combat of the corps artillery into groups of the size and composition required by the missions to be performed during a rapid pursuit and in support of coordinated attacks.

b. The attachment of corps medium and heavy artillery to divisions of a corps is inefficient and unnecessary. A vigorous corps artillery group commander who keeps his guns well forward can reinforce the fires of divisional artillery effectively and at the same time perform corps missions without burdening the divisional artillery commander with the responsibilities and distractions that go with attached artillery.

c. A group commander can keep as many as four battalions (including 155 mm guns and 8" howitzers) in continuous support during a rapid advance through difficult mountainous terrain.<sup>64</sup>

By early August, the Fifth Army had consolidated along the Arno River and the pursuit phase of the battle had ended. Offensive operations were initiated again by the Eighth Army on 26 August and followed on 10 September by a Fifth Army attack. This attack by the II Corps in the Fifth Army zone secured the Futa Pass and advanced to within fifteen miles of Bologna before it was halted. German reinforcements were committed against the II Corps in such numbers that the attack was ordered halted on 20 October 1944.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Ibid., pp. 4-6.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>65</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., pp. 82-85.

The artillery employment during this phase with II Corps was routine. Prior to the attack an active counterbattery program was carried out by corps artillery. Three group headquarters were available to the corps at the start of the offensive. Two of the groups had three battalions attached while the third group varied from five to six battalions.<sup>66</sup> At the end of October, after the attack had been halted the same three groups remained but were of different composition in that the corps was following a program of rest and rehabilitation in preparation of the next offensive planned for December 1944. During November, Headquarters, 423d Field Artillery Group was given the unique mission of administering a rest center at Montecatini.<sup>67</sup>

A defensive posture was retained by Fifth Army until April 1945. Limited objective attacks were conducted in both the II and IV Corps areas but in general a stalemate existed across the front.<sup>68</sup> The II Corps had three field artillery groups, while the IV Corps had only one group during this period. To facilitate control, the IV Corps Artillery used the division artillery headquarters of the reserve division as a group headquarters and attached corps battalions to it.<sup>69</sup>

The artillery support of the Fifth Army attack in April was typical of the support that follows a long defensive phase. The planning

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<sup>66</sup>U. S., War Department, II Corps, "Report of Operations of II Corps in the Italian Campaign, 1-30 September 1944", 30 September 1944, Annex 5.

<sup>67</sup>U. S., War Department, II Corps, "Report of Operations of II Corps in the Italian Campaign, 1-30 November 1944", 30 November 1944, Annex 5.

<sup>68</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., pp. 88-90.

<sup>69</sup>U. S., War Department, IV Corps, "Report of Operations of the IV Corps in the Italian Campaign, 1 March to 31 March 1945", p. 58.

by II Corps had been especially detailed with conferences conducted well in advance by the corps artillery commander. For the attack each of the three groups contained three battalions. All groups were placed in general support but priority of their fires was given to the division attacking in the primary zone of fire of the group. Prior to the attack the division's fire plans, counterbattery programs, harassing fires, survey, communication plans, liaison, and observation had all been coordinated by II Corps Artillery. Even though the groups were in general support, liaison had been provided to each division artillery headquarters within the group's zone of fire. Communications were also duplicated so that fire requests were promptly handled by the group in answer to the division requirements. Over 17,000 rounds of ammunition were fired during the first twenty-four hours of the attack. As the initial enemy defenses were breached the groups worked directly with the divisions' artillery headquarters in order to keep up with the attack. Upon reaching the Po River, a 155 mm gun battery was attached to each of the two divisions making the crossing while the remainder of the corps artillery went into positions to support the crossings.<sup>70</sup> By this time the attack was encountering very little resistance with only the 155 mm guns possessing sufficient range to reach the retreating enemy vehicles and personnel. In crossing the Adige River the corps artillery supported while the division artillery crossed with corps 155 mm gun batteries attached. From this point enemy resistance was weak and few requests for fire were received by corps artillery units. The pursuit into the mountains was so rapid that by the end of April corps artillery units were in assembly

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<sup>70</sup>U. S., War Department, II Corps, "Battle Experiences, Coordination of Various Arms", 6 July 1945, pp. 3-7, 11-12.

areas using their vehicles to assist infantry units in their forward movement.<sup>71</sup>

The artillery support for the IV Corps attack on 14 April was similar to that of the II Corps. It was planned in every detail possible. After the initial breach of the enemy's defensive positions the attack became a pursuit. Group commanders were ordered to keep their artillery as far forward as possible and maintain communications and liaison with the reinforced unit. During this pursuit phase, the group commanders worked directly with the reinforced units and displaced their artillery as they deemed necessary. Toward the end of April targets consisted primarily of by-passed pockets of resistance which were quickly destroyed.<sup>72</sup>

All across Italy the resistance by German forces was crumbling late in April. Both the Fifth Army and Eighth Army were advancing at will on the 29th of April. On this day peace negotiations were begun and articles of unconditional surrender were signed on 2 May. The surrender in Italy was the beginning of mass surrender throughout the European theater that marked the end of World War II in Europe.<sup>73</sup>

The organization of nondivisional artillery in the Italian Campaign can best be described as one of evolution. As previously discussed, the field artillery brigade with its organic regiments was first used entirely as the corps artillery. This arrangement evolved into a hybrid organization with regiments, groups, brigades with organic elements,

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<sup>71</sup>U. S., War Department, II Corps Artillery, "Historical Record, April 1945", p. 3.

<sup>72</sup>U. S., War Department, IV Corps, "Report of Operations of the IV Corps in the Italian Campaign, 1 April to 30 April 1945", undated, pp. 63-67.

<sup>73</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., p. 95.

and brigade headquarters batteries without organic elements. Finally, the last year was fought with a headquarters and headquarters battery, corps artillery, commanding field artillery groups with their attached separate battalions.

The employment of corps artillery in Italy, with few exceptions, can be summarized as being centralized to the maximum degree. This was possible due to several factors; however, all eventually point to the nature of the terrain. The mountainous terrain provided good defensive positions to the German forces which made progress by the Allies extremely slow and deliberate. Restrictions on movement canalized attacks into relatively narrow avenues of approach. The battle was also characterized by lengthy periods of build up prior to each Allied offensive effort. The narrow frontages of attack did not require decentralization of the artillery in that the corps artillery commander could maintain control over the bulk of the units and thereby increase the effectiveness of massed fires on the enemy. The lengthy periods of build up prior to each attack made detailed planning possible and, again, this was best accomplished at the corps level. Since the corps artillery headquarters was able to effectively mass the majority of nondivisional artillery through its own fire direction facility, the fire direction capability of the fire artillery group headquarters was not extensively used in Italy. With the corps artillery headquarters effectively controlling the fires of the battalions, the group headquarters made its greatest contribution in the various other aspects of command and control of attached battalions. The group commander and his staff were able to give close supervision to the subordinate units and assist them greatly in reconnaissance and movement of the units. Coordination of observation was accomplished by the group



headquarters for all elements within its zone. The group headquarters served as a link in the communication nets which materially reduced the requirements of the corps artillery headquarters and provided a back up facility in this area just as it did in the fire direction capability. Perhaps the greatest contribution made by the group organization was the flexibility which it made possible. Often the corps only had two group headquarters, yet the artillery of the corps was capable of being shifted from one area to another without delay or confusion due to the manner in which the group headquarters were able to control and assist these units.<sup>74</sup>

The contribution of the field artillery group organization in Italy is best illustrated by the comments of one of the most experienced and senior artillerymen of the Italian Campaign, Major General John A. Crane. General Crane had commanded the 13th Field Artillery Brigade in North Africa, Sicily, and in the early phases of the Italian Campaign. In this capacity he had observed the first employment of the field artillery group and later the revised nondivisional artillery organization in its entirety. Midway in the Italian Campaign, an article by General Crane published in the Military Review contained the following comments:

In other words, separate battalions and separate group headquarters are a nuisance. They work under a decided handicap and constitute an uncoordinated mass of administrative chaff in an otherwise well organized system.

.....  
 There is no need whatsoever to break up organic corps artillery into separate battalions and separate headquarters like headless bodies and bodyless heads.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>Maj. Gen. John A. Crane, "Field Artillery Groups," The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXV (October, 1945), pp. 579-581.

<sup>75</sup>Maj. Gen. John A. Crane, "What Makes an Army an Army," Military Review, Vol. XXIV (September, 1944), p. 6.

Later, after he had commanded a corps artillery under the revised organization, he changed his opinion of the field artillery group. Near the end of the war in Italy, General Crane stated in another article that the most important advancement made by artillery was:

... the improvements we have made in controlling large quantities of artillery and in rapid and accurate massing of fires.

.....  
Recognition of the tactical importance of the field artillery group has increased markedly and is still growing.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>Crane, The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXV (October, 1945), p. 580.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP IN WESTERN EUROPE

The environment in which the nondivisional field artillery units prepared for employment in Western Europe was completely different from that which had prevailed prior to earlier World War II campaigns. This difference to a great degree influenced the employment of nondivisional field artillery units in Western Europe. The organization of nondivisional field artillery had become standardized. The revised organization directed in July 1943 (see Appendix) had been accomplished and there was uniformity in command structure of the nondivisional field artillery units. The corps artillery organization consisted of a headquarters and headquarters battery and a field artillery observation battalion. These two units were assigned to the corps with all other nondivisional field artillery units being assigned to the army and either attached to the corps or retained under army control. Normally, only the field artillery brigade and a limited number of heavy artillery battalions were retained at Army. The organization and employment of the attached field artillery groups and the separate battalions were the responsibility of the corps artillery commander.<sup>1</sup>

The field artillery brigade employed in Western Europe was considerably different from its counterpart which was used in North Africa, Sicily, and during a great part of the Italian Campaign. In the earlier

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<sup>1</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, "Report of the General Board - Organization and Equipment of Field Artillery Units", 1945, p. 27.

campaigns the field artillery brigade had normally performed as a tactical subelement of the corps artillery officer since the field artillery brigade often contained, as organic units, the bulk of corps artillery. Under the revised organization the corps artillery commander was provided the headquarters and headquarters battery through which he could exercise command of the attached field artillery. Thus, in the European Theater the field artillery brigade headquarters were allocated on a basis of one per army rather than one per corps.<sup>2</sup> It was necessary to have the brigade as a command headquarters at army since army artillery was merely a special staff section of the army headquarters headed by a brigadier general and having no command function.<sup>3</sup>

The role planned for the field artillery group headquarters in the European Campaign was that role for which it had been originally designed. It was to be attached to the corps and utilized to command separate battalions attached to it by the corps artillery headquarters, three or four battalions being considered normal.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to having a uniform organization, the nondivisional field artillery units initially employed in Western Europe had an opportunity to train together for a lengthy period prior to the invasion. The V Corps, for example, had been in Ireland since early 1942. As early as 30 June 1943 this headquarters began preparing general plans for an operation to seize the Brest Peninsula of France. The employment of non-

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>3</sup>U. S., War Department, First Army, "Combat Operations Data, First Army, Europe, 1944-1945", 1946, pp. 279-280.

<sup>4</sup>U. S., War Department, Circular 255, Reorganization of Corps, Headquarters, and Organic Troops (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1943), pp. 1-3.

divisional field artillery was stressed in the early planning effort as well as the exercises conducted later to correct deficiencies noted in the plans.<sup>5</sup>

The build up of units in the British Isles was necessarily spread over a considerable period of time. One of the earliest arrivals was the 5th Field Artillery Group which had been initiated to combat in North Africa. It had been shipped to Scotland at the end of the Sicilian Campaign.<sup>6</sup> In early 1944 the artillery units began to arrive in larger numbers and were quickly attached to the several corps for training. The corps artillery headquarters in England were actively studying the operational techniques being employed in Italy with a view toward developing the best operational procedures with the new artillery organization. Within XX Corps Artillery, weekly command post exercises were conducted to perfect its operations with the four group headquarters which had been attached in April 1944.<sup>7</sup> This training period was beneficial to all units from the battalions through the corps artillery headquarters in that a "sense of confidence in its own ability and in that of higher headquarters prevailed."<sup>8</sup>

Headquarters, Army Ground Forces, attempted to ship group headquarters with the battalions which had been attached during the training period in the United States. This effort to maintain continuity of

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<sup>5</sup>U. S., War Department, V Corps, Historical Sub-Section, V Corps Operations in the ETO, 6 January 1942 - 9 May 1945 (668th Engineer Topographic Company, V Corps, 1945), pp. 16-21.

<sup>6</sup>The Odyssey of the 5th F. A. Group (1946), p. 17.

<sup>7</sup>Colonel Russell V. Eastman, The History of the XX Corps Artillery (Weisback, Germany: W. F. Mayr, 1945), p. 9.

<sup>8</sup>The 119th Field Artillery Group (Gross-Steinheim, Offenback, Germany: Illert and Ewald, 1945), p. 22.

command was not entirely successful. Shipping considerations made it necessary to fit small, self-administered units into any available space. Consequently, the group headquarters and the battalions which had trained together often became separated.<sup>9</sup> In some cases the group headquarters and the battalions were rejoined but often "new teams" were formed as they arrived in England.<sup>10</sup>

As June 1944 approached the planning, training, and preparations increased greatly for operation OVERLORD, the invasion of Western Europe. The United States element of the invasion was to be the First Army consisting of the V, VII, and XIX Corps. The general plan of First Army called for simultaneous landings on two main beaches by the V and VII Corps. The XIX Corps was to follow the V Corps on the eastern beach.<sup>11</sup>

Nondivisional field artillery was allocated by First Army in equal amounts to both V and VII Corps. This initial organization for combat provided each corps three group headquarters, nine separate battalions, and one self-propelled 155 mm gun battery. A brigade headquarters, three group headquarters, and ten battalions were retained under army control while the follow up corps (the XIX Corps) was allocated two group headquarters and eight battalions.<sup>12</sup>

The artillery allocated to V Corps for the invasion included two self-propelled 105 mm howitzer battalions which were attached by corps

<sup>9</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, "Report of the General Board - The Field Artillery Group", 1945, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup>The 119th Field Artillery Group, pp. 19-21.

<sup>11</sup>U. S., War Department, First Army, Report of Operations, 20 October 1943 - 1 August 1944, Book I (1944), p. 26.

<sup>12</sup>U. S., War Department, First Army, Report of Operations, 20 October 1943 - 1 August 1944, Book IV, (1944), pp. 219-220.

to the 1st Infantry Division for the assault landings. The two battalions came ashore in the assault waves and provided direct fire support from landing craft. The V Corps Artillery Commander was ashore on 6 June (D Day) but the V Corps Artillery Fire Direction Center was not operational until the night of 8 June, at which time four nondivisional artillery battalions (two 155 mm howitzer and two 155 mm gun battalions) were ashore. Upon landing, one 155 mm howitzer battalion and a battery of the 155 mm guns were attached to each of the two committed divisions of the corps.<sup>13</sup> The original plans of corps were for the 190th Field Artillery Group (one 155 mm gun battalion and one 155 mm howitzer battalion) to be attached to the 1st Infantry Division upon landing on 7 June.<sup>14</sup> Since the group headquarters did not land until 8 June it was used to control the artillery in general support of the corps.<sup>15</sup> The 2d Infantry Division was committed on 9 June and received the attachment of one 155 mm howitzer battalion. This decentralized employment continued until 11 June with the retention of only one group headquarters to control the limited general support artillery and the remaining artillery was attached to the three committed divisions. Between 11 June and 14 June, the remaining two group headquarters and four battalions were landed and placed in general support of the corps.<sup>16</sup>

The nondivisional artillery of VII Corps was decentralized in much the same manner as that of V Corps for the assault landings. Self-propelled

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<sup>13</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces, European Theater, "Report of the General Board - Field Artillery Operations", 1945, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup>U. S., War Department, V Corps, "Operations Plan NEPTUNE, Annex No. 16 - Artillery Plan", 26 March 1944, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup>U. S., War Department, V Corps, Historical Sub-Section, V Corps Operations . . ., p. 265.

<sup>16</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, ". . . Field Artillery Operations", p. 7.

105 mm howitzer battalions were attached to the assault divisions for the landing. The remainder of the battalions were programmed for arrival on the beach from 7 June until 21 June.<sup>17</sup> The commanding general and a small staff of VII Corps Artillery headquarters landed on 7 June and established the command post near that of VII Corps. From here coordination of naval gun fire was accomplished through nine Shore Fire Control Parties accompanying the maneuver units. This naval support was utilized from 6 June to 26 June. As the remainder of the corps artillery landed it was attached to the divisions or grouped under the 142d and 188th Field Artillery Groups for support of the corps. The corps artillery fire direction center did not arrive until 12 June and became operational on 13 June.<sup>18</sup> Prior to 13 June, the 4th Division Artillery performed as the VII Corps Artillery Fire Direction Center.<sup>19</sup>

By 12 June the Allied beachhead was firmly held and extended inland approximately twenty miles in the V Corps zone. With sixteen Allied divisions then in the beachhead, and additional nondivisional artillery and armor arriving daily, the threat of a decisive enemy counterattack had diminished.<sup>20</sup> Table 3 depicts the daily artillery support available within First Army during this critical phase of the operation.

As part of the build up of forces, the XIX Corps became operational

<sup>17</sup>U. S., War Department, VII Corps, "Artillery, Annex 4 to FO 1", 12 May 1944, pp. 1-2.

<sup>18</sup>U. S., War Department, VII Corps Artillery, "Action Against the Enemy, Reports After", 30 July 1944, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, ". . . Field Artillery Operations", p. 8.

<sup>20</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War in Western Europe, Part 1 (West Point, New York: USMA Printing Office, 1952), p. 107.



on 14 June and the VIII Corps on 15 June.<sup>21</sup> Since shipping was not available for nondivisional field artillery of these units, only an advanced detachment of the corps artillery was ashore at the time that the corps became operational. To function as control headquarters for XIX Corps Artillery, the 187th Field Artillery Group (one 105 mm howitzer battalion, one 155 mm howitzer battalion, and one 155 mm gun battalion) was attached to XIX Corps from the V Corps. This mission was performed by the 187th Field Artillery Group until 27 June. By this date the bulk of the XIX Corps Artillery units had arrived and the 187th Field Artillery Group was returned to the V Corps.<sup>22</sup>

TABLE 3

ARTILLERY SUPPORTING FIRST ARMY OPERATIONS  
INVASION OF WESTERN EUROPE, 6-14 JUNE 1944\*

Date	105 mm How		155 mm How		155 mm Gun	
	Number Weapons in Action	Total Rounds Expended	Number Weapons in Action	Total Rounds Expended	Number Weapons in Action	Total Rounds Expended
6 June	119	1,747	24	320	0	0
7 June	155	5,995	60	290	0	0
8 June	157	6,625	60	125	0	0
9 June	191	10,084	84	2,021	28	332
10 June	191	9,642	84	2,623	28	221
11 June	252	24,403	84	5,190	28	150
12 June	252	27,398	84	3,667	28	598
13 June	306	13,785	84	3,467	36	692
14 June	330	22,117	108	5,584	36	867

\*Taken from: U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, "Report of the General Board - Field Artillery Operations", 1945, pp. 13-14.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 114-115.

<sup>22</sup>U. S., War Department, XIX Corps Artillery, "Unit Report No. 1", 30 June 1944, pp. 1-3.

When VIII Corps became operational an advanced detachment of ten officers and thirty-four enlisted men of the VIII Corps Artillery Headquarters was ashore. The mission of the corps, with the 101st Airborne Division being initially its only maneuver force, was the defense of a sector southwest of Carentan. Since none of the corps artillery units had arrived ashore, nondivisional fire support was obtained by calling on adjacent corps. By 21 June the corps consisted of three divisions and on that date it received the attachment of the 18th Field Artillery Group Headquarters to operate the fire direction center for the corps artillery.<sup>23</sup> Performing in this role, the 18th Field Artillery Group Headquarters directed the fires of up to fourteen battalions until 6 July. The VIII Corps Artillery Headquarters suffered heavy losses of personnel in the channel crossing so First Army attached the 32d Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters to the VIII Corps to relieve the 18th Field Artillery Group Headquarters. Prior to assuming the mission of performing as a fire direction center for VIII Corps, the 32d Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters had been retained under control of First Army.<sup>24</sup>

On 14 June an attack was launched by First Army which cut a corridor five miles wide across the Normandy Peninsula. The continuation of this attack led to the fall of Cherbourg on 27 June and the clearing of enemy resistance on the remainder of the peninsula. The attack had not been pushed further eastward due to the strong resistance encountered and to the critical logistical situation which had developed during the

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<sup>23</sup>U. S., War Department, VIII Corps Artillery, "Action Against Enemy, Reports After/After Action Reports", 23 July 1944, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup>History and Operations of the 18th Field Artillery Group in World War II (Erfurt, Germany: Ohlenroth'sche Buchdruckerei, 1945), pp. 6-7.

latter part of June.<sup>25</sup>

During the period 1-24 July, First Army conducted a series of limited objective attacks designed to obtain better attack positions in the open terrain west of Saint Lo. Geographical gains were minor; however, terrain better suited to launch an all out attack was secured and the necessary build up of supplies was accomplished.<sup>26</sup>

On 25 July, the First Army initiated an attack to break out of the Normandy Peninsula, gain control of Brittany, and then turn the attack to the east. All four corps (V, VII, VIII, and XIX) participated with the VII Corps making the main effort just west of Saint Lo.<sup>27</sup>

To assist in this attack the 32d Field Artillery Brigade, two group headquarters, and six additional battalions (three 240 mm howitzer battalions and three 155 mm gun battalions) were attached to VII Corps by First Army. Additionally, the field artillery with V, VIII, and XIX Corps were given zones of fire to assist in the VII Corps attack. Within VII Corps the large amount of artillery available allowed for adequate field artillery for every role. The divisions were augmented by the attachment of additional field artillery. The 13th Field Artillery Group (two battalions of 155 mm howitzers) and the 188th Field Artillery Group (one battalion of 4.5 inch guns and two battalions of 155 mm howitzers) were given missions of reinforcing the division artilleries. The remaining three groups were all employed in general support under the control of the 32d Field Artillery Brigade. This brigade had been given the mission of controlling all fires of VII Corps Artillery during the penetration phase and to control the fires of the heavy artillery for

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<sup>25</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 1, pp. 109-113.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 114-115.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

the entire operation. The three groups in general support were made up of three battalions each. One of the groups contained all 240 mm howitzer battalions, one contained all 155 mm gun battalions, and the third contained one eight inch howitzer battalion and two 155 mm gun battalions. The group with mixed calibers was to remain in general support after the penetration phase but its fires were controlled by the corps artillery fire direction center rather than the fire direction center of the 32d Field Artillery Brigade. By using the field artillery brigade headquarters in this manner, the VII Corps Artillery Commander was able to concentrate the efforts of his headquarters on the tasks of coordinating the artillery fires of the other three corps and to the operations after the penetration. Liaison with adjacent corps was established and the fires from all artillery within First Army were responsive to the VII Corps Artillery Commander.<sup>28</sup>

Within VIII Corps the artillery was centralized in view of the mission of the corps to act as a "direct pressure force" and due to the requirement to support the early phases of the VII Corps effort. All four field artillery groups with VIII Corps were retained in general support. The groups were composed of from one to four battalions for this attack.<sup>29</sup>

In V and XIX Corps, the artillery was organized in a similar manner for this attack. The XIX Corps had two groups with four battalions in each group performing missions of general support, reinforcing the division artilleries of the two committed divisions. The three field

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<sup>28</sup>U. S., War Department, VII Corps, "Annex No. 3 to FO No. 6, VII Corps", 18 July 1944, pp. 1-3.

<sup>29</sup>U. S., War Department, VIII Corps, "FO 8", 15 July 1944, pp. 1-2.

artillery groups of V Corps varied in composition from two to four battalions. Two of these groups were retained in general support while the third was given a mission of general support, reinforcing the fires of the 2d Infantry Division Artillery.<sup>30</sup>

This operation on 25 July can best be described as an attack against an organized position. It was initiated by VII Corps on a narrow, six mile front with three infantry divisions to make the penetration and all of the artillery of the four corps firing heavy concentrations. The initial advance was slow against stubborn enemy resistance; however, by 27 July the heaviest fighting was over and the enemy defenses were weakening. By 31 July the enemy withdrawal had evolved into a disorganized retreat and First Army forces were beginning to break out of the restrictive peninsula into the open terrain.<sup>31</sup>

As the success of the VII Corps threatened to cut off German forces facing VIII Corps, these enemy units began to withdraw rapidly. This opportunity was seized by VIII Corps on the army west flank and the largest gains were made in this area. When the Third Army became operational on 1 August the VIII Corps plus the XII, XV, and XX Corps came under the newly formed Third Army and by 3 August it was astride the communications lines of the enemy forces cut off in Brittany.<sup>32</sup> The flexibility of the artillery within VIII Corps was well demonstrated during this period. The artillery which had been tightly centralized under corps artillery control at the start of the attack on 25 July was,

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<sup>30</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, ". . . Field Artillery Operations", pp. 17-18.

<sup>31</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 1, pp. 128-133.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., pp. 131-135.

on 1 August, decentralized to the maximum degree. In order to render the most effective and rapid fires to the attacking divisions, four groups were attached to the divisions on 1 August.<sup>33</sup>

On 3 August Third Army began an attack in two directions. The VIII Corps was given the mission of securing the Brittany ports while the remainder of the army turned eastward in an attack designed to seize the Chartres area and encircle a large portion of the German Army. The XV Corps made the main attack of Third Army to the east and by 8 August had secured Le Mans, the main supply base of the German Seventh Army. The VIII Corps had carried its drive to the west through Brittany to Brest. During the first five days of operations Third Army had made gains eastward of 85 miles and 120 miles westward.<sup>34</sup>

The employment of the nondivisional field artillery within VIII and XV Corps was as different as had been their two directions of attack on 3 August. The VIII Corps was faced with an attack against the heavily fortified city of Brest, while XV Corps was to maintain the pursuit which had been started earlier. The separate actions by these corps exemplify the two extremes in control of nondivisional field artillery by the corps artillery headquarters and provide excellent examples of the flexibility inherent in the artillery organization.

After securing Le Mans on 8 August, the XV Corps was ordered to drive northward toward Argentan. This change in plans was brought about by a bold attempt on the part of the Germans to close the gap through which the Third Army had been attacking. This German counterattack began

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<sup>33</sup>U. S., War Department, VIII Corps Artillery, "Action Against the Enemy, Reports After/After Action Reports", 22 November 1944, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 1, pp. 135-137.

on 7 August and had some initial success. But First Army had contained the thrust in the vicinity of Mortain and by 10 August the Germans were giving ground. The Third Army attack to Argentan, in conjunction with a British attack from the north, was to encircle the enemy forces.<sup>35</sup>

The XV Corps attacked from Le Mans toward Argentan on 10 August with its two armored divisions abreast, followed closely by two infantry divisions. Two field artillery groups, with two battalions each, were attached to one of the divisions while one field artillery group of two battalions was attached to another division. The remaining two committed divisions were augmented by the attachment of separate battalions. The only artillery retained by XV Corps Artillery was one field artillery group (two 155 mm gun battalions and one 240 mm howitzer battalion) in general support. A total of twelve battalions were attached to the divisions. By decentralizing the artillery the divisions were given the means to rapidly bring fires upon any German forces attempting to escape to the east and also provided additional means to repel any enemy threats on the unprotected right flank of the corps. The attack was so rapid that effective control of all nondivisional field artillery by the corps artillery headquarters would have been extremely difficult. Argentan was occupied on 13 August by XV Corps. One day later, the corps received orders to attack to the east leaving sufficient forces to hold Argentan. For this new attack the policy of decentralization was continued; however, the composition of each of the field artillery groups except one was rapidly changed to meet the requirements of the new mission.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., pp. 138-140.

<sup>36</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, ". . . Field Artillery Operations", pp. 35-38.

The complete encirclement of the enemy was not accomplished before some units had fought their way free to the east. Enemy losses in this battle were estimated to have been 70,000 killed and captured. Coupled with the material losses, the German forces were broken as an effective fighting element and the Allies' path across France was opened.<sup>37</sup>

While pursuit had been the nature of the XV Corps operations, the VIII Corps had closed on the city of Brest and begun preparations to secure the strongly defended area. Not only was Brest a strongly fortified city but the entire surrounding area was well organized to provide an effective defense. The attack by VIII Corps was launched on 25 August. The artillery organization initially provided only one battalion of 105 mm howitzers to be attached to one of the divisions. Additionally one field artillery group composed of three battalions was attached to a special task force. The remainder of VIII Corps Artillery was retained in general support or general support, reinforcing the division artillery operating within the zone of the field artillery groups. All corps artillery units, except the one battalion attached to a division, were attached to the five field artillery groups of the corps. The two groups in a general support role had four battalions attached, all of different caliber. These two groups (one 4.5 inch gun battalion, one 8 inch howitzer battalion, one 240 mm howitzer battalion, and one 8 inch gun battalion) provided the heavy destructive fires needed to reduce the fortifications of the defense.<sup>38</sup> The city of Brest was finally secured on

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<sup>37</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 1, pp. 192-193.

<sup>38</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, ". . . Field Artillery Operations", pp. 80-83.



18 September after six weeks of fighting. Unfortunately, destruction within the port city was so great that it proved to be of little value to the Allies as a port facility.<sup>39</sup>

While the siege was being waged at Brest, some of the most decisive and rapid operations of the war were being conducted by the remainder of the Allied forces. The Seventh Army had landed in southern France on 15 August and provided another force to continue the pressure against the disorganized and retreating Germans. The First Army, after closing the trap on the enemy at Argentan, had continued the rapid movement toward the Seine River and closed on that obstacle on 25 August. Elements of the Third Army had entered Paris and reached the Seine River on the same date as the First Army and British elements to the northwest.<sup>40</sup>

The First and Third Armies were ordered on 25 August to resume their advance to the northeast. This phase, which lasted until 14 September, was truly a pursuit and ended with the First Army against the strong defenses of the West Wall. The Third Army was hampered greatly by a shift in priority of logistical support to the First Army and ended the phase along the Moselle River facing the fortress cities of Metz and Toul. The forces of the Seventh Army had maintained pressure against a withdrawing enemy and linked up with Third Army elements on 11 September. Seventh Army's advance of over 200 miles in less than a month had cut off major German forces in southwestern France. By 14 September a continuous front had been established by the Third and Seventh Armies.<sup>41</sup>

Field artillery supported First Army's pursuit from the Seine

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<sup>39</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 1, pp. 192-193.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., pp. 145-147.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., pp. 150-156.

River in other ways than fire support. The German resistance was so disorganized that the majority of the heavy artillery units were not needed. Additionally, the shortage of fuel curtailed movement of ammunition as well as movement of all units except the advancing divisions and their organic artillery. Corps artillery units were used to supplement the supply, transportation, and communication facilities of First Army. On 10 September, eighteen field artillery battalions were engaged in this type of activity in First Army. The 422d Field Artillery Group with six battalions continued in this role during the last half of September as the requirement for artillery increased. In September, over 17,000 tons of supplies were handled by nondivisional field artillery units. Additionally, a provisional signal company was organized to assist in the maintenance of communication lines.<sup>42</sup>

All of the artillery of First Army participated in the initial assault out of the Seine bridgehead; however, as the maneuver units moved out of range the majority of the heavy artillery did not immediately displace across the river. Instead, the mission of logistical support was performed while the light and medium artillery supported the maneuver units. In VII Corps, two field artillery group headquarters and four battalions were retained in general support while the remainder was attached to the divisions. In the XIX Corps three field artillery groups were used to control a total of six battalions which were retained under corps artillery control. Each of the three groups was to support one of the three committed divisions during the attack. In both corps the pursuit was so rapid, however, that the artillery support truly rested in the hands of

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<sup>42</sup>U. S., War Department, First Army, "Artillery Information Service Memorandum No. 7", December 1944, p. 187.

the division artillery and direct support battalion commanders, and few missions were required from the nondivisional artillery units. In this instance, the attached nondivisional artillery was utilized effectively by the division artillery commanders. Artillery centrally controlled at corps artillery level could not have supported the attack.<sup>43</sup> The ammunition expenditures shown in Table 4 portray the importance of the light and medium artillery in supporting the divisions in this pursuit.

TABLE 4

FIRST ARMY AMMUNITION EXPENDITURES, 26 AUGUST TO 13 SEPTEMBER  
1944, PURSUIT ACROSS FRANCE AND BELGIUM\*

Weapon	Rounds Fired
105 mm Howitzer	124,588
4.5 inch Gun	1,273
155 mm Howitzer	26,382
155 mm Gun	9,384
8 inch Howitzer	2,006
240 mm Howitzer	660
8 inch Gun	none

\*Taken from: U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, "Report of the General Board - Field Artillery Operations", 1945, p. 34.

Operations from mid September until mid December characterize a phase of the battle in which both the logistical battle and the battle of well fortified defenses were fought. During this three month period, gains were limited in each of the four U. S. Army zones. The First Army in the north breached the "West Wall" defenses in the vicinity of Aachen and, in conjunction with the newly activated Ninth Army, drove eastward

<sup>43</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, ". . . Field Artillery Operations", pp. 30-34.

approximately fifteen miles to the Ruhr River. The Third Army overcame the strong points at Metz and Toul and made penetrations in the West Wall defense near Saarbrücken. The most impressive gains were made in the Seventh Army area in the south. By mid December, Seventh Army elements had penetrated the West Wall defense near Wärsenbourg and had over twenty miles of its front within Germany.<sup>44</sup>

When the Germans launched their strong attack in the Ardennes region on 16 December, First Army had twelve field artillery groups employed in its four corps. As the attack pushed farther into the defenses the performance of these headquarters in controlling the artillery was instrumental in the effective support of the maneuver units. Disruptions in communications, rapid movement throughout the sector, and the enemy airborne elements dropped behind First Army lines all contributed to the corps artillery commanders' problems of control. Yet, the ability to mass large volumes of fire on critical targets was not lost and the artillery support was invaluable throughout the campaign. Action within the V Corps sector was an example of the effect of massed fires in the early phases of the attack. On 17 December it was determined that a German attack was being launched in a part of the V Corps sector which was lightly held by the 102d Cavalry Group. The 62d Armored Field Artillery Battalion, attached to the cavalry unit, fired an intense counterpreparation which delayed the initial German attack. Three attacks were eventually launched by the Germans. The first two failed and the third, which was made in much greater strength, was partially successful and one battalion size force succeeded in breaching the defenses of the cavalry unit. The bulk of the enemy forces in this third attack had been "decimated" by

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<sup>44</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 1, pp. 190-205.

the fires of the 187th (three battalions) and 406th (four battalions) Field Artillery Groups, the 78th Infantry Division Artillery (six battalions), and portions of the 32d Field Artillery Brigade. These units had rapidly responded to the request of the 62d Field Artillery Battalion for all available fires. The one German battalion which survived the artillery fires was later destroyed by the 102d Cavalry Group.<sup>45</sup>

All along the front adjustments were made to counter the new offensive effort of the Germans. Forces in contact in other than the First Army area were given broader fronts as units were pulled out of the line to assist in the First Army sector. When VII Corps was pulled out of line the XIX Corps of Ninth Army assumed responsibility for a much wider sector. This wider sector required the corps artillery commander to decentralize his control of the artillery in XIX Corps. The 119th Field Artillery Group was given full responsibility for counterbattery operations in the southern part of the corps sector.<sup>46</sup> During this period two group headquarters and ten battalions of artillery were transferred between First and Ninth Armies. Within Ninth Army three group headquarters and ten battalions were shifted from one corps to another.<sup>47</sup>

To counterattack the German penetration in First Army's sector, Third Army was directed to defend with minimum forces in the south and attack to the north. The XII Corps was occupying a sector in the Third Army near Sarrebrücken when the army attack order was received. The

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<sup>45</sup>U. S., War Department, First Army, "Artillery Information Service Memorandum No. 8", May 1945, pp. 192-196.

<sup>46</sup>The 119th Field Artillery . . ., pp. 55-58.

<sup>47</sup>U. S., War Department, Ninth Army, Office of the Artillery Officer, "After Action Report, 16 December 1944 to 31 December 1944, Inclusive", 2 January 1945, pp. 1-2.

action of XII Corps Artillery in rapidly responding to this requirement is indicative of the flexibility which the artillery organization possessed. At 1800 hours on 21 December the XII Corps Artillery was informed that it would move north toward Luxembourg and that XV Corps Artillery would take over its sector. The move north would be made by the corps artillery headquarters and three groups (seven battalions). Four other field artillery battalions were shifted to other corps because of the move. Advance parties under the field artillery groups' control performed reconnaissance of the 100 mile route, established control points, and performed area reconnaissance on 22 December while final arrangements were made with the XV Corps Artillery for relief in sector. The move was executed on 23 December and required an average of twelve hours. By the evening of 23 December all battalions had closed into the new area and calls for fire were being fulfilled.<sup>48</sup>

The German penetration reached its maximum depth of over fifty miles on 26 December. It was this same day that the 4th Armored Division was able to break through to Bastogne and open a narrow corridor to the 101st Airborne Division.<sup>49</sup> On 31 December the 6th Armored Division attacked to widen this corridor. The main attack was made by Combat Command A with the 193d Field Artillery Group (three battalions) in direct support. This group had been attached to the division on 29 December. The division artillery commander had placed this group in direct support of Combat Command A and his organic artillery, controlled by

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<sup>48</sup>U. S., War Department, European Theater of Operations, War Department Observers Board, "AGF Report No. 509 - Movement of XII Corps Artillery", 3 January 1945, pp. 1-3.

<sup>49</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War in Western Europe, Part II (West Point, New York: USMA Printing Office, 1952), p. 34.

the division artillery headquarters, in direct support of Combat Command B.<sup>50</sup>

By 9 January 1945 the penetration had been beaten back considerably in all areas. On this day Third Army launched an attack supported by more than 1,000 tubes of artillery. On 16 January, Third Army elements made contact with advance units of the First Army at Houffalize closing the salient created a month earlier. On 7 February all of the area lost during the German offensive had been regained and both the First and Third Armies had advanced deep into the fortified areas of the West Wall.<sup>51</sup>

By 23 February the Allied forces were reorganized and prepared to launch an attack to the Rhine River. The attack in the Ninth Army was made by the XIII and XIX Corps across the Roer River. The VII Corps of First Army attacked in its zone simultaneously with the Ninth Army in the north. In the south, Third Army had penetrated the major fortifications in the West Wall defenses and was ready to begin operations to close on the Rhine. By 21 March all four U. S. Armies had reached the Rhine River. The Seventh Army had not cleared all resistance west of the river but First Army had far exceeded planned objectives by seizing the bridge at Remagen intact and establishing a bridgehead across the Rhine.<sup>52</sup>

On 22 March the Third Army's XII Corps crossed the Rhine at Oppenheim. This crossing had been expanded into a bridgehead nine miles deep and ten miles wide by 24 March. Additional crossings were seized by VIII Corps in Third Army's zone on 24 March. On 25 March the First

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<sup>50</sup>Lt. Col. William R. Jesse, "Bastogne - An Artillery Classic," The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXV (December, 1945), p. 718.

<sup>51</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part II, pp. 38-39, 47.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., pp. 72-88.

and Third Armies were ordered to exploit the existing crossings in zone and attack to seize objectives forty miles beyond the river line. Success of these attacks, coupled with equally successful attacks by Ninth Army in the north, resulted in the encirclement of a 4,000 square mile area of the Ruhr industrial complex and the enemy forces of an army group. The encirclement was completed on 1 April. The Seventh Army forces had made their crossing of the Rhine on 28 March and by 4 April had reached Heilbronn in the south.<sup>53</sup>

The attack was continued on 4 April to destroy the German Army Group trapped in the Ruhr encirclement and to exploit to the Elbe River, almost 100 miles to the east. The Seventh Army attack continued to the east. It was anticipated that final contact would be made with the Soviet forces at the Elbe; and this river, in effect, was a limit of advance line. By 13 April the First, Third, and Ninth Armies were along the designated line. On this date the Ruhr pocket, 250 miles to the rear, was reduced. During the remainder of April and the first days of May nearly three million prisoners were captured by the four United States Armies. Resistance was light and only political considerations limited the advances of the Armies. The link up of Russian and United States patrols was accomplished on 25 April and on 7 May the Act of Surrender of Germany was signed.<sup>54</sup>

During the last three months of action the control of the artillery varied from centralized for the river crossing to decentralized during the periods of rapid advance. Toward the end of the campaign the volume of fire missions fell rapidly as the forces met almost no resistance from the nearly defeated enemy. In all phases of this action the

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid., pp. 93-106.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 106-118.



field artillery group enhanced the responsiveness and versatility of the nondivisional artillery.

The Rhine crossing by the XVI Corps of Ninth Army can best serve as an example of the tremendous amount of artillery support that could be brought together quickly to meet critical needs. To support this crossing the entire XIX Corps Artillery, except for two battalions, was attached to the XVI Corps. The corps plan was for two divisions to make the assault crossings; thus the two corps fire direction centers operated in the zones of the two assaulting divisions. Attachments of light and medium artillery were made to each of the assaulting divisions. In addition, one group (four battalions) and two separate battalions were in general support, reinforcing the assaulting divisions. Retained in general support were one brigade headquarters and six field artillery groups controlling nineteen battalions. The two divisions making the assault were supported by almost 800 weapons.<sup>55</sup>

After the Rhine was crossed, the speed of the pursuit increased and the requirement for fire missions decreased. In April the 18th Field Artillery Group fired fewer missions and less ammunition than any month of its participation in the European Campaign.<sup>56</sup>

The pursuit across Germany after the Rhine was crossed was so rapid that, as previously mentioned, limited artillery support was needed. Counterbattery was not required since most of the German artillery had been abandoned in their flight to the north. On 30 March XX Corps lost one group headquarters to perform duty in maintaining communications for

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<sup>55</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, ". . . Field Artillery Operations", pp. 52-54.

<sup>56</sup>History and Operations of the 18th Field Artillery Group . . .  
p. 16.

the advancing columns. By 9 April all of corps artillery was attached to the four remaining field artillery groups, and the groups were reinforcing the maneuver units. Marches of over fifty miles a day were not uncommon.<sup>57</sup>

At the close of the war in Western Europe, a committee designated as the General Board was established by Headquarters, European Theater of Operations to prepare an analysis of the strategy, tactics, and administration employed within the theater. One of the areas of study by this group resulted in a report on the field artillery group organization as compared to the regimental organization. The comments contained in this report are considered to be of great value since the participants in the study were approximately twenty of the most experienced artillerymen in the theater.<sup>58</sup>

A summary of the advantages of the group organization as determined by the study were:

34. Tactical Flexibility.

a. Tactical flexibility is the basic principle under which the group is organized. This flexibility of organization makes it readily possible to form task forces of artillery by reassignment of units without any reorganization, thereby permitting the rapid movement of artillery as required by the situation.

b. Combat experience has shown that the flexibility provided by the present organization of non-divisional field artillery was highly successful and should be retained. Flexibility should be the criterion throughout the entire structure of the artillery with an army -- not only flexibility of fires, but flexibility of organization for combat. The ability to shift the weight of artillery from one corps to another in the army and from one part of a corps zone to another as the situation and organization of the corps changed, has proven not only successful but conservative in the amount of artillery required.

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<sup>57</sup>Eastman, The History of the XX Corps . . ., pp. 45-49.

<sup>58</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, ". . . The Field Artillery Group", p. 16.

### 35. Organizational Flexibility.

a. The group staff is organized to provide only sufficient personnel for group headquarters administration, limited supervision of battalion administration, and for operational requirements in training and combat.

b. The separate artillery battalions have been organized so that they are administratively self-sufficient, thus permitting tactical shifting without changing the administrative organization.<sup>59</sup>

The advantages of the field artillery group as stated by the General Board are considered valid; however, flexibility in tactics and organization deserve further comment. The sole purpose of artillery is to support the maneuver units. The corps artillery commander in Western Europe was normally given sufficient artillery units to support the ground gaining elements. Artillery support is dependent primarily on the manner in which the artillery commander organizes his forces for combat. In organizing the nondivisional artillery to support the corps, the corps artillery commander was afforded much latitude and was generally limited in his considerations only by the tactical situation. The field artillery group headquarters was the organization which provided the corps artillery commander the capability to employ his resources with the greatest degree of flexibility. The group headquarters was capable of performing as a second corps artillery fire direction center, as a control headquarters for the field artillery attached or in direct support of a task force, and as a subordinate tactical headquarters of the corps artillery in controlling several battalions with the same mission. It also functioned well as a tactical headquarters to assist the division artillery headquarters when several battalions of nondivisional artillery were attached to the division. Inherent in the group organization was

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

the capability for observation, liaison, communications, limited administration, and, above all, command. The various artillery commanders developed their own procedures or norms for the use of the field artillery group. Some attempted to retain groups and battalions together while others often shifted the composition of the group. This lack of compliance to a firm set of procedures by the artillery commanders is not regarded as a weakness but rather an extension of the doctrine of the commander's estimate of the situation and his decision of how best to support the maneuver units. Regardless of the manner in which the artillery commander met his support requirements, it was the flexibility of the field artillery group, both in tactics and organization, which enabled him to meet the requirements presented in a rapidly moving and highly mobile war.<sup>60</sup>

As more experience was gained in the employment of the field artillery group, a pattern usually developed within each corps. The artillery annex of the XIII Corps Standing Operating Procedure stated that:

1. Light battalions are attached normally to divisions. Other Corps Artillery battalions are attached to groups which operate under the Commanding General, Corps Artillery.
2. Groups are in general support of the corps, but, normally one group per division will be given the additional mission of reinforcing the fires of division artillery.<sup>61</sup>

In the XIX Corps a definite effort was made to retain the same battalions attached to the same field artillery group. This led to a type grouping in which basically the same field artillery groups habitually performed certain missions. Two field artillery groups were organized to perform general support missions while other field artillery

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>61</sup>U. S., War Department, XIII Corps, "Artillery Annex to Standing Operating Procedure", 25 April 1945, p. 1.

groups were semi-permanently tailored to reinforce and follow a committed division artillery. The group reinforcing the artillery of an infantry division was slightly different from one reinforcing the artillery of an armored division. While providing a degree of stability to the field artillery group composition and missions performed, these organizations were quickly altered to meet a change in the situation. In the XIII Corps the artillery was usually organized on a semi-permanent basis but it was changed rapidly when the situation required. The XVI Corps Artillery even referred to its groups as a "heavy group" (normally employed in general support) and a "reinforcing group" (employed in a role of general support, reinforcing a division artillery). The group headquarters in all three of these corps commanded the attached battalions in every respect with corps artillery headquarters exercising tactical fire direction only when fire from other than the battalions of the groups were massed on one target.<sup>62</sup>

As discussed above, attempts were made to retain battalions attached to the same group; however, the tactical situation required changes. Table 5 lists the attachments which were made to the 18th Field Artillery Group during its operations in Western Europe.

The General Board listed as deficiencies of the group organization the following:

36. Lack of Continuity of Command.

a. There were few instances of battalions being permanently attached or assigned to groups or any other unit. As a result, battalions passed rapidly from group to group, division to division, corps to corps, and army to army. Groups were also frequently shifted, and could not expect to keep the same battalions for any

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<sup>62</sup>U. S., War Department, European Theater of Operations, War Department Observers Board, "AGF Report No. 957 - Corps Artillery, Organization and Employment", 13 May 1945, pp. 1-28.

TABLE 5

ATTACHMENTS TO THE 18TH FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP DURING  
COMBAT OPERATIONS IN THE EUROPEAN CAMPAIGN\*

Battalion	Caliber	Total Day's Attached
196th Field Artillery Battalion	105 mm Howitzer	13
79th Field Artillery Battalion	105 mm Howitzer	8
690th Field Artillery Battalion	105 mm Howitzer	8
183d Field Artillery Battalion	155 mm Howitzer	123
188th Field Artillery Battalion	155 mm Howitzer	189
957th Field Artillery Battalion	155 mm Howitzer	90
751st Field Artillery Battalion	155 mm Howitzer	54
666th Field Artillery Battalion	155 mm Howitzer	36
768th Field Artillery Battalion	155 mm Howitzer	22
254th Field Artillery Battalion	155 mm Howitzer	13
776th Field Artillery Battalion	155 mm Howitzer	21
980th Field Artillery Battalion	155 mm Gun	1
981st Field Artillery Battalion	155 mm Gun	44
991st Field Artillery Battalion	155 mm Gun (Sp)	17
195th Field Artillery Battalion	8 inch Howitzer	83
663d Field Artillery Battalion	8 inch Howitzer	7
172d Field Artillery Battalion	4.5 inch Howitzer	18
285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion		8

\*Taken from: History and Operations of the 18th Field Artillery Group in World War II (Erfurt, Germany: Ohlenroth'sche Buchdruckerei, 1945), p. 19.

length of time. As a result of this shifting, commanders were not cognizant of the capabilities and limitations of their subordinate units. Further, time was required for subordinate units to adjust themselves to the varying procedures of higher headquarters.

b. The constant shifting of battalions made it difficult for group commanders to influence their subordinate commands. Thus, non-divisional battalion commanders were inclined to feel that they had no immediate commander who was personally interested in the efficiency of their units. Further, an inefficient commander could be retained in command of a unit for a considerable period because of frequent shifts in command. For the same reason, superior commanders in the grade of major failed to get promotions.

c. It is the opinion of some commanders that the constant shifting of battalions could have been reduced by a more closely knit artillery organization. A comparison of the number of shifts in command made by various battalions of the same caliber shows a wide variation. Some battalions remained in the same group throughout combat, others remained in the same corps, whereas others were attached to as many as twenty (20) corps, divisions and groups.

### 37. Maintenance and Supply Problems.

a. The frequent moves and changes of command of groups and separate battalions required changing of supporting supply services. This shifting of units caused delays in repairs and filling of requisitions for various supplies.

b. When units moved from one major command to another all pending requisitions for Class II and IV supplies had to be resubmitted. This procedure slowed the procurement and issue to troops of needed clothing and other supplies. Small units often received the odds and ends of rations because of their frequent and sudden moves.

### 38. Technical Problems.

a. The technical procedure involved in the control and maneuver of artillery fire requires that a high degree of standardization be obtained by all artillery units. This includes standard methods of requesting and delivering artillery fire and the complete communication system necessary to transmit orders.

b. In order to obtain the maximum advantage from the power of artillery, units working together for a long period of time will obtain the best results by building up standard procedures of technique and communication. Thus, the constant shifting of groups and battalions slowed the building up of artillery teams capable of delivering fire to the maximum efficiency.

### 39. Faulty Administrative System.

a. Although most administrative forms and procedures were prescribed by the Theater Headquarters, divisions and corps had minor variations which necessitated frequent changing and resubmitting of forms for battalions moving from control of one major headquarters to another. This caused a great deal of delay in processing promotions, requests for emergency furloughs, leaves and

other matters having a direct bearing on the morale of units.

b. The frequent shifting of non-divisional artillery battalions from one command to another prevented higher commanders from knowing non-divisional battalion commanders well enough to rate them. Forms 66-1 for such officers were not properly maintained in many cases, and it was difficult to secure a fair, adequate efficiency report. As a result of the above, many capable non-divisional battalion commanders were not considered for advancement. Further, the officers and personnel were "stuck" within their own organizations due to the lack of knowledge of higher commanders as to the capabilities and efficiency of these personnel.

c. The requirements for decorations and awards varied between higher headquarters. In these matters, although the non-divisional battalions were theoretically directly under army for administration, groups and corps, and sometimes divisions, if units were attached, required that recommendations be forwarded through their headquarters, thereby slowing down action, or blocking it completely.

d. The allocation of the time and numbers of personnel to go on leave or furlough to rest camps varied between higher headquarters. As a result, units shifting from one headquarters to another usually suffered a loss of allocation or received a reduced allocation.

#### 40. Morale.

a. The essence of high morale is the feeling on the part of an individual that his unit is the best unit of its type; that if he does well he will be recognized for outstanding services and considered for advancement; and that his superiors see to it that his unit will be justly treated in such matters as recreation, publicity, food, shelter, clothing and general welfare.

b. The shifting of units from command to command did not insure all of the above. Further, the lack of an organic higher headquarters to whom commanders could turn for assistance with their many problems was a further detriment to morale.<sup>63</sup>

While the deficiencies are valid they are more correctly stated as deficiencies in a nondivisional organization of any type rather than solely those peculiar to a field artillery group organization. The field artillery group organization from the beginning was an advancement which was not matched by advancements in combat service support and administrative unit organizations. Had there been a concurrent development in these areas many of the deficiencies would not have existed.

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<sup>63</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, ". . . The Field Artillery Group", pp. 17-19.



The problems in continuity of command were reduced by attempts to form semi-permanent attachments of battalions to group. This was not entirely possible due to the requirements of the tactical situation but it did reduce needless shifting of units. The War Department attempted to alleviate this problem to some extent with the publishing of Circular 439 on 14 November 1944. This circular encouraged the retention of assignments of battalions to groups if practicable to enhance the continuity of command.<sup>64</sup> There was nothing to indicate to the General Board that the publishing of this document in any way affected the attaching of battalions to groups.<sup>65</sup> By the time this document was received in the theater, commanders were too accustomed to enjoying artillery support with all the flexibility that the group organization possessed and did not desire to change during combat. The deficiencies in the other areas were partially the result of inflexibility on the part of support facilities, lack of command attention, or poor training. In the XII Corps, the problems brought about by the policy of frequent shifting of battalions between groups were recognized and anticipated. In this corps artillery the administrative functions were maintained at minimum levels and the corps artillery staff was oriented toward assisting the groups.<sup>66</sup>

The field artillery group headquarters had experienced a growth in its administrative responsibilities due to an unwillingness of higher commanders to bypass the group headquarters in dealing with the battalions.

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<sup>64</sup>U. S., War Department, Circular No. 439 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 14 November 1944), p. 1.

<sup>65</sup>U. S., War Department, U. S. Forces European Theater, ". . . The Field Artillery Group", p. 14.

<sup>66</sup>U. S., War Department, European Theater of Operations, War Department Observers Board, "AGF Report 1071 - S-1, S-4 Sections, Corps Artillery", 29 June 1945, pp. 1-7.

Headquarters, Army Ground Forces had continually exerted its influence to reduce the amount of administration required of the group headquarters; however, observer reports from the field indicated a requirement of additional administrative personnel in the group headquarters. This requirement was met with the publishing of Circular No. 439 which assigned administrative responsibility to the group headquarters for the battalions within the group.<sup>67</sup>

In summary, the field artillery group was instrumental in the effective fire support provided maneuver units in Western Europe. By its flexibility the field artillery group enabled the corps artillery commander to effectively organize his forces to provide the fire support in the amount and caliber needed with an effective command headquarters to enhance its employment. In addition, rapid response was possible at each level of command to meet changing tactical situations. The deficiencies noted in the organization were not solely the results of a poor organizational structure but often a result of poor planning and lack of sufficient command attention. In Western Europe the field artillery group organization was the characteristic organization of artillery - responsive to the needs for fire support of the maneuver elements, and in this role played a major part in the defeat of Germany.

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<sup>67</sup>Major Bell I. Willey, "Problems of Nondivisional Training in the Army Ground Forces", Unpublished report prepared for the Army Ground Forces, 1946, pp. 21-24.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP IN THE PACIFIC

Suitable weapons for use in jungle warfare, where observation and fields of fire are very limited, are short range arms easily supplied with ammunition and readily transported over difficult terrain.<sup>1</sup>

The jungles of the Pacific islands were not the only factors which limited the employment, both in number of units and tactics, of field artillery in the Pacific Campaign. Insofar as the United States was concerned, World War II officially began with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The war plans of the United States were developed on a policy of defeating Germany first and allocating only minimum forces to contain Japanese advances in the Pacific.<sup>2</sup> From the Pearl Harbor attack on 7 December 1941 until August 1942, delaying tactics were employed by American forces in the Pacific area while the war making capacity of the nation was being developed and organized. During this period the Japanese conquered a vast area of the western Pacific, but in so doing stretched their supply and communication lines far from the shores of Japan.<sup>3</sup>

On 7 August 1942, the first significant ground offensive action

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<sup>1</sup>U. S., War Department, FM 31-20, Jungle Warfare (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1941), p. 19.

<sup>2</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War With Japan, Part 1 (West Point, New York: USMA Printing Office, 1948), pp. 111-112.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 123-125.

of the United States was launched by the 1st Marine Division against Japanese forces on the island of Guadalcanal. From this beginning until the end of 1943 a series of operations were conducted to seize the initiative from the Japanese and to prepare for the powerful counteroffensive of 1944.<sup>4</sup> During this period nondivisional field artillery units within the Pacific area were almost nonexistent. This deficiency in artillery was due to the low priority given the Pacific Theater for resources, the nature of jungle warfare which made artillery employment difficult, and the limited size of the operations which were conducted in the island areas.

For the Guadalcanal invasion, the field artillery with the 1st Marine Division consisted of two battalions of 75 mm pack howitzers and one battalion of 105 mm howitzers. Normal support was provided to the maneuver units; however, considerable difficulty was encountered with survey, observation, displacement, and position area improvement.<sup>5</sup>

Even greater problems were encountered in the Buna operation on New Guinea. Here the 32d Infantry Division was employed to prevent the Japanese from seizing Port Moresby. When the division was initially committed in November 1942, the division artillery remained in Australia. The decision to leave the division artillery out of the battle had been based on the assumptions that artillery, other than pack howitzers, could not be used in the Buna area and that Buna could be secured without field artillery support by using air support and infantry mortars. The error

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<sup>4</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War With Japan, Part 2 (West Point, New York: USMA Printing Office, 1947), pp. 1-3.

<sup>5</sup>U. S., War Department, Army Ground Forces, "Report of Military Observer's Interview on 19 December 1942 with Brigadier General P. S. Del Valle", 19 December 1942, pp. 1-10.

of these assumptions was noted early in the operation and immediate steps were taken to obtain field artillery support. This support was obtained by using two mountain howitzers and four 25 pound guns obtained from the Australian 7th Division.<sup>6</sup> Based on these early experiences in Buna, the field artillery battalions of the 32d Infantry Division were authorized to be equipped with 81 mm mortars and 75 mm pack howitzers as substitutes for their normal weapons.<sup>7</sup>

The lack of field artillery support in the 32d Infantry Division at Buna was in contrast to the extensive use of field artillery at Guadalcanal. By January 1943, the XIV Corps had assumed control of the three divisions on the island and was attacking to clear the remaining pockets of resistance. While nondivisional field artillery units did not participate in the operations, the field artillery of the Americal Division, the 25th Infantry Division, and the 2d Marine Division was coordinated by the corps artillery commander to maximize field artillery support for the corps.<sup>8</sup>

The Guadalcanal campaign ended on 8 February 1943. The remainder of the year saw continued offensive operations at Bougainville Island in the Solomons, New Georgia, New Britain, the Gilbert Islands, and New Guinea.<sup>9</sup> Field artillery employed in these operations consisted primarily

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<sup>6</sup>U. S., War Department, Army Ground Forces, "Report of Military Observer in Southwest Pacific Theater of Operations, 26 September to 23 December 1942", 2 January 1943, pp. 3-12.

<sup>7</sup>U. S., War Department, Army Ground Forces, "Observations in Southwest and South Pacific Theaters During the Period 5 April 1943 to 14 July 1943", 25 August 1943, p. 6.

<sup>8</sup>U. S., War Department, XIV Corps, "FO No. 1", 16 January 1943, pp. 1-2.

<sup>9</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 2, pp. 25-54.

of divisional units but there was a growing realization that field artillery support, even in the jungle, was necessary and could not be replaced entirely by naval gunfire, mortars, and close air support.

Early in 1944 the V Marine Amphibious Corps seized Kwajalein and Eniwetok in the Marshall Islands. After completing this operation an attack was launched against Saipan, Tinian, and Guam in the Marianas. The attack against Guam was made by the III Marine Amphibious Corps while the V Marine Amphibious Corps attacked Saipan and Tinian. Field artillery units from the XXIV Corps were attached to the V Marine Amphibious Corps for this operation.<sup>10</sup>

The landings at Saipan were made on 15 June and by 19 June the XXIV Corps Artillery Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, the 419th Field Artillery Group (two battalions of 155 mm howitzers), and one battalion of 155 mm guns were in position firing for the Marines. Position areas were limited on the small island and it was necessary for the corps units to occupy firing positions in the vicinity of the divisional field artillery units. Since the island was only twelve miles long fires could be placed throughout the zone with minimum displacement. For this operation conventional field artillery procedures were found to be acceptable. The only deviation from normal procedures was the greater reliance placed on aerial observation. The mountains screened the northern portion of the island from ground observation and approximately fifty percent of the missions were fired by aerial observers.<sup>11</sup>

After securing Saipan on 9 July the Marine units reorganized for

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 73-76.

<sup>11</sup>U. S., War Department, Office of the Chief of Staff, "Operations Division Information Bulletin", Vol. III, No. 3, 23 September 1944, pp. 2-3.

an attack on nearby Tinian. This attack was launched on 24 July supported by the XXIV Corps Artillery units located on Saipan. By 1 August Tinian had been secured.<sup>12</sup>

The activities of the 419th Field Artillery Group (two 155 mm howitzer battalions) for the remainder of 1944 were relatively unproductive, indicating again the minimum requirement which existed for nondivisional field artillery units. After Tinian was secured, the group moved to the south end of the island and neutralized the Japanese installations on Aguijan Island, 10,000 yards across the channel. After completing this mission on 9 September, the group initiated a comprehensive training program and was administered gunnery tests by Headquarters, XXIV Corps Artillery. On 6 December the group departed for Leyte, arriving on 12 December. The first task of the 419th Field Artillery Group in the Philippines was to function as a shore party in the Mindoro invasion. The personnel (600 officers and men) required for this duty were returned to Leyte on 18 December. On 20 December elements of the group headquarters and one battalion moved to the vicinity of Ormoc on Leyte to give field artillery support to combat operations then being conducted. At Ormoc the battalion was attached, by battery, to the committed divisions and the group headquarters was released to return to the rear area. At the end of 1944 the group headquarters and its one remaining battalion were unloading cargo ships for the XXIV Corps.<sup>13</sup>

More effective employment was experienced by the 191st Field Artillery Group Headquarters with Sixth Army on New Guinea. On 2 January

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<sup>12</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 2, p. 78.

<sup>13</sup>U. S., War Department, 419th Field Artillery Group, "Report of Action Against the Enemy", 31 December 1944, p. 1.

1944 this group was attached to a task force of the 32d Infantry Division for an amphibious assault at Saidor. The task force was made up of the 126th Infantry Regiment with the 191st Field Artillery Group (one 75 mm howitzer battalion and one 105 mm howitzer battalion) to provide its field artillery support. The landing was made behind the Japanese defenses and effectively cut off major enemy forces. Within the Saidor beachhead the 191st Field Artillery Group accomplished all tasks of fire support coordination until the 32d Infantry Division joined the task force. During this operation the 105 mm howitzer was found to be completely satisfactory for direct support of the infantry battalions. It was further noted that some 155 mm howitzers would have been of great value due to their longer range.<sup>14</sup> Slowly, the techniques of field artillery employment in the jungle were being developed and, as a result, more effective field artillery support was being provided.

The leapfrogging amphibious operations by Sixth Army elements proved to be extremely successful on the north coast of New Guinea. On 22 April, I Corps made an assault landing at Hollandia and rapidly seized all three airfields. A simultaneous assault at Aitape, farther to the east, seized two additional airfields. In addition, the Japanese Eighteenth Army was trapped between these forces and the advancing Australians at Madang.<sup>15</sup>

The task force making the landing at Aitape had the 191st Field Artillery Group attached to provide fire support for the operation. This was the same group which had accomplished a similar task for the

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<sup>14</sup>U. S., War Department, Sixth Army, "Report No. 29, Army Ground Forces Board, SWPA", 23 February 1944, pp. 1-3.

<sup>15</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 2, pp. 86-87.



amphibious landings at Saidor. For this operation the group was made up of two battalions of 105 mm howitzers and one company of a tank destroyer battalion which had 4.2 inch mortars.<sup>16</sup>

This specialized use of the 191st Field Artillery Group was continued on 17 May when it was attached to a task force making a landing at Arare, New Guinea. For this assault the group had three battalions and one battery attached as it supported the 163d Infantry Regiment. This infantry regiment and field artillery group had now combined for three similar and important operations on the New Guinea north coast. On 18 May the 163d Regimental Combat Team assaulted Wakde Island with the 191st Field Artillery Group supporting from the mainland of New Guinea. This island was secured and another large airfield was captured. At the end of this operation a forward observer of the group fired three battalion volleys (thirty-six rounds) at a submarine which surfaced in the vicinity of the battalion base point. Without being hit, the submarine quickly submerged and departed the "field artillery controlled waters."<sup>17</sup>

And now back to the Philippine campaign. The air fields secured on New Guinea and the large forces strategically located in the area made an invasion of the Philippines possible in late 1944. The target for the initial invasion was the island of Leyte and the date was established as 20 October. The plan for the Leyte invasion provided for the XXIV and X Corps to make the landings under the control of Sixth Army.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>U. S., War Department, 191st Field Artillery Group, "Historical Report - PERSECTION Task Force", Undated, pp. 1-6.

<sup>17</sup>U. S., War Department, 191st Field Artillery Group, "Historical Report - TORNADO Task Force", Undated, pp. 1-10.

<sup>18</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 2, pp. 89-92.

The landings by the two corps on 20 October followed a two hour bombardment and encountered little resistance. The attack reached the Leyte Valley with little opposition, but on 1 November Japanese reinforcements began arriving on the island. The decision to make a major defensive effort at Leyte resulted in Japanese losses of over 56,000 dead (less than 400 being captured). Coupled with these losses, the Japanese naval forces lost twenty-seven major ships in the naval battles which took place during this period near Leyte. The island was finally freed of organized resistance on 31 December 1944.<sup>19</sup>

Neither corps participating in the Leyte invasion had field artillery groups in the nondivisional artillery provided for the assault. In fact, the XXIV Corps did not even have its corps artillery headquarters and headquarters battery since the corps artillery was committed in the Marianas Islands at this time. To act as the control element for XXIV Corps Artillery, the V Marine Amphibious Corps Artillery Headquarters Battery was attached to XXIV Corps. Field artillery units attached were one field artillery observation battalion, two 155 mm howitzer battalions (one Army and one Marine), and two 155 mm gun battalions (one Army and one Marine). The field artillery with XXIV Corps was extensively used and was regarded as probably the "most effective Jap killer available." The employment of the corps battalions throughout the campaign was under the control of the corps artillery commander with the battalions functioning in general support of the corps or reinforcing the fires of a division artillery. Additional XXIV Corps Artillery units arrived on Leyte on 11 December and relieved the Marine artillery units. The XXIV Corps Artillery now consisted of the corps artillery headquarters and headquarters

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., pp. 93-108.

battery, the 419th Field Artillery Group (two 155 mm howitzer battalions), and the 420th Field Artillery Group (two 155 mm gun battalions). The presence of these units on Leyte in late December marked the first time that all units of XXIV Corps Artillery had been assembled on one island, indicating the dispersed nature of the Pacific battle and the relatively little use that had been made of massed fires.<sup>20</sup>

Field artillery within X Corps for the Leyte invasion consisted of three battalions (one each 155 mm gun, 155 mm howitzer, and eight inch howitzer). During the assault landings all were retained under corps artillery control in general support with each battalion prepared to reinforce a division artillery of the assault divisions.<sup>21</sup> The employment of the nondivisional units was routine during the Leyte campaign with the battalions in general support of the corps, reinforcing the fires of a division artillery, and occasionally being attached to a division when control by the corps artillery commander was difficult. One unique arrangement was initiated on 3 November. On this date, the reinforcement activities of the Japanese were first noted and the 24th Infantry Division was occupying a critical sector of the front near Ormoc. To reinforce this division, all three of the nondivisional battalions were attached to the division and - "in order to facilitate the control of the three battalions" - a portion of the corps artillery headquarters acted as a group headquarters.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>U. S., War Department, XXIV Corps, "Operations Report, XXIV Corps in Leyte (PI) Campaign, 20 October - 25 December 1944", 28 February 1945, pp. 27-30.

<sup>21</sup>U. S., War Department, X Corps Artillery, "FO 1", 30 September 1944, pp. 1-3.

<sup>22</sup>U. S., War Department, United States Army Forces in the Far East, "X Corps Artillery in the Leyte Campaign", 28 March 1945, pp. 1-9.

In January 1945, there were twenty-seven American divisions (including six Marine divisions) in the Pacific area. Accompanying this tremendous build up of combat troops was the development of an impressive logistical system and an ever increasing number of planes and ships to support the offensive operations of the land forces.<sup>23</sup> On 9 January 1945, a portion of this offensive might was launched against the main island of the Philippines when the Sixth Army invaded Luzon.

The invasion forces employed by Sixth Army on Luzon were the I and XIV Corps, each employing two divisions in the assault. Following the heaviest naval bombardment of the war in the Pacific to date, the assault forces landed in the Lingayen Gulf area and by the end of the first day had secured an initial lodgment against light enemy resistance. By 16 January, the Sixth Army beachhead was almost thirty miles deep and except for determined resistance in the zone of the 43d Infantry Division little resistance had been encountered.<sup>24</sup>

On 29 January, the XI Corps joined the battle and landed on the west coast of Luzon in the San Antonio-San Felipe area. This additional force, coupled with the all-out drive by the XIV Corps on 1 February, led to the capture of Manila on 4 March. The XIV Corps attack had met little resistance prior to reaching Manila but the resistance within the city was bitter and required considerable effort to destroy the Japanese defenders. The last stronghold within the city was the medieval walled city, Intramuros, which required point blank artillery fires to dislodge

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<sup>23</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War With Japan, Part 3 (West Point, New York: USMA Printing Office, 1947), p. 1.

<sup>24</sup>U. S., War Department, Sixth Army, "Report of the Luzon Campaign", Vol. I (1945), pp. 17-21.

the defenders.<sup>25</sup>

After the fall of Manila the island of Luzon was divided into three areas with the XIV Corps in the south, the XI Corps in the central portion, and the I Corps in the north. With this disposition, Sixth Army forces began a program of methodically isolating and destroying the enemy on the island. The casualties suffered by the Japanese - over 192,000 killed and over 9,000 captured compared to less than 8,000 Americans killed - attest to the success of the operation. However on 15 August, when fighting ceased, isolated pockets of resistance still existed on Luzon.<sup>26</sup>

For the Luzon landing, Sixth Army provided I Corps one 155 mm gun battalion, two 155 mm howitzer battalions, and one field artillery observation battalion, minus one battery, as corps artillery. Nondivisional field artillery provided to XIV Corps was the same except that only a field artillery observation battery was allocated. Two field artillery groups, the 163th and the 191st, were retained under army control as army artillery. The 168th Field Artillery Group contained a 240 mm howitzer battalion, a 155 mm gun battalion, and an eight inch howitzer battalion. The 191st Field Artillery Group was much lighter in composition having three 107 mm howitzer battalions and one 155 mm howitzer battalion. Instructions in the Army order directed the corps commanders to "be prepared for the attachment of army artillery" and for the field artillery group commanders to "be prepared to attach all or part of his Group to Corps or separate Divisions" and "to be prepared to operate directly under

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<sup>25</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 3, pp. 26-32.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 38-43.

the Commanding General, Sixth Army."<sup>27</sup>

Within I Corps, a 155 mm howitzer battalion was attached to each of the assaulting divisions and the 155 mm gun battalion was retained under corps artillery control to perform long range counterbattery missions and to reinforce the committed division artilleries.<sup>28</sup> By 11 January, the corps artillery commander was able to establish effective control facilities ashore and centralize the control of the nondivisional field artillery. In that only three battalions were allocated, the corps artillery commanders problem was one of shifting the units to the zones needing additional fire rather than one of control.<sup>29</sup>

The nondivisional artillery units of XIV Corps were attached to the two divisions making the assault; however, on 12 January they reverted to the control of corps artillery headquarters and were placed in general support of the corps. During the period of the attachment to the division, none of these units performed any fire missions due to the limited resistance encountered by the corps.<sup>30</sup> The rapid advance of the XIV Corps made it difficult to maintain communications over the long distance which separated the corps artillery fire direction center and the units; therefore, it became necessary to employ a small advance element of the corps artillery headquarters well forward to control the nondivisional

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<sup>27</sup>U. S., War Department, Sixth Army, "Annex 9 to FO 34, Field Artillery", 20 November 1944, pp. 1-2.

<sup>28</sup>U. S., War Department, I Corps, "Annex No. 7 to FO 1, Field Artillery", 25 November 1944, pp. 1-3.

<sup>29</sup>U. S., War Department, I Corps Artillery, "After Action Report, Luzon Campaign", 1945, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup>U. S., War Department, XIV Corps Artillery, "After Action Report, M-1 Operation", 15 June, p. 5.

battalions.<sup>31</sup> Similar problems in Western Europe had been solved simply by the employment of a field artillery group headquarters in this fashion. Since the XIV Corps did not have a field artillery group headquarters attached, it was often necessary to form groupments of two or more battalions.<sup>32</sup>

The XI Corps Artillery supported the assault landings by attaching a nondivisional 155 mm howitzer battalion to the 38th Infantry Division. Only two other battalions were attached to the corps for this assault, a 155 mm gun battalion and a 240 mm howitzer battalion. Both of these battalions had originally been attached to the 168th Field Artillery Group which had been retained as army artillery in the earlier landings at Lingayen Gulf. These two battalions were retained under the control of the corps artillery commander during the invasion.<sup>33</sup> The nondivisional units remained with the XI Corps for a great deal of the Luzon campaign but at no time was a field artillery group headquarters employed with the corps. Centralized control by the corps artillery commander was normally exercised; however, attachments were made to the divisions if the situation dictated such employment.<sup>34</sup> Lacking a field artillery group headquarters, the technique of forming groupments was utilized within the XI Corps whe. it was desired to provide a force greater than one battalion to perform a mission under a single commander.<sup>35</sup>

The two field artillery groups which participated in the Luzon

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 7-8.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., pp. 12-14.

<sup>33</sup>U. S., War Department, XI Corps, "Annex 9 to FO 3, Field Artillery", 19 January 1945, pp. 1-2.

<sup>34</sup>U. S., War Department, XI Corps, "Annex 2 to FO 9, Field Artillery", 14 March 1945, pp. 1-2.

<sup>35</sup>U. S.; War Department, XI Corps, "FO 17", 1 May 1945, p. 2.

operation were employed differently due to the caliber of weapons within the groups. The 191st Field Artillery Group was originally composed of three 105 mm howitzer battalions and one 155 mm howitzer battalion. This group was first attached to the I Corps on 31 January with three of its battalions and given a mission of reinforcing the 6th Division Artillery.<sup>36</sup> For the remainder of the campaign this group remained attached to I Corps and performed general support or general support, reinforcing missions.<sup>37</sup>

The 168th Field Artillery Group was utilized by Sixth Army to control the two heavy field artillery battalions. The need for heavy artillery was experienced by all corps at different times in varying amounts. Thus, the 168th Field Artillery Group Headquarters was retained under Army control while the heavy artillery was attached by battery or battalion to the corps.<sup>38</sup> By the end of April, the operations of the three corps were so wide spread that it was not possible for the heavy artillery to remain centrally grouped and quickly move from one corps to another; therefore, the heavy artillery was attached to the three corps on a more permanent basis and the 168th Field Artillery Group Headquarters was attached to I Corps to control medium battalions in the conventional manner.<sup>39</sup>

While the liberation of the Philippines was being conducted by Sixth Army, other operations were launched to secure advanced bases to support the invasion of the Japanese mainland. The first of these two

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<sup>36</sup>U. S., War Department, I Corps, "FO 18", 31 January 1945, p. 4.

<sup>37</sup>U. S., War Department, I Corps, "History of the Luzon Campaign", 1945, pp. 293-298.

<sup>38</sup>U. S., War Department, XIV Corps Artillery, ". . . , M-1 Operation", p. 11.

<sup>39</sup>U. S., War Department, I Corps, "History of the Luzon . . .", p. 299.



important landings took place at Iwo Jima on 19 February. This landing was performed by the V Marine Amphibious Corps and did not employ any Army artillery units. The second offensive strike for advanced bases was aimed at Okinawa. The invasion of this island, less than 400 miles from Japan, was conducted by Tenth Army on 1 April 1945.<sup>40</sup>

The assault on Okinawa by Tenth Army was made with the XXIV Corps and the III Marine Amphibious Corps. Little initial opposition was developed by either corps and by 4 April objectives programed for seizure on 15 April were secured. Against little resistance the III Amphibious Corps cleared the northern portion of the island while the XXIV Corps turned southward against stiffening opposition. By 9 April, the Japanese intentions to defend the rugged terrain north of Naha were apparent and the XXIV Corps attack was stopped by extensive defenses in this area.<sup>41</sup>

Little headway was made by the XXIV Corps against the strong defenses of the enemy during the remainder of April and on 7 May the III Amphibious Corps was committed alongside the XXIV Corps for a two corps drive south. A coordinated attack on 11 May was successful and important gains were made across the front; however, by mid May the Tenth Army was fighting torrential seasonal rains in addition to the determined Japanese and the advance slowed. Early in June, the Japanese forces withdrew to the south to more defensible terrain. Following a brief period of pursuit, the new defenses of the Japanese were encountered by the two corps and the process of digging the defenders from the caves and strongpoints was continued. On 12 June, an attack was launched all along the Tenth

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<sup>40</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 3, pp. 51-66.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., pp. 67-72.

Army front which split the enemy into three isolated pockets. By 21 June, the Island of Okinawa was declared secure even though an additional ten days were required to mop-up the isolated resistance.<sup>42</sup>

Field artillery played a major role in the defeat of the Japanese on Okinawa. Realizing that the battle on the well defended island would require a great deal of nondivisional field artillery, Tenth Army initially requested that seven field artillery group headquarters (five Army and two Marine) be provided for the operation. It was later determined that the number of nondivisional field artillery units requested could not be supported by shipping and beach operations and a total of three field artillery groups (two Army and one Marine) were provided.<sup>43</sup> The Marine field artillery group headquarters was a provisional group headquarters which was attached to the III Marine Amphibious Corps to assist in control of the three 155 mm gun battalions and three 155 mm howitzer battalions which were attached to the III Marine Amphibious Corps for the assault. All six of these nondivisional battalions were Marine units.<sup>44</sup> Attached to XXIV Corps were the 419th Field Artillery Group (three 155 mm howitzer battalions), the 420th Field Artillery Group (two 155 mm gun battalions), a field artillery observation battalion, and one eight inch howitzer battalion.<sup>45</sup>

On the day prior to the landings the 420th Field Artillery Group

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., pp. 73-81.

<sup>43</sup>U. S., War Department, Tenth Army, "Report of Operations in the RYUKYUS Campaign", 3 September 1945, p. 11-VI-3.

<sup>44</sup>U. S., War Department, Tenth Army, "Annex 8, Field Artillery, Tentative Operations Plan No. 1-45, ICEBERG", 6 January 1945, p. 3.

<sup>45</sup>U. S., War Department, XXIV Corps, "Annex 5 to FO 45 A & B, Field Artillery", 8 February 1945, p. 3.

(two 155 mm gun battalions) was landed on the small island of Keise Shima, approximately six miles west of Okinawa. From positions there, this field artillery group was able to deliver long range fires in support of the landing operations and flanking fires over a large portion of the southern half of Okinawa. The group's powerful fires were of such value to the overall operation in disrupting enemy movement and in firing counterbattery missions that it remained in this initial location the entire month of April.<sup>46</sup>

The 419th Field Artillery Group landed on 2 April with a mission of general support of the corps and the additional requirement of reinforcing each of the two assault divisions with the fires of one battalion. The eight inch battalion was retained under the corps artillery commander's control to provide long range destruction fires and counterbattery.

As the Japanese resistance increased in the XXIV Corps zone, three battalions of Marine artillery were formed into a groupment known as "Henderson Group." The groupment was attached to the XXIV Corps where it was employed in general support.<sup>47</sup> This overall artillery organization for combat continued until 10 May; however, the composition of the groups was altered as the tactical situation dictated. At one time during this period, the 419th Field Artillery Group had six battalions attached in order to simultaneously reinforce the artillery of three attacking divisions.<sup>48</sup>

On 10 May "Henderson Group" was discontinued and the Marine

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<sup>46</sup>U. S., War Department, XXIV Corps, "XXIV Corps Action Report, RYUKYUS Campaign", 17 August 1945, pp. 38-39.

<sup>47</sup>U. S., War Department, XXIV Corps Artillery, "Action Report, RYUKYUS Campaign", 17 August 1945, pp. 9-10.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., pp. 10-11.

artillery units reverted to III Marine Amphibious Corps. The 420th Field Artillery Group was in position on the main island and from this date the artillery support of the XXIV Corps by the two field artillery groups changed very little. The 419th Field Artillery Group habitually was assigned the mission of general support, reinforcing the division artilleries of the committed divisions while the 420th Field Artillery Group was placed in general support and was responsible for long range destruction and counterbattery missions. The battalions attached to the two groups were changed; however, habitually the 419th Field Artillery Group controlled the medium artillery while the 420th Field Artillery Group controlled the longer ranged guns.<sup>49</sup>

The Tenth Army report on the Ryukyus campaign acknowledged the major contribution which the field artillery had made to the success of the operation in supporting the maneuver units and destruction of the well organized enemy defenses.<sup>50</sup> This report also recommended that four field artillery group headquarters and headquarters batteries and twelve battalions of nondivisional field artillery be provided each corps for future operations.<sup>51</sup>

Following the operations on Okinawa and Iwo Jima, plans were being finalized for the invasion of Japan. These plans, as well as World War II, were halted in August 1945 when the newly found atomic power of the United States was unleashed for the first time. The atomic bombing of Hiroshima on 6 August was followed on 9 August with an atomic bomb on

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., pp. 11-12.

<sup>50</sup>U. S., War Department, Tenth Army, "Report . . . RYUKYUS Campaign", p. 11-VI-35.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 11-VI-76.

Nagasaki. Six days later Japan capitulated, ending World War II.<sup>52</sup>

At the beginning of the war in the Pacific, circumstances prevailed which resulted in minimum use of nondivisional field artillery. During the early phases delaying tactics were utilized to enable the war machinery and the manpower of the United States to become operational and provide the forces needed to combat the Japanese. These defensive actions were fought, from an artilleryman's viewpoint, with the forces in being which did not include field artillery groups nor nondivisional field artillery to any substantial degree. As the war turned to one of an offensive nature in mid 1943, nondivisional field artillery units were still of doubtful value in United States operations. The nature of the campaign, at the beginning, was the seizing of small islands by division size forces not requiring nondivisional units for additional fire support. It is also true that little use was made of the divisional field artillery units due to the problems encountered with movement, location of position areas, ammunition resupply, survey, and control within the almost impassable jungle; however, the lack of artillery support was basically due to faulty command decisions and poor training. For example, the Marine landings on Guadalcanal, in which field artillery units of the division participated, contrasted greatly with the operations of the 32d Infantry Division in New Guinea where none of the division artillery was used. As the XIV Corps assumed responsibility for the area of Guadalcanal and expanded operations on that island, a coordinated use of the artillery evolved. There were no nondivisional field artillery units employed on Guadalcanal; however, XIV Corps made maximum use of the field artillery of the three divisions under its control to support the maneuvers of the corps. From this point, field

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<sup>52</sup>U. S. Military Academy, The War . . ., Part 3, pp. 89-91.

artillery played an important part in the operations in the Pacific.

Nondivisional field artillery units were not rapidly provided for the expanding operations in the Pacific area primarily due to the lower priority which this theater had been assigned in the Allies' efforts against Germany. Additionally, the first reports from the Pacific had indicated the unsuitability of the terrain and nature of operations to the use of large amounts of field artillery. Nondivisional field artillery units were provided in late 1943 as the consolidation phase of the battle ended and preparations accelerated for the offensive to be launched in 1944. The first field artillery group headquarters and headquarters battery arrived in the Pacific during the latter part of 1943. This unit, the 191st Field Artillery Group Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, was sent to New Guinea on 9 September 1943 and participated as the fire support agency of the task force (Michaelmes) which seized Saidor.<sup>53</sup> The employment of this group headquarters was in contrast to the employment of the 419th Field Artillery Group at Saipan. The group headquarters at Saipan was employed in the conventional role as a subelement of the corps artillery headquarters.

The employment of the field artillery groups, though they were few in number, contributed to the effective fire support of maneuver units in the Pacific area. During the battles of Luzon and Okinawa the employment of the field artillery group was similar to its employment in the war of movement being waged in Western Europe. The Standing Operating Procedures of I, X, XIV, and XXIV Corps provided no special treatment,

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<sup>53</sup>U. S., War Department, "Field Artillery Units", Unpublished fact sheets of field artillery unit history prepared by the Army Personnel Records Board, 3 June 1948, p. 1.

composition, or use of the field artillery group.<sup>54</sup> Whether attached to a division, a task force, or operating under the control of the corps artillery headquarters, the flexibility of the organization provided the corps artillery commander another tool with which to fashion artillery support for the maneuver unit.

The Okinawa campaign evidenced the most effective employment of nondivisional field artillery in the Pacific Theater. This was due to the availability of substantial amounts of nondivisional field artillery on a fairly large battlefield with strongly organized defenses. More important, this battle represented the growing awareness of the importance of artillery support and improved techniques of the artilleryman in its utilization in the Pacific. An article written by the commander of the 419th Field Artillery Group adds credence to the improved employment of the field artillery group at Okinawa. He felt that:

In this operation the group came to the fore as a definitely important part of the artillery structure. In previous operations within my experience the corps artillery headquarters had only a small number of battalions under its control and occupied itself solely with artillery fire direction, making the group seem an unnecessary link in the chain of command. During this campaign, however, the picture was entirely different. The corps artillery commander had under his control not only a very large number of artillery battalions, but also the direction and coordination of naval gunfire and tactical air support. It was thus impossible for him to exercise close supervision over fire direction, so the group, as an echelon concerned solely with the artillery, performed this function.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>U. S., War Department, Army Ground Forces, "SOP's of Corps Artillery in Pacific Area", 6 July 1945, p. 1.

<sup>55</sup>Colonel Bernard S. Waterman, "The Battle of Okinawa, an Artillery Angle," The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXV (September, 1945), p. 528.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP FROM 1945-1950

Immediately following World War II, much effort was devoted toward evaluating the tactics and organizations employed by the United States forces in achieving victory. The results of the formal efforts were published in special reports and studies while the service journals were used as a media for the experienced and high ranking authorities to publish their evaluations and recommendations.

These articles, reports, and studies generally led to one of three recommendations with regard to the field artillery group organization. Some officers felt that the field artillery group organization was unsound based on the "complete absence of the team work and esprit" brought about by the shifting of battalions within the organization and that the field artillery should return to the regimental organization.<sup>1</sup> Others felt that the flexibility inherent in the field artillery group organization had been the decisive element which enabled the corps and army commanders to adequately support the maneuver elements in the varied tactical conditions of World War II. Brigadier General Charles E. Hart, the artillery officer of II Corps in North Africa and of First Army in Western Europe shared this latter opinion. General Hart felt that the original concept of the field artillery group organization had not provided

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<sup>1</sup>U. S., War Department, Army Ground Forces, "AGF Board Report - T/O", 6 May 1945, p. 1.



for sufficient administrative capability but that this defect had been corrected by implementation of Circular 439. General Hart's only criticism was the fact that the "fine old army term" regiment had not been used instead of group.<sup>2</sup> A third form of recommendation generally acknowledged the necessity of retaining the flexible field artillery group organization but dealt with desired changes in the framework of the corps artillery or army artillery organization. One recommendation of this nature was put forth by the General Board established in the European Theater. The recommendation of this board was that the field artillery group organization be redesignated field artillery regiment and that the field artillery allotted to corps be organized into an "Artillery Division." This division was to be commanded by a major general and was to administer and command the organic artillery and such additional artillery as may be attached from the army pool. In addition to combat service support units, it was recommended that this division contain four headquarters and headquarters batteries, field artillery group (regiment), and thirteen separate field artillery battalions.<sup>3</sup> Major General John A. Crane endorsed the continuation of the field artillery group organization and the recommended artillery division. General Crane felt that "groups are great inventions. Under a good commander it can pull its battalions along like a sail on a boat. The sail should not be reefed too tightly with red tape." In his opinion the artillery division should be established at army level and contain two headquarters and headquarters batteries, field

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<sup>2</sup>Brigadier General Charles E. Hart, "Artillery With an American Army in Europe," Military Review, Vol. XXV (September, 1945), pp. 30-31.

<sup>3</sup>U. S., War Department, United States Forces European Theater, "Report of the General Board - Organization and Equipment of Field Artillery Units", 1945, pp. 47-48.

artillery group, per corps.<sup>4</sup> These recommendations had not been requested by the War Department as part of a reorganization program. However, the recommendations as well as the articles published by individuals influenced future formal actions.

The first formal action taken after World War II toward future development of field artillery organization was initiated on 4 December 1945. On this date the Commanding General, Army Ground Forces directed that a Field Artillery Conference be conducted at the Field Artillery School in early 1946. This conference, attended by 102 combat experienced officers, submitted recommendations in four areas: organization, equipment, technique, and new developments. Committees were formed for each of the four categories. After study of assigned specific questions, the committees presented the results of their study in the form of recommendations to the entire conference group for discussion. Each member of the conference then submitted his opinion by answering a questionnaire.<sup>5</sup> One of the specific questions, which had been provided by Army Ground Forces, dealt with the establishment of an artillery division to replace the nondivisional field artillery organization in the corps. Sixty-seven, of the eighty-two members expressing an opinion, felt that an artillery division should replace the nondivisional artillery organization of the corps and approved the following recommendations:<sup>6</sup>

- a. Recommend that corps artillery be organized with the following organic units: A headquarters and headquarters battery, an

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<sup>4</sup>Major General John A. Crane, "Field Artillery Groups," The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXV (October, 1945), pp. 581-582.

<sup>5</sup>Major General Louis E. Hibbs, "Report on the Field Artillery Conference," The Field Artillery Journal, Vol. XXXVI (July, 1946), p. 407.

<sup>6</sup>U. S., War Department, Field Artillery School, "Tabulation of Conference Group Questionnaire", 1946, p. 2.

observation battalion, and a minimum number of organic artillery battalions to be determined by a separate study. These to be organized into permanent groups or regiments of varying or the same caliber as deemed necessary. Adequate personnel should be provided in headquarters and headquarters battery and the observation battalion to perform its function.

b. Recommend that the corps artillery commander be a major general with a brigadier general as deputy commander.

c. Recommend that all nondivisional battalions be self-sustaining and organized into permanent groups or regiments of mixed or the same calibers as deemed most desirable.<sup>7</sup>

At the time that this recommendation was forwarded to Army Ground Forces, the nondivisional field artillery organization remained the same as it had been at the close of World War II. Courses taught at the Command and General Staff College continued to stress the composition of a field artillery group as being temporary and varying with the situation to provide "greater flexibility of employment."<sup>8</sup> Further evidence of the retention of the organization was the assignment of the 5th Field Artillery Group (five battalions attached) to the Field Artillery School as School Troops on 1 August 1946. This assignment was made in order to perpetuate units with distinguished combat records.<sup>9</sup>

In 1947 a detailed study was completed to establish a uniform field army organization to be used for planning purposes within the Army Ground Forces and for instructional purposes within the Army Ground Forces schools.<sup>10</sup> This study provided regiments as the parent unit of

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<sup>7</sup>U. S., War Department, Field Artillery School, "Extract from Committee on Organization - Question No. 5", 1946, pp. 1-2.

<sup>8</sup>U. S., War Department, Command and General Staff College, "Subject Schedule No. 378 - Field Artillery", Instruction presented to the 27th General Staff Class, February-May 1946, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Artillery and Guided Missile School, "History of the U. S. Army Artillery and Guided Missile School, 1945-1957", 1958, pp. 112-113.

<sup>10</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Army Ground Forces, "Type Field Army", 24 November 1947, p. 1.

nondivisional battalions in the field army and corps thereby "giving every nondivisional type unit a 'parent' unit which will insure adequate administration and will provide for efficient operation of these nondivisional units, heretofore 'homeless'."<sup>11</sup> Specifically, the nondivisional field artillery in each of the three corps of the Type Field Army consisted of a corps artillery headquarters and headquarters battery, four field artillery regiments, an observation battalion, a 105 mm howitzer armored field artillery battalion, and a rocket battalion. The composition of the four field artillery regiments is shown in Table 6. In addition, either an eight inch gun battalion or a 240 mm howitzer battalion would be allocated on the basis of one per army.<sup>12</sup>

The field artillery regimental organization was included in the instruction presented to the 1947-48 Regular Course at the Command and General Staff College.<sup>13</sup> However, the proposed Table of Organization and Equipment (6-12R for the field artillery regiment) was never published and the field artillery group headquarters remained the tactical control headquarters for nondivisional field artillery.<sup>14</sup>

In May 1948, Field Manual 6-20, Field Artillery Tactics and Techniques was published, superseding the previous edition dated 5 February 1944. In this manual, the field artillery group was defined as the group headquarters and headquarters battery and such artillery units as are assigned. It was recognized that the group organization provided

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., Tab A, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., Tab A, p. 21.

<sup>13</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Command and General Staff College, "Subject Schedule No. 3114 - Organization of the Corps, Army and Army Group", 16 September 1947, pp. 1-3.

<sup>14</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, "Index to Tables of Organization and Equipment and Tables of Organization", 3 May 1948, p. 24.

centralized command to perform tactical and command functions. Since the assigned battalions were self-sustaining, they could be temporarily detached and attached to other field artillery headquarters thereby providing flexibility to the artillery organization for combat. The field artillery group commander was charged with the responsibility for the employment and supervision of the assigned or attached battalions in every aspect to include assisting with supply and administrative problems.<sup>15</sup>

TABLE 6

REGIMENTAL COMPOSITION OF NONDIVISIONAL FIELD ARTILLERY  
ALLOCATED TO THE CORPS OF THE 1947 TYPE FIELD ARMY\*

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Two Regiments Composed of:

- 1 155 mm Howitzer Battalion (Towed)
- 1 155 mm Howitzer Battalion (SP)
- 1 8 inch Howitzer Battalion (SP)

One Regiment Composed of:

- 1 155 mm Gun Battalion (Towed)
- 1 240 mm Howitzer Battalion (Towed)
- 1 8 inch Howitzer Battalion (Towed)

One Regiment Composed of:

- 1 240 mm Howitzer Battalion (Towed)
  - 1 8 inch Howitzer Battalion (Towed)
  - 1 155 mm Gun Battalion (SP)
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\*Taken from: U. S., Department of the Army, Army Ground Forces, "Type Field Army", 24 November 1947, Tab A, p. 21.

A revised Table of Organization and Equipment for the headquarters and headquarters battery of the field artillery group was also

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<sup>15</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, FM 6-20: Field Artillery Tactics and Technique (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948), pp. 5-8.

published in 1948. This document made no change in the headquarters and headquarters battery except that it provided an increase in personnel to a total of twenty-one officers and one hundred and nine enlisted personnel.<sup>16</sup>

The employment of the field artillery group, as taught at the Command and General Staff College in 1948-49, also represented little change in technique from that which had been utilized in World War II. In one problem entitled "Corps Operations" which involved a rapid advance by a corps, the four field artillery groups attached to the corps were organized with three of the field artillery groups controlling three field artillery battalions each and the fourth group controlling five field artillery battalions. Each of the three small groups were given missions of general support, reinforcing the division artillery of a committed division, while the five battalion group was placed in general support of the corps.<sup>17</sup>

In July 1949 the Army Field Forces (formerly Army Ground Forces) published a revised document on the Type Field Army. The nondivisional artillery organization was identical to that of the Type Field Army of 1947 with one major change - the field artillery group replaced the field artillery regiment.<sup>18</sup>

In 1950 the field artillery group organization was basically the

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<sup>16</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Table of Organization and Equipment No. 6-12, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, Field Artillery Group (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948), pp. 1-5.

<sup>17</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Command and General Staff College, "Subject Schedule 3315A - Corps Operations", 29 July 1948.

<sup>18</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Army Field Forces, "Type Field Army - Revised - 1949", 1 July 1949, pp. 251-252.

same organization which had existed at the end of World War II. Much effort had been devoted toward the formation of an organization which retained the necessary flexibility and at the same time eliminated the deficiencies inherent in the group organization of World War II. These problems had been partially solved with the publishing of Circular 439; however, the provisions of this directive were not fully implemented during the remainder of the war and some of the problems brought about by the frequent shifting of field artillery battalions and field artillery groups continued to exist. The intervening years provided an opportunity for the doctrine of a more rigid field artillery group composition to be thoroughly implemented. In addition, the nondivisional field artillery battalions authorized in the Type Field Army in 1947 and 1949 were of varied calibers and in sufficient numbers to provide four field artillery groups which would require less shifting of battalions. The use of the term "regiment" was advocated as a name for the organizational headquarters, and in no way represented a serious effort to return to the previous fixed regimental organization.

The end result of the study from ~~1945-1950~~ was an organization with sufficient personnel to exercise supervision of assigned battalions both in tactical and administrative areas. The measures implemented to reduce the transferring of battalions between field artillery groups in no way restricted the corps artillery commander from making temporary changes in group organization in order to provide adequate field artillery support to the divisions of the corps.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP IN KOREA

On 25 June 1950, an uneasy peace in "the Land of the Morning Calm" was shattered by the North Korean Army's invasion of South Korea. Movement south by the Communist forces was rapid against the disorganized South Korean units and, by 28 June, Seoul fell to the aggressors. The attack continued across the Han River and by 4 July Suwon had been seized.<sup>1</sup> It was on this date that the North Korean Army first encountered American forces.<sup>2</sup>

At the time of the invasion, the United States had four understrength divisions deployed on occupation duty in Japan. All infantry regiments within these divisions were reduced from the normal three battalions per regiment to two per regiment. The field artillery battalions were reduced from three firing batteries per battalion to two; except for one battalion of the 25th Infantry Division. With these forces available, a decision was made on 30 June to employ American ground troops in Korea.<sup>3</sup>

The lead elements of the 24th Infantry Division arrived in Korea on 2 July. Immediately, a battalion size task force, containing one

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<sup>1</sup>Brigadier General Vincent J. Esposito (ed.) The West Point Atlas of American Wars, Vol. II, 1900-1953 (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1959), Section 3, Map 3.

<sup>2</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations in Korea (West Point, New York: USMA Printing Office, 1953), p. 9.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 7.



battery of field artillery, was moved forward to meet the advance of the enemy while the remainder of the division arrived by boat from Japan. Patrol contact was established on 4 July and the main enemy force was contacted the following day north of Osan. This force was augmented by the remainder of the 24th Infantry Division as it arrived from Japan and was committed to delay the advance of the enemy's main attack down the Seoul-Taejon axis. The same delaying tactics were employed by elements of five South Korean divisions in the mountainous terrain to the east.<sup>4</sup>

The 25th Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry Division joined the 24th Infantry Division in July and were immediately committed. By 5 August the defending United States and South Korean forces had been pushed into a rectangular-shaped beachhead, about ninety miles long and sixty miles wide. The eight divisions holding the beachhead were all under the command of Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker who had established his Eighth Army headquarters in Korea on 12 July.<sup>5</sup>

For the most part, Eighth Army operations from 5 August until 15 September developed into a determined defense against the North Korean attempts to destroy the forces within this beachhead which became known as the "Pusan Perimeter". The North Korean tactics at the beginning sought to develop weak spots in the defense; however, by the end of August the beachhead was under almost simultaneous attack around the entire perimeter.<sup>6</sup> In the latter part of August, two Republic of Korea (ROK) Corps Headquarters were organized and provided to Eighth Army. On 12 September the I (US) Corps under the command of Major General Frank W. Milburn became operational and on 14 September assumed control of the

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 9-11.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 12-16.

1st Cavalry Division, the 1st ROK Division, and the 27th (United Kingdom) Infantry Brigade.<sup>7</sup> The 27th Infantry Brigade had arrived in Korea on 29 August in response to an appeal by the United Nations for its members to assist South Korea.<sup>8</sup>

The organic field artillery battalions followed the divisions to Korea as quickly as possible. In several instances, due to insufficient shipping, this waiting period amounted to several days; however, by 11 August all of the divisional field artillery battalions of the 1st Cavalry Division and the 24th and 25th Infantry Divisions were in Korea.<sup>9</sup> By 13 August, advance parties for the batteries that were shipped from the United States to fill out the battalions and the advance party for the 17th Field Artillery Battalion had arrived in Korea. The 17th Field Artillery Battalion was the first eight inch howitzer battalion and the first nondivisional field artillery unit to arrive in Korea.<sup>10</sup>

Concurrent with the delay of the enemy and defense of the "Pusan Perimeter" was the planning and assembling of an offensive force to make an amphibious landing at Inchon. This deep strike behind the enemy's mass was designed to cut his supply lines and then to envelop and annihilate his front line divisions which would be caught between two attacking forces. Initial planning for this operation had been built around the use of I Corps as a separate tactical headquarters to execute the landing,

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<sup>7</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, I Corps, "Three Years in Korea", 13 September 1953, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., p. 15.

<sup>9</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Eighth U. S. Army Korea, "Artillery Information Bulletin No. 4", 11 August 1950, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Eighth U. S. Army Korea, "Artillery Information Bulletin No. 5", 18 August 1950, p. 2.

but the greater need for the I Corps staff in the "Pusan Perimeter" was given priority. Lacking any other corps headquarters, a provisional headquarters was formed from personnel of General Headquarters, Far East Command, in Japan and designated Headquarters, X Corps, with Lieutenant General E. M. Almond appointed as the commander. The 7th Infantry Division and the 1st Marine Division were provided to X Corps for the amphibious landing at Inchon scheduled for mid September.<sup>11</sup> The only nondivisional artillery which could be provided to X Corps for the Inchon landing were the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 5th Field Artillery Group, the 92d Armored Field Artillery Battalion (155 mm howitzer), and the 96th Field Artillery Battalion (155 mm howitzer). As Eighth Army forces in Korea were compressed in the "Pusan Perimeter" appeals were made for the "urgent immediate use" of these three units, even if on a temporary basis. However, all three were retained for the Inchon landing and attached to the 7th Infantry Division for training.<sup>12</sup> These two battalions and the group headquarters had arrived in Japan on 28 August after being alerted in the United States in late July and embarking from San Francisco on 12 August. The 92d Armored Field Artillery Battalion had been taken from the 2d Armored Division at Fort Hood while the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 5th Field Artillery Group had been relieved of its duties as Headquarters, School Troops at Fort Sill.<sup>13</sup>

The Inchon landing was conducted as planned on 15 September by

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<sup>11</sup>Major James F. Schnabel, "The Inchon Landing", Unpublished draft manuscript prepared for the Office, Chief of Military History, U. S. Department of the Army, 1955, pp. 6-18.

<sup>12</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Eighth U. S. Army Korea, "Special Problems in the Korean Conflict", 17 June 1952, p. 34.

<sup>13</sup>History of the 92d Armored Field Artillery Battalion (Tokyo: Kokusai Shuppan Insatsusha, 1951), pp. 1-2.

X Corps. The 1st Marine Division landed first and by 16 September had advanced several miles inland. On 17 September, the 7th Infantry Division landed and attacked to the south and east. By 26 September, X Corps elements had succeeded in capturing Seoul and linking up with advance elements of Eighth Army in the south near Osan. The link up had been made possible by a determined offensive launched by Eighth Army on the same date as the Inchon landing to breakout from the "Pusan Perimeter." This offensive effort did not break through the initial defenses of the enemy until 20 September. Once these shallow defenses were penetrated the advance was rapid and by 7 October all enemy forces had either been cut off in southwestern Korea or driven north of Seoul.<sup>14</sup>

For the Inchon landing, Headquarters, 5th Field Artillery Group performed as X Corps Artillery since the newly activated corps did not have the normal corps artillery headquarters and headquarters battery. Only the 92d and 96th Field Artillery Battalions were available to augment the fires of the two divisions of the corps and both of these battalions were attached to the 7th Infantry Division. When these corps artillery battalions were landed on 20 September, they were employed to reinforce the fires of the direct support battalions of the division. No change was made in the X Corps Artillery organization from the time of the landings until X Corps was relieved of its zone by Eighth Army.<sup>15</sup>

Initially, nondivisional field artillery battalions were not available to the forces within the "Pusan Perimeter." As nondivisional units became available they were attached to the divisions where they were used in general support or used to reinforce the fires of the direct

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<sup>14</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., pp. 16-19.

<sup>15</sup>History of the 92d . . ., pp. 3-5.

support artillery battalions. The extremely wide frontages of the divisions had often required the attachment of the organic artillery to the infantry regiments; attached nondivisional artillery units were then normally retained under division artillery control. With such wide dispersion, massing the fires of the division artillery was almost impossible; therefore, battalion groups were frequently formed to provide massed fires of two or more battalions. A corps artillery headquarters and headquarters battery was not available in either the I or IX Corps (IX Corps Headquarters had been committed in the "Pusan Perimeter" on 23 September) of Eighth Army; therefore, counterbattery programs and technical fire direction were controlled at division artillery level. Each corps did have an artillery officer but his staff was so small that corps artillery activities were limited to fire support coordination and administrative matters.<sup>16</sup> The lack of nondivisional field artillery units, both firing units and control headquarters, is exemplified by the heavy reliance which was placed on antiaircraft artillery units used in a surface role. The 78th AAA Gun Battalion (90 mm) was used entirely in this role to support maneuver units in the attack north. On 18 September, this battalion was attached to the 1st ROK Division where the 10th Anti-aircraft Artillery Group was acting as the division artillery.<sup>17</sup>

The offensive which was initiated by the Inchon landing and the Eighth Army breakout in the south was continued in October. The IX Corps engaged in security operations to destroy the isolated elements in the

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<sup>16</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, The Artillery School, "Report of the Artillery School Representative, AFF Observer Team No. 2, Concerning Korean Campaign, September to October 1950, Inclusive", 27 November 1950, pp. 134-141.

<sup>17</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, 78th AAA Gun Battalion, "90 mm M-2 Firing as Field Artillery", 29 September 1950, p. 1.

southwest while the I Corps and two ROK Corps (I and II) continued to drive the enemy northward. The X Corps had been removed from the front to participate in another amphibious landing on the eastern coast. By 26 October, the North Korean capitol Pyongyang had been secured and the most advanced elements of Eighth Army had reached the Manchurian border.<sup>18</sup>

As Eighth Army elements reached the Manchurian border, X Corps with the 5th Field Artillery Group (two 155 mm howitzer battalions) still performing as its corps artillery, landed at Wonsan. This landing had been planned as an amphibious assault but the area had been secured by the swift advance of the Eighth Army and an administrative landing was possible. Immediately after its first element (1st Marine Division) landed, X Corps was given responsibility for the eastern portion of the zone and control of the I ROK Corps. The X Corps continued to operate as a separate command, not a part of Eighth Army. Late in October and early in November the 3d and 7th Infantry Divisions landed at Iwon and Wonsan under the control of X Corps to assist in the drive northward. This X Corps advance reached the Manchurian border on 21 November when the 7th Infantry Division entered the border town of Hyesanjin.<sup>19</sup> On the night of 25-26 November large scale attacks by Chinese Communist forces, which had crossed into Korea from Manchuria, halted the offensive of the United Nations.<sup>20</sup>

Against the overwhelming forces of the Chinese, later estimated to be greater than 250,000, Eighth Army and X Corps withdrew to the south. The initial attack had driven a wedge between Eighth Army and X Corps leaving both elements with open flanks which complicated their withdrawal.

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<sup>18</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., pp. 20-21.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 23-24.

As Eighth Army moved south, concentrating its delay on the terrain in the west and protecting its right flank as well as possible, X Corps withdrew its forces into a beachhead around the port of Hungnam. By 15 December, Eighth Army elements had established a strong defensive position which ran across the peninsula along the 38th parallel and the X Corps was concentrated in the beachhead at Hungnam. As the forces within the beachhead were evacuated, the perimeter was contracted and by 27 December the evacuation by sea to Pusan was completed. Upon arrival in Pusan the independent corps was placed under Eighth Army which continued to defend along the 38th parallel.<sup>21</sup>

During the drive to the Manchurian border the forces of Eighth Army and X Corps did not have sufficient nondivisional field artillery to properly support their efforts. Fortunately, resistance had been disorganized and the lack of close support targets had even allowed the air support emphasis to be shifted to targets of interdiction. The offensive had been initiated with the same nondivisional field artillery organizations which had participated in the "Pusan Perimeter" defense and the Inchon landing. This, in effect, included only a small number of corps artillery battalions, skeleton corps artillery staffs at I and IX Corps, and Headquarters, 5th Field Artillery Group, acting as corps artillery headquarters for X Corps. Nondivisional field artillery battalions were habitually attached to the divisions due to this lack of a formal corps artillery headquarters, the nature of the rapid advance, and the scarcity of nondivisional units.<sup>22</sup> The lack of nondivisional field artillery was

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 24-29.

<sup>22</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, IX Corps, "Operations Plan 5", 1 December 1950, pp. 1-3.

further complicated by the fact the South Korean divisions had only one organic light field artillery battalion. The meager resources of the American divisions were further diluted in order to augment the limited field artillery of the South Koreans.<sup>23</sup> Fortunately, limited enemy resistance - coupled with the available air support, antiaircraft artillery units employed in the surface role, and naval gunfire - had allowed the drive to be sustained.

The most effective employment of nondivisional artillery during this phase occurred in the X Corps. The 5th Field Artillery Group (two 155 mm howitzer battalions) performed all functions of the corps artillery headquarters and effectively supported the corps in both its drive to the Manchurian border and later its evacuation at Hungnam. The nature of the rapid movement after landing at Wonsan and Iwon had required that the nondivisional field artillery battalions be attached to the divisions.<sup>24</sup> As the advance slowed and the withdrawal and evacuation phase began, the 5th Field Artillery Group headquarters was able to centralize field artillery employment and utilize its two battalions to reinforce the division artilleries.<sup>25</sup> As the evacuation progressed and the beachhead contracted, the headquarters of the group effectively coordinated the employment of naval gunfire and naval air support.<sup>26</sup>

The enemy attacked Eighth Army defenses along the 38th parallel

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<sup>23</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Eighth U. S. Army Korea, "A Study of the Employment and Effectiveness of the Artillery with the Eighth Army", 16 January 1954, p. 37.

<sup>24</sup>History of the 92d . . ., pp. 8-37.

<sup>25</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, X Corps, "Annex F (Artillery) to Operations Order 10", 11 December 1950, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup>U. S. Military Academy, Operations . . ., p. 26.



as 1950 came to a close. Quickly the X Corps was moved from Pusan and assumed control of a sector in the Eighth Army line. With X Corps committed, the Eighth Army line, from west to east, contained the I, IX, and X United States Corps and the South Korean III and I Corps. The Chinese attack secured gains across the peninsula in excess of fifty miles and captured Seoul for the second time. On 24 January the advance was halted and Eighth Army forces initiated an attack to regain the lost ground.<sup>27</sup>

The Eighth Army offensive in late January initially met little resistance, but as the advance neared Seoul the enemy's defense stiffened. A series of counterattacks in mid February threatened to isolate the South Korean elements of Eighth Army on the east. These counterattacks were repulsed and the attack northward continued. Seoul was recaptured on 15 March and resistance along the front dwindled. By the end of March the front again ran closely along the 38th parallel.<sup>28</sup>

The Eighth Army attack was pushed north of the 38th parallel in April, but enemy resistance became increasingly strong and it was apparent that a build up for another offensive was taking place. The anticipated Communist attack began on 22 April and Eighth Army conducted an orderly delay against forces estimated to be in excess of fifty divisions. The well-executed delay by Eighth Army permitted enemy gains of approximately thirty-five miles in the west and lesser gains in the east; however, the Communist suffered an estimated 70,000 casualties in the attack which was halted on 30 April.<sup>29</sup>

Taking advantage of the halted Chinese offensive, Eighth Army

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., pp. 29-30.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 30-34.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., pp. 34-37.

elements immediately regained five to ten miles of the lost terrain. By mid May enemy resistance had again stiffened and all indications pointed to a new Chinese attack. This attack materialized on the night of 15-16 May and succeeded in making significant gains in the east. The brunt of the enemy's attack came in the III Corps sector and succeeded in forcing a withdrawal in that portion of the line. A reserve division was employed in this sector to prevent further losses and by 23 May the attack was stopped with enemy gains amounting to approximately thirty miles in the east and little or no gains in the west.<sup>30</sup>

The seesaw battle continued on 23 May when Eighth Army counter-attacked to regain the terrain lost during the most recent Communist drive. By the end of May fighting had progressed beyond the 38th parallel but the enemy's resistance began to impede the advance. Gains during June were minor and the Eighth Army focused its attention upon consolidating its forces upon good defensible terrain in anticipation of cease-fire talks. In early July negotiations for an armistice began and the land battle slowed to a defense by both sides of the mountainous terrain.<sup>31</sup>

The war of movement which characterized the first year of the Korean War was much like World War II in Western Europe. The employment of field artillery, except for modifications necessitated by the unique aspects of the United Nations forces and the continued scarcity of non-divisional field artillery, might have closely approximated the field artillery employment in Western Europe.<sup>32</sup> Additional nondivisional field artillery units arrived in Korea prior to the beginning of the peace talks

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., pp. 37-40.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 40-43.

<sup>32</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Eighth U. S. Army Korea, "A Study of the Employment . . .", p. xi.

in July to augment the few battalions which were present in January 1951.

The advance party of the first formal headquarters and headquarters battery, corps artillery (I Corps Artillery) arrived in Korea in February along with the advance parties for three 155 mm howitzer battalions and two 155 mm gun battalions.<sup>33</sup> By 10 March, these units, along with an additional headquarters and headquarters battery, corps artillery (IX Corps Artillery) and four nondivisional 105 mm self-propelled howitzer battalions had closed into Korea.<sup>34</sup>

Brigadier General J. F. Brittingham was assigned as the I Corps Artillery Commander in March and expressed his impression as follows:

Most of the time I had only between five and six battalions. Not only were we limited to that much artillery, but we had a peculiarity in the ROK division in that it is organized with only one light battalion of 105 mm howitzers. We had two ROK divisions on our corps front, so almost all of my artillery had to be used in direct support of these two ROK divisions. . . . By the time we put two battalions as a minimum behind each ROK division, in effect as direct support artillery, it left a maximum of three battalions of corps artillery. . . . As compared to the other two corps in Korea, we had about our share. . . . The army front was a minimum of 140 miles, 40% of it manned by ROK units, so you are just terribly short of artillery.<sup>35</sup>

As the number of nondivisional field artillery battalions increased in May and June, the corps artillery commanders were able to employ a more centralized control of their attached units. Units were still spread laterally along the wide front and the reinforcing mission was most often appropriate.<sup>36</sup> Occasionally a battalion could be positioned in such

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<sup>33</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Eighth U. S. Army Korea, "Artillery Information Bulletin No. 10", 2 February 1951, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Eighth U. S. Army Korea, "Artillery Information Bulletin No. 11", 10 March 1951, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, The Artillery School, "Debriefing Report No. 84", 27 March 1952, p. 2.

<sup>36</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, X Corps, "Annex B, Artillery, to Operations Order 23 (Chopper)", 25 May 1951, p. 1.

a manner to be given a general support mission for the corps.<sup>37</sup>

The need for additional field artillery groups during this period would have been more pronounced had there been sufficient nondivisional field artillery battalions employed. The only group headquarters available was the 5th Field Artillery Group which continued to serve as corps artillery headquarters for X Corps.<sup>38</sup> Since so few battalions were available, the corps artillery commanders were able to exercise effective control. Had they been available, field artillery group headquarters could have materially assisted in controlling the units spaced across the wide frontage and could have eliminated the necessity of attaching nondivisional field artillery to the divisions. This fact was recognized and battalion groups were often formed to provide control of widespread units and to support specific task forces.<sup>39</sup> The nondivisional field artillery employment within I, IX, and X Corps at the time of the initiation of the armistice talks is shown in Table 7.

After the initiation of the armistice talks in July 1951 until the cease fire in July 1953, the nature of the war changed to a stabilized defense. Even with this rather stabilized battle line, offensive actions were frequent and ranged from almost continuous patrolling activities to a six division attack by the Communists in July 1953. The deliberate adoption of an area defense by the United Nations forces gave the initiative to the Communists and placed greater emphasis on the use of field

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<sup>37</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, IX Corps, "Operations Plan 17", 1 May 1951, pp. 2-3.

<sup>38</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, The Artillery School, "Debriefing Report No. 84", 27 March 1952, p. 14.

<sup>39</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, X Corps, 8 June 1951, "Annex D, Artillery, to Operations Plan Gopher", p. 1.

artillery as a defensive means to disrupt the Communist attacks.<sup>40</sup>

TABLE 7

ORGANIZATION FOR COMBAT NONDIVISIONAL FIELD ARTILLERY  
OF I, IX AND X CORPS, 12 JULY 1951\*

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I Corps Artillery

17th FA Bn (8 in How) . . . . . G.S.  
 176th FA Bn (105 mm How) . . . . . D.S. 1st ROK Div  
 204th FA Bn (155 mm Gun) . . . . . G.S.  
 955th FA Bn (155 mm How) . . . . . G.S./Reinf. 3d Div Arty  
 936th FA Bn (155 mm How) . . . . . G.S./Reinf. 1st Cav Div Arty  
 999th FA Bn (155 mm How) . . . . . G.S./Reinf. 176th FA Bn

IX Corps Artillery

92d FA Bn (155 mm How) . . . . . G.S./Reinf. 24th Div Arty &  
 18th ROK FA Bn  
 987th FA Bn (105 mm How) . . . . . G.S./Reinf. 27th ROK FA Bn  
 213th FA Bn (105 mm How) . . . . . G.S./Reinf. 18th ROK FA Bn  
 937th FA Bn (155 mm Gun) . . . . . G.S.

X Corps Artillery

196th FA Bn Group\*\*. . . . . G.S./Reinf. 11th Marine Arty Regt  
 196th FA Bn (155 mm How)  
 96th FA Bn (155 mm How) . . . . . G.S./Reinf. 11th Marine Arty Regt

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\*Taken from: U. S., Department of the Army, The Artillery School, "Report of Artillery Representative, AFF Observer Team Number 5", 25 July 1951, Tab B.

\*\*Two field artillery battalions (37th and 503d) of 2d Division Artillery also attached.

During this two year period, the twelve nondivisional field artillery battalions were joined by an additional seven battalions arriving in Korea. To offset a much greater increase in the number of enemy divisional and nondivisional field artillery battalions (50 battalions with

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<sup>40</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Eighth U. S. Army Korea, "A Study of the Employment . . .", pp. xi, 1.

530 weapons in 1951 versus 154 battalions with 1570 weapons in 1953) an intensive program of activation, training, and deployment of South Korean field artillery battalions was carried out.<sup>41</sup> In the fall of 1951, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 5th Field Artillery Group, was released from X Corps and assigned the mission of supervising this program within the South Korean Army.<sup>42</sup> While performing this training mission, the group headquarters retained from one to three attached nondivisional field artillery battalions and performed as corps artillery for the II ROK Corps. This arrangement was not as cumbersome as it might appear since the group was concurrently training and supervising ROK field artillery groups which were being prepared to perform as division artillery headquarters. Though the program began slowly, by June 1952 sufficient field artillery battalions were being trained to provide one ROK division per month with a division artillery headquarters, three light field artillery battalions and one medium field artillery battalion.<sup>43</sup>

Though there had been a slight increase in field artillery units in the summer of 1951, Eighth Army was still woefully short of that required to defend the sector occupied by its five corps (three US and two ROK). The I ROK Corps, occupying a relatively quiet sector on the Army east flank, was provided only one platoon (two weapons) of eight inch howitzers as corps artillery. The remaining sixteen battalions of non-divisional artillery were employed with the three United States corps

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., pp. 1, 42.

<sup>42</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, The Artillery School, "Debriefing Report No. 84", 27 March 1952, p. 14.

<sup>43</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Eighth U. S. Army Korea, "A Study of the Employment . . .", pp. 4, 38.

(I, IX, and X).<sup>44</sup>

As a relatively static phase of operations evolved, the non-divisional field artillery employment, from past experience and doctrine, should have become centralized under the corps artillery commanders. However, the problems presented by the wide frontage and the scarcity of battalions dictated decentralized employment.<sup>45</sup> The need for the field artillery group at this time was apparent to Colonel John S. Blair, who had succeeded General Brittingham as I Corps Artillery Commander. Colonel Blair felt the wide frontage and problems created in command and control required a tactical headquarters to assist the corps artillery headquarters. To solve the problem in I Corps, a provisional group was organized to control the nondivisional artillery in the western portion of the corps sector.<sup>46</sup>

A study prepared by the Eighth Army Artillery Officer concluded that the main weaknesses of the artillery composition had been insufficient nondivisional field artillery battalions and a lack of field artillery group headquarters and headquarters batteries. This study further acknowledged that the absence of the group headquarters had not hampered operations so greatly in the stabilized situation but that it would have presented a serious problem in the event mobile warfare had continued as it did for short periods in June and July 1953.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>45</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, The Artillery School, "Debriefing Report No. 54", 27 March 1952, p. 12.

<sup>46</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, The Artillery School, "Debriefing Report No. 91", 4 June 1953, p. 8.

<sup>47</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Eighth U. S. Army Korea, "A Study of the Employment . . .", p. 3.

In summary, nondivisional field artillery was lacking during the first year in Korea and scarce thereafter. The field artillery group headquarters performed well as a corps artillery headquarters; had there been sufficient nondivisional field artillery in the battle, the group could have assisted greatly in its control during the year of movement. The Department of the Army recognized the need for the headquarters and headquarters battery, field artillery group, and activated eight such units as part of the expansion brought about by the Korean War.<sup>48</sup> As late as the summer of 1951, the Eighth Army Artillery Officer was still attempting to obtain additional headquarters and headquarters batteries, field artillery group, but the stringent troop ceiling placed on Eighth Army and the greater need for other units caused his requests to be disapproved.<sup>49</sup> Lacking the formal field artillery group organization, the corps artillery commanders utilized battalion groups and provisional groups to assist in the control of the nondivisional artillery along the wide frontage during the static phase of the battle. While these organizations performed acceptably, the formal headquarters and headquarters battery, field artillery group could have performed this role in a far better manner.

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<sup>48</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, "Plan for the Expansion of the General Reserve", 15 September 1950, p. 20.

<sup>49</sup>U. S., Department of the Army, Eighth U. S. Army Korea, "A Study of the Employment . . .", p. 3.



## CHAPTER VIII

### SUMMARY -- THE FIELD ARTILLERY GROUP 1942 - 1953

The twelve year period covered by this study is easily divided into convenient campaigns or phases in the history of the field artillery group. Since the chapters correspond to distinct phases, conclusions regarding the organization's strength, weakness, and employment are contained in the appropriate chapters of the study. This final portion serves to summarize the most pertinent conclusions and to extend those having application throughout, or beyond, the twelve year period.

From an artillery view, each of the World War II theaters and Korea can be characterized according to the field artillery organization which influenced the battle to the greatest degree. The division artilleries were most prominent in North Africa and Sicily; in Italy, the corps artillery exerted the greatest influence; in Western Europe, the field artillery group was the echelon of influence; and in the Pacific, and later Korea, the field artillery battalion was most important. In each the field artillery group played a different role due to the use of different techniques in its employment. This, in itself, is evidence of the versatility of nondivisional field artillery organization in the United States Army, a versatility largely based upon the group-separate battalion concept.

Throughout the North African and Sicilian Campaigns, the one available field artillery group, or individual battalions of the group,

was habitually attached to the divisions of the corps. While this was an ideal use of the separate, self-propelled, light battalions and the group headquarters, it failed to take full advantage of the flexibility of the group organization and to fully use the command and control capabilities of the headquarters and headquarters battery. A complete reorganization of nondivisional field artillery had not been completed at this time and the fixed field artillery brigade was still the basis for the corps artillery. Therefore, the corps artillery employed in these operations contained representatives of two incompatible organizational concepts, with the older form more dominate. The corps artillery brigade commander in each instance made but limited use of the group headquarters as a control headquarters. In the brigade commander's defense, it must be remembered that he had three regimental commanders and their headquarters to assist him in these areas.

The tortuous terrain and stubborn enemy resistance encountered in Italy enabled and required the corps artillery commander to exercise extremely tight control of the field artillery. In tactical situations in which this centralized control is possible and justified - as it was in Italy - far more effective artillery support can be achieved from the detailed planning and coordination which results. With the corps artillery headquarters effectively controlling the fires of the nondivisional field artillery, the field artillery group commanders and their staffs made their greatest contribution in other areas of command and control. Assistance was given to the attached battalions in reconnaissance, survey, and other related areas. In Italy, the field artillery regimental headquarters could have fulfilled the requirements of the subordinate command and control headquarters of the corps artillery with the same success

achieved by the field artillery group headquarters. It was only in the closing weeks of the Italian Campaign, when the Allied forces at last were able to conduct fully mobile operations, that the flexibility of the group was utilized to any degree.

In Western Europe, the field artillery group was employed with maximum effectiveness. The war of movement fought in this theater required a flexible organization in all arms and especially in the field artillery. Unlike previous campaigns, the field artillery group was employed in all artillery roles from the invasion of Normandy to the surrender of Germany. It demonstrated its ability to act as an advanced corps artillery headquarters, as fire support coordination headquarters for separate task forces, and especially as a capable subelement of corps artillery in controlling and employing attached battalions. In the non-divisional field artillery battalions and their accompanying group headquarters, the corps and army commanders had a source of combat power which could be rapidly shifted to exploit success or reinforce a vulnerable area. Many different techniques were utilized by artillery commanders in providing the necessary artillery support to the maneuver units; however, all relied extensively on the flexibility of the field artillery group, both in tactics and organization, to meet these requirements.

In Western Europe, the limited administrative capability of the field artillery group headquarters gave rise to legitimate criticism of the organization. This weakness was emphasized in this theater because of the rapidity with which the battalions within the group were shifted and the frequent changes made in the group composition. Some of the field artillery battalions experienced problems in administration and morale since the group headquarters was not able to provide extensive

assistance in the administrative field and the rapid changes did not enhance continuity of command. The more farsighted corps artillery commanders anticipated these problems and took appropriate action to ease the administrative burdens of their attached units by orienting their corps artillery staffs to provide the bulk of the support needed. The War Department, in response to reports concerning these deficiencies, provided the group headquarters with additional administrative personnel.

In contrast to the European Theater, little use was made of non-divisional field artillery in the first two years of operations in the Pacific. As offensive operations evolved, the field artillery group headquarters' capability to perform as a fire support coordination headquarters for task forces was first used. Later as larger operations were undertaken in the Philippines and on Okinawa, the use of the group more closely paralleled its employment in Western Europe.

The detailed studies conducted after World War II attempted to improve upon the organizational structure of nondivisional field artillery. While many changes were advocated the final command and control headquarters which evolved was the field artillery group headquarters with the same basic configuration which had existed at the end of World War II. Particular emphasis was placed upon the necessity of providing the corps artillery a more varied mix in calibers of weapons. The variety in caliber enhanced the ability of the corps artillery commanders to form more rigid groups, thus requiring less shifting of units and promoting continuity of command.

The only field artillery group headquarters which participated in the Korean War was used as a corps artillery headquarters, and later to train South Korean field artillery units. As in the Pacific Theater

of World War II, the number of nondivisional field artillery battalions available in Korea did not overtax the corps artillery commander's span of control. However, the peculiarities of the Korean War, with the wide corps frontages and the requirements placed on United States units to support other forces, generated a valid requirement for additional field artillery group headquarters. Had these headquarters been provided, more effective field artillery support would have been possible.

In 1953, the concept of the field artillery group organization differed only in minor details from that which was first used in 1942. In organization the headquarters and headquarters battery changed only slightly to provide a more extensive administrative capability. Doctrine was still expressed in general terms as it had been during the entire twelve year period. The field artillery group was still characterized as being capable of providing flexibility in the organization of nondivisional field artillery for combat. The lack of change in the original principles, both in doctrine and structure, is indicative of the original soundness of the field artillery group organization. This durability of organization existed even though the group had been extensively employed in all combat areas in World War II and Korea under varied situations. Any inherent deficiency in the organization would have been exposed under these conditions. Furthermore, the fact that many field artillery weapons employed initially during this period passed into obsolescence and were replaced by other weapons did not hamper the group in its performance. The flexible, economical, and responsive tailoring principles exemplified by the field artillery group were basic to the organizational concepts envisioned by General McNair. Though these principles were the basis of the 1943 reorganization of the corps

and army, in no other nondivisional unit organization were they applied to greater advantage than in the field artillery group.

Of most significance is the conclusion that future nondivisional field artillery units, employing far more efficient and destructive weapons, will continue to be organized along the principles embodied in the group-separate battalion organization. While the rigid command lines of a fixed organization promote centralized planning and control, the fixed structure does not possess a high degree of flexibility. It was during the war of movement in Western Europe that the flexibility of the field artillery group was most effectively utilized and provided a degree of responsiveness which would have been impossible with a fixed organization. The mobility of forces on the battlefield of the future will place even greater requirements for flexible organizations and tactics. Organizational concepts must match the pace of technical advances if the forces' increased mobility is to be employed effectively. The organizational structures must provide for decentralized control of tailored, dispersed elements but retain the ability to rapidly mass the units at the time and place of decision. The field artillery units of the future must also be capable of supporting the tactics of a conventional war. Again, the impact of increased mobility will require a responsive command and control headquarters. In summary, the nondivisional field artillery organizations of the future must facilitate tailoring of units to meet specific requirements and possess a high degree of responsiveness and flexibility. Upon these principles the field artillery group was originally organized. The organizational structure thus appears to be as sound for future employment as it was in the past.

APPENDIX

ARMY GROUND FORCES DIRECTIVE CONCERNING  
ARMY AND CORPS REORGANIZATION

HEADQUARTERS  
ARMY GROUND FORCES  
Army War College  
Washington 25, D.C.

320.2/6031(R)(21 Jul 43)GNGCT

21 July 1943.

SUBJECT: Orientation with Reference to Revised Organization.

TO: Commanding Generals,  
Second and Third Armies,  
IV and XIII Corps,  
II Armored Corps,  
Airborne Command,  
Antiaircraft Command,  
Armored Command,  
Desert Training Center,  
Replacement and School Command,  
Tank Destroyer Center.

GENERAL

1. The following information and comments are transmitted by way of orientation in connection with pending revision of the organization of large units.

2. The organization of combat and supporting service units is being revised extensively and necessary Tables of Organization and Tables of Equipment will be issued in near future. See paragraph 2, letter, Hq AGF, 320.2/185(R)(3 Mar 43)GNGCT, 3 March 1943, Subject: "Reorganization of Units under New Tables of Organization." The purposes of this revision may be stated generally as follows:

a. To economize manpower, in order that the overall needs of armed forces, of industry, and of agriculture may be met in the maximum degree.

b. To permit available shipping to transport overseas a maximum

of fighting power.

c. To provide a more flexible organization, permitting full application of the principle of economy of force and massing of military might at the decisive point.

d. To reduce headquarters and other overhead to speed up command. Command functions must keep pace with fast transportation and signal communication.

e. To devote strength as fully as possible to elements which can be made effective offensively against the enemy and reduce those elements which are passively defensive.

#### ORGANIZATION OF LARGE UNITS

3. The army is a tactical and administrative unit. The revised organization contemplates that administrative functions be more extensive and complete than at present. In exercise of such administrative functions, the army should by-pass the corps in every way possible in order that the corps may devote itself so far as practicable to tactical and training functions. Corps currently in training in the United States are in general occupying themselves too much with administration. Army commanders must take the steps necessary to correct this condition. The reduced administrative procedure applied in some headquarters and headquarters detachments, special troops, could well be applied to corps. A separate corps will have a status similar to that of an army.

4. a. The corps will consist essentially of a headquarters and headquarters company, a signal battalion, headquarters and headquarters battery, corps artillery, and a field artillery observation battalion. Its functions will be primarily tactical. It will be reinforced according to the combat situation by divisions, groups of artillery, anti-aircraft, tank battalions, tank destroyer battalions, engineer battalions, engineer companies, and reconnaissance squadrons. See Inclosure 1 as an example of what may be attached to a corps. In combat, according to the situation, non-divisional units (except reconnaissance squadrons) may be put under division control. In principle, they are passed on to divisions unless they may be employed effectively for more or less simultaneous support of more than a single division. Grouping battalions for training provides essential supervision of higher commanders. Such training must not preclude close association of battalions, and perhaps groups, with divisions for combined training. However, permanent attachments of battalions to divisions is undesirable since such action will prevent training in mass employment. See letter, Hq AGF, 353/2209 (1 Apr 43) GNGCT, 1 April 1943, Subject: "Assignment and Training of Group Headquarters and Battalions of Tank, Tank Destroyer, and Antiaircraft Artillery."

b. The artillery commander commands all reinforcing artillery received and not passed on to divisions and has the additional function of corps artillery officer. The corps artillery headquarters has a large staff. For training purposes, it will be advisable to use part of it to perform training functions of present corps artillery section, thereby



permitting the artillery commander to devote his attention during training periods to considerable number of groups and separate battalions attached to the corps. In this way, the existing satisfactory organization for training may continue. (See paragraph 12, below.)

5. Orders to reorganize infantry and armored divisions under new Tables of Organization and Equipment will issue at a later date. The following information is furnished on the new organizations.

a. The motorized division as a distinct organization has been eliminated. An infantry division can be transported by the attachment of a troop transport battalion consisting of six truck companies. It follows that the training of all infantry divisions will include development of a Standard Operating Procedure for motor movement and the execution of such movements.

b. The infantry division has been reduced in aggregate strength by approximately 8 per cent and in fuel consuming motor vehicles by 14 per cent.

c. The armored division will be reorganized into two combat commands or groups of flexible composition of self-sustaining tank and armored infantry battalions. The organic total strength includes three tank battalions and three armored infantry battalions. The artillery strength remains at three battalions. The infantry and artillery strength of the division, in comparison with the tank strength, will be increased greatly.

d. It is planned that all tank battalions with certain exceptions will be interchangeable - including those of armored divisions and of General Headquarters Reserve. The battalion will include three medium companies and one light company. Thus there will be a pool of tank battalions available for both support of the infantry and as replacement units of armored divisions. Similarly, a pool of armored infantry battalions is being organized so that replacement and reinforcing infantry units will be available for armored divisions. Again the reconnaissance squadrons of armored divisions and separate reconnaissance squadrons will be identical except for the number of reconnaissance troops, permitting interchange of such units as necessary.

e. A new light division, suitable for amphibious, airborne, mountain and jungle operation is being tested. The aggregate strength of this light division is approximately 9,000 and its equipment varies with the type of operations in which it is to engage. There will be a minimum of transportation. The division will be on foot, with hand carts, except for those essential loads which cannot be transported in this manner. Such loads will be handled by pack animals or 1/4-ton trucks. Approximately 400 men will be subtracted from strength of the division when motor transportation is used.

f. The radio intelligence platoon is being removed from division signal companies because it is felt that such activities pertain more properly to the corps signal battalion, at least until equipment for such operation has been developed more fully, its capacities measured and

operational needs determined more completely than at present. Trained traffic analysts have been provided in the corps signal battalion to evaluate information obtained by the radio intelligence platoons. An effort is being made to reduce and simplify the set-up of signal equipment without sacrificing the essential effectiveness of signal operations.

g. The division engineers will hold to a strength which some commanders may regard as too small. There is no lack of appreciation of the number of engineering functions or of the considerable overall strength of engineers needed. However, a division of whatever type is supposedly a mobile unit and nature and extent of engineer operations under such conditions necessarily must be limited. If and when operations do not move so rapidly, it is readily possible to introduce engineers from the corps and army, reinforcing or relieving the division engineers of functions which are beyond their capabilities. Bridge trains are excluded from division engineers because they are not needed under all conditions. The need of bridges can be foretold from maps, air photographs and ground reconnaissance and bridges can be provided by companies and battalions from the army.

#### COMMENTS ON ORGANIZATION

6. Staffs are being revised downward. They are to be provided solely for combat needs. Operations cannot possibly be swift and effective if staffs are large and clumsy. Lack of staff training and fitness cannot be compensated for by increasing size. The development of suitable Standard Operating Procedures lightens the burden of staffs and expedites operations. In general, field orders in maneuvers still are far too lengthy. The average formal mimeographed field order, prepared under conditions which would be impractical in service, can be replaced by messages of a few lines, expediting operations greatly and largely eliminating the frequent capture of elaborate orders by the opposing forces. Field orders should be oral or in message form habitually for all elements of divisions and frequently for the corps. The practice of assembling subordinate commanders for issuance of orders is pernicious, since it takes commanders away from their units at critical times and delays operations intolerably. Liaison officers should be used for dissemination of orders.

7. a. The revised organization takes extensive advantage of the pooling principle. For example, there are General Headquarters pools of artillery battalions, tank destroyer battalions, reconnaissance squadrons, antiaircraft battalions, engineer companies and battalions, armored infantry battalions, tank battalions; group headquarters for artillery, tank destroyer, engineer, cavalry, antiaircraft, armored infantry, and tank units; necessary and appropriate brigade headquarters; and service units. In general, group headquarters will be provided in the ratio of one to every three or four battalions; brigade headquarters in appropriate cases one to every three or four groups.

b. Unlike the old regiment and brigade, which had organic battalions and regiments, the new groups and brigades have no organic units. Battalions, of any or various types, and in any number, may be attached to a group headquarters; varying number of groups to a brigade headquarters.

See Inclosure 2 for examples of possible attachment of units to various types of group headquarters. The flexibility of the new organization makes it readily possible to form task forces to meet particular needs, thus effecting economy and permitting massing of means according to the situation. Except in the infantry regiment, battalions are self-sustaining, that is they are self-administering in the same sense as the regiment heretofore.

8. Organic antiaircraft and antitank defense of divisions is a moot question. It is entirely natural that division commanders desire such defensive means in strength sufficient to defeat all attacks. Provisions of this kind are impractical and unsound from the standpoint of economy of force. At the same time it is reasonable to furnish a limited defense organically and provide a pool of means sufficient to reinforce threatened points so as to afford full protection. The infantry has antitank guns, but the pool of tank destroyer units affords a more powerful reserve to meet a massed tank attack. Similarly, all units have organic antiaircraft protection in the form of caliber .50 machine guns on ring mounts of vehicles, but the major antiaircraft protection is in the form of self-propelled or mobile, automatic weapons, antiaircraft battalions assigned organically to a General Headquarters pool, which are highly suitable for this purpose. The employment of special pool units is a command decision, according to the situation.

#### SUPPLY AND MAINTENANCE

9. All organic provisions for supply are based on the principles of paragraph 38, FM 100-10, 9 December 1940. The following comments are made:

a. The army is being provided with abundant and flexible means of placing supplies within convenient reach of the transportation of using units, regiments, self-sustaining battalions, and small separate units.

b. The army handles all supplies upon their arrival in the combat zone, using army personnel and transportation. It establishes and mans all supply points down to include those which deliver to using units. The using units need no personnel specifically detailed for loading the supplies and bring only transportation and personnel normally assigned to the vehicle to the supply point.

c. Unit reserves of rations and water normally are confined to kitchen trucks and trailers. Resupply of both rations and water is by any available unit transportation.

d. Unit transportation generally includes no provisions for a reserve of fuel and lubricants, except in the case of tanks or similar vehicles consuming large quantities. Motor vehicles in general have an adequate reserve in fuel tank and cans carried in vehicles. Resupply of fuel and lubricants is by any available unit transportation, in the discretion of the unit commander.

e. There is no change in the present system of ammunition supply.

The reserve of ammunition of a unit consists primarily of hauling capacity of its vehicles. In general, the number of ammunition vehicles assigned a unit is based on hauling, rather than carrying capacities. The unit commander must see that ammunition vehicles are employed actively and continuously to the extent necessary to insure an adequate supply of ammunition at all times.

10. Adequate provision is made for motor maintenance, provided that all echelons are employed effectively. Admittedly, third echelon maintenance of divisions is inadequate of itself to handle all third echelon repairs under severe operating conditions. The excess of such repairs must be made by third echelon shops of army and when practical, by second echelon shops of units. When time permits and when scheduled maintenance services are not interrupted, it is greatly to the advantage of units to make all possible repairs within units, in order to avoid evacuating a vehicle with the attendant temporary loss of effectiveness. Accordingly, it is emphasized that maintenance echelons of units should be trained and practiced in making all repairs to the limit of their capacity in tools, parts, and skill. Unserviceable vehicles beyond third echelon repairs should be freely evacuated for replacement. The commanding officer of the third echelon maintenance unit of a division is ex officio motor officer of the division. His activities should extend beyond his own unit and include inspection of all maintenance elements of the division.

#### AUGMENTATION OF CORPS HEADQUARTERS

11. Orders are issuing directing reorganization of certain corps headquarters under Table of Organization 100-1, 15 July 1943. This reorganization will cause considerable reduction in corps headquarters. It is appreciated that corps headquarters in training in the United States have problems and responsibilities other than those of an army or corps in combat. Their units are comparatively dispersed geographically and there is a continuing need for close supervision and tests of training.

12. In order to meet the training requirements of corps assigned to armies, the following allotment is being provided:

	INF	F A	ENGR	ARMD - TD	AA - AS
COLONEL	1				
LT COLONEL	2	2 (1)	1*	1*	1*
MAJOR	2	1 (1)	1*	1*	1*
CAPTAIN	1	- (3)	-	-	-
TOTAL OFFICERS	6	3** (5)	2*	2*	2*
TOTAL ENLISTED MEN	4	6 (4)	3*	3*	3*

( ) Armored Corps.

\* Only when no group headquarters of the type indicated is present. If one or more type group headquarters are present, corps commander may assign special staff functions to one or more officers of a group headquarters.

\*\* Five officers for headquarters and headquarters battery, corps artillery can augment three allotted officers to continue existing training section of eight officers and current procedure.

13. The following allotment, in addition to training allotment, is being furnished in order to provide adequate personnel for administrative requirements for corps operating directly under Army Ground Forces.

	ENGR	SIG	AG	IG	JA	FIN	MED	ORD	QM	TOTAL
MAJOR	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	10
CAPTAIN	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	-	-	-	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>
TOTAL OFF	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	3	16
TOTAL EM	3	4	7	2	2	3	3	4	7	35

#### FUNCTIONS OF ARMY AND CORPS

14. The following conception of functions is believed the most suitable under the pending organization and in view of the problems of armies and corps in the United States:

a. In general, combat units in training in the United States will be assigned or attached to corps, service units to armies and separate corps.

b. The army should absorb the maximum of administration, endeavoring in every possible manner to simplify procedures and eliminate paper work and reports. The army's role in connection with training should be general supervision of all units without duplicating or interfering with the more detailed supervision by subordinate headquarters.

c. In accordance with letter, Hq AGF, 320.2/93(R)(15 Oct 42) GNGCT, 15 October 1942, Subject: "Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, Special Troops, Army and Corps," (as amended), each army and separate corps has been authorized certain headquarters and headquarters detachments, special troops, to direct and supervise both tactical and administrative instruction and training of its component units, with the exception of divisions, brigades and groups. Each group commander is charged with supervising training of individual units of the group, as well as of the combination as a team. Groups will not be attached to headquarters and headquarters detachments, special troops.

d. The corps has the primary function of as close and frequent supervision of training as is possible in view of size of its headquarters and number of dispersion of its units. The more important training tests preferably should be conducted by the corps staff. See paragraph 7a, letter, Hq AGF, 319.22/22(1Jan 43)GNGCT, 1 January 1943, Subject: "Conduct of Training." A separate corps combines the functions of army and corps.

e. The tabular organization of army and corps staffs should be disregarded in connection with training inspections in whatever degree is necessary in order to utilize the entire staff as wholly as possible for training supervision. Activities of the headquarters should be reduced to a minimum, and all personnel sent to the field in connection with training and in capacities best suited to meet training needs. Particularly in the corps, it is important that organic staff compartmentation be overridden with this end in view and major proportion of all

personnel be kept in the field. See paragraph 1, "Conduct of Training" referred to in d, above.

15. Paragraph 2, letter Hq AGF, 320.2/137(R)(1 Mar 43)GNGAP-A, 1 March 1943, Subject: "Personnel Administration in 'Assigned' and 'Attached' Units," and all other instructions in conflict with the principles stated above are rescinded.

By command of Lt. Gen McNair:

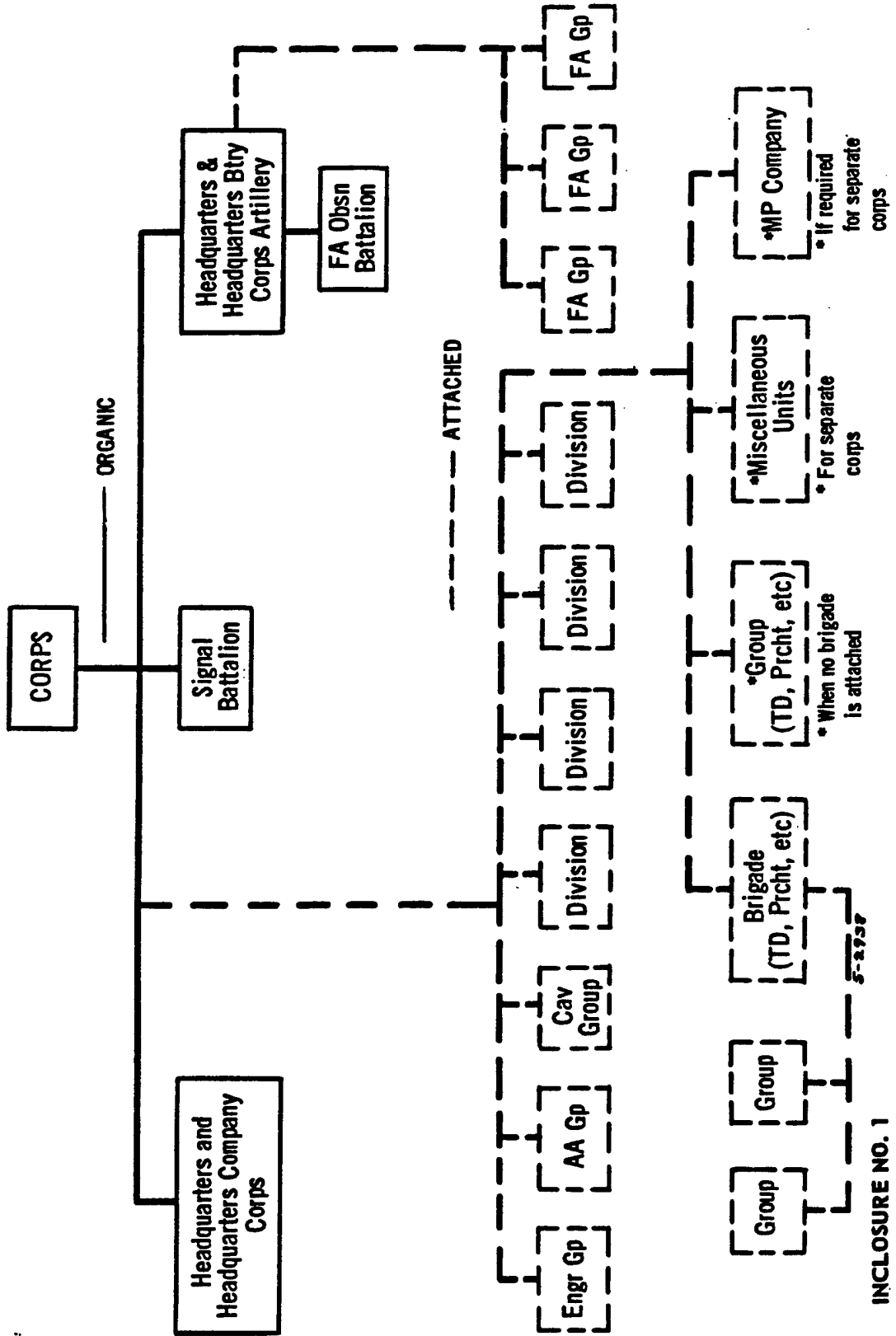
s/J. R. Dryden  
 J. R. DRYDEN,  
 Lt. Col., A.G.D.,  
 Ass't Ground Adjutant General.

2 Incls:

- Incl 1 - Example of Possible Corps Organization.
- Incl 2 - Examples of Possible Attachment  
 of Units to Various Types of  
 Group Headquarters.

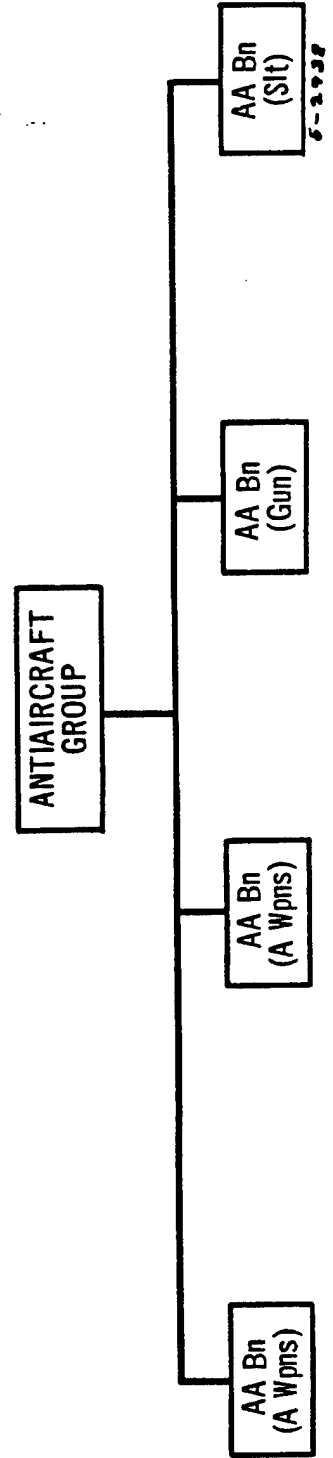
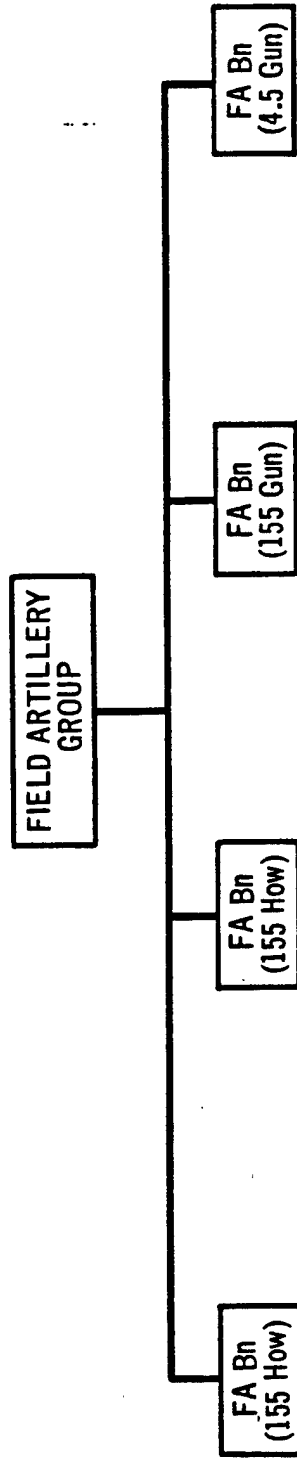
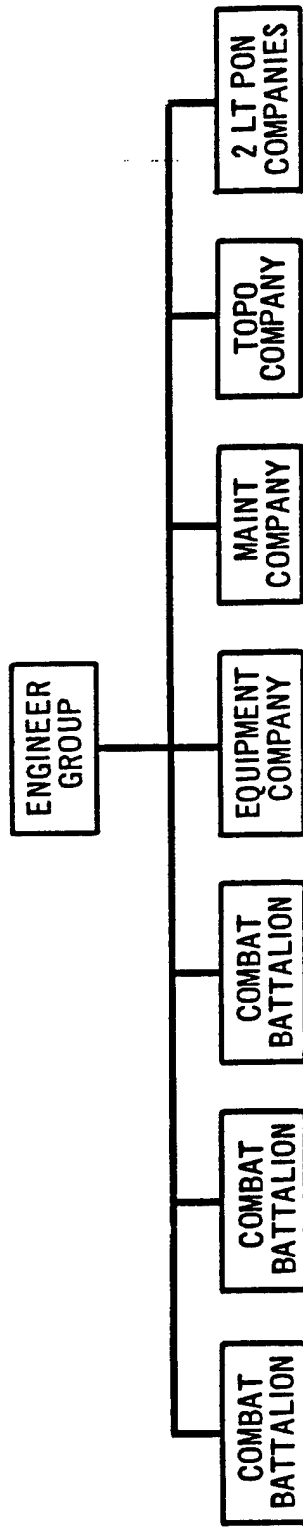
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EXAMPLE OF POSSIBLE CORPS ORGANIZATION



INCLOSURE NO. 1

EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE ATTACHMENT OF SERVICE UNITS TO VARIOUS TYPES OF GROUP AND BATTALION HEADQUARTERS



INCLOSURE NO. 2

6-2938



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