

freeing the Edmontons held by the enemy and taking 35 of the latter prisoner. (2 Cdn Inf Bde Report; W.D., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 22 Oct 44; W.D., L. Edmn R., 22 Oct 44)

140. At 1000 hours, 22 Oct, the G.O.C. 1 Cdn Inf Div arrived at Brigade Headquarters to discuss the bridging problem with Lt-Col Bogert. The Engineers had reported that neither bridging nor fording was possible in the brigade sector due to the height of the banks, the prevailing high water level, and the long muddy approaches. On the basis of this information Lt-Col Bogert advised the G.O.C. that there was no hope of getting supporting arms across the river for at least 24 hours. Reference was then made to the Corps Commander, who ordered 2 Cdn Inf Bde to maintain its positions west of the river. However, while the Divisional Commander was still at Brigade Headquarters, an officer of 145 Regt R.A.C. came in with word of a possible crossing place some 2,000 yards downstream, near the village of Borgo di Ronta (5912). Although the water gap at this site, which lay west of the village, was 60', good approaches existed on either side for the erection of a Bailey bridge. Actually the Borgo di Ronta area lay in the New Zealand sector, although, the New Zealanders, in preparation for their relief by 5 Cdn Armd Div (see para 162), had already begun to withdraw their troops. As immediate action appeared necessary, the A/Brigade Commander ordered a company of Patricias, with a troop of tanks in support, to move at once to a covering position in the vicinity of Borgo di Ronta. (2 Cdn Inf Bde Report; W.D., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 22 Oct 44)

141. In the meantime the first steps had already been taken to provide an alternate method of getting badly needed supplies and ammunition into the bridgehead. An engineer party had gone down to the river near the road junction 596109 to reconnoitre a site for a ferry crossing. The plan was to operate the service by winch and cable. During the morning, despite enemy shelling, assault boats and a half-track vehicle equipped with a winch were brought forward and by late afternoon the service was in operation. Once the assault boat began plying back and forth across the river the supply position gradually improved; stocks of ammunition and supplies were moved into the bridgehead and the evacuation of casualties and prisoners begun. (2 Cdn Inf Bde Report; W.D., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, October 1944: Appx 1, 2 Cdn Inf Bde Operations Log, 22 Oct 44)

142. Although enemy activity in the Edmonton sector decreased somewhat during the morning, the danger of a counter-attack remained. Several times the unit called for artillery D.F. fire to come down on enemy infantry and tank movement near the company areas. Unfortunately, owing to weather conditions there was no close air support available on either 22 or 23 Oct. To the north, at 1130 hours, elements

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(Footnote cont'd from page 57)

\* that when his company entered the village the second time, the place was nearly flat and there were dozens of dead Boche there.

((H.S.) 142.11013(D1): 1 Cdn Army Group R.A. Report on Operation "OLIVE": Appx C, Report of 3 Med Regt R.A., sheet 9)



of Seaforth of C. reached the final objective, the Cesena - Ravenna road, at a track junction (576109) 500 yards south-west of Pieve Sestina. Shortly after, enemy infantry, supported by tanks, put in a strong counter-attack. After a bitter struggle, the Seaforths, despite a lack of adequate anti-tank weapons, succeeded in repulsing their attackers. (2 Cdn Inf Bde Report; W.D., G.S.H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps, October 1944: Appx 82 and 84, 1 Cdn Corps Ops Summaries Nos 30 and 31, 22-23 Oct 44; 2 Cdn Inf Bde Operations Log, 22 Oct 44)

143. At 2100 hours, 22 Oct, Lt-Col Bogert issued his orders for the seizing of a new bridgehead at Borgo di Ronta. The initial assault would be made by the Patricias, followed by two companies of West N.S.R. In the first phase, the intention was to form a bridgehead some 500 yards in depth, extending, on the one hand, towards the Seaforth's right flanking positions and, on the other, downstream to the bend in the river south of the village of Ronta (5913). If this attack achieved success a fourth company would pass through, directed on the village of Borgo Pieve Sestina (5712). The operation, supported by an artillery fire plan on call, would begin at 2400 hours. Assault boats for the crossing would be available in the event that wading should prove impossible. In conjunction with the West N.S.R. action, Seaforth of C. would push out their right flank and capture the Palazzo Foschi (582114), a large building 500 yards north-east of Pieve Sestina, while L. Edmn R. would continue their attempts to reach their final objective on the Cesena - Ravenna road, the track junction 900 yards due west of Cse Gentili. (2 Cdn Inf Bde Report; W.D., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 22 Oct 44; W.D., Seaforth of C., 22 Oct 44; W.D., L. Edmn R., 22 Oct 44; W.D., West N.S.R., 22 Oct 44; 2 Cdn Inf Bde Operations Log, 22 Oct 44)

144. More rain had fallen in the early evening, causing the already swollen river to rise still higher. This and an enemy standing patrol, which had taken up position on the near side of the river, caused some delay. By 0445 hours, 23 Oct, however, the Patricias and one company of West N.S.R. were over the river and advancing against heavy opposition. Unfortunately, as the company commander of P.P.C.L.I. had failed to cross with his company, communications between them and battalion headquarters had broken down. By this time the immediate vicinity of the ford was under heavy enemy machine gunfire - the Germans knew the place thoroughly from having used it themselves, and so had it well covered by fire - and only a portion of the second West N.S.R. company reached the far bank. During the remaining hours of darkness, fighting every step of the way, the West Novas and Patricias pushed slowly forward. At 0805 hours, West N.S.R. reported their company on its objective

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\* An entry in the West N.S.R. war diary indicates that P.P.C.L.I. found it necessary to use a rope and assault boats in order to make the crossing, but makes no mention, however, of the method used by West N.S.R.



(587127) near the bend in the river south of Ronta. (2 Cdn Inf Bde Report; W.D., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 22 - 23 Oct 44; W.D., West N.S.R., 23 Oct 44; 2 Cdn Inf Bde Ops Log, 23 Oct 44)

145. In the meantime the movement of supplies into the main bridgehead had continued. In addition to receiving ammunition and rations, L. Edmn R. had acquired two 2-pdr anti-tank guns and three man-packed medium machine guns, Seaforth of C. one 2-pdr gun.\* A notable achievement of the ferry service was the movement of a jeep over the river on a raft. During the night, the Seaforths, meeting with only light opposition, occupied the Palazzo Foschia. Further south, near the main road, the Edmontons after another unsuccessful attempt to reach their objective, decided to postpone the action until they had the anti-tank guns in position. (2 Cdn Inf Bde Report; W.D., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 22-23 Oct 44; W.D., Seaforth of C., 23 Oct 44; W.D., L. Edmn R., 22 Oct 44)

146. At dawn on 23 Oct the situation in the bridgehead opposite Borgo di Ronta was most unfavourable. The portion of the follow-up wave which had crossed had been forced to return to the near bank. The Patricias, minus one platoon which had been cut off and overwhelmed, soon followed the same course. By 0720 hours the West N.S.R. position north of the crossing-site was all that remained of the bridgehead. For several hours this company, dug in around a farmhouse 300 yards west of the Savio, held on. Their position was extremely precarious:

... edged in from three sides -- the enemy even worked up a self-propelled gun and some infantry to a group of buildings on the Savio bank at the company's right rear. All the German gunners concentrated their fire upon the farmhouse, the key to the situation in all ways, not least because it held the signallers and the lone "18" set which now comprised "D" company's sole link with the forces on the home side of the river. This slender link brought powerful support, for as the German tanks and S.P. guns revealed themselves the F.O.O. was able to call down a prompt and heavy fire from the Canadian artillery behind the Savio. Nobody realized this better than the German gunners and tank crews, hurriedly shifting from one firing point to another, and at every opportunity they poured shells at the house. As the morning went on the building became a ruin with its tiles blown off and its walls shot through and through, but by a miracle the radio set remained intact and so did the signallers who stuck to their posts with grim resolution. (One of these men,

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\* These guns were "Littlejohns" - a 2-pdr gun with an attachment to increase the muzzle velocity. (1 Cdn Inf Div Report Part II). This was their first reported use in 1 Cdn Corps sector. (W.D., G.S., H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps, October 1944; Appx 82, 1 Cdn Corps Ops Summary No. 30, 22 Oct 44)



Pte Alan K. Minard, was later awarded the Military Medal for his devotion to duty.) Finally, when the house was tumbling about their ears, Major Rhodes ordered the radio set to be moved into the shelter of a shell-hole outside.

(Raddall, Thomas H. "West Novas",  
p. 242)

At length, the A/Brigade Commander, since the company was running low in ammunition and because the present position was not providing cover for bridging operations, requested and received permission from the G.O.C. to withdraw. Under cover of a smoke screen, West N.S.R. broke contact, and by 1130 hours the complete company had reached the east bank of the Savio. (2 Cdn Inf Bde Report; W.D., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 23 Oct 44; W.D., West N.S.R., 23 Oct 44)

147. Early that morning (23 Oct), the Corps Commander arrived at Headquarters 1 Cdn Inf Div, where he learned of the failure of the West N.S.R. attack, and that General Vokes proposed making a second attempt, using the same troops, during the afternoon. After some discussion, however, it was decided to postpone it and put in another attack later using fresh troops. On his return to Headquarters 1 Cdn Corps, General Burns spoke on the telephone with the Army Commander concerning the current situation. General McCreery informed General Burns that he did not wish to commit 1 Cdn Inf Div to another brigade operation. For the present the Division was to concentrate on maintaining the bridgehead established by Seaforth of C. and L. Edmn R. So soon as the bridging position in the 4 Brit Inf Div sector permitted, tanks would be able to move into the Pieve Sestina positions via that route.<sup>#</sup> Over the rest of the Corps front operations were, in the main, to be confined to active patrolling. In the centre, where 5 Cdn Armd Div had now relieved 2 N.Z. Div (see para 162), a reconnaissance of the river would be made in preparation for a crossing. As the enemy troops opposing this division were not considered to be of a high calibre, the Army Commander thought a foothold on the west bank might be easily gained in this sector. (Burns Diary, 23 Oct 44)

148. Accordingly, the plan to erect a bridge at Borgo di Ronta was abandoned. Headquarters 1 Cdn Inf Div now ordered 2 Cdn Inf Bde to concentrate all its efforts on

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# Since 21 Oct 4 Brit Inf Div had had an Ark bridge in use and tanks were operating west of the river (see para 152).



strengthening its present bridgehead. To this end, at 1430 hours Lt-Col Bogert issued orders to his advanced battalions to consolidate the positions then held and to patrol vigorously to ascertain if the enemy was attempting to disengage. The P.P.C.L.I. were to cross the river at 1800 hours, take up position behind Seaforth of C. and L. Edm R. and be prepared to exploit forward should the situation warrant it. (W.D., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 23 Oct 44)

149. During the day, apart from artillery and mortar fire, there was little enemy activity opposite 2 Cdn Inf Bde. In the late afternoon the shelling of the river area decreased and the engineers were able to start work on the Martorano crossing (591104). Using bulldozers to push down the banks, by 0300 hours on 24 Oct they had a 60-foot Class 9 F.B.E. ready for the passage of jeeps, carriers and anti-tank guns. Due to the steep exit, it was necessary to winch each vehicle up the far bank. Despite this handicap, by first light, a considerable quantity of guns, vehicles, ammunition and supplies had reached the forward troops. In 3 Cdn Inf Bde sector on the 23rd, the engineers commenced work on the erection of a 150-foot high level T.S. Bailey. (R.C.E. 1 Cdn Inf Div Report; W.D., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 23-24 Oct 44; W.D., 3 Fd Coy R.C.E., 24 Oct 44)

150. At about 1900 hours, 23 Oct, information was received at Headquarters 1 Cdn Corps indicating that 1 Para Div, the enemy formation astride Route 9, was preparing to withdraw, and that probably the whole enemy line would go back beyond the Bevano River. Accordingly the divisions under command were warned to be prepared to follow any such movement closely. During the night, except in the north, the enemy drew back from the line of the Savio. Early in the morning of 24 Oct the pursuit to regain contact got under way and formations of both 1 Cdn Corps and 5 Corps made considerable advances. (Burns Diary, 23 Oct 44; W.D., G.S. Branch, H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps, October 1944: Appx 89, Ops Summary No. 32, 24 Oct 44)

151. On 25 Oct Lt-Col Bogert received a special message of congratulation from the Army Commander:

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\* Work on this bridge was abandoned the same evening in favour of a low level 60-ft D.S. Bailey to be erected just north of the railway bridge at Cesena. This was completed at 0230 hours 25 Oct (R.C.E. 1 Cdn Inf Div Report)



Dear Bogert

My very best congratulations to you and all your Officers and Men for the splendid fight you have carried out to capture and hold your important bridgehead over the SAVIO. I am convinced that your battle has been the most important factor in forcing the enemy to withdraw, and your bridgehead has been of the greatest assistance to 5 Corps. The way your Brigade secured a big bridgehead, smashed all enemy counter attacks, and surmounted all the difficulties of having no bridge behind was magnificent. The fighting spirit, determination and enterprise of everyone were outstanding, and great endurance was shown. The battle has been a great example of how determined well trained infantry can destroy enemy tanks with their own weapons. I congratulate too your supporting artillery which must have done fine work in helping to defend the bridgehead. You have inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy, and have captured a large number of prisoners from one of his best divisions.

Well done indeed. All good luck.

Yours sincerely,

R.L. McCreery

(W.D., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, October 1944;  
Appx 34)

#### THE OPERATIONS OF 5 CORPS, 20 - 24 OCT 44

152. As 5 Corps approached the Savio on 19 Oct it brought up a fresh formation and effected the relief of its right flanking division. This relief, in which 46 Brit Inf Div was replaced by 4 Brit Inf Div, was completed late on 19 Oct; the troops which entered Cesena the following day, however, were actually battalions of the former division, which remained under command 4 Brit Inf Div for that purpose. In the early morning of 20 Oct troops of the latter formation put in a surprise attack south of Cesena and gained a footing west of the river. By nightfall, despite determined enemy efforts against it, the brigade, concerned, 12 Brit Inf Bde, had considerably strengthened its position. Fortunately the weather remained good and the Air Force was able to provide close support. On the following day the enemy laid down a heavy artillery barrage on the area which, while it delayed the bridging operations, did not prevent the movement of additional troops into the bridgehead. By first light (21 Oct) the engineers had positioned an Ark bridge and tanks were beginning to move forward to the support of the infantry. Aided by these the 12 Brit Inf Bde units repelled three enemy counter-attacks during the morning. All attempts to advance, however, met with strong enemy resistance and during the next two days there was little change in the situation. Despite enemy shelling of the river area, the engineers carried on and during this period constructed two Class 2 rafts and commenced the erection of a Bailey bridge. By first light on 24 Oct four infantry battalions and approximately three squadrons of tanks were operating west of the Savio in this sector. ((H.S.)224Cl.013(D12): Extracts from Eighth Army



Weekly Summary of Ops: For week Ending 24 Oct 44, and  
4 British Div Ops from Cesena to R. Ronco - 19 Oct to 26  
Oct 44)

153. Meanwhile 10 Ind Div was repeating its previous tactics in the foothills to the south. During 20 Oct this division secured two widely separated bridgeheads over the Savio, one lying due west of Roversano (5610), the other some seven miles further upstream near Cella (5591). On the night 21/22 Oct the division put in a two-pronged attack directed on the high ground at Monte Cavallo (5099) and Tessello (5002), and by dawn on 23 Oct it had cleared the Germans from the Monte Cavallo feature. That night the right flanking brigade of the division attacked and captured Monte dei Feriti (5202), a commanding feature some two miles north of Monte Cavallo. 10 Ind Div was now firmly established on the southern end of the watershed between the valleys of the Savio and the Ronco. With his Savio line outflanked the enemy had no choice but to withdraw. Thus it was that 4 Brit Inf Div, attacking from its Cesena bridgehead on 24 Oct met with comparatively light opposition. (Eighth Army - The Gothic Line and Romagna Battles, p. 67; The Tiger Triumphs, p. 148)

154. Preceded by a heavy artillery barrage, 12 Brit Inf Bde began its attack at 0530 hours, 24 Oct. Although the attacking troops ran into scattered pockets of resistance they made such good progress that during the afternoon the division moved up 10 Brit Inf Bde and continued the advance on a two-brigade front. Not until it reached Bertinoro (5008) and the lower slopes of Monte Maggio (5007) did 4 Brit Inf Div encounter any stiff opposition. By this time, however, substantial support for the forward brigades was crossing the Savio via a Class 9 Bailey, an F.B.E. Class 9 and one Ark. During the 25th the division occupied Bertinoro and light elements pushed on towards the Ronco. As these approached the river, late in the afternoon (25 Oct); they saw the main bridge, which carried Route 9, blown up. That night troops of 10 Ind Div reached the river north and south of Meldola (4506). (Eighth Army - The Gothic Line and Romagna Battles, p. 68; 4 Brit Inf Div op cit)

THE PURSUIT TO THE RONCO - 1 CDN INF DIV, 24 - 26 OCT 44

155. Early on 24 Oct it became apparent that the enemy opposite 1 Cdn Inf Div was quietly disengaging. At 0415 hours a West N.S.R. patrol to Borgo Pieve Sestina reported it clear of the enemy. Shortly afterwards L. Edm R. occupied without difficulty the long-contested road junction on the Cesena - Ravenna road. By now P.P.C.L.I. were completely across the river and in position behind the forward battalions. Accordingly Lt-Col Bogert issued orders at 0830 hours for the Patricias to take up the pursuit. Throughout the morning the battalion moved steadily forward and by 1325 hours the leading companies were on the crossroads (565105) over a mile to the south-west of Pieve Sestina. Here they linked up with a squadron of tanks from 145 Regt R.A.C. and a troop of M.10's which had passed the Savio earlier in the morning via a 4 Brit Inf Div bridge at Cesena. From the crossroads P.P.C.L.I. continued the advance in a north-westerly direction towards the village of Provezza. By midnight one company had consolidated a position around a road junction (552126) 500 yards north of the village.



returning, shortly after midnight, reported that for some distance ahead the front was clear with no sign of the enemy anywhere. On receipt of this information, Lt-Col R.P. Clark, the commanding officer of the Patricias, informed the Brigade Commander that he intended sending a patrol to the small village of Volturona (532136), on the Bevano River, during the night. In anticipation of a possible quick crossing of the river at this point, Lt-Col Bogert sent forward an Ark and a bulldozer. (W.D., H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, 24 Oct 44 and Appx 1, Operations Log, 24 Oct 44)

156. On the left, 3 Cdn Inf Bde moved one battalion west of the Savio during the morning of 24 Oct and joined in the chase to the Bevano. Since 21 Oct, this brigade, positioned along the river between 2 Cdn Inf Bde and the northern outskirts of Cesena, had been engaged mainly in patrol activity. By dawn on 24 Oct, however, it became obvious, from the practically unopposed advance being made on the right and left, that the chief obstacle to a westward advance by 3 Cdn Inf Bde was the river itself. Accordingly, Brigade Headquarters placed Carlt & York R. on one hour's notice as of 0900 hours. With its immediate objectives the first three road and rail crossings (map squares 5808, 5709, 5609) the unit would begin its advance from the vicinity of the railway bridge. If it proved impossible to make the passage of the river at this point, Carlt & York R. would move south and cross in 12 Brit Inf Bde's sector. Just north of the railway bridge (588084), the Engineers planned to construct a Class 12 Bailey (see footnote p. 62). Since this would not be completed until some time during the night 24/25 Oct, Lt-Col J.V. Allard, D.S.O., commanding R. 22e R., volunteered, as an interim measure, to build a bridge near the same location using only his battalion resources. Despite some scepticism on the part of the Engineers this bridge was ready for the passage of jeeps by 1700 hours. (W.D., H.Q. 3 Cdn Inf Bde, 24 Oct 44; (H.S.) 234Cl.013(D7): 3 Cdn Inf Bde Operations in Italy, 17-28 Oct 44; Webb op cit)

157. Carlt & York R. moved off at 0930 hours, 24 Oct, and half an hour later the leading troops reported a safe crossing with no sign of the enemy. In the absence of opposition, despite a swift current, the fording operation went well, and by early afternoon the complete unit had shifted to west of the Savio. By this time, 1420 hours, the leading company, moving along the railway, had secured all three of the road and rail crossings. In front and to the flanks patrols were operating and at 1825 hours one of these established contact with the Patricias' main body. Earlier, on orders from Brigade Headquarters, a standing patrol had been dispatched to Diegaro (5509), a village on Route 9. During the afternoon essential unit vehicles and supporting arms for Carlt & York R. moved forward by way of a bridge in the 12 Brit Inf Bde sector. At midnight Carlt & York R. had its leading sub-unit approaching the most westerly of the road and rail crossings north of Diegaro, while the standing patrol mentioned above was in the village itself. The battalion main body lay astride the railway some 3,000 yards to the rear. It was the battalion intention to probe forward along the railway during the night as far as the road crossing, lying just east of the Bevano River. (3 Cdn Inf Bde Report, op cit; W.D., Carlt & York R., 24 Oct 44)



158. Early on the following day (25 Oct) the forward battalions of both brigades reached the line of the Bevano River. On the left the enemy brought down light artillery fire on troops of Carlt & York R. in the vicinity of the railway bridge. By 1020 hours the unit had secured its first objective beyond the river, a road junction (529126) about 800 yards north of the railway crossing. On their right a company of the Patricias, which had crossed the Bevano at Volturona, was now moving parallel to and about 1000 yards north of Carlt & York R. During the same morning the engineers began bridging operations at Volturona. As a result of their efforts an Ark bridge was in position by midday. (3 Cdn Inf Bde Report; W.Ds, H.Q. 3 Cdn Inf Bde, H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, Carlt & York R., and P.P.C.L.I., 25 Oct 44)

159. During the afternoon the Patricias, patrolling forward towards San Leonardo (5015), made their first contact with the enemy. At a crossroads, about one mile south-east of the village, the patrol observed several enemy vehicles. In response to a request from the Patricias, the artillery engaged the place and the enemy withdrew unscathed. On Route 9 a patrol from Carlt & York R. which entered Forlimpopoli at 1600 hours, reported it clear of the enemy. That evening 1 Cdn Inf Div instructed 2 and 3 Cdn Inf Bdes to close up to the line of the Ronco River and patrol across to maintain contact; but no main bodies were to move west of the river. (W.D., (G. Ops) H.Q. 1 Cdn Inf Div, October 1944: Appx 72, (G Ops) Ops Log, 25 Oct 44; W.Ds, H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde, H.Q. 3 Cdn Inf Bde, P.P.C.L.I., and Carlt & York R., 25 Oct 44)

160. Resuming the pursuit at 2030 hours, P.P.C.L.I. passed through San Leonardo without further sign of the enemy and by midnight were 1000 yards beyond this village. During the night both battalions pushed steadily forward. In the early hours of the morning (26 Oct), they reported their final objectives secured - P.P.C.L.I. at 0350 hours and Carlt & York R. at 0430 hours. On the left Carlt & York R. were up to the Ronco from the railway north along the river road for 1000 yards to the building Casa Maltoni (478162). Further along the same road between Casa Zambelli (479164) and Casa Gramiaci (485173) lay the forward companies of P.P.C.L.I. Both units had at once patrolled to the river bank on their respective fronts but were unable to cross due to the speed of the current. Although the enemy was in evidence on the west bank, apart from an interchange of sniping and some shelling, all was quiet. Patrols to the north in the area of Bagnolo (4818), and Pieve Quinta (5219) returned with nothing to report except civilian tales of enemy activity in the country still further to the north. (Ibid, 26 Oct)

161. During 24 and 25 Oct the two reserve battalions of 3 Cdn Inf Bde had moved forward in echelon by bounds, R. 22e R. and West N.S.R. in that order. Shortly after midnight, 25 Oct, the R. 22e R. took up positions north of Forlimpopoli and the railroad (map squares 5013 - 5014). A few hours earlier West N.S.R. had completed their final bound and now occupied a sector north of the railway extending east and west of the Bevano River. In the case of 2 Cdn



Inf Bde the pursuit to the Ronco was a one-battalion affair, the other two units, L. Edmn R. and Seaforth of C., taking no part in the operation. (3 Cdn Inf Bde Report; 1 Cdn Inf Div Ops Log op cit, 24-26 Oct 44) At 0900 hours, 26 Oct both brigades were ordered to stand fast and maintain contact by active patrolling to the river. This condition was to continue until 12 Lancers completed their take over of 1 Cdn Inf Div sector. (Ibid, 26 Oct 44)

OPERATIONS OF 5 CDN ARMD DIV AT THE SAVIO AND DEVANO RIVERS,  
22 - 26 OCT 44

162. In the meantime command of the right corps sector had changed hands. The relief began at 1715 hours, 22 Oct, when 11 Cdn Inf Bde effected the relief of 4 N.Z. Armd and 6 N.Z. Inf Brigades. At 0600 hours the following day 5 Cdn Armd Div assumed command of the whole front from the boundary with 1 Cdn Inf Div near Borgo di Ronta to the sea, for at the same time Cumberland Force came from under direct command 1 Cdn Corps to under 5 Cdn Armd Div. (W.D., G.S. Branch, H.Q. 5 Cdn Armd Div, 23 Oct 44; W.D., H.Q. 11 Cdn Inf Bde, 22 Oct 44). In accordance with the wishes of the Army Commander (see para 147) 5 Cdn Armd Div was instructed to clear the enemy from the area east of the Savio and probe the line of the river for likely crossing-places. It was not anticipated that in carrying out these tasks the division would become involved in any heavy fighting. At this time the armoured division was holding the forward line with two brigades up. On the left 11 Cdn Inf Bde, with its three battalions disposed in line, lay along the Cesena lateral between Ronta (5912) and Borgo Pipa (5916) with Perth R. near Ronta, Ir. R.C. around Borgo Pipa and midway between them C.B. Highrs near the village of S. Martino in Fiume (5915). Cumberland Force, at this time, had its left flank near the Savio at Castiglione di Cervia, but its right at Cervia was still some distance from the river. (Cumberland Force; W.D., H.Q. 11 Cdn Inf Bde, October 1944: Appx 11, Ops Log, 22 Oct 44)

163. On the following morning (24 Oct), Maj-Gen B.M. Hoffmeister, the G.O.C. 5 Cdn Armd Div, visited Headquarters 11 Cdn Inf Bde and discussed with the Brigade Commander the plan of operations for the day. In view of the enemy withdrawal from in front of 1 Cdn Inf Div and 5 Corps the limitation of the brigade role to patrol and reconnaissance would no longer apply. Instead Ir R.C. would cross the Savio during the morning near the demolished road bridge east of the village of Mensa (5917) and establish a bridgehead. C.B. Highrs would follow the Irish over the river pass through them and extend the lodgment area. Bridging operations at the Mensa crossing would begin immediately. (W.D., H.Q. 11 Cdn Inf Bde, 24 Oct 44)

164. On the previous night, 23/24 Oct, a patrol from Ir R.C. swam the river near the road bridge, entered the village of Mensa, and found it clear of the enemy. The same patrol reported that assault boats and rafting equipment would be necessary for an infantry crossing. On the basis of this report the required items of equipment were ordered forward. At 1300 hours all was in readiness and the ferrying of the Irish over the Savio commenced. No



opposition whatsoever was encountered and by 1800 hours three companies of Ir R.C. were in the Mensa area. Class 5 rafts were soon in operation and three anti-tank guns were ferried to the west bank. It was in the course of moving these guns that the unit had its only casualties of the river operation. One of the guns, while being man-handled up the west bank, struck a German boxmine and blew up, killing or injuring 13 men. By 2114 hours the unit was in a firm position with two companies forward of Mensa and one in the village itself. In addition the fourth company, supported by a squadron of 8 N.D.H., was affording protection to the bridging operations from positions on the east bank. During the evening an Irish patrol reached the Cesena - Ravenna road and on their return reported the road linking the main road with Mensa muddy but serviceable and fit for two-way traffic. This patrol was shelled by artillery but saw no other signs of the enemy. (11 Cdn Inf Bde Ops Log, 24 Oct 44; W.D., Ir R.C., 24 Oct 44)

165. During the morning the engineer reconnaissance party discovered an old German military bridge (590142) 3000 yards upstream from Mensa near the village of Dagnolo (5814). Although the bridge itself had been demolished, the approaches were still good. It was now decided to erect a second Bailey at this site during the night (24/25 Oct). Accordingly 11 Cdn Inf Bde altered its plan slightly and ordered Perth R. to cross the Savio and form a bridgehead covering the Dagnolo site. Perth R. moved up to the river and at 2130 hours the first assault boat was launched. Once again there was no sign of the enemy and the boats plied the river without interruption. By midnight the unit had all three companies\* in position in the vicinity of Dagnolo covering the bridging site. During the night patrols went forward to the Cesena - Ravenna road but found nothing to report. At midnight the engineers - 1 Fd Sqn R.C.E. at Mensa and 14 Fd Coy R.C.E. at Dagnola - began work on the Bailey bridges. Both were completed on 25 Oct, the Mensa bridge at 1550 hours, that at Dagnolo, an hour later. (11 Cdn Inf Bde Ops Log, 24-25 Oct 44; W.D., H.Q. R.C.E. 5 Cdn Armd Div, 24 Oct 44 and Appx 3, Intelligence Log, 24-25 Oct 44; W.D., Perth R., 24 Oct 44)

166. In the early morning of 25 Oct, C.B. Highrs crossed the river and took up positions west of the village of Mensa at the "T" junction on the Cesena - Ravenna road. 11 Cdn Inf Bde now intended to push on to the Bevano River on a two-battalion front. C.B. Highrs were to move due west and seize a foothold on the far bank in the vicinity of the road-bridge, (554186) a distance of about one and one half miles. On their right Ir R.C. would move northward along the Cesena - Ravenna road with its final objective the bridge carrying that route over the Bevano. In reserve would be Perth R., occupying the positions presently held by C.B. Highrs. (11 Cdn Inf Bde Ops Log, 25 Oct 44; W.D., C.B. Highrs, 25 Oct 44)

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\* Only three companies were engaged in this operation, the fourth having passed to under command Cumberland Force that morning (see para 169).



167. Shortly after midday both battalions moved off and reached their respective objectives late that afternoon. Both bridges had of course been demolished by the enemy. Once again the only obstacle to the free forward movement of the units was in the form of mines and demolitions. During the evening a large number of Partisans, equipped with German weapons, arrived in the Ir R.C. area. They had marched from Ravenna that day and they claimed that there were no Germans this side of Ravenna and only a few small parties in the town itself. Meanwhile a platoon of C.B. Highrs had crossed the Bevano and taken up a position just west of the river near the fork in the road (551188). In the course of the night (25/26 Oct) although both units patrolled extensively, nothing of interest occurred. (11 Cdn Inf Bde Ops Log, 25 Oct 44; W.D., C.B. Highrs, 25 Oct 44; W.D., Ir R.C., 25 Oct 44)

168. To return to Cumberland Force, now operating under direct command 5 Cdn Armd Div. By 22 Oct this force had occupied Cervia on the coast and inland it was approaching the Savio at Castiglione di Cervia. On the following day, due to a number of enemy machine gun posts and infantry pockets which were encountered, only slight progress was made. At last light 27 Lancers reached the outskirts of Castiglione, but were unable to enter the town itself, to which the enemy was still holding firmly. Patrols from this unit remained in contact with the enemy during the night, but on the right patrols of 3 Cdn Armd Recce Regt in the area south of the Savio lost touch. Throughout the period of darkness the enemy brought down heavy mortar fire on the 27 Lancers' positions. (Cumberland Force; W.D., H.Q. 5 Cdn Armd Bde, 23 Oct 44; W.D., 3 Cdn Armd Recce Regt, 23 Oct 44)

169. On 24 Oct the German grip on the sector loosened, and both units moved up to the line of the Savio. During the day a squadron of G.G.H.G. operating on Route 16 had a short engagement with an enemy platoon post and suffered some casualties. The fight ended with the appearance of two Sherman tanks, which fired on the enemy post at 150 yards' range and inflicted a number of casualties. At 2100 hours "A" Coy Perth R., which had come under command G.G.H.G. that morning, relieved the squadron on Route 16. Across the river from 27 Lancers the enemy was still in evidence. For their part the Lancers spent the day establishing firm positions on the east bank of the Savio and in mopping up the town of Castiglione di Cervia. Their entry into the town that morning had been the signal for the Germans to give it a good pounding with artillery. (Cumberland Force; (H.S.)244C5.013(D7): Operational History of Governor General's Horse Guards, October 1944)

170. On the following day (25 Oct) the enemy again withdrew and both units of Cumberland Force crossed the Savio without opposition. The Perths, with G.G.H.G. moving over the river near the village of Savio, advanced straight up Route 16 to within 400 yards of the Bevano River before regaining contact. Here the advance bumped into German machine gun positions and came to a halt. That night (25/26 Oct), however, the company of Perths waded the Bevano and seized a foothold on the far bank astride Route 16. On the left 27 Lancers had made slightly better progress. In the complete absence of resistance advanced elements of this unit were able to



of Castiglione. (Cumberland Force; W.D., H.Q. 5 Cdn Armd Bde, 25 Oct 44; W.D., G.G.H.G., 25 Oct 44)

171. The only enemy activity along the 5 Cdn Armd Div front during 26 Oct was on Route 16 west of the Devano. Here an enemy patrol of about 30 men attacked the Perth positions. At a cost to themselves of only one man wounded the Perths threw off the assault killing four of the Germans and taking two prisoners. During the day patrols of 11 Cdn Inf Bde operating in the country between the Bevano and the Ronco found no sign of the enemy. (W.D., Perth R., October 1944: Appx 9, The Operations of "A" Coy u/c Cumberland Force; (H.S.)224Cl.013(D13): Bi-monthly Summary of Ops of 1 Cdn Corps, 16-31 Oct 44; (H.S.)224Cl.013(D14): 1 Cdn Corps Ops Summary No. 34, 26 Oct 44)

#### THE RELIEF OF 1 CDN CORPS, 28 OCT 44

172. Heavy rains and winds on the night 25/26 Oct and the following day, brought flood conditions to the Cumberland Force sector and washed out the Savio bridges along the whole of the Corps front. All the Canadian Corps traffic had now to proceed via the 5 Corps bridge at Cesena. For three days this bridge, a Bailey over the one blown span of an old Roman bridge, was the main supply link for both Corps. In his account of bridging operations over the Savio, Lt-Col Webb, C.R.E. 1 Cdn Inf Div, gives the following description of the events of 26 Oct:

...by 0800 hours the water was rising rapidly. In three quarters of an hour it came up over the top of the bridge and washed out the decking. The bridge itself started to twist and turn, and rolled three or four hundred yards down the river.\* The rain continued all day.

At the same time that the Bailey bridge went out an infantry officer reported that the F.B.E. bridge was going.\*\* 1 Fd Coy was sent down immediately to try to yank it out before the water came up over it. As they came up to it the water was coming up over the ramps and before they could do any work, the whole bridge broke loose and went down the river.

Meanwhile 5 Cdn Armd Div bridges were faring as badly as ours. They accused us of sabotaging their first bridge, saying that a hay stack, a dead ox and our F.B.E. hit it at the same time, and the final straw was our F.B.E.

An attempt was made to fill in the dyke on the near side of the river, for we had breached it in order to make an approach to the Bailey bridge. By the time

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\* This was the Bailey bridge at 588084 referred to earlier in this report (para 156)

\*\* The F.B.E. was at Martorano (591104) (see para 149)



we could get a bulldozer on the job, the water was up to the level of the bottom of the dyke. We did manage to get the gap filled in to the height of 5 ft, but further up the dyke had been damaged by the Germans, so the water flowed in behind the dyke, making our work useless. Shortly after this there was a raging torrent 300 yds wide on the wrong side of the tyke.

Before dark that night the water in the river was 18 ft high.

All the bridging equipment resources of 1 Cdn Corps had used in these bridging operations across the R. SAVIO, . . . , yet no bridges withstood the tide. During the last 2,000 years the natives of ITALY have built good and numerous bridges, but never have they bridged the R. SAVIO in the 7 mile stretch from CESENA north to MENSA. . . This the Cdns attempted to do, and failed.

(Webb)

As a result of the bad weather the relief of 1 Cdn Corps was postponed for 24 hours, from 0600 hours 27 Oct to 1200 hours 28 Oct. (1 Cdn Corps Operations: Appx R, 1 Cdn Corps Messages, 25-26 Oct 44)

173. In the meantime the front remained static, the only activity consisting of long range patrolling in the area north of the exposed right flank of 1 Cdn Inf Div between the Bevano and the Ronco. A patrol from Ir R.C., operating in conjunction with the Partisans, reached the Ronco opposite Cocolia (4924). At this place they found a demolished bridge and a river over 100 yards in width. During the night 27/28 Oct an Irish and Partisan patrol ambushed a troop of enemy armoured cars outside San Pietro in Vincoli (5225). This was a most successful affair, one of the armoured cars being destroyed, a German officer killed and several of the enemy taken prisoner. Apart from incidents of this type, the remaining hours in the line were very quiet along the whole of the Corps front. (The Gothic Line Battle; W.D., G.S. Branch, H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps, October 1944: Appx 103-104, 1 Cdn Corps Ops Summaries Nos. 36-37, 27-28 Oct 44)

174. At 1200 hours, 28 Oct, 5 Cdn Armd Div handed over its operational commitments in the sector from the mouth of the Savio to the Ronco at Bagnolo to the task force "Porterforce". This force, which took its name from its commanding officer, Lt-Col A.M. Horsbrugh-Porter of 27 Lancers, consisted of 27 Lancers, the G.G.H.G. and appropriate supporting arms. Upon the withdrawal of 1 Cdn Corps the group was to come under direct command of Eighth Army. At the same time 12 Lancers, operating under command of 5 Corps, relieved 1 Cdn Inf Div in its positions along the Ronco between Bagnolo and Route 9. Thereupon 1 Cdn Corps, with the exception of Canadian units included in Porterforce,



passed into Eighth Army reserve.\* (The Gothic Line Battle, and Appx R., 1 Cdn Corps Messages, 25-26 Oct 44)

#### IN CONCLUSION

175. With the withdrawal of 1 Cdn Corps into the rest areas on the Adriatic coast Operation "OLIVE" came to an end. During the last thirty-three days of this operation the formations under command 1 Cdn Corps had made an advance of approximately 23 miles, involving the crossing of several major water obstacles and numerous small streams and rivers; this under weather conditions which were seldom good and at times turned the whole country into a sea of mud and even the smaller rivers into raging torrents. Fortunately, due to the outflanking movements of the higher and drier left wing of Eighth Army, casualty figures were relatively small (see Appx "B"). On only two occasions did the Canadian brigades have more than one battalion committed at any one time in anything more than light encounters with enemy rearguards. The first of these was the 12 Cdn Inf Bde action at the Uso River, and the second the battle of 2 Cdn Inf Bde for its Savio bridgehead.

176. Although the nature of the terrain provided the other arms and services with ample cause for complaint, this was not the case with the signals. Both 5 Cdn Armd Div and 1 Cdn Inf Div speak of wireless communications as being good. A report made by the latter formation states:

The totally flat, waterlogged character of the terrain provided ideal facilities for wireless communication which worked well throughout.

((H.S.)234C1,013(D7): 1 Cdn Inf Div Communications during the Advance from the Fiumicino to the Ronco)

In the same report it is pointed out that the deep ditches characteristic of the landscape provided excellent protection for the lines if the joints were kept above the water level.

177. A feature of these operations was the unusually large number of guns and mortars which the enemy

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\* In addition to G.G.H.G., the Canadian element of Porterforce consisted initially of 2 Fd Regt R.C.A., 5 Med Regt R.C.A. and 12 Fd Coy R.C.E. (The Gothic Line Battle).



concentrated on 1 Cdn Corps front.<sup>\*</sup> As a result, at Headquarters R.C.A. 5 Cdn Armd Div, steps were taken to improve the system of countering hostile battery and mortar fire. It was made the responsibility of the headquarters staff to see that:

- (i) Shelreps and moreps<sup>\*\*\*</sup> were in fact passed quickly and correctly.
- (ii) The unit or fmn concerned was advised at the earliest possible moment of the counter measures being carried out...
- (iii) Some definite action was taken against every H.B. which could be heard shelling any part of the Div area. To accomplish this it was made a drill to call regts or bdes whenever hostile firing was heard, to seek out shelreps or moreps rather than wait for them to be submitted.

((H.S.)244C5.013(D7): R.C.A. 5 Cdn Armd Div Ops from R. Metauro to R. Savio, 23 Aug 44 to 28 Oct 44)

However, it would not be sufficient if this more positive attitude existed only at divisional level:

All gnr offr, regardless of their locations in action, were impressed with the need of (i) adopting an aggressive rather than a passive "counter" attitude and (ii) for taking definite action to ascertain and pass to those concerned the infm required concerning enemy shelling and mortaring.

(Ibid)

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\* According to a report made by Headquarters R.C.A. 1 Cdn Corps on operations, 25 Aug to 28 Oct, enemy H.E. artillery fire caused 58.7% of "own cas" during the period as compared to 11.7% from small arms and 7.1% from mortar fire. The report continues:

If these casualty figures are accurate, it would appear that one of the two following alternatives must be taken in future:

- (a) Have a pre-H Hr C.B. plan using all or the majority of the arty and a large proportion of the amn available.
- (b) Allot a very much higher proportion of the Arty and amn to C.B.

((H.S.)224C1.2013(D2): R.C.A. 1 Cdn Corps Report on Operations during period 25 Aug - 28 Oct 44, Appx "B")

\*\*\* Immediate reports of enemy artillery and mortar fire submitted to counter-bombardment staff normally through artillery channels of communication and designed to assist in the location of hostile guns and mortars. They included such information as time and duration of fire, direction of fire, type of projectile and target area.



178. Beyond the Fiumicino enemy artillery and mortars were again very active requiring an intensive use of counter measures. Throughout these actions widespread harassing fire was carried out to hamper the enemy's withdrawal. Of the fire plans arranged in support of the infantry, the report by the C.R.A. 1 Cdn Inf Div states:

The few fire plans arranged were of the concentration type designed to neutralize and destroy known enemy strong points. Flexibility and simplicity were the principal considerations of these plans in order to enable the infantry (sic) to exercise control of the artillery support.

(1 Cdn Inf Div Report Part II)

About this time 1 Cdn Inf Div instituted a slight change of policy in the use of anti-tank weapons. It was decided that, if other equipments were available, these guns would not be brought forward for use in a sniping or harassing role. In his report the C.R.A. 1 Cdn Inf Div writes:

I felt that this policy was justified as we should not risk valuable equipment and highly trained personnel to carry out tasks for which other equipments had been designed.

(Ibid)

179. Air support, during the period, due to the bad weather and ground conditions resulting therefrom, was of an intermittent nature. An article in the R.A.F. Mediterranean Review states:

The deterioration in the weather greatly restricted the air operations in support of our ground forces in the Adriatic sector. With the break-through at RIMINI, however, far fewer close support targets were available for the D.A.F. fighter-bombers and our advancing forces for a time no longer needed air attacks on a blitz scale to wear down enemy resistance. A better dividend was now paid by attacks on the enemy's communications to hinder his movement, re-grouping, and bringing up of supplies.

Three of the last ten days of September were blank or practically blank days so far as the Desert Air Force's operations were concerned, due to torrential rain which rendered landing grounds unserviceable. On only a few other days also, did the daily total of sorties approach or exceed the 500 mark.

(R.A.F. Mediterranean Review No. 8, July to September 1944: The Invasion of Italy (Part IV) - 10 June to 30th September 1944, p. 44)

A particularly strong effort was made against the Savio River road and rail bridges during the last week of September. These continued to be an important target until 15 Oct when the last of the road bridges over the river was destroyed.



The other D.A.F. attacks on communications, meanwhile, included the cutting of railway tracks, light and medium bomber attacks on marshalling yards on the BOLOGNA - FAENZA - CESENA route, and night and day armed reconnaissances over the enemy's railways and roads in the rear of the eastern battle area. In the latter activity Mustangs were extremely successful in knocking out locomotives; in particular, fourteen were destroyed on 22nd September and another fourteen on the last day of the month.

(Ibid, p. 45)

During the month of October the weather remained the limiting factor, the enemy air force being conspicuous by its absence.

On five of the last sixteen days in October sorties fell below 100, including three blank or **virtually** blank days; nevertheless, by taking advantage of a few spells of good weather, D.A.F.'s total effort topped the 3,300 sorties mark.

High-lights of the D.A.F. battlefield attacks were the harassing of the enemy's movement across the SAVIO river on 20th October; help for our ground forces in their enlargement of their SAVIO bridgehead on the 24th; harassing the enemy's retreat to the RONCO river line on the 25th...

(R.A.F. Mediterranean Review No. 9, October - December 1944: The Invasion of Italy (Part V) 1st October - 31st December 1944, p. 201)

In addition attacks on enemy communications, apart from those bound up with the advance of Eighth Army, were again a feature of the D.A.F. operations.

180. As was usual when 1 Cdn Corps went into reserve, rumours as to the next role of the Corps began to circulate. Spice was added to these by the departure from the theatre, at the beginning of November, of General Burns and the news of General McNaughton's appointment as Minister of National Defence in place of Col the Hon J.L. Ralston, C.M.G., D.S.O. At Headquarters Eighth Army, however, the Canadian Corps had already been assigned its role in the operations being planned for the near future. During the month of November, 1 Cdn Corps and its divisions would rest and prepare themselves for the job ahead. In the meantime Eighth Army, using 2 Pol Corps and 5 Brit Corps, would continue to apply such pressure as was possible on the enemy forces. Then, at the end of the month, ~~freshened~~ and retrained the Canadians would return to the line to take part in the all-out drive to capture Ravenna.



181. This report was drafted in part by Capt  
J.M. Hitsman and completed by Maj D.H. Cunningham.

*C.P. Stacey*  
for  
(C.P. Stacey) Colonel,  
Director  
Historical Section. *Myer*



## ORDER OF BATTLE

## 1 CANADIAN CORPS

11 OCT 44

(Taken from W.D., G.S. Branch, H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps, October 1944:  
Appx 38, Order of Battle 1 Cdn Corps, 11 Oct 44)

7th Anti-Tank Regiment (S.P.) Royal Canadian Artillery (less  
two batteries)

1st Canadian Survey Regiment

657th Air O.P. Squadron

1st Canadian Army Group Royal Artillery

1st Medium Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
2nd Medium Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
5th Medium Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
3rd Medium Regiment Royal Artillery  
4th Medium Regiment Royal Artillery  
32nd Heavy Regiment Royal Artillery  
56th Heavy Regiment Royal Artillery (less two batteries)  
10th Medium Regiment Polish Artillery  
11th Medium Regiment Polish Artillery

1st Canadian Infantry Division

1st Field Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
2nd Field Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
3rd Field Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
8th Field Regiment (S.P.) Royal Canadian Artillery  
1st Anti-Tank Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
2nd Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
One Battery (S.P.), 7th Anti-Tank Regiment Royal Canadian  
Artillery

1st Canadian Infantry Brigade

The Royal Canadian Regiment  
The Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment  
48th Highlanders of Canada

2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade

Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry  
The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada  
The Loyal Edmonton Regiment

3rd Canadian Infantry Brigade

Royal 22e Regiment  
The Carleton & York Regiment  
The West Nova Scotia Regiment



5th Canadian Armoured Division

5th Armoured Regiment (8th Princess Louise's (New Brunswick Hussars) Canadian Armoured Corps  
9th Armoured Regiment (The British Columbia Dragoons) Canadian Armoured Corps  
3rd Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment (The Governor General's Horse Guards) Canadian Armoured Corps

11th Canadian Infantry Brigade

The Perth Regiment  
The Cape Breton Highlanders  
The Irish Regiment of Canada

12th Canadian Infantry Brigade

The Westminster Regiment (Motor)  
1st Canadian Light Anti-Aircraft Infantry Battalion (Lanark & Renfrew Scottish Regiment of Canada)  
4th Princess Louise Dragoon Guards Battalion\*

2nd New Zealand Division

2nd New Zealand Divisional Cavalry (less two squadrons)  
4th Field Regiment New Zealand Artillery  
5th Field Regiment New Zealand Artillery  
6th Field Regiment New Zealand Artillery  
7th Anti-Tank Regiment New Zealand Artillery (less one battery)  
14th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment New Zealand Artillery  
24th Field Regiment (S.P.) Royal Artillery  
One battery (S.P.) 7th Anti-Tank Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
654 Air O.P. Squadron (less two flights)  
27th New Zealand (M.G.) Battalion (less one platoon)  
22nd New Zealand (Mot) Battalion

4th New Zealand Armoured Brigade

18th New Zealand Armoured Regiment  
19th New Zealand Armoured Regiment  
20th New Zealand Armoured Regiment

5th New Zealand Infantry Brigade

21st New Zealand Battalion  
23rd New Zealand Battalion  
28th New Zealand (Maori) Battalion

6th New Zealand Infantry Brigade

24th New Zealand Battalion  
25th New Zealand Battalion  
26th New Zealand Battalion

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\* Actually under command 5th New Zealand Inf Bde at this date



21st Tank Brigade (under command 1 Cdn Corps)

12th Royal Tank Regiment  
48th Royal Tank Regiment  
145th Regiment Royal Armoured Corps

CUMBERLAND FORCE

Headquarters 5th Canadian Armoured Brigade

Headquarters Royal Canadian Artillery 5th Canadian  
Armoured Division

11th Field Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
17th Field Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
4th Anti-Tank Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
5th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment Royal Canadian Artillery  
3rd Field Regiment Greek Artillery

3rd Greek Mountain Brigade (part of Cumberland Force)

1st Greek Mountain Battalion  
2nd Greek Mountain Battalion  
3rd Greek Mountain Battalion

LANDELL FORCE (part of Cumberland Force)

1st Armoured Car Regiment (The Royal Canadian Dragoons)  
Canadian Armoured Corps

WILDER FORCE (under command LANDELL FORCE)

Two squadrons 2nd New Zealand Divisional Cavalry  
One battery 7th Anti-Tank Regiment New Zealand Artillery  
One platoon 27th New Zealand (M.G.) Battalion



Table 3.

Casualties of Other Arms and Services 1 Cdn Corps period 17 Sep to 27 Oct 44

	KILLED <sup>#</sup>		WOUNDED		MISSING		PW <sup>##</sup>	
	Offrs	O.Rs	Offrs	O.Rs	Offrs	O.Rs	Offrs	O.Rs
R.C.A.	8	65	25	287	1	2	-	-
R.C.E.	4	9	4	73	-	-	-	-
R.C. Sigs	-	3	2	23	-	-	-	-
R.C.A.S.C.	-	10	-	26	-	3	-	-
R.C.A.M.C.	-	2	1	21	-	-	-	-
R.C.O.C. and R.C.E.M.E.	1	2	2	28	-	1	-	1
C. Pro C.	-	2	-	6	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	-	1	4	12	1	-	-	-
Totals Table 3	13	94	38	476	2	6	-	1

Table 4.

Casualties of Canadian Component Eighth Army period 17 Sep to 27 Oct 44<sup>###</sup>

Totals Table 1	17	250	62	879	4	78	-	-
Totals Table 2	13	109	30	440	1	11	-	2
Totals Table 3	13	94	38	476	2	6	-	1
Totals Table 4	43	453	130	1795	7	95	-	3

Table 5.

Casualties of Canadian Component A.A.I.<sup>###</sup> period 17 Sep to 27 Oct 44

17 Sep to 30 Sep 44	34	484	95	1602	1	44	-	3
1 Oct to 14 Oct 44	9	201	47	656	5	77	-	-
15 Oct to 27 Oct 44	21	123	38	610	2	19	1	4
Totals	64	808	180	2868	8	140	1	7

# KILLED includes "Presumed killed". "Died of Wounds", "Killed" and "Died while PW"  
PW includes "PW wounded"

## Does not include casualties of infantry units 1 Cdn Inf Div prior to 1 Oct 44.

### Includes 1 Cdn Corps (all formations and units) 1 Cdn Armd Bde, 1 Cdn S.S. Bn and base units.



## CASUALTY STATISTICS

(Compiled from C.M.H.Q. Records Office Statistical Report Casualties "EA")

Table 1.

Casualties of Canadian Infantry and Armoured Units under command 5 Cdn Armd Div and CUMBERLAND FORCE for period 17 Sep to 27 Oct 44

	KILLED <sup>SE</sup>		WOUNDED		MISSING		PW <sup>SE</sup>	
	Offrs	O.Rs	Offrs	O.Rs	Offrs	O.Rs	Offrs	O.Rs
2 Cdn Armd Regt	1	13	-	31	-	-	-	-
5 Cdn Armd Regt	-	13	1	29	-	-	-	-
9 Cdn Armd Regt	-	9	5	13	-	1	-	-
1 Cdn Armd Regt	-	2	2	42	-	-	-	-
3 Cdn Armd Recce Regt	4	22	4	43	-	1	-	-
5 Cdn Assault Tp C.A.C.	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-
25 Cdn Armd Del Regt	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
<b>Totals C.A.C.</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
H.Q. 11 Cdn Inf Bde	-	2	-	3	-	-	-	-
11 Cdn Indep M.G. Coy (P.L. Fus)	1	4	3	37	-	-	-	-
Perth R.	2	32	4	100	-	-	-	-
C.B. Highrs	1	41	12	149	-	-	-	-
Ir R.C.	1	40	9	115	3	58	-	-
H.Q. 12 Cdn Inf Bde	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
P.L.D.G.	4	27	11	138	1	1	-	-
Westmr R. (Mot)	2	24	6	104	-	1	-	-
1 Cdn L.A.A. Bn C.I.C.	1	21	5	70	-	16	-	-
<b>Totals C.I.C.</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>716</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Totals Table 1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Table 2.

Casualties of Infantry component 1 Cdn Inf Div period 1 Oct to 27 Oct 44

H.Q. 1 Cdn Inf Bde	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
R.C.R.	4	27	2	53	-	1	-	-
48 Highrs	-	16	4	50	-	3	-	-
Hast & P.E.R.	-	17	2	42	-	1	-	-
H.Q. 2 Cdn Inf Bde	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
P.P.C.L.I.	2	7	5	42	-	4	-	2
Seaforth of C.	1	13	3	47	-	1	-	-
L. Edmn R.	4	10	4	96	-	-	-	-
H.Q. 3 Cdn Inf Bde	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
R. 22e R.	2	11	8	67	-	-	-	-
Carl't & York R.	-	2	-	12	1	1	-	-
West N.S.R.	-	5	1	14	-	-	-	-
Sask L.I. (M.G.)	-	1	1	16	-	-	-	-
<b>Totals Table 2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>



## A NOTE ON MILITARY BRIDGING

All military bridges and rafts are given classification numbers which represent approximately the live loads in tons which may safely cross them. The distinction between dead and live loads is most important, as, weight for weight, live loads bring a greater stress on the members of the bridge, owing to shocks and vibrations set up by their sudden impact. It is usual, therefore, to add to the live loads some allowance for impact, to convert them into what is called their equivalent dead loads or "Equivalent Bridge Weights". Thus a bridge of a given class can carry vehicles the sum of whose "Equivalent Bridge Weights" at the minimum spacing (80 feet nose to tail) does not exceed the figure of its class (e.g. 9 tons for a Class 9 bridge or raft, 40 tons for Class 40 etc.). (Military Engineering Vol III - Part I, Bridging (1941), pp 34, 42 and Table II)

The Bailey equipment can be assembled quickly in different ways for various loads and spans of fixed or floating bridges. It is simple to erect and launch, and all parts can be easily manhandled, and all fit into 3 - ton lorries. A bridge strong enough to take the vital transport and support weapons can be put across early in the assault and later if required to take heavier loads strengthened and raised to a higher classification in situ. The roadway of a Bailey bridge is carried through between two main girders. These girders are formed from panels 10 feet long pinned together end to end. By adding extra panels alongside of and on top of the original panels the strength of the girder can be increased. Such arrangements of panels are known respectively as "trusses" and "storeys". In describing a bridge reference is made to the number of trusses and storeys which form its main girders. In all cases the number of trusses is given first, followed by the number of storeys. "Single single" is the lightest combination possible and "triple triple" the heaviest. "Single double" and "single triple" are never used because they form unstable structures due to lack of lateral strength. There are therefore seven possible combinations of girders. (Military Engineering Vol III - Part III, Bailey Bridge - Normal Uses, pp 1-3)

The normal method of launching a Bailey bridge is by the cantilever method, using a skeleton launching nose. The bridge is constructed on rollers and is rolled forward over rocking rollers on the home side until the point of balance of the bridge and launching nose together is reached. At that point the nose will be over the landing roller on the far bank. The nose is then lowered onto the landing roller and the whole pushed forward until the end of the bridge proper is over the prepared baseplate position. In the case of the triple storey bridge it may on some occasions have to be constructed and launched as a double storey bridge and the third storey added over the gap. (Ibid, pp 25, 44 and 53)

Double storey construction is used to carry Class 40 loads over spans greater than 110 feet and Class 70 loads over spans in excess of 70 feet. It is also used in preference to single storey for longer and more permanent bridges. To carry Class 40 loads over spans of more than 150 feet or Class 70 for spans in excess of 110 feet triple storey construction is used. The latter can be double or triple truss, each of which can be built in two ways as described below:-

- (a) The deck is carried on the bottom storey panels so that the bridge is three storeys high, or



- (b) the deck is placed at one-third height, that is on the second storey panels, and the bottom storey underslung.

(Ibid, pp 44, 53)

Bailey floating bridges and shore landing rafts are a straightforward development of the fixed span bridge. The former type consists of a series of short Bailey spans supported on floating pontoon piers, with approach spans from the banks at each end. The three main parts of these bridges are termed: floating bays, end floating bays and landing bays. Normally a floating bridge is made up of two landing bays, two end floating bays and any number of floating bays as required to fill the remainder of the wet gap. These bridges are usually built for two load classes only, Class 40 and 70, but lower and intermediate classes can be used. Two types of shore loading rafts of Class 40 capacity have been designed using Bailey superstructure and pontoon piers. The first of these consists of a 60 foot single-single bridge with Class 40 decking placed across four pontoon piers. The second is a 70 foot single-single bridge with Class 40 decking using five pontoon piers. The latter type is preferred for use in a strong wind or current. These rafts have a capacity of about 10-15 vehicles per hour depending on the width of the river and the conditions prevailing at the time.\* (Ibid, pp 74-5, 103-4, (107)). Apart from the Bailey floating equipment a type of crossing frequently used was the Folding Boat Equipment (F.B.E.). This equipment is primarily intended for use as rafting equipment in the early stages of an assault but can be formed into bridges or the boats used singly as ferries. To be suitable for such a role the F.B.E. is very lightly constructed and for that reason easily damaged. It is capable of handling only the lighter classes of traffic. (Military Engineering Vol III - Part II, Pamphlet No. 2, Folding Boat Equipment, Mk II (1939), pp 6-7)

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\* Depending on the circumstances the rafts may be propelled by outboard motors or on shore to shore cables hand or motor operated.



CESENATICO

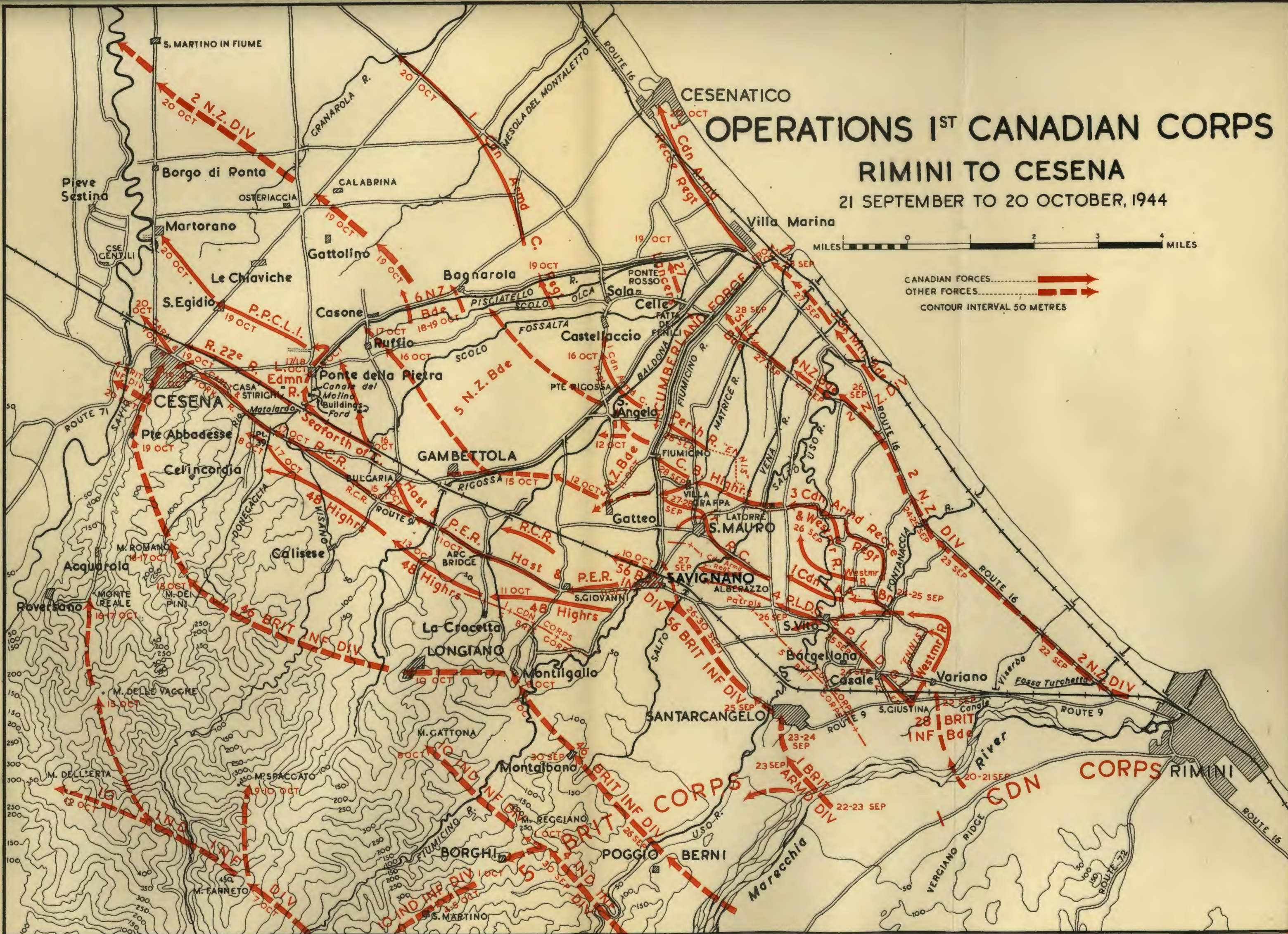
# OPERATIONS 1<sup>ST</sup> CANADIAN CORPS

## RIMINI TO CESENA

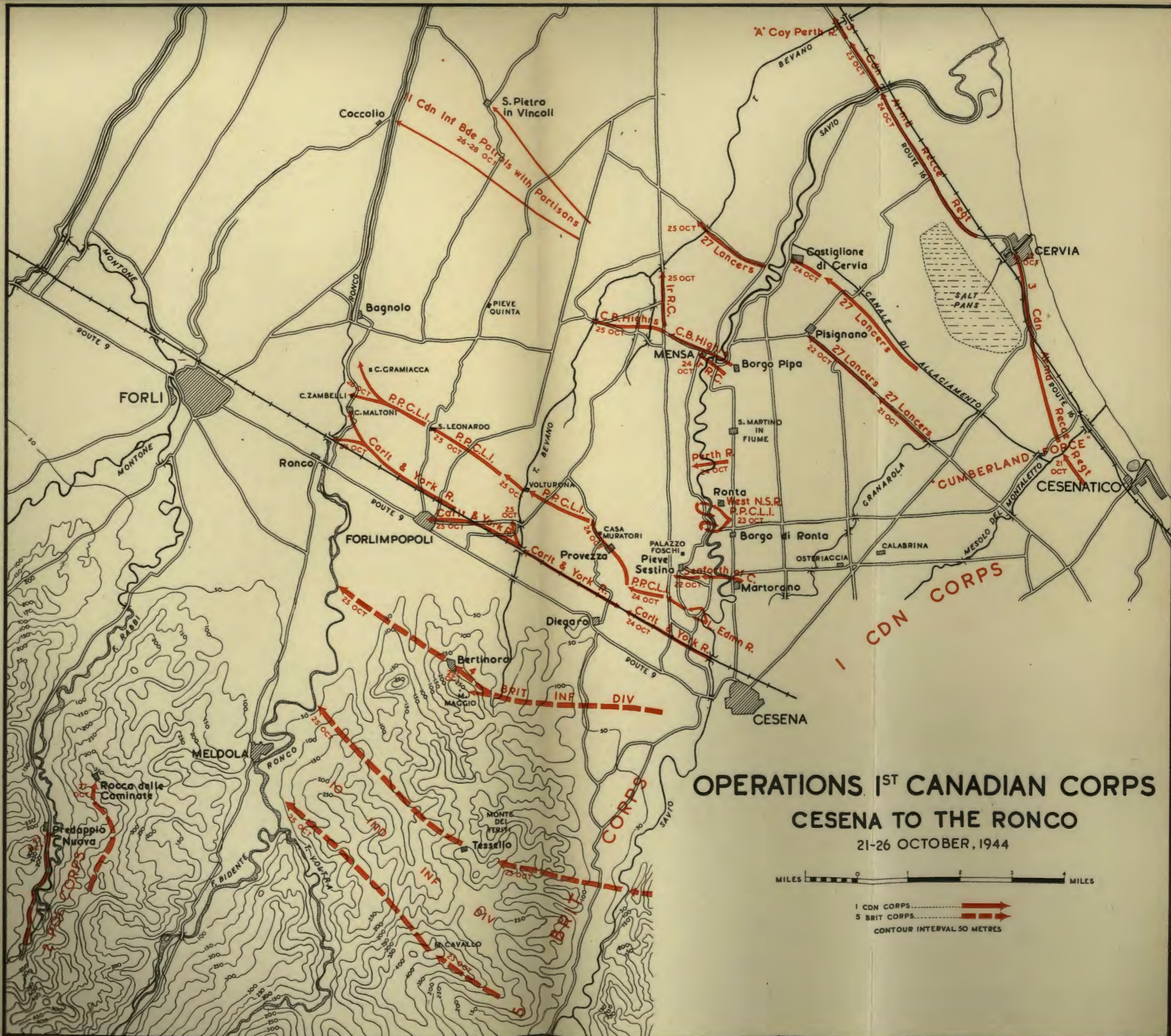
21 SEPTEMBER TO 20 OCTOBER, 1944



CANADIAN FORCES .....  
OTHER FORCES .....  
CONTOUR INTERVAL 50 METRES

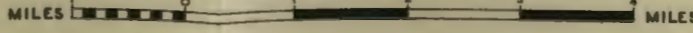






# OPERATIONS 1<sup>ST</sup> CANADIAN CORPS CESENA TO THE RONCO

21-26 OCTOBER, 1944



- 1 CDN CORPS.....
- 5 BRIT CORPS.....
- CONTOUR INTERVAL 50 METRES