

43-861

CROSSING THE VOLTURNO,

Every bridge spanning the Volturno River was wrecked by the retreating Germans in an effort to stave off the Allied advance. Our first big river battle of the war was fought here under extremely difficult conditions. A forward platoon takes up position along the southern banks overlooking the German positions.

The initial crossing of the river was made under cover of darkness. Infantry assault boats (such as you see here) fought it out in mid stream with German troops flung against them in counter attack. Tanks, hull-down on the South bank give covering fire.

Nazi fighter bombers are sent in to bomb and machine gun the crossings.

British and American Engineers set about the task of spanning the river. With a bridgehead established, they strain every nerve to maintain the flow of supplies. Apart from the Volturno, a network of canals formed natural tank obstacles. Here goes a heavily laden DUCK plunging into the water to head down the Canal and make a landing at the river mouth.

One major problem which added to the difficulties encountered was the swollen state of the river caused by heavy rains. Across this flood water they built their pontoon bridges. From one slippery bank to another a great stream of men and machines began to flow. The engineers set the seal of success to the Battle of the Volturno;

Across that swollen river came the supporting infantry and supplies. Only a few hours before, the spearhead of attacking men had paddled their way across, straight in the face of the German fire. Petrol tins lashed to a wooden ramp were enough to get many of the lads across. The success of that

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CROSSING THE VOLTURNO

Every bridge spanning the Volturno River was wrecked by the retreating
 Germans in an effort to prevent the Allies from crossing. On the first day of the
 battle of the war was fought here under extremely difficult conditions.
 A forward platoon takes up its station along the southern banks overlooking
 the German positions.
 The initial crossing of the river was made under cover of darkness.
 Infantry assault boats (such as you see here) fought it out in mid stream
 with German troops firing against them in counter attack. Tanks, buff-down
 on the South bank give covering fire.
 Next lighter bombers are sent in to bomb and machine gun the crossings.
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