

Operation Dragoon

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Coordinates: 43°13′37.5″N 6°39′42″E﻿ / ﻿43.22708°N 6.66167°E﻿ / 43.22708; 6.66167

Operation Dragoon was the Allied invasion of southern France on 15 August 1944, during World War II. The invasion was initiated via a parachute drop by the 1st Airborne Task Force, followed by an amphibious assault by elements of the U.S. Seventh Army, followed a day later by a force made up primarily of the French First Army.^[5] The landing caused the German Army Group G to abandon southern France and to retreat under constant Allied attacks to the Vosges Mountains. Despite being a large and complex military operation with a well-executed amphibious and airborne component, Operation Dragoon is not well known; it came in the later stages of the war and was overshadowed by the earlier and larger Operation Overlord.^[6]

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Background

Operation Dragoon

Part of Mediterranean and Middle East Theatre and the European Theatre of World War II



A map of the operation.

Date 15 August 1944 – 14 September 1944

Location Southern France
43°13′37.5″N 6°39′42″E

Result Allied victory

Belligerents

 United States

 Germany

 Free French

 United Kingdom

 Canada^[1]

Commanders and leaders

 Jacob L. Devers

 Johannes Blaskowitz

 Friedrich Wiese

 Alexander Patch

 Wend von Wietersheim

 Lucian Truscott

 Jean de Lattre de Tassigny

Strength

175,000-200,000

85,000-100,000 in assault area,
285,000-300,000 in southern France



Troops of the 517th PRCT prepare for the landings

Casualties and losses

 2,050 killed, captured or missing	 7,000 killed 20,000 wounded
7,750 other casualties	130,000+ trapped in southern France and later captured ^{[3][4]}
 more than 10,000 casualties ^[2]	

During planning stages, the operation was known as "Anvil", to complement Operation Sledgehammer, at that time the code name for the invasion of Normandy. Subsequently, both plans were renamed, Sledgehammer becoming Operation Overlord, and Anvil becoming Operation *Dragoon*. An apocryphal story holds that the name was chosen by the British prime minister, Winston Churchill, who was opposed to the plan and claimed to having been "dragooned" into accepting it.^[7] Other accounts attest that the operation was named after *Draguignan*, a city near the invasion site. (See the "Landings" map below.)

Operation Dragoon was controversial from the time it was first proposed. The American military leadership and their British counterparts disagreed on the operation. Churchill argued against it on the grounds that it diverted military resources that were better deployed in the on-going Allied operations in Italy; instead, he favoured an invasion of the oil-producing regions of the Balkans.^[8] Churchill reasoned that by attacking the Balkans, the western Allies could deny Germany oil, forestall the advance of the Red Army of the Soviet Union, and achieve a superior negotiating position in post-war Europe, all at a single stroke. At the time Operation Anvil was first considered, the Allied landing at Anzio had gone badly and planning was put on ice.

The operation, now renamed *Dragoon*, was revived after the successful execution of the Normandy landings, which freed vital amphibious assets. In addition, the Allies were struggling to resupply their growing forces in France, because the Germans had destroyed the port facilities at Cherbourg and a storm had damaged the artificial harbour at Omaha Beach. This made seizure and control of the French ports at Marseille and Toulon increasingly attractive.^[9] The French leaders pressed for an invasion in southern France too. Finally on 14 July 1944 the operation was authorized by the Allied Combined Chiefs of Staff.^{[8][10]}

Opposing forces

Main article: Operation Dragoon order of battle

The U.S. 6th Army Group, also known as the *Southern Group* and as *Dragoon Force*, commanded by Lieutenant General Jacob L. Devers, was created to carry out the Operation. It was formed in Corsica and activated on 1 August 1944 to consolidate the French and American forces slated to invade southern France. As addition, *Task Force 88* was also activated in August to support the landing. It was planned that the forces of the US Seventh Army, commanded by Alexander Patch, would make the initial landing, to be followed by the French Army B commanded by Jean de Lattre de Tassigny.^[11] Accompanying the whole operation was a fully mobilized unit called "Taskforce Butler", consisting of the bulk of the Allied tanks, tank destroyers and mechanized infantry. In addition, the French Resistance of the FFI played a major role in fighting, tying down numerous German troops.^[12] French resistance fighters also supplied the Allies with vital intelligence information and sabotaged German operations.^[13]

In conjunction with the amphibious landing, several airborne operations were planned, conducted by a combined US-British airborne unit, the 1st Airborne Task Force.^[14]

Opposing the Allies was the German Army Group G (*Armeegruppe G*). Although nominally an Army Group, Army Group G had at the time of the invasion only one Army under its command: the 19th Army, led by Friedrich Wiese. As southern France had never been important to German planning, their forces there had been stripped of nearly all their valuable units and equipment over the course of the war. The remaining 11 divisions were understrength and only one intact Panzer Division was left, the 11th Panzer Division, which also had lost two of its tank battalions. The troops were positioned thinly along the French coast, with an average of 90 km (56 mi) per division. Generally the troops of the German divisions were only second and third grade. This meant that over the course of the years, Germans in those divisions were sent away and replaced with wounded old veterans as well as Volksdeutsche from Poland and Czechoslovakia. There were numerous *Ostlegionen* inserted, as well as several units made up from volunteered Soviet prisoners of war (*Ostbataillone*). The equipment of those troops was in poor shape, consisting of obsolete weapons from various nations, with French, Polish, Soviet, Italian and Czech guns, artillery and mortars. Four of the German divisions were designated as "static", which meant that they were stripped of all of their mobile capabilities and unable to move from their assigned position. The only potent unit inside Army Group G was the 11th Panzer Division, which was commanded by Wend von Wietersheim.^[15]

The German command chain was overly complex, with parallel chains for the occupation forces, the land forces, the Luftwaffe and the Kriegsmarine commands. As part of their defense, the Germans had several fortifications and coastal guns which they had constructed during the years of occupation.^[16] The Luftwaffe as well as the Kriegsmarine played a negligible role in the operation.^[17]

Planning

Initially, the chief operational objective of Operation Dragoon was the capture of the important French ports of Marseille and Toulon, which were considered as essential to supply the growing Allied forces in France.^[18] The Allied planners used lessons learned from the Anzio and Normandy landings. They chose a location without high ground controlled by the Wehrmacht, as such conditions had forced them to incur heavy casualties after the initial landings at Normandy. The Allies chose an area at the Var coast east of Toulon as the landing site. Prior to the invasion, an air campaign was planned to isolate the battlefield and cut the Germans off from reinforcement by destroying several key bridges. Also a large airborne landing was planned in the center of the landing zone to quickly seize the high ground overlooking the beaches. Parallel to the invasion, several commando units would seize the islands off the coast.^[19]

Although the German Command expected another Allied landing in the Mediterranean, the advancing Red Army and the Allied Landings in Normandy required all German resources, so little was done to improve the condition of Army Group G. Given the advancing Allied forces in northern France, the German Command deemed a realistic defense in the South impossible. Blaskowitz's Army Group G headquarter openly discussed a general withdrawal from southern France in July and August with the German High



German 88 mm gun on the coast in southern France



British Hadrian gliders towed by Dakota (C-47) aircraft over Southern France for the Allied airborne invasion, photographed from a Hudson

Command, but the 20 July plot led to an atmosphere in which any withdrawal was out of question. Blaskowitz was quite aware that with his scattered forces any serious Allied landing attempt would be impossible to ward off. He planned the withdrawal in secret, to include demolition of the ports and conduct an ordered withdrawal, covered by the 11th Panzer Division. He intended to establish a new defense line centered on Dijon in central France. German intelligence was aware of the impending Allied landing, and on 13 August Blaskowitz ordered the 11th Panzer Division to move east of the Rhone River, where the landing was expected.^[20]

Operation Dragoon

Preliminary amphibious assault against the Hyères Islands

Prior to the main invasion, the navy insisted that the Hyères Islands, Port-Cros and Levant, had to be neutralized. The guns of the German garrisons on both islands could reach the proposed Allied landing area and the sea lanes that the troops would follow.^[21] The First Special Service Force, a joint U.S.-Canadian special forces unit trained in amphibious assault and mountaineering, received the order to take the islands as part of Operation Sitka.^[22]

After 10 p.m. on August 14, the men of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Regiments, First Special Service Force, transitioned between the troop transport vessels and rubber assault rafts about 8,000 yards off shore. The rafts were attached, three per tow line, to LCAs that towed the flotilla in to the shoreline. Upon arrival, the men had to scramble and immediately begin climbing cliffs ranging from 40 to 50 feet in height.^[23]

On Levant, the 2nd and 3rd Regiments faced sporadic resistance that became more intense when the German garrison forces came together in the area of the port. The men of the First Special Service Force gained the upper hand, and the coastal defense battery that so concerned the Allied naval forces turned out to be several well-camouflaged dummy weapons.^[24]

The 1st Regiment, First Special Service Force, drove the German garrison on Port-Cros to the western side of the island to an old fort. Fighting continued through August 16. When darkness fell, enemy guns on the French mainland at Cap Benat shelled Port-Cros. The British Royal Navy Battleship HMS *Ramilles* took aim at the fort where the Germans were barricaded. The German garrison surrendered on the morning of August 17, 1944.^[24]

With both islands in Allied hands, the men of the First Special Service Force transferred to the mainland where they were attached to the First Airborne Task Force. Before the main invasion, another operation was carried out, named Operation Span. This was a deception plan, aimed to confuse the German defenders with fake landings and paratroops, to disperse them from the actual landing zones.^[25]

Main invasion force landings

The preceding bombing missions together with resistance sabotage acts hit the Germans heavily, interrupting railways, damaging bridges, and disrupting the communication network. The landing started on the morning of 15 August.^[11]

The assault troops were formed of three American divisions of the VI Corps, reinforced by the French 1st Armoured Division, all under the command of Lieutenant General Lucian K. Truscott, Jr.. The 3rd Infantry Division landed on the left at Alpha Beach (Cavalaire-sur-

Mer), the 45th Infantry Division landed in the centre at Delta Beach (Saint-Tropez), and the 36th Infantry Division landed on the right at Camel Beach (Saint-Raphaël).^[25]



3rd Infantry Division disembarking from LCI (L)

The landings were overwhelmingly successful. On Delta and Alpha beaches, German resistance was low. The *Osttruppen* surrendered quickly, and the biggest threat to the Allies were the mines. A single German gun as well as a mortar position was silenced by destroyer fire. The Allied units in this sector were able to link up with the paratroopers very quickly and succeeded in capturing the nearby towns. Only on Camel Beach did the Germans put up some serious resistance. This beach was secured by several well

emplaced coastal guns as well as several flak batteries. Here too, the *Osttruppen* surrendered quickly; the German artillery formed the main opposition and some bunkers provided heavy resistance.^[25]

The most serious fighting was on Camel Red Beach at the town of Saint-Raphaël. A bombing run of 90 Allied B-24 bombers were used against a German strongpoint here. But even with the assistance of naval fire, the Allies were not able to bring the landing ships close to the beach. They decided to avoid Camel Red and land only at Camel Blue and Camel Green, which was successful. The Allied casualties at the landings were very light, with only 95 killed and 385 wounded. 40 of those casualties were caused by a Henschel Hs 293 launched from a Do-217, which sank the USS LST-282.^[25]

Parallel to the main landings, several special force missions were carried out. At Cap Nègre to the west of the main invasion, a large group of French commandos destroyed German artillery emplacements (Operation Romeo). These commandos were supported by other French commando teams that landed on both flanks. In one of those missions, 67 French commandos were taken prisoner after they ran into a minefield. The airborne and glider landings (Mission Dove, Mission Albatross and Mission Bluebird) around the area of Le Muy accompanying the whole operation, were as successful as the beach landings, with only 434 dead, mostly due to the hazardous landing conditions and not to German resistance.^[26]

German counterattacks

The Germans were initially confused, because of the cutting of their communication lines by the French Resistance. Allied paratroopers also cut off the LXII Corps headquarters at Draguignan, contributing to the confusion. Nevertheless, despite the hampered communications German commanders acted independently to put measures in effect to counter the Allied invasion. At Draguignan, Ferdinand Neuling ordered the nearby 148th Infantry Division to counterattack against the beaches at Le Muy, just before he got fully cut off from all communications by Allied paratroopers. Wiese, as commander of the 19th Army, was also out of touch with Blaskowitz's Army Group G headquarter, but drew up a plan to push the Allied forces in the Le Muy - St. Raphael region back into the sea on his own. With almost no mobile reserves to react against the beach landings, he ordered the commander of the 189th Infantry Division, Richard von Schwerin, to establish an ad hoc battle group (*Kampfgruppe*) of all nearby units to counterattack against the Allied bridgeheads in this area. While von Schwerin was assembling all men he could find, the 148th Infantry Division near Draguignan ran into heavy resistance provided by the FFI, which had been reinforced by British paratroopers, upsetting its plan for a counterattack towards the beaches.^[27]



Operation Dragoon Landings

While the Germans were not able to mount a counterattack against the Allied beachheads on 15 August, on the morning of 16 August von Schwerin now had assembled a force with the size of about 4 infantry battalions. With this force he launched his assault towards Le Muy and the Allied forces, as well as towards Draguignan to relieve the German headquarters there. By that time the Allies had already landed a significant amount of troops, vehicles and tanks. The Allied mobile forces of the 45th Division went out against the German forces themselves. The town of Les Arcs, which had just been reoccupied by von Schwerin's troops, was surrounded by the Allied division, which attempted to cut off the German forces. After heavy fighting the whole day, von Schwerin ordered his troops to retreat in the cover of the night. At the same time heavy fighting occurred at Saint-Raphaël. Mobile units of the 148th Infantry Division finally had arrived there and encountered the US 3rd Division, which was trying to take Saint-Raphaël from the Germans. This attack however was fruitless. By 17 August the German counter-attacks had largely been defeated, Saint-Raphaël was secured together with a large bridgehead along the coastline, and mobile forces had linked up with the airborne troops in Le Muy.^[28]

By the night of 16/17 August, Army Group G headquarters realized that they could not drive the Allies back into the sea. German movement was generally hindered by a Maquis uprising. In northern France, the Falaise pocket threatened the loss of major German forces. Given the precarious situation, Hitler moved away from his "no step backwards" agenda and agreed to an OKW plan for the complete withdrawal of Army Group G and B. The OKW plan was for all German forces (except the stationary fortress-troops) in southern France to move north to link up with Army Group B to form a new defensive line from Sens through Dijon to the Swiss frontier. Two German divisions (148th and 158th) were to retreat into the French-Italian Alps. The Allies were privy to the German plan through Ultra interception.^{[29][30]}

German withdrawal

The Germans started to withdraw, while the motorized Allied forces broke out from their bridgeheads and pursued the German units from behind. The rapid Allied advance posed a major threat for the Germans, who could not retreat fast enough. The Germans tried to establish a defense line at the Rhône to shield the withdrawal of several valuable units there. The US 45th and 3rd Division were pressing to the north-west with uncontested speed, undermining Wiese's plan for a new defense line. Barjoles and Brignoles were taken by the two US divisions on 19 August, which also were about to envelop Toulon as well as Marseille from the north, cutting off the German units there.^[31]

In the north-east the German problems were not any smaller. Taskforce Butler, the Allied mechanized component of the landings, was pushing north of Draguignan. Here on 18 August Neuling's surrounded LXII Corps headquarters had finally been captured, when they attempted to escape. The German troops in this area were exhausted and demoralised by the fighting against the FFI, so Taskforce Butler could also advance with high speed. Digne was liberated on 18 August. At Grenoble, the 157th Infantry Division faced the Allied advance, and its commander decided to retreat on 21 August toward the Alps. This decision would prove to be fatal for the Germans, as it left a large gap in the eastern flank of the retreating Army Group G. Blaskowitz now decided to sacrifice the 242nd Infantry Division in Toulon as well as the 244th Infantry Division in Marseille to buy time for the rest of Army Group G to retreat through the Rhône Valley, while the 11th Panzer Division and the 198th Infantry Division would shield the retreat in several defense-lines.^[31]

Liberation of Marseille and Toulon

Meanwhile the disembarked French units started to head for the two ports. The initial plan was for the ports to be captured in succession, but the unexpected Allied advance allowed the French commander Lattre de Tassigny to attack both ports almost simultaneously. He split his forces into two units, with Joseph de Goislard de Monsabert tasked to

take Toulon from the east while Edgard de Larminat had to drive north to encircle the city at the flanks. The Germans had a significant force stationed in both cities, but they had not enough time to prepare for a determined defense. After heavy fighting around Hyères, which temporarily stopped the advance, French forces approached Toulon on 19 August. At the same time, Monsabert swung around the city, enveloped it and cut off the highway between Toulon and Marseille. On 21 August, the French pressed into Toulon, and heavy fighting ensued. The heavy German resistance led to an argument between Larminat and de Tassigny, after which de Tassigny took over direct command over the operation, dismissing Larminat. By 26 August the remaining German units had surrendered. The battle for Toulon cost the French 2,700 casualties, but they captured 17,000 Germans, with the Germans losing their entire garrison of 18,000 men.^[32]



Jean de Lattre de Tassigny walking through the liberated Marseille

At the same time, Monsabert's attempt to liberate Marseille commenced. At first a German force at Aubagne was defeated, before French troops attacked the city. Unlike at Toulon, the German commander at Marseille did not evacuate the civilian population, which became increasingly hostile. The resulting fighting with FFI troops further weakened the German units, which were exhausted from partisan fighting. The Wehrmacht was not able to defend on a broad front and soon crumbled into numerous isolated strongpoints. On 27 August most of the city was liberated, with only some small strongpoints remaining, and on 28 August the official surrender was issued. The battle caused 1,825 French casualties, but 11,000 German troops were captured.^[33] In both harbours, German engineers had demolished port facilities to deny the use of the ports to the Allies.^[34]

The battle at Montélimar

While Marseille and Toulon were liberated, the German retreat continued. The 11th Panzer Division started several feint attacks toward Aix-en-Provence to discourage any further Allied advance. By doing so, LXXXV Corps as well as the IV Luftwaffe Field Corps were able to successfully retreat from the Allied advance at the Rhone. The Allies were unsure about the German intentions, but by 22 August Truscott decided to pursue the Germans with his three divisions from VI Corps. However, still unsure about the German intentions, the Allies missed several opportunities to cut off the retreating German forces of the LXXXV Corps.^[35]

While VI Corps was pursuing the Germans from behind, Taskforce Butler recognized the open German flank at the east of the Rhone near Grenoble. The Taskforce advanced in this direction, paralleling the German evacuation effort. While doing so, it fought some scattered German resistance, and finally found itself near Montélimar, a small city on the east bank of the Rhone River. This town lay directly on the German escape route. Following Taskforce Butler was the 36th Infantry Division. Together they were tasked on 20 August to block the German force at Montélimar. By this time, the forward Allied forces suffered from a serious lack of fuel and supplies, after having advanced with unexpected speed.^[36]

On 21 August, Taskforce Butler occupied the hills north of the town, according to revised orders from Truscott, as Taskforce Butler was considered too weak to block the entire German force marching north. From this position Taskforce

Butler fired on the evacuating German troops, while waiting for further reinforcements. Troops from the FFI supported the Americans, harassing German troops through the entire battle. The sudden appearance of this new threat shocked Wiese and the German command. As a first countermeasure, Wietersheim's 11th Panzer division was called in. The first of its units to arrive, together with several ad hoc Luftwaffe battle groups, were tasked to deal with this new threat. An attack against Puy was mounted the same day by this hastily assembled force, and the Germans were able to cut off Taskforce Butler from supplies. This success was however short-lived, and the Germans were pushed back soon after.^[37]

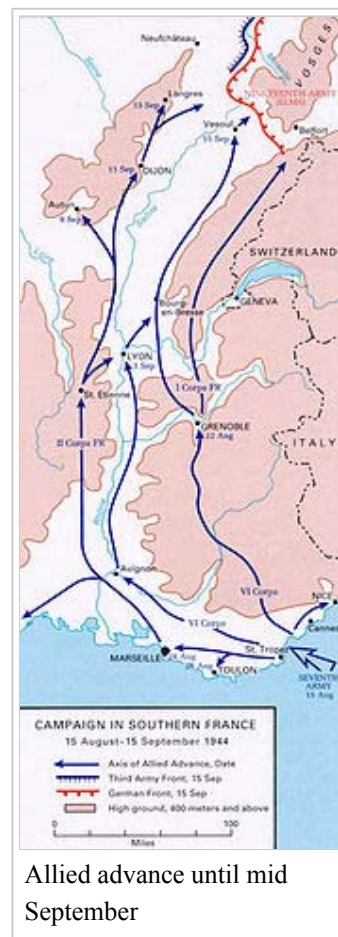
On 22 August, the first units of the 36th Division arrived, reinforcing Taskforce Butler. However, the Allied troops were still short of supplies and lacked enough men to directly attack the German escape route. During the next days, more men and supplies would trickle in for the Allies. At the same time, the US 45th Division took over positions at Grenoble, leaving the 36th Division free to fully commit its forces at Mont elimar. Meanwhile, the Germans also struggled to bring the 11th Panzer Division through the chaos of the evacuation into position at Mont elimar. By 24 August a substantial amount of the 11th Panzer Division had finally reached the battle area.^[38]

On 23 August, Taskforce Butler was officially dissolved and its units were taken over by John E. Dahlquist, commander of the 36th Infantry Division. For the rest of the day small skirmishes occurred between German and Allied forces. On 24 August Dahlquist tried to launch an attack against Mont elimar, which failed. The German counter-attack was able to make some ground against the hills occupied by the Allies. After the battle the Germans captured a copy of Dahlquist's operational plans, giving them a better picture of the Allied forces. As result, a large attack was planned by Wiese for the 25 August with the 11th Panzer as well as the 198th Infantry Division together with some more ad hoc Luftwaffe battlegroups. This attack however was also a big failure. The Allies struck back, retook the hills and were able to establish a temporary roadblock on the German escape route. This Allied success also did not last long, as another ad hoc attack led by Wietersheim reopened the passage at midnight.^[39]

The next day, Truscott finally allowed reinforcements from the 45th Division to support Dahlquist at Mont elimar. At the same time, the Germans also reinforced their fighting force. Over the next days a stalemate emerged, with the Allies unable to block the retreat route and the Germans unable to clear the area of the Allied forces. Both sides however became increasingly frustrated during the fighting, and on 26 August an angry Truscott even arrived at Dahlquist's headquarters to relieve him from command. However on seeing the heavy terrain and shattered forces he refrained, leaving the headquarters again. Finally from 26–28 August, the majority of the German forces was able to escape and on 29 August the Allies captured Mont elimar. The Germans suffered 2,100 battle casualties plus 8,000 POWs, while the Americans had 1,575 casualties.^{[40][41]}

Final German retreat towards the Vosges Mountains

The US VI Corps together with units from the French II Corps at its flank pursued and tried to cut off the German forces on their way toward the town of Dijon, while the Germans planned to prevent another Mont elimar with a defensive shield by the 11th Panzer Division. The Allied 45th and 3rd Division, as well as the 11th Panzer Division were racing north to fulfill their objectives. In the meantime, the Germans tried to continue with the evacuation though Lyon. Behind their flight, the Germans destroyed bridges, hoping this



Allied advance until mid September

would slow down the Allied advance. However, the American 45th Division was able to bypass the German forces, taking the town of Meximieux on 1 September. This posed again a threat to the German evacuation. After some initial skirmishes, the 11th Panzer Division launched a heavy attack into the city, causing 215 American casualties and destroying a number of tanks and vehicles.^{[42][43]}

At the same time the main German units retreated through Lyon. On 3 September Lyon was liberated by French units, but the Germans had already escaped. The Allies made a last-ditch attempt to cut the Germans off with an offensive towards Bourg-en-Bresse by the 45th Division and the 117th Cavalry Squadron from the original Taskforce Butler. However, the 45th Division was not able to overcome the German defenses near Bourg-en-Bresse. The 117th Cavalry Squadron had more success, bypassing Bourg-en-Bresse and taking Montreval and Marboz north of Bourg-en-Bresse instead. By 3 September Montreval was taken, but the squadron soon found itself trapped by units from the 11th Panzer Division, which surrounded the town. As a result the squadron was almost annihilated, and the German escape route was again open. The American units then retired to Marboz.^{[42][43]}

For the next two weeks more skirmishes occurred and the Allies were not able to cut off a major body of the German forces, but the Germans were also not able to maintain any stable defense line as planned. On 10 September Dragoon units were able to establish contact with units from Patton's Third Army. Truscott hoped to be able to push through the Belfort Gap, but on 14 September the Allied offensive was largely halted, as reorganisations of the command structure for the units from Operation Dragoon were conducted. Therefore, at the foothills of the Vosges Mountains, the campaign came to an abrupt end and the pursuit of the Germans was stopped.^[43]

Aftermath

Operation Dragoon was a success for the Allied forces. It enabled them to liberate most of France in a timespan of only 4 weeks, while inflicting heavy casualties to the German forces. But, because the battle plan had envisaged stiffer resistance near the beaches, the immediate need for transport was badly underestimated. Fuel consumption outstripped supply and the shortfall proved to be a greater impediment to the advance than the German defence. The Allies were not able to cut off the most valuable units of the retreating Army Group G, which escaped into the Vosges Mountains, leaving over 130,000 troops trapped behind.^[44]

An expected benefit of Operation Dragoon was the use of the port facilities at Marseille. The Allied advance after Operation Cobra and Operation Dragoon slowed almost to a halt in September 1944 due to a critical lack of supplies. Thousands of tons of *matériel* were shunted to Brittany in the French northwest because the ports at Le Havre and Calais were not yet available to the Allies. Marseille and the southern French railway system were brought back into service, despite heavy damage inflicted during Dragoon. Eventually, the southern route became a significant source of supplies for the Allied advance into Germany, providing about one third of the total Allied requirement.^[45]



Monument to the landings of Allied troops under General Patch on the beach of St Tropez, France.

See also

- Battle of Port Cros
- Battle of La Ciotat

References

Notes

1. [^] A significant number of Canadians also took part, both afloat and in the battles in southern France as members of the bi-national US-Canadian First Special Service Force (a.k.a. *The Devil's Brigade*).
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3. [^] Zaloga (2009), p. 88
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6. [^] Zaloga (2009), p. 5
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8. ^{^ a b} Yeide (2007), p. 13
9. [^] Yeide (2007), p. 14
10. [^] Zaloga (2009), p. 6-7
11. ^{^ a b} Pouge (1986), p. 227
12. [^] Zaloga (2009), p. 29
13. [^] Zaloga (2009), p. 8
14. [^] Breuer (1987), p. 35
15. [^] Zaloga (2009), pp. 16-19
16. [^] Zaloga (2009), pp. 20-22
17. [^] Zaloga (2009), p. 20
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20. [^] Zaloga (2009), pp. 32-34
21. [^] Historical Division, U.S. Army. "Invasion of Southern France Monograph, 15-28 Aug 1944" (<http://www.fold3.com/image/#291877368>). Fold3.com. Retrieved 12 January 2013.
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26. [^] Zaloga (2009), pp. 38-41
27. [^] Clarke & Smith (1993), pp. 105-107
28. [^] Clarke & Smith (1993), pp. 118-125
29. [^] Zaloga (2009), p. 55
30. [^] Clarke & Smith (1993), pp. 128; 134-137
31. ^{^ a b} Zaloga (2009), p. 57-59
32. [^] Clarke & Smith (1993), pp. 137-140
33. [^] Clarke & Smith (1993), pp. 140-142
34. [^] Zaloga (2009), pp. 70-71
35. [^] Clarke & Smith (1993), pp. 142-143
36. [^] Clarke & Smith (1993), pp. 144-147
37. [^] Clarke & Smith (1993), pp. 149-147
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39. [^] Clarke & Smith (1993), pp. 154-160
40. [^] Zaloga (2009), p. 71-81
41. [^] Clarke & Smith (1993), pp. 160-165
42. ^{^ a b} Clarke & Smith (1993), pp. 175-180
43. ^{^ a b c} Zaloga (2009), p. 85-88
44. [^] Zaloga (2009), p. 88-89
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External links

- US Army Campaigns of World War II - Southern France (<http://www.history.army.mil/brochures/sfrance/sfrance.htm>) at the United States Army Center of Military History
- A detailed history of the campaign (http://web.archive.org/web/20070312030846/http://www.wwiadt.com/Airborne_history/Dragoon.htm)
- US historical article of the campaign (<http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1772.html>)
- The short film *THE BIG PICTURE - COMMAND DECISION: THE INVASION OF SOUTHERN FRANCE (1963)* (<http://www.archive.org/details/gov.dod.dimoc.30144>) is available for free download at the Internet Archive [*more*]
- 517th PIR veteran returns wedding photos of a German soldier he killed shortly after Operation Dragoon to the soldier's grandson after 68 years (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uux-vk0HJ74>)

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