



El Alamein and Torch 1942

The Second Battle of El Alamein in October 1942 was a turning point in the Desert War, which had previously entailed swift advances on both sides covering hundreds of miles, followed by retreats and the building of new defensive lines. The Battle of Alam el Halfa in August had been significant. Rommel's forces had launched an attack against the Allies' defensive positions at Ruweisat Ridge, Alam Nayil and Alam el Halfa, yet the air attacks by the Desert Air Force and the increasing numbers of Grant tanks had taken their toll on Axis armour and troops. By 2 September the attack had failed, although Montgomery did not follow up with a



October 1942 after a Stuka raid at Alamein, treating the wounded.

concerted counter-attack, despite pressure from Churchill, as he felt his forces were not yet sufficiently prepared. His memoir relates; "I had decided that in building up the Eighth Army for what lay ahead I would concentrate on three essentials: leadership, equipment, and training". In preparation for the battle, Montgomery ordered increased patrol activity and mapping of the Axis positions. The Allies also had a numerical advantage in manpower, tanks, guns and aircraft. The Eighth Army comprised three Corps - X, XIII and XXX, with four armoured divisions. The forces also included Australian, Indian, New Zealand, South African and Free French units. The Plan relied on a night assault with moonlight to see the extensive minefields, so the date was fixed for 23/24 October. Lt General Montgomery decided that the Axis forces would be attacked simultaneously on both flanks, with the major assault by XXX Corps in the north, under Lt General Oliver Leese and diversionary attacks in the south by Lt General Brian Horrocks' XIII Corps. XXX Corps would force two corridors through the minefields to allow X Corps, commanded by Lt Gen Lumsden, to pass through and hold off the Axis armour. The attack would open with a massive artillery barrage. Despite eventual success, it was by no means an easy victory and at times the stiff opposition gave cause for serious concern, as well as the extensive minefields and ensuing congestion. Yet by 3/4 November Axis troops were withdrawing and had suffered the loss of 4 German and 8 Italian divisions. The victory was a tremendous relief to the Allies and particularly Churchill, who was under pressure at home and abroad to produce results. By 23rd January 1943 the Allies had reached Tripoli and quickly opened up the harbour to receive much-needed supplies, while Rommel's forces retreated into Tunisia.



More wounded after Stuka raid



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We are honoured to display photographs from the papers of **Arthur Pullan**, who served in the RASC firstly during the campaign in France in 1940 and then in North Africa. Arthur was an ambulance driver and recorded his experiences of treating the wounded during the Battle of El Alamein by camera, until the conclusion of the campaign in May 1943. Arthur also served later in Italy.



MO giving injections after Stuka raid



Loading the wounded into ambulances - Alamein



Bug Bug Nov 1942 German 210 mm gun



Knocked out Jerry tank - Alamein



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Martuba track Nov 1942 - Stuck in the mud.
This is where we did about 5 or 6 miles a day



Rounding up the prisoners at Alamein Nov 1942



Martuba Wadi - Nov 1942 - Flea hunting
after visit to abandoned Italian camp.



South Sidi Rezegh - Dec 1942 - after a 10
minute shower in the desert.



Major Gerald Jackson had served in 6RTR during the retreat towards El Alamein in June and July 1942 and took part in a series of engagements which took their toll both on tank numbers and on crew-members. He then joined 10 Corps HQ as Personal Liaison Officer to Brigadier George Webb in time for the October battle.

I soon found that the work was interesting and had a hectic time working under George Webb on the movement plans of 10th Corps to its battle positions, I had never realised before how much work had to be done to get formations and supplies into the places where they were needed and now on a scale that we had never experienced before. One of the first things that struck me was that this was now quite a different Army, the improvement in morale since Montgomery had arrived was amazing, in July I had left a bewildered angry army that did not seem to know what it was trying to do and had now come back two months later to this hive of purposeful activity. . . . Just before it all started I went up with the Brigadier to visit 30 Corps and we also visited some of the assault divisions including our old friends the New Zealanders, it was a hive of activity, tracks forward were being marked with signs and lamps for use at night and tanks and guns were moving up to their positions. I was particularly impressed with the new Shermans, here at last was a proper tank with a decent gun in the main turret and there seemed to be plenty of them. . . .

On the 23rd October I went forward to Tac HQ and then in the evening at 9.40pm the barrage started, it was an amazing spectacle, gun flashes as far as the eye could see and the noise like someone continuously hammering on a big drum. The armoured divisions were moving up and I went to watch them following their allotted tracks, it was a most impressive sight and one had a sneaking feeling that one would have liked to be with them. . . . I spent most of my time going up and down from rear HQ to main HQ and at times visiting divisional HQs picking up all the information I could about how the battle was progressing, it was a new experience to see what went on in these HQs and to watch progress on the maps. As usual there was a lot of confusion at times but somehow it all seemed much better controlled and there was an air of confidence about that made a pleasant change. Minefields were again proving to be the big problem as these were on a scale we had never seen before and new ones always seemed to be found where least expected. The tanks were having a rough time and losses were very heavy, as usual mainly from those cursed 88s, we still had not solved the problem of getting the tanks through the minefields in support of the Infantry. We had a few bombs dropped on us, mainly by marauding night bombers as the RAF seemed to have



Advance from Alamein - Armoured cars waiting to go up Sollum Pass



Advance from Alamein - 10 Corps HQ on the road



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complete mastery of the skies during daylight. For the final break through I went up to 1st Armoured Division which was located just our side of the German minefields and in front of our guns, in the early hours of the next morning the barrage opened, 800 guns each firing 400 rounds, the noise was deafening and the flashes lit up the sky and in the distance one could see the almost continuous flashes of the shells arriving on their targets.



Ron Mitchel and Larry Gain - Ron killed at Sidi Rezegh and Larry killed Alamein



Larry's grave at Alamein

By first light the New Zealanders had secured their bridgehead and the Armoured division was moving forward, 9th Armoured brigade was soon astride the Rahman track but was held up by the inevitable 88 screen and suffered very heavy losses. It was interesting to be among the original defences and to see the pock marked ground where the barrage had fallen, the trenches, and here and there one or two of those 88s so well dug in that only the barrel appeared above ground level, no wonder they were so difficult to knock out.

We moved our HQ through the Alamein position and could see the over-run enemy trenches, burnt out tanks, destroyed guns and of course the corpses. We were now kept frantically busy organizing forward supply dumps for the advance, we moved again to near Girawla, the main hazard now was scattered mines along the roadside and booby traps which were abundant. Traffic was chaotic as it had rained heavily and off the road the desert was a quagmire where even tracked vehicles could hardly move, the main road was an amazing sight with vehicles nose to tail as far as one could see, and if one wanted to get through one had to take a chance of mines and take to the desert, it was fortunate that the Luftwaffe never made an appearance.

We heard of the Allied landings by the Americans and British 1st Army in North Africa and wondered if we would after all lose the race to Tripoli, it was still a very long way to go, and in the past we had always come to a grinding halt at El Agheila



Jeepery - on the way to Tunis

See also [Events in North Africa - June 1942](#).



Stanley Palmer of the Signal section, 6th Bn Green Howards wrote over two hundred letters to his fiancée Winnie during his service including the campaign in North Africa. He sailed from Gourrock June 1941, spent seven days in Durban and arrived at Port Tewfik in July. The following year, having escaped from the 69th Brigade Box on the Gazala line, through the Italian lines, Stanley Palmer then took part in the El Alamein battle.



Stanley Palmer and his fiancée

October 30th 1942

My Darling Sweetheart,

Am anxiously awaiting your next letter, for it seemed a week, no two weeks at least since I received your last, I am not impatient am I . . . But having gone through a hectic period, that when we come out, we feel we ought to go down on hands and knees, to thank God for having been delivered safely, and I do thank God that I am able to say, am well and in good health. Yes! Those few words mean such a lot these days. I can assure you that this is no time in which to continue my effort in writing, but want to make the best of any spare time that comes my way, that's if my mind is relaxed enough to settle down to such a delicate 'job' for I always try to make a letter as interesting as possible out of what is happening around me, not meaning that it's so monotonous, far from it, we get as many thrills, and excitements, in three days, than what some folk experience in a lifetime.

There is nothing better for building up the morale than successes, our turn has come, when we have experienced that, doing a fine job, many prisoners have been taken. Yes, we have some fine lads in the companies, couldn't have better, there will be more awards I feel sure, for gallantry and bravery.

November 20th 1942

My Darling Sweetheart,

Except for a couple of air graphs and an airmail letter, must be about six weeks since I last wrote you a decent letter and how miserable I feel that such a long spell has had to elapse, no explanation is needed, for the events of late speak for themselves, I made an attempt sixteen weeks ago, was going quite well, then on we moved, and it's now that we are settled at least for a little while, that I shall now be able to get myself organised - what a lot in the meantime has happened. We didn't take such a big part in this final push, but we took as big a part as





any until the 'crack', and then it fizzled out for us, it was over, being shepherds rounding up the sheep, it couldn't have been easier collecting the Jerries and Ities in by the hundreds, it wasn't a case of going after them, but them giving themselves up to us, needed no armed guard, was amusing at times to see them on their own, making their own meals, no one interfering, and then for them to be told it was time they were on their way. With the Jerry trucks that were captured, were used to transport prisoners, with their own drivers fetching them, going backwards and forwards ferrying prisoners, was incredible.

This pen I'm using is one borrowed from Ging, for mine has a broken nib, this is one that was given by an Italian prisoner, in gratitude for giving him some water, Ging wouldn't take it at first but the Italian insisted he should take it, the pen was most probably taken off one of the Tommies at some time, for it is a Parker pen, a darned good pen as well. I got some useful articles which had been left in their desperate bid to reach comparative safety, which was all in vain, for very few got away from the southern section. One day, was taking my turn on a carrier with wireless set, what a sight to see, all these prisoners being brought in. There were trucks right and left, some piled up, others burnt out, passing some still burning, but all is over for us, at least a little while, and how weary we feel now, we got excitement in the push forward, then to stop and come back, a deep depression has come over us, of misery, I have never felt as miserable for a long time, it's a case of being war weary I think . . this writing pad I am using belonged to an Italian, same day picked up a pair of binoculars out of a Jerry broken down car, later came across an Italian revolver, all mementos.

The desert itself is getting under our skin, the flies, the mention of flies, is nearly every letter, but when we are cursing them the whole day long, only those who have lived amongst such conditions realise. In the exchange here it's like being in a hive of bees, by the buzzing, we spend the whole day flapping our hands about, it's murder. Oh to get away from the pests, to go for meals, sit down, put down our pot of tea, and see immediately the rim covered, very rarely can I drink it without having to throw a quarter of my tea away, to slop out four or five flies that have committed suicide. What a life. Then the dust and sand that gets in the food, put my porridge down this morning, to butter a biscuit, and when I came to pick it up, I couldn't see the porridge for sand. No wonder so many on sick, there is an epidemic on just now. . . I'm not surprised at the millions of flies, for it smells of death, bodies lying around, never been buried, legs with a boot and part of the trousers lying about. Feel rather depressed these days for writing a decent letter, don't know what has come over us, but we are all alike, had too much knocking around to be happy, all looking forward to a break, but doesn't seem to be for us. So excuse me, Sweetheart, for such a bad letter. Lying deep in my heart, my yearnings to be with you again, are crying and longing, to have you comfort me, to console me, make me cheerful, how I am missing the times we spent together. Oh! If we could only meet again, for me to get away from war to peace, live human instead of living a life of hell, as we have lived for the last nine months, often



at night as we lay in bed gazing up at the stars, we talk of life that used to be, and to when we return to dear old Blighty, seems so far away at times and so long since we saw our loved and dear ones, for so much has happened to us in that space of time, which has felt an age.

Perhaps at this stage would be no harm if I related to you a little episode which we had to go through a week before this big push, don't know but every time we have had to engage in action, always came on Sundays. Yes! Every action for us was on the Sabbath - that Sunday evening was a quarter moon, clear, we knew what our job was, a few days previously, that a certain position had to be taken that the Ities were holding, the famous troops of theirs, Folgore (paratroops) everybody seemed in good spirits despite the knowledge of what we knew, we were gathered together wondering. Of course an issue of rum was about to take place, as we often get in times when it's going to be anything like sticky.

Once on the way it becomes deadly silent, not a sound, just the crumping of feet over the soft sand, the barrage opens, the bangs, whines of our twenty five pounder guns, going over our heads giving the Ities a terrific pounding, with high explosives and smoke shells, finally reaching the position which has to be taken, we are all waiting, laying down, till the gap in the minefield is made, as we lay, bombs from mortars and shells were dropping amongst us, there are moans and groans coming from the wounded, where are the stretcher bearers was the cry, those are the lads who deserve praise, the magnificent work that they do in action, forever in the thick of it, it's pitiful to hear yells and screams coming from those around, we are all helping to comfort each other, bandaging those wounded, to say you're OK. A lot troubled more after, by shock, the reaction . . . One time, mortar bombs dropped within less than thirty yards, then forming a square one in each corner, I couldn't see my mate for black dust, who was within arms length away, the smell of cordite filled our nostrils for a day, finally word came that a gap had been made, companies went dashing forward, mopping up the Ities who tried to stop them, small stuff, that is rounds from machine guns were whistling and whining in the air, on through the gap, bodies of dead were laying here and there, some badly hurt, moaning, giving out screams, Ities in their language, laid there calling for help . . . First part of the objective was gained, the company lads had been marvellous, talk what good soldiers the Australians, the Indians, New Zealanders, believe me there are no better soldiers in this world than the English lads, British to be correct. There were some Ities to be mopped up yet . . . A few lads were called for to do the job, on with the bayonets and over the top, to get those who were putting up resistance, what a fine spirit exists in action, lads were shouting and cursing to the Ities come out . . . One minute later, over the top came trooping about 30 Ities, hands above their heads. What a sorry state, worn out clothes and boots, what a tough lot they looked with their grizzly little beards, just after seeing them and the noise had died down somewhat, for all the while it was an inferno, a continuation of bangs and cracks. We were digging in, that's the first job, a pal of mine a few yards away doing likewise, when a crack followed by a sizzling whine, we saw a tracer shell pass



between us and explode 15 yards in the ridge side, didn't the sweat roll off my brow . . .
.was miraculous that so few of us got hurt in this certain spot, for the amount of
STUFF that DROPPED, BUT IT WAS SUCCESSFUL . . .

Information we were told later, a doctor who was captured that night with the Italians told us, when they were attacked they were practically wiped out, only 30 of them left, took a lot of prisoners, and the few days we were there some of the lads spent all their time doing burials, such is the life, very unpleasant, that we wanted to get away from it all. But there's no better lads anywhere, no more willing to do their share. We know there are still hard times ahead for us still, but this time we are on the homeward way, which gives us still more heart . . . News is better today than at any time in this war, advancing on all fronts. Good luck to the Russians, they have surely stood hardships and bitter fighting but their time has come for victories, the same as us, we're on the homeward path now Sweetheart, the future looks bright for us both, till we meet my love. God bless you dear. I thank God that I am able to write this letter to you. Your ever loving and faithful Sweetheart, Stanley

From North Africa Stanley Palmer and the 6th battalion Green Howards moved on to Sicily before Stanley returned home for a long-awaited leave in November 1943. Stanley's brother Ronald served in the Royal Navy, his other brother Douglas was also in the Army and his sister Mary joined the ATS.

As the Battle of El Alamein brought success in Egypt, an Allied amphibious force, under the overall command of Lt General Dwight D Eisenhower landed at Casablanca in Morocco, and Oran and Algiers in Algeria on 8 November 1942. A force of 31,000 landed as part of the Western Task Force at Casablanca, 18,500 came ashore as the Central Task Force at Oran and 20,000 troops formed the Eastern Task Force. A small force of British airborne troops took Bone airfield, west of Tunis to deprive the Germans of vital reinforcement and supply opportunities. The Allies pushed eastwards towards Tunisia, while German reinforcements were rushed in to the region to halt their advance. During the winter months and early Spring of 1943, Rommel led his troops in a skilful withdrawal, holding up the Allied forces at Medinine and the heavily fortified Mareth Line. Further west, Axis forces captured all the passes in the Eastern Dorsales region before launching a major attack against the Kasserine Pass in February 1943. American forces held the 10th Panzer Division at the Pass and Rommel called off the attack on the 22nd, before heading to a meeting with Hitler to request an evacuation from Africa. Not only was the request denied, Rommel was sent on sick-leave and overall command of Army Group Africa passed to General von Arnim. After General George S Patton took command of US II Corps, US troops took Gafsa and Station de Sened. German troops fought to the end, despite Allied troops entering Tunis and Bizerta. However 275,000 Axis troops surrendered in Tunisia as the Desert War came to a close on 13 May 1943. The Torch landings were an important reflection of the need for close air, sea and ground co-ordination in executing a successful campaign and the move towards greater co-operation between the Allied nations in deciding priorities for action.



Geoffrey Wooler was born in November 1911 and studied medicine at Cambridge, before starting his medical career at London Hospital in October 1933. Having joined the Royal Army Medical Corps (Territorial Army) in 1938, Geoffrey was responsible for checking the physical fitness of new recruits to the second Battalion the Queen's Westminsters. In May 1942 he was transferred as a graded surgeon to the 70th General Hospital and moved with the Hospital to North Africa shortly after the Torch landings. Here we display extracts from Geoffrey Wooler's diary:



On the road to Tunis

Friday Dec 11th During the late morning, we arrived in Bone and camped in a field about a mile from the town. I was asked to form a small mobile surgical team from the personnel of the 70th General Hospital in order to help the surgeons working with Field Ambulances at the front. I thought it would be a good idea to see what their conditions were like. So on Monday, Feb 1st, 1943, a Capt Porterfield from 185 Field Ambulance offered to take me to the front in his car. He had a Dodge 15cwt. truck with a solid roof covering the front seats from which you could spot planes. We drove all day Eastwards along the main coastal road which eventually goes as far as Bizerta and Tunis, but these towns were still in enemy hands.

After leaving La Calle the road passes through a desolate part of the country. There were many burnt out vehicles dumped by the side of the road and several German tanks in the surrounding fields. In many places the road showed signs of being mined. We arrived at Sedjenane at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The 185 Field Ambulance was billeted in a tobacco factory along with a number of British and French commandos. About every ten days front line troops came there for forty-eight hours' rest.

Tuesday Feb 2nd 1943 After breakfast I went over to see the tunnel in which Gledhill had his Field Surgical Unit. It is safely housed in this railway tunnel and looks as though it would stop anything except a direct hit. The theatre has a wooden and lino floor. There is a resuscitation ward and one other ward with 12 beds adjoining the theatre. They have an ample supply of stretchers. Electric lighting is from a generator or from accumulators. They have also a supply of Tilley lamps.

A mixed French and English commando force is billeted in part of the tobacco factory. Some of the French are very young - in their teens. They go out at night armed with Sten guns to shoot Arabs and anybody they see coming over from the Jerry lines.

Thursday Feb. 4th 1943 One of the padres of the Field Ambulance wished to go up to the Advanced Dressing Station on a motorbike after breakfast. I was discussing with Gledhill whether it was fairly safe to do this and so avoid a night journey when Jerry planes arrived. We were in our room, Gledhill told me to duck. There was the sound of machine gunfire and cannon. The planes arrived with their engines turned off from the



direction of the sun and dived on the tobacco factory shooting with their cannons. There was a colossal roar of engines as they pulled out of their dives and went away. They were quickly followed by a second wave of planes which bombed the factory. I counted at least six bombs which arrived without any whistle. The windows and doors of our room were blown in and both Gledhill and I were covered with glass and wood splinters. My left foot was cut slightly. A crack appeared in the wall above our fireplace, and a grate from the stove shot out through the door, which was difficult to explain.

The whole show lasted about five minutes. I kept to my corner of the room with my tin hat on. The house rocked on two occasions but withstood the racket.

There were signs of machine gunning and cannon fire on the wall of the passage outside our room. A bomb had hit the Main Dressing Station at the other side of the yard to our house, and all the patients in there were killed. An ammunition dump belonging to the commandos in our house was on fire and French commandos were rushing about telling us to get clear because it might blow up any minute.

Gledhill soon recovered from this shaking up and started organising things for the reception of casualties. Several of the Field Ambulance officers came into the tunnel to help. I assisted Gledhill with all the cases - there were twelve. Most of them had multiple injuries so we both worked together in order to get them out of the theatre as quickly as possible.

Friday Feb. 26th 1943 After arriving at 19 Casualty Clearing Station a message arrived from Corps Headquarters ordering us to prepare all beds, because we were to expect a great number of casualties. They started to arrive in the late afternoon. I operated all the night, stopping once for food at 4 o'clock in the morning.

Saturday Feb 27th Casualties continued to pour in every four hours. We had three operating tables going in my theatre and I operated and supervised all the day. I had two hours' rest in the late afternoon and then carried on throughout the night until four o'clock. The Commanding Officer of the Casualty Clearing Station, Colonel Pern, kindly assisted me during the night.

Wednesday April 14th The 70th General Hospital is under canvas in a field about half a mile from Thibar village. Got up at dawn and spent the whole day pitching tents and unloading lorries.

A Bosch plane came over in the evening and bombed us - he dropped two 500lb bombs and a number of anti-personnel bombs, which did little damage.

Thibar monastery is situated between the village and our hospital camp site. It was built in the mid-19th century and houses Les Pères Blancs monks. Their toilets have been built over a crevice in the rocks and everything has conveniently disappeared for over a century - until our soldiers arrived.

One man was smoking a cigarette while he used the toilet, and as he got up to dress, he threw the remainder of his cigarette down the toilet and so into the crevice. Immediately there was an ominous rumbling sound, which alerted him, and he left hurriedly before adjusting his clothing.



I was in a field about 200 yards away, when there was a loud explosion like a bomb, and the whole roof of the toilet sailed into the air. Hydrogen sulphide no doubt.

A corrugated iron roof was immediately fitted; but this only lasted two days, when it went up - in spite of a notice on the toilet door: 'No smoking'.

After losing a second roof it was decided not to replace it, as summer was approaching and the weather becoming warmer. Our men were not accustomed to roofs on latrines.

Thursday April 15th 1943 We made a large red cross and I felt safer from air attack.

Wednesday April 21st At about mid-day Jerry commenced a major offensive and casualties began to pour in. We were the only unit functioning because all the others had packed and were waiting to go forward. Later I learnt that our army had been preparing for a major attack, to force the Germans out of the remaining pocket in Tunisia. He must have received this information and so attacked first.

Thursday April 22nd The most severely injured of our men arrived during the early morning. They came in hundreds and many of them died. We had three operating tables going and I worked hard all the day and night. Jerry is attacking in full force and determined to break through our lines. Col Coyte and Major Owen and many others from the 71st General came to help us.

Friday April 23rd Wounded continued to pour in the whole day, all very severe injuries. I had three hours' rest in the afternoon but otherwise kept going all day and night. Our nursing sisters arrived in the afternoon.

Saturday April 24th 1943 We admitted 580 severely wounded cases yesterday.

Sunday April 25th We are taking in hundreds of casualties a day, some have already been operated on at the forward Casualty Clearing Stations. Our attack is certainly on but Jerry is harder to crack than I thought.

Thursday May 6th Our attack for Tunis has started and the air was never free of our planes, relays of bombers escorted by fighters passed overhead all the day long - making for the direction of Tunis. We took a few minor casualties in during the night but nothing in comparison with the show of a fortnight ago.



Tommy washing for me while I recover



MacKay with the Peugeot I was given by a German Doctor in Tunis



Friday May 7th 1943 Planes continued to pass overhead during all the night and day. The men who have come back from the front say that there seemed to be thousands of our planes bombing the enemy. In the evening we heard that both Tunis and Bizerta fell today at about 4pm.

Monday May 10th We were told to clear the hospital completely and to expect 2,000 prisoners. All British cases are to go to the 71st General Hospital.

Many more wounded prisoners arrived.



Blown bridge Sousse-Tunis Road



Tunis aerodrome

Tuesday May 11th We took in over 1,200 wounded prisoners today and I was up until 5 o'clock in the morning treating them. The Italian and German doctors assisted us.

Thursday May 13th 1943 The best way of annoying the Bosch is to ask them if they are Italian. They dislike one another intensely.

We allowed the medical prisoners considerable freedom but soon learnt that it was foolish. One night the German doctors burnt our hospital tents saying they have not lost the war, a disgraceful thing to do - so they were taken to a Prisoner of war camp.

Saturday May 15th 1943 Back at the 70th General in Thibar, German sick and casualties continued to arrive in their hundreds. They believe that we are going to fight with them against Russia after the war.

Thursday May 20th Victory day in Tunis. The American surgical team left at an early hour to fly over Tunis in the victory demonstration.

Geoffrey Wooler's service in North Africa was, for him, just the beginning. He landed on an invasion barge in Pantelleria, before moving on to Sicily and subsequently Italy, where he operated on the casualties of the Monte Cassino battles. Post war, Geoffrey Wooler operated for many years at Leeds General Infirmary, undertaking pioneering work in the field of Thoracic surgery. He wrote of his experiences in an autobiography 'Pig in a Suitcase' which is both informative and extraordinarily entertaining and the Centre is honoured to hold copies of Geoffrey Wooler's extensive collection of photographs and his diary.