

# Chain of Command

**CHAIN OF COMMAND WESTERN DESERT, 1941**

# DUEL IN THE DESERT THE VILLAGE AT ELPH ARRRT



WEHRMACHTBERICHT, REICHSMINISTERIUM  
FÜR VOLKSAUFKLÄRUNG UND PROPAGANDA, (RMVP)

ARMED FORCES REPORT VOLUME 3.  
VICTORY AT THE VILLAGE OF ELPH ARRRT.

# THE ALLIES

## 1ST PLATOON, 3RD BATTALION THE NORTH ESSEX REGIMENT

**LIEUTENANT BRIAN SURBITON**  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL BOY, SENSIBLE, SPORTY  
AND DEPENDABLE. RECENTLY MARRIED.  
INTELLIGENT AND LOYAL, BUT CAUTIOUS.

**SERGEANT JOHN BROWN**  
FARM BOY. UNIMAGINATIVE BUT TOUGH.  
RESOLUTE AND LOYAL. FOLLOWS ORDERS -  
THAT'S HIS JOB.

**CORPORAL REG JENKINS**  
PRE-WAR SOLDIER. EXPERIENCED,  
BUT NOT ONE FOR VOLUNTEERING

**CORPORAL JEREMY STRAP**  
OFFICE CLERK CALLED UP AT THE BEGINNING OF  
THE WAR. GOOD ON ADMIN AND CAN FOLLOW A  
PLAN. ENDLESSLY ANNOYED AT HIS NICKNAME,  
"JOCK"

**CORPORAL PETER LE MANOIR**  
BOHEMIAN ARTIST. VEHEMENTLY ANTI-FASCIST,  
FOUGHT IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR. INSPIRES  
HIS SECTION WITH HIS GENUINE CONVICTIONS



1ST PLATOON, A COMPANY, 22ND NEW  
ZEALAND BATTALION, ALSO KNOWN AS THE  
"WELLINGTON BATTALION".

**2ND LIEUTENANT BARNEY PYTHON**  
AGED 26 FROM WELLINGTON. COMES FROM A  
WELL KNOWN AND PROMINENT RESPECTED  
FAMILY. HIS FATHER IS A FORMER MAYOR OF  
WELLINGTON WHO SERVED IN WW1 AT  
GALLIPOLI WHERE HE WON A MILITARY CROSS.  
LT PYTHON IS A NATURAL LEADER BUT ALSO  
RELIES HEAVILY ON HIS SGT'S EXPERIENCE AND  
COUNSEL.

**SERGEANT FULTON MCKAY**  
AGED 37 ORIGINALLY FROM GLASGOW, WAS  
FORMERLY A SERGEANT IN THE SCOTS GUARDS  
WITH 15 YEARS HARD SERVICE IN IRELAND,  
PALESTINE AND INDIA BEFORE BUYING HIMSELF  
OUT OF HIS ARMY CONTRACT TO EMIGRATE AND  
JOIN THE NZ PRISON SERVICE.

**CORPORAL COLIN MEADE**  
AGED 28 FROM LEVIN OUTSIDE WELLINGTON,  
WAS FORMERLY AN ALL BLACK INTERNATIONAL  
RUGBY PLAYER AND A SHEEP FARMER. WELL  
OVER 6 FOOT 5 INCHES AND WEIGHING IN AT  
220 POUNDS WITH A HARDY HEWN PHYSIQUE, HE  
HAS THE STRENGTH TO CARRY A SHEEP UNDER  
EACH ARM AND RUN FOR MILES WITHOUT  
STOPPING. BEING HALF MAORI, HE HAS AN  
INTENSE DISLIKE OF RACISTS.

**LANCE CORPORAL ALFRED 'MOBY' DICKIE**  
AGED 23 FROM KAPITI ISLAND OFF  
WELLINGTON'S COAST, TACITURN, BUT ALSO  
ABLE TO INSPIRE THE MEN IN HIS SECTION WITH  
HIS COURAGE.

**CORPORAL TIMOTHY 'HIC' FARTHING**  
26 FROM WELLINGTON, SON OF A CARPENTER.  
CPL FARTHING WAS FORMERLY A VICAR WHO  
PRIOR TO THE WARS OUTBREAK LED A  
SOMEWHAT HERMIT LIKE LIFESTYLE,  
TRAVELLING ACROSS NEW ZEALAND PREACHING  
THE VIRTUES OF SOCIALISM, GODLINESS AND  
THE DANGERS OF DRINK.



# THE AXIS

## **AFRICA KORPS 5TH LEICHTE DIVISION - RESERVE PLATOON**

### **OBERLEUTNANT OTTO VON GENSCHLAND**

4TH SON OF VERY MINOR BAVARIAN NOBILITY. ADVENTURER, PLAYBOY AND ALL ROUND CAVALIER ROISTERER, AGE 26.

### **1ST SQUAD - OBERGEFREITER JOHANN SCHMIDT**

ARMY REGULAR, VETERAN OF THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR, FROM A POOR UPBRINGING IN DUSSELDORF, GRIZZLED AND GNARLED, AGE 38

### **2ND SQUAD - OBERGEFREITER KARL HAGEN**

HISTORY TEACHER FROM A SMALL TOWN OUTSIDE HAMBURG, STUDIOUS, CAREFUL PRECISE, AGE 31.

### **3RD SQUAD - OBERGEFREITER STEFAN WASSERLECHNER**

FARM BOY FROM EAST GERMANY, STRONG AS AN OX, INDEFATIGABLE, WILL NOT QUESTION ANY ORDER, AGE 25.

## **ITALIAN PLATOON, 10TH ARMY, 63RD INFANTRY DIVISION, 157 REGIMENT.**

### **COMMANDED BY TENENTE STEFANO VILLARI**

24 YEARS OLD, FROM LUCCA IN TUSCANY, STUDIED ARCHITECTURE AT THE UNIVERSITY IN PADUA BUT JOINED THE ARMY AMIDST THE SURGE OF ITALIAN NATIONALISM THAT COINCIDED WITH THE ITALO-ETHIOPIAN WAR. ITALIAN MORALE IS HIGH AFTER THE INITIAL SUCCESSES IN EGYPT AND STEFANO IS POPULAR WITH HIS MEN.

### **1ST SQUAD**

#### **SERGEANTE LUIGI GRIFFO**

LUIGI TRAINED AS A PLUMBER BEFORE THE WAR, 30 YEARS OLD, HE IS TALL AND AS STRONG AS AN OX WITH A DISTINCTIVE BLACK MOUSTACHE.

#### **CAPORALE POMPEO STROMBOLI**

32 YEARS OLD, STROMBOLI WAS A PUPPETEER AND SHOWMAN BEFORE THE WAR, HE IS DARK AND SWARTHY WITH GYPSY HERITAGE. RATHER FUN BUT HAS A BIT OF A TEMPER.

### **2ND SQUAD**

#### **SERGEANTE FRANCESCO BERNOULLI**

30 YEARS OLD, GREW UP IN THE SHADOW OF THE FAMOUS MONZA RACE TRACK, WAS MAKING A NAME FOR HIMSELF AS AN AMATEUR RACING DRIVER, LOVED BY THE LADIES, BUT FRANCESCO'S BIGGEST FAN IS HIMSELF, COCKY, BOASTFUL AND ARROGANT.

#### **CAPORALE VINCENZO SANTORINI**

34 YEARS OLD, SANTORINI IS A VETERAN OF THE ABYSSINIAN CAMPAIGN WHERE HE SERVED IN THE ARTILLERY, HE BECAME ADEPT AT BLOWING THINGS UP, UNFORTUNATELY FOR VINCENZO HE FREQUENTLY BLEW UP THE WRONG THINGS WHICH IS WHY HE IS STILL A CAPORALE. HIS PARENTS RAN A FLOWER SHOP IN NAPLES.



## THE VILLAGE AT ELPH ARRT

THE PATROL PHASE UNDERWAY, THE INEXPERIENCED BRITISH PLATOON WERE IMMEDIATELY DRAWN TO THE APPARENT SAFETY OF THE VILLAGE, IT ACTUALLY TURNED INTO A DEATH TRAP TO THE MEN FROM NORTH ESSEX.

THE NEW ZEALAND PLATOON ENDED UP DEPLOYING ON THE BRITISH LEFT FLANK AND HAD A LONG WAY TO GO OVER OPEN GROUND TO GET INVOLVED IN THE BATTLE.

THE MORE EXPERIENCED GERMANS AND ITALIANS MANAGED TO WORK THEIR WAY AROUND THE BRITISH RIGHT FLANK UNDER THE CAREFUL TUTELAGE OF THE COMPLETELY UNBIASED UMPIRES, AND DEPLOY AMONGST THE ROCKS AND BROKEN GROUND WHICH GAVE THEM GOOD COVER TO POUR FIRE INTO THE HAPLESS BRITISH.



THE VILLAGE AT EL PHARRT

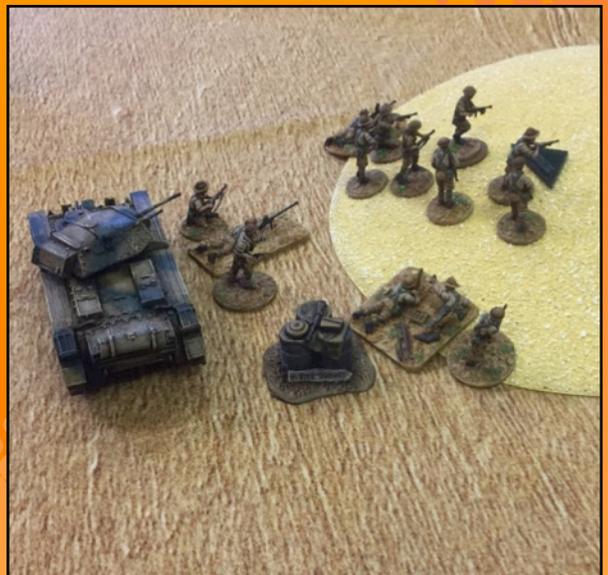


# THE ALLIES DEPLOY

THE BRITISH DEPLOYED INTO THE VILLAGE THEN REALISED WITH VERY FEW DOORS AND WINDOWS THAT THE HOUSES WERE VERY LIMITING. THE ROOFS ONLY ALLOWED A VERY NARROW FRONTAGE AND ONLY A FEW OF THE BRITISH COULD FIRE.

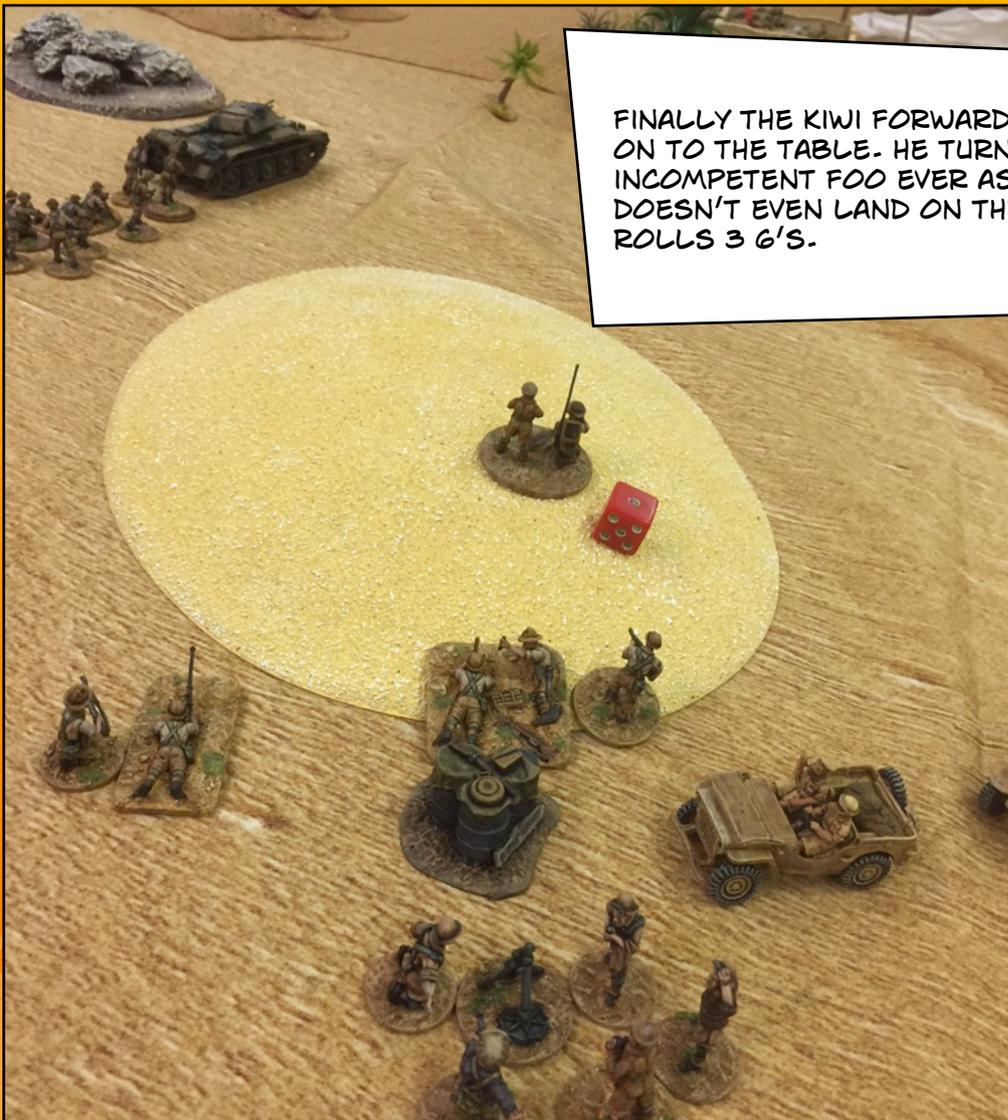
THE NEW ZEALANDERS DEPLOYED BEHIND THE HILL AND HAD TO RISK SOME VERY ACCURATE GERMAN FIRE BEFORE THEY COULD REACH THE RELATIVE SAFETY OF THE OASIS. BY THE TIME THEY HAD GOT THERE 3 OF THE RIFLEMEN WERE DEAD AND CORPORAL COLIN MEADE WAS WOUNDED.

THE NEW ZEALANDERS CALLED ON THEIR SUPPORTS, AN A15 MK.1 CRUSADER AND A 3" MORTAR BATTERY. COMMUNICATIONS IN THE DESERT PROVED DIFFICULT AND THE ORDERS TO THE BATTERY KEPT GOING ASTRAY.





THE BRITISH DEPLOYMENT PROVES DIFFICULT AS THEY SHELTER FROM THE HEAVY FIRE FROM THE GERMAN AND ITALIAN MACHINE GUNS.



FINALLY THE KIWI FORWARD OBSERVER FINDS HIS WAY ON TO THE TABLE. HE TURNS OUT TO BE THE MOST INCOMPETENT FOO EVER AS HIS FIRST RANGING SHOT DOESN'T EVEN LAND ON THE TABLE - DEVIATES 3DG AND ROLLS 3 6'S.





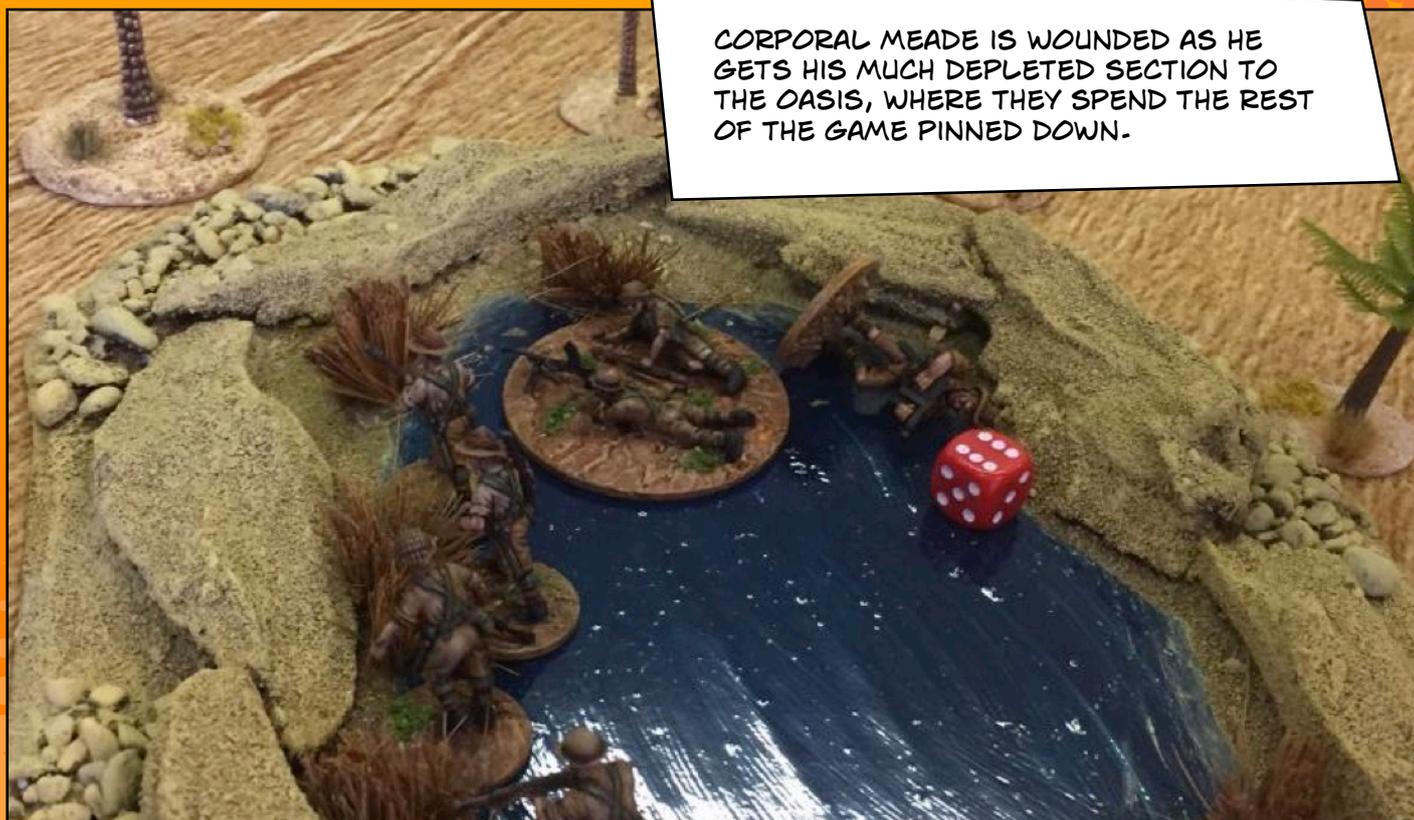
STROMBOLI  
ASSEMBLES  
HIS MEN.

CAPORALE STROMBOLI ON HIS  
ILL-FATED MISSION.





THE BRITISH AND NEW ZEALANDERS TRIED TO ADVANCE AGAINST THE COMBINED ITALIAN AND GERMAN MACHINE GUNS BUT WERE DRIVEN BACK. THE BRITISH IN THE VILLAGE WERE EVENTUALLY BROKEN AND THE KIWI'S STRUGGLED TO OVERCOME MULTIPLE PINS AND SHOCK.



CORPORAL MEADE IS WOUNDED AS HE GETS HIS MUCH DEPLETED SECTION TO THE OASIS, WHERE THEY SPEND THE REST OF THE GAME PINNED DOWN.

# CASUALTIES

VON GENSCHLANK'S' GERMANS SUFFERED ONLY MINOR CASUALTIES - 2 DEAD.

CAPORALE STROMBOLI AND HIS ENTIRE PLATOON OF 10 RIFLEMEN WERE SENT OUT TO ASSAULT THE VILLAGE AND WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN. THEY WERE EITHER CAPTURED OR KILLED.

CORPORAL MEADE AND 3 OTHER KIWIS WERE KILLED OR WOUNDED.

THE LOSSES AMONGST THE BRITISH WERE CATASTROPHIC, CORPORALS LE MANOR AND JENKINS WERE BOTH KILLED ALONG WITH 15 OTHERS.

LIEUTENANT BRIAN SURBITION MAY BE RELIEVED OF HIS COMMAND.

THE GERMAN AND ITALIAN COMMANDERS RECEIVE THEIR BRIEFING FROM THE UMPIRES.

