North African campaign

North African Campaign
Part of the Mediterranean and Middle East theatre of World War II

A British Crusader tank passes a burning German Pz.Kpfw.IV tank during Operation *Crusader*, 27 November 1941.

Date	10 June 1940 – 13 May 1943 (2 years, 11 months and 3 days)
Location	Italian Libya · Kingdom of Egypt French Algeria / Tunisia / Morocco
Result	Allied victory ▪ Fall of Italian Libya ▪ Surrender of all Axis forces in North Africa ▪ Eventual Allied invasion of Sicily
Territorial changes	Former Italian Libya placed under British military administration
Belligerents	

Allies	Axis

British Commonwealth	Italy
United Kingdom	Libya
India	Germany
Southern Rhodesia	Vichy France[nb 2]
Australia	Algeria[nb 1]
Canada	Tunisia[nb 1]
New Zealand	Morocco[nb 1]
South Africa	

United States[nb 1]

Free France

- Algeria[nb 1]
- Tunisia[nb 1]
- Morocco[nb 1]

Poland

Czechoslovak Legions

Greece

Commanders and leaders

Harold Alexander	Italo Balbo †
Claude Auchinleck	Rodolfo Graziani
Archibald Wavell	Italo Gariboldi
Bernard Montgomery	Ugo Cavallero
Dwight D. Eisenhower	Ettore Bastico
George S. Patton	Pietro Badoglio
François Darlan †[nb 3]	Giovanni Messe ⚑
Władysław Anders	Erwin Rommel
	Hans-J. von Arnim ⚑
	Adolf Hitler
	François Darlan †[nb 3]

Casualties and losses

Commonwealth	Italy
Estimated 220,000 dead, wounded, missing and captured,[1] including 35,478 confirmed dead.[2] **British**	22,341 dead or missing;[6] 250,000–350,000 captured.[7][nb 4] **Italy**
	18,594 dead; 3,400 missing; 130,000 captured. **Germany**[9]

16,000 killed, wounded
🇫🇷 **Free French** and missing.[3]

🇫🇷 **Vichy France**[nb 5] 1,346 dead; 1,997 wounded.

2,715 killed;
8,978 wounded;
🇺🇸 **United States** 6,528 missing.[4][5]

Principal material losses[10][11]
8,000 aircraft destroyed;
6,200 guns, 2,550 tanks and
70,000 trucks destroyed

Principal material losses
1,400 aircraft destroyed;
2,000 tanks destroyed.

or captured.   2,400,000 gross tons of supplies

The **North African Campaign** of the Second World War took place in North Africa from 10 June 1940 to 13 May 1943. It included campaigns fought in the Libyan and Egyptian deserts (Western Desert Campaign, also known as the Desert War) and in Morocco and Algeria (Operation Torch), as well as Tunisia (Tunisia Campaign).

The campaign was fought between the Allies, many of whom had colonial interests in Africa dating from the late 19th century, and the Axis Powers.[12][13] The Allied war effort was dominated by the British Commonwealth and exiles from German-occupied Europe. The United States officially entered the war in December 1941 and began direct military assistance in North Africa on 11 May 1942.

Fighting in North Africa started with the Italian declaration of war on 10 June 1940. On 14 June, the British Army's 11th Hussars (assisted by elements of the 1st Royal Tank Regiment, 1st RTR) crossed the border from Egypt into Libya and captured the Italian Fort Capuzzo. This was followed by an Italian counter-offensive into Egypt and the capture of Sidi Barrani in September 1940 and again in December 1940 following a British Commonwealth counteroffensive, Operation Compass. During Operation Compass, the Italian 10th Army was destroyed and the German *Afrika Korps*—commanded by Erwin Rommel, who later became known as "The Desert Fox"—was dispatched to North Africa in February 1941 during Operation *Sonnenblume* to reinforce Italian forces in order to prevent a complete Axis defeat.

A fluctuating series of battles for control of Libya and regions of Egypt followed, reaching a climax in the Second Battle of El Alamein in October 1942 when British Commonwealth forces under the command of Lieutenant-General Bernard Montgomery inflicted a decisive defeat on Rommel's Afrika Korps and forced its remnants into Tunisia. After the Anglo-American landings (Operation Torch) in North-West Africa in November 1942, and subsequent battles against Vichy France forces (who then changed sides), the Allies encircled several thousand German and Italian personnel in northern Tunisia and finally forced their surrender in May 1943.

Operation Torch in November 1942 was a compromise operation that met the British objective of securing victory in North Africa while allowing American armed forces the opportunity to engage in the fight against Nazi Germany on a limited scale.[14] In addition, as Joseph Stalin, the leader of the Soviet Union, had long been pleading for a second front to be opened to engage the Wehrmacht and relieve pressure on the Red Army, it provided some degree of relief for the Red Army on the Eastern Front by diverting Axis forces to the North African theatre.

Information gleaned via British Ultra code-breaking intelligence proved critical to Allied success in North Africa. Victory for the Allies in this campaign immediately led to the Italian Campaign, which culminated in the downfall of the fascist government in Italy and the elimination of Germany's main European ally.

Western Desert Campaign

On 10 May 1940, the Wehrmacht had started the Battle of France (or *Westfeldzug*). One month later, it was plain to see that France would have to surrender within two weeks (the Armistice at Compiègne took place on 22 June 1940).

On 10 June 1940, the Kingdom of Italy aligned itself with Nazi Germany and declared war upon France and the United Kingdom.[15] British forces (along with Indian and Rhodesian troop said under the empire) based in Egypt were ordered to undertake defensive measures, but to act as non-provocatively as possible.[16] However, on 11 June they began a series of raids against Italian positions in Libya.[17] Following the defeat of France on 25 June, Italian forces in Tripolitania—facing French troops based in Tunisia—redeployed to Cyrenaica to reinforce the Italian Tenth Army.[18] This, coupled with the steadily degrading equipment of the British forces led General Archibald Wavell to order an end to raiding and placed the defence of the Egyptian border on a small screening force.[19]

The Italian Empire in November 1942.

Italian dictator Benito Mussolini ordered the Tenth Army to invade Egypt by 8 August. Two days later, no invasion having been launched, Mussolini ordered Marshal Graziani that, the moment German forces launched Operation Sea Lion, he was to attack.[20] On 8 September, the Italians—hampered by the lack of transport and enfeebled by the low level of training among officers and weakened by the state of its supporting arms[18] – were ordered to invade Egypt the following day. The battle plan was to advance along the coastal road, while limited armoured forces operated on the desert flank.[19] To counter the Italian advance, Wavell ordered his screening forces to harass the advancing Italians, falling back towards Mersa Matruh, where the main British infantry force was based. Positioned on the desert flank was the 7th Armoured Division, which would strike the flank of the Italian force.[21][22]

By 16 September, the Italian force had advanced to Maktila, around 80 mi (130 km) west of Mersa Matruh, where they halted due to supply problems.[23] Despite Mussolini urging that the advance carry on, Graziani ordered his force to dig in around Sidi Barrani, and fortified camps were established in forward locations; additional troops were also positioned behind the main force.[24] In response to the dispersed Italian camps, the British planned a limited five-day attack, Operation Compass, to strike at these fortified camps one by one.[25][26] The British Commonwealth force, totalling 36,000 men,[27] attacked the forward elements of the 10-division-strong Italian army on 9 December.[28] Following their initial success, the forces of Operation Compass[29] pursued the retreating Italian forces.[30] In January, the small port at Bardia was taken,[31] soon followed by the seizure of the fortified port of Tobruk.[32] Some 40,000 Italians were captured in and around the two ports, with the remainder of the Tenth Army retreating along the coast road back to El Agheila. Richard O'Connor sent the 7th Armoured Division across the desert, with a small reconnaissance group reaching Beda Fomm some ninety minutes before the Italians, cutting off their retreat. Although desperate attempts were made to overcome the British force at the Battle of Beda Fomm,

the Italians were unable to break through, and the remnants of the retreating army surrendered. Thus, over the course of 10 weeks Allied forces had destroyed the Italian Tenth Army and reached El Agheila, taking 130,000 prisoners of war in the process.[33][34][35]

A British Matilda Mk II during Operation Compass displaying a captured Italian flag, 24 January 1941

Mussolini requested help from his German ally while the Italian Commando Supremo speedily sent several large motorized and armoured forces to protect their colonies in North Africa.[36] This greatly expanded reinforcement included the soon to be renowned *Ariete* Armoured division under General Ettore Baldassarre.[37] Meanwhile, the Germans hastily assembled a motorized force, whose lead elements arrived in Tripoli in February. This relatively small expeditionary force, termed the *Afrika Korps* by Hitler, was placed under the command of Erwin Rommel. His orders were to reinforce the Italians and block Allied attempts to drive them out of the region.[38][39] However, the initial commitment of only one panzer division and subsequently, no more than two panzer and one motorized divisions, indicated the limited extent of German involvement and commitment in this theater of operations.[37] The bulk of the reinforcements were Italian and therefore it was up to the Italians to do the bulk of the fighting. The forward Allied force—now named XIII Corps—adopted a defensive posture and over the coming months was built up, before having most of its veteran forces redeployed to Greece. In addition, the 7th Armoured Division was withdrawn to the Nile delta.[40][41][42] The veteran forces were replaced by inexperienced forces, ill-equipped to face German armour.[43]

Italian generals Ugo Cavallero and Ettore Bastico discussing the war at an Italian air base in Libya 1942

Although Rommel had been ordered to simply hold the line, an armoured reconnaissance soon became a full-fledged offensive from El Agheila in March 1941.[38][39] In March–April, the Allied forces were forced back [44] and leading general officers captured. The Australian 9th Infantry Division fell back to the fortress port of Tobruk,[45] and the remaining British and Commonwealth forces withdrew a further 100 mi (160 km) east to the Libyan–Egyptian border.[46] With Tobruk under siege from the main Italian-German force, a small battlegroup continued to press eastwards. Capturing Fort Capuzzo and Bardia in passing, it then advanced into Egypt, and by the end of April had taken Sollum and the tactically important Halfaya Pass. Rommel garrisoned these positions, reinforcing the battle-group and ordering it onto the defensive.[47][48]

British Crusader tanks moving to forward positions during Operation Crusader, 26 November 1941

Though isolated by land, Tobruk's garrison continued to receive supplies and replacements, delivered by the Royal Navy at night. Rommel's forces did not have the strength or training to take the fortress. This created a supply problem for his forward units. His front-line positions at Sollum were at the end of an extended supply chain that stretched back to Tripoli and had to bypass the coast road at Tobruk. Further, he was constantly threatened by a breakout of the British forces at Tobruk.[49] Without Tobruk in Axis hands, further advances into Egypt were impractical.[50][51]

The Allies soon launched a small-scale counter-attack called Operation Brevity. This was an attempt to push the Axis forces off the key passes at the border, which gained some initial success, but the advanced position could not be held. *Brevity* was then followed up by a much larger-scale offensive, Operation Battleaxe. Intended to relieve the siege at Tobruk, this operation also failed.

Following the failure of Operation *Battleaxe*, Archibald Wavell was relieved of command and replaced by Claude Auchinleck. The Western Desert Force was reinforced with a second corps, XXX Corps, with the two corps forming the Eighth Army. Eighth Army was made up of army forces from the Commonwealth nations, including the British Army, the Australian Army, the British Indian Army, the New Zealand Army, the South African Army, and the Sudan Defence Force. There was also a brigade of Free French under Marie-Pierre Koenig. The new formation launched a new offensive, Operation Crusader, in November 1941. After a see-saw battle, the 70th Division garrisoning Tobruk was relieved and the Axis forces were forced to fall back. By January 1942, the front line was again at El Agheila.

After receiving supplies and reinforcements from Tripoli, the Axis attacked again, defeating the Allies at Gazala in June and capturing Tobruk. The Axis forces drove the Eighth Army back over the Egyptian border, but their advance was stopped in July only 90 mi (140 km) from Alexandria in the First Battle of El Alamein.

German prisoners captured during the Second Battle of El Alamein, November 1942

Of great significance, on 29 June US reports from Egypt of British military operations stopped using the compromised "Black Code" which the Axis were reading, so learning of British "strengths, positions, losses, reinforcements, supply, situation, plans, morale etc".

General Auchinleck, although he had checked Rommel's advance at the First Battle of El Alamein, was replaced by General Harold Alexander. Lieutenant-General William Gott was promoted from XIII Corps commander to take command of the entire Eighth Army, but he was killed when his aircraft was intercepted and shot down over Egypt. He was replaced by Lieutenant-General Bernard Montgomery.

At the end of June, the Axis forces made a second attempt to break through the Allied defences at El Alamein at Alam Halfa, but were unsuccessful. After a lengthy period of build-up and training, the Eighth Army launched a major offensive, decisively defeating the Italian-German army during the Second Battle of El Alamein in late October 1942, driving the Axis forces westward and capturing Tripoli in mid-January 1943. By February, the Eighth Army was facing the Italian-German *Panzer* Army near the Mareth Line and came under command of General Harold Alexander's 18th Army Group for the concluding phase of the war in North Africa, the Tunisia Campaign.

Operation Torch

Operation Torch started on 8 November 1942, and finished on 11 November. In an attempt to pincer German and Italian forces, Allied forces (American and British Commonwealth), landed in Vichy-held French North Africa under the assumption that there would be little to no resistance. Nevertheless, Vichy French forces put up a strong and bloody resistance to the Allies in Oran and Morocco, but not in Algiers, where a *coup d'état* by the French resistance on 8 November succeeded in neutralizing the French XIX Corps before the landing and arresting the Vichy commanders. Consequently, the landings met no practical opposition in Algiers, and the city was captured on the first day along with the entire Vichy African command. After three days of talks and threats, Generals

Mark Clark and Dwight Eisenhower compelled the Vichy Admiral François Darlan (and General Alphonse Juin) to order the cessation of armed resistance in Oran and Morocco by French forces on 10–11 November with the provision that Darlan would be head of a Free French administration. During Operation *Torch*, American, Vichy French and German navy vessels fought the Naval Battle of Casablanca, ending in an American victory.

The Allied landings prompted the Axis occupation of Vichy France (Case Anton). In addition, the French fleet was captured at Toulon by the Italians, something which did them little good as the main portion of the fleet had been scuttled to prevent their use by the Axis. The Vichy army in North Africa joined the Allies (see Free French Forces).[52]

American troops on board a Landing Craft Assault heading into Oran, November 1942

Tunisian Campaign

Following the Operation *Torch* landings, (from early November 1942), the Germans and Italians initiated a buildup of troops in Tunisia to fill the vacuum left by Vichy troops which had withdrawn. During this period of weakness, the Allies decided against a rapid advance into Tunisia while they wrestled with the Vichy authorities. Many of the Allied soldiers were tied up in garrison duties because of the uncertain status and intentions of the Vichy forces.

Tiger 712 of the 501st heavy tank battalion was surrendered to the US and subsequently transferred to the United States Army Armor & Cavalry Museum[53]

By mid-November, the Allies were able to advance into Tunisia but only in single division strength. By early December, the **Eastern Task Force**—which had been redesignated as the British First Army under Lieutenant-General Kenneth Anderson—was composed of the British 78th Infantry Division, British 6th Armoured Division, 1st Parachute Brigade, No. 6 Commando and elements of US 1st Armored Division. But by this time, one German and five Italian divisions had been shipped from Europe and the remoteness of Allied airfields from the front line gave the Axis clear air superiority over the battlefield. The Allies were halted and pushed back having advanced eastwards to within 30 kilometres (19 mi) of Tunis.

During the winter, there followed a period of stalemate during which time both sides continued to build up their forces. By the new year, the British First Army had one British, one US and one French Corps (a second British Corps headquarters was activated in April). In the second half of February, in eastern Tunisia, Rommel and von Arnim had some successes against the mainly inexperienced French and US troops, most notably in routing the US II Corps commanded by Major General Lloyd Fredendall at the Battle of Kasserine Pass.

By the beginning of March, the British Eighth Army—advancing westward along the North African coast—had reached the Tunisian border. Rommel and von Arnim found themselves in an Allied "two army" pincer. They were outflanked, outmanned and outgunned. The British Eighth Army bypassed the Axis defence on the Mareth Line in late March and First Army in central Tunisia launched their main offensive in mid-April to squeeze the Axis forces until their resistance in Africa collapsed. The Axis forces surrendered on 13 May 1943 yielding over 275,000 prisoners of war. The last Axis force to

surrender in North Africa was the 1st Italian Army.[54] This huge loss of experienced troops greatly reduced the military capacity of the Axis powers, although the largest percentage of Axis troops escaped Tunisia. This defeat in Africa led to all Italian colonies in Africa being captured.

Intelligence

Axis

The Axis had considerable success in intelligence gathering through radio communication intercepts and monitoring unit radio traffic. The most important success came through intercepting the reports of Colonel Bonner Fellers, the US military attaché in Egypt. He had been tasked by General George Marshall with providing detailed reports on the military situation in Africa.[55] Fellers talked with British military and civilian headquarters personnel, read documents and visited the battlefront. Known to the Germans as "die gute Quelle" (the good source) or more jokingly as 'the little fellow', he transmitted his

A German Signals reception unit in the desert

reports back to Washington using the "Black Code" of the US State Department. However, in September 1941, the Italians had stolen a code book containing the Black Code, photographed it and returned it to the US embassy in Rome.[56] The Italians shared parts of their intercepts with their German allies. In addition the "Chiffrierabteilung" (German military cipher branch) were soon able to break the code. Fellers' reports were very detailed and played a significant role in informing the Germans of allied strength and intentions between January and June 1942.

An Italian M13/40 tank belonging to the Ariete Armoured Division

In addition, the Italian *Servizio Informazioni Segrete* or SIS code-breakers were able to successfully intercept much radio encrypted signals intelligence (SIGINT) from British aircraft traffic as well as first-class ciphers from British vessels and land bases, providing Supermarina (Regia Marina) with timely warnings of Allied intentions in the Mediterranean.[57] Indeed, so successful was the Italian SIS in handling the bulk of Axis naval intelligence in the Mediterranean, that "Britain's offensive use of SIGINT was largely negated by Italy's defensive SIGINT."[58]

The Afrika Korps had the intelligence services of the 621st Signals Battalion mobile monitoring element which arrived in North Africa in late April 1941,[59] commanded by Hauptmann Alfred Seeböhm. The 621st Signals Battalion monitored radio communications among British units.[55] Unfortunately for the Allies, the British not only failed to change their codes with any frequency, they were also prone to poor radio discipline in combat. Their officers made frequent open, uncoded transmissions to their commands, allowing the Germans to more easily identify British units and deployments.[55] The situation changed after a counterattack during the Battle of Gazala resulted in the 621st Signals Battalion being overrun and destroyed, and a number of their documents captured, alerting British intelligence to the problem.[60] The British responded by instituting an

improved call signal procedure, introducing radiotelephonic codes, imposing rigid wireless silence on reserve formations, padding out real messages with dummy traffic, tightening up on their radio discipline in combat and creating an entire fake signals network in the southern sector.[60]
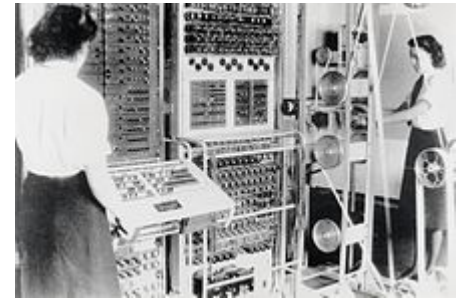
Allies

Allied codebreakers read much enciphered German message traffic, especially that encrypted with the Enigma machine. The Allies' Ultra programme was initially of limited value, as it took too long to get the information to the commanders in the field, and at times provided information that was less than helpful.[61] In terms of anticipating the next move the Germans would make, reliance on Ultra sometimes backfired. Part of the reason the initial German attacks in March 1941 were so successful was that Ultra intercepts had informed Wavell that OKW had clearly directed Rommel not to take any offensive action, but to wait until he was further reinforced with the 15th Panzer Division in May.[62]

Colossus Mark II computer at Bletchley Park

Rommel received this information, but placed more value on his own assessment of the situation. Trusting that the Germans had no intention of taking major action, the British command did not respond until it was too late.[63] Furthermore, Rommel did not generally provide OKW or the Italian Comando Supremo details of his planned operations, for he thought the Italians too prone to leak the information. Thus on 21 January 1942, when Rommel struck out on his second offensive from El Agheila, Commando Supremo was just as surprised to learn of it as the British were.[64] Ultra intercepts provided the British with such information as the name of the new German commander, his time of arrival, and the numbers and condition of the Axis forces, but they might not correctly reveal Rommel's intentions.

The primary benefit of Ultra intercepts to the effort in North Africa was to aid in cutting the Axis supply line to Tunisia. Ultra intercepts provided valuable information about the times and routes of Axis supply shipments across the Mediterranean. This was critical in providing the British with the opportunity to intercept and destroy them. During the time when Malta was under heavy air attack, the ability to act on this information was limited, but as Allied air and naval strength improved, the information became instrumental to Allied success. It is estimated that 40% to 60% of Axis supply shipping was located and destroyed due to decrypted information.[65][66] However, this claim is strongly disputed by the authors Vincent P. O'Hara and Enrico Cernuschi (2013) who claim that authors like F.H. Hinsley have greatly exaggerated the effects of ULTRA. For example, they claim that intelligence provided by ULTRA had little impact in stopping Italian convoys reaching North Africa. Of the 2.67 million tons of materiel, fuel, and munitions shipped to Africa — nearly all in Italian vessels and under Italian escort — 2.24 million tons managed to arrive despite the best efforts of ULTRA and the British Navy to prevent it.[67] In effect, "Ultra did not deny the Axis armies the supplies they needed to reach the Nile." [58]

Heavy losses of German paratroopers in Crete, made possible by Ultra warnings of the drop times and locations, meant that Hitler hesitated in attacking Malta,[68] which aided the British in gaining control of the Mediterranean, as did the losses of the Italian Navy at the Battle of Cape Matapan.[69]

To conceal the fact that German coded messages were being read, a fact critical to the overall Allied war effort, British command required a flyover mission be carried out before a convoy could be attacked in order to give the appearance that a reconnaissance flight had discovered the target.

Aftermath

After victory by the Allies in the North African Campaign, the stage was set for the Italian Campaign to begin. The invasion of Sicily followed two months later. Nearly 400,000 Axis and Allied troops were either lost, injured, or died of disease by the end of the North African Campaign.

See also

- List of World War II Battles
- North African Campaign timeline
- Timeline of World War II in 1940 / 1941 / 1942 / 1943

Wehrmacht fuel barrel in Tunisia, 2010

World War II portal

Notes

Footnotes

1. 1942–43.
2. 8–11 November 1942. Vichy officially pursued a policy of armed neutrality and conducted military actions against armed incursions from Axis and Allied belligerents. The pledging of allegiance of the Vichy troops in French North Africa to the Allies convinced the Axis that Vichy could not be trusted to continue this policy, so they invaded and occupied the French rump state (*Case Anton*)
3. Darlan joined the Allies in November 1942, ordering the French Army of Africa to cease fire and unite with the Free French, and became High Civilian and Military Commissioner in French North Africa. He was assassinated on 24 December 1942.
4. Historian Giorgio Rochat wrote:

   > *Sono circa 400.000 i prigionieri fatti dagli inglesi in Etiopia e in Africa settentrionale, 125.000 presi dagli americani in Tunisia e in Sicilia, 40.000 lasciati ai francesi in Tunisia* ("There were about 400,000 prisoners made by the British in North Africa and in Ethiopia, 125,000 taken by the Americans in Tunisia and Sicily, 40,000 by the French in Tunisia")[8]

Considering that about 100,000 Italian prisoners were taken in East Africa and that prisoners taken by the Americans were mainly in Sicily, the total is around 340,000–350,000.

5. During Operation Torch only (8–16 November 1942).

Citations

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2. Carell, p. 597
3. Cartier, Raymond. *La Seconde Guerre Mondiale, vol4: 1943-Juin1944* [*The Second World War, vol4: 1943-June1944*]. Press Pocket. p. 40.
4. Playfair, Volume IV, p. 460. United States losses from 12 November 1942
5. Atkinson, p. 536
6. Roma: Instituto Centrale Statistica' *Morti E Dispersi Per Cause Belliche Negli Anni 1940–45* Roma 1957
7. Colin F. Baxter. "The War in North Africa, 1940–1943: A Selected Bibliography". 1996. Page 38. 500,000 prisoners are listed as being taken in North Africa, East Africa, and Sicily; as 150,000 POWs were taken in the Allied invasion of Sicily, and about 100,000 in East Africa, this would leave ~250,000 to be taken in North Africa; 130,000 during Operation Compass, and 120,000 afterwards.
8. Rochat, Giorgio. *Le guerre italiane 1935–1943. Dall'impero d'Etiopia alla disfatta* [*The Italian Wars 1935–1943. From the Ethiopian Empire until defeat*]. Einaudi. p. 446.
9. Carell, p. 596
10. Barclay, Mediterranean Operations
11. Porch, Douglas: "The Path to Victory: The Mediterranean Theater in World War II", 2004, p. 415.
12. "Military Operations in North Africa" (https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007301). *www.ushmm.org*. Retrieved 25 May 2017.
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14. Wilmott, H.P. p.
15. Playfair, p. 109
16. Playfair, p. 41
17. Churchill, p. 371
18. Macksey, p. 25
19. Macksey, p. 38
20. Macksey, p. 35
21. Macksey, p. 40
22. Playfair (2004), pp.209–210
23. Macksey, p. 47
24. Macksey, p. 68
25. Wavell "No. 37628" (https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/37628/supplement/3261). *The London Gazette* (1st supplement). 25 June 1946. p. 3261.
26. Playfair pp. 260–261, 264
27. Bauer (2000), p.95
28. Playfair p. 267

29. Mead, p. 331

30. Playfair p 271

31. Playfair, pp. 286–287

32. Dunn, Jimmy. "World War II's Opening Salvoes in North Africa" (http://www.touregypt.net/featurest ories/wwii1.htm). Tour Egypt.

33. Playfair, p. 358

34. "Fall of Bengasi" (http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,851005,00.html). *Time Magazine* (17 February 1941). 17 February 1941. Retrieved 17 December 2007. `{{cite journal}}`: Cite has empty unknown parameter: `|quotes=` (help)

35. Wavell in "No. 37628" (https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/37628/supplement/3268). *The London Gazette* (1st supplement). 25 June 1946. p. 3268.

36. Bauer, p.121

37. Walker, Ian W. (2003). *Iron Hulls Iron Hearts*. Trowbridge: The Crowood Press. p. 67. ISBN 978-1-86126-646-0.

38. Jentz, p. 82

39. Rommel, p. 109

40. Playfair (1954), p. 289

41. Playfair (1956), p. 2

42. Jentz, p. 85

43. Playfair (1956), pp. 2–5

44. Playfair (1956), pp. 19–40

45. Latimer, pp. 43–45

46. Playfair (1956), pp. 33–35

47. Playfair (1956), p. 160

48. Jentz, pp. 128–129, 131

49. Latimer, pp. 48–64

50. Playfair (1956), p. 41

51. Jentz, p. 128

52. See Operation Torch#Resistance and coup

53. "AFTA Tiger I Page" (http://armorfortheages.com/MilitaryVehicles/TigerI/TigerI.html). *armorfortheages.com*. Retrieved 28 September 2016.

54. Walker 2006, p. 193

55. Wil Deac (12 June 2006). "Intercepted Communications for Field Marshal Erwin Rommel" (http://w ww.historynet.com/intercepted-communications-for-field-marshal-erwin-rommel.htm/1). *World War II Magazine*.

56. Lewin p. 251

57. Vincent P. O'Hara and Enrico Cernuschi, 2013, p.119.

58. Vincent P. O'Hara and Enrico Cernuschi, 2013, p.135

59. Forty 1998, pp. 97 and 148.

60. Lewin p. 252

61. "Intelligence in North Africa" (http://www.topedge.com/panels/ww2/na/intelligence.html) Quote:Protection of the top secret Ultra source meant that the distribution of Ultra was extremely slow and by the time it had reached the relevant commander it was often out of date and therefore at best useless and at worst dangerously mis-leading.

62. *Verlauf März 1941* (http://www.deutsches-afrikakorps.de/html/verlauf_maerz_1941.html). In: *Der Feldzug in Afrika 1941–1943* (deutsches-afrikakorps.de). Abgerufen am 24. November 2009. Quote: Schuld an dieser Einschätzung sind die Enigma Berichte, aus denen Wavell ersehen kann, dass Rommel lediglich den Auftrag hat, die Syrte-Front zu stabilisieren, und dass sein wichtigster Verband, die 15. Panzerdivision, noch nicht in Afrika eingetroffen ist. Translated: The responsibility for this assessment are the Enigma reports, which can be seen from Wavell that Rommel only has a mandate to stabilize the Sirte front, and that his most important unit, the 15th Panzer Division, has not yet arrived in Africa.

63. Lewin p. 33 Quote: On 30 March Wavell signalled, 'I do not believe he can make any big effort for another month.'

64. Lewin pp. 99–101 Quote from Rommel's diary: I had maintained secrecy over the Panzer Group's forthcoming attack eastwards from Mersa el Brega and informed neither the Italian nor the German High Command. We knew from experience that Italian Headquarters cannot keep things to themselves and that everything they wireless to Rome gets round to British ears. However, I had arranged with the Quartermaster for the Panzer Group's order to be posted in every *Cantoniera* in Tripolitinia on 21 January ...

65. Kingsly, Sir Harry "The Influence of ULTRA in the Second World War" (http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/research/security/Historical/hinsley.html) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20110622015407/http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/research/security/Historical/hinsley.html) 22 June 2011 at the Wayback Machine

66. Hinsley, Francis Harry (1993), British intelligence in the Second World War, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, ISBN 978-0-521-44304-3

67. Vincent P. O'Hara and Enrico Cernuschi, 2013. p.118

68. " "Intelligence in North Africa" " (http://www.topedge.com/panels/ww2/na/intelligence.html). *topedge.com*. Retrieved 28 September 2016.

69. Hinsley, F.H.; Stripp, Alan, eds. (1993), Codebreakers: The inside story of Bletchley Park (OU Press paperback ed.), Oxford: Oxford University Press, ISBN 978-0-19-280132-6 p 3

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External links

- The Jews of North Africa and the Holocaust (http://www1.yadvashem.org/yv/en/education/newsletter/25/index.asp?WT.mc_id=wiki) an e-Newsletter for Holocaust educators by Yad Vashem
- BBC's flash video of the North African Campaign (https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/launch_ani_north_africa_campaign.shtml)
- Timeline of the North African Campaign (http://www.worldwar-2.net/timelines/war-in-the-desert/war-in-the-desert-index-1940.htm)
- General sites on the North African Campaign

  - Spartacus Educational website: Desert War (http://www.spartacus-educational.com/2WWdesert.htm)
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