

tinent was also deficient.³ The spectacular nature of the breakout from the cramped pre-COBRA beachhead had made it impossible for supply installations to keep up with the combat units, supply distances having suddenly changed from tens of miles to hundreds. The First Army had relinquished logistical responsibilities to the Communications Zone at the end of July, just when the demands of the static battle of the hedgerows were giving way to the different requirements of mobile warfare. The Communications Zone, instead of expanding the depot system as planned, had to assume the more pressing task of delivering supplies directly to the consumers. The result was not the most secure logistical base from which to launch post-OVERLORD operations.

Despite his awareness of the logistical flaws, General Eisenhower on 17 August felt that "the beating" the Allies were administering the enemy in Normandy would enable the Allies to "dash across the Seine." Two days later he decided to cross the Seine in strength.⁴ On 20 August, while the 79th Division was securing the first Allied bridgehead over the Seine, the Allied command was giving serious consideration to the next goal—the Rhine River, more than two hundred and fifty miles to the east.⁵

³ See Ruppenthal, *Logistical Support*, I, 483ff; The Gen Bd USFET, Rpt on Ammo Supply for FA, Study 58, p. 18, File 471/1.

⁴ Msg, Eisenhower to Marshall, CPA-90228, 17 Aug, Pogue Files; Ltr, Eisenhower to Montgomery, 19 Aug, SGS SHAEF File 381, Post-OVERLORD Plng; 12th AGP Memo for Rcd (Additional Notes of Bradley-Patton Conf, 1730, 19 Aug), 19 Aug, 12th AGP File 371.3, Mil Obs, I.

⁵ 21 AGP Operational Situation and Dir, M-519, 20 Aug, SGS SHAEF File 381, Post-OVERLORD Plng; 12th AGP Operational Plan, 20 Aug, 12th AGP

The decision to cross the Seine necessitated little soul searching. The example of McClellan at Antietam was too well known. Pursuit of a defeated enemy was axiomatic.

General Eisenhower's decision to pursue the enemy across the Seine changed neither the port development plans nor the prevalent feeling that the Breton ports were vital for the development of the campaign.⁶ According to the Allied troop dispositions and the plans for post-OVERLORD operations, the 21 Army Group would advance up the Channel coast while the 12th Army Group drove eastward away from the coast and across northern France. By liberating and opening the Seine and Channel ports, which had been reserved in the OVERLORD planning for British and Canadian logistical operations, the 21 Army Group would ease its supply problems. In contrast, the American forces would be moving away from the coast and lengthening their supply lines. Since in August Cherbourg was still handling less cargo than anticipated and since the gales of September might disrupt and even terminate the beach operations on the invasion coast, sheltered waters and port unloading facilities in Brittany, despite their increasing distance from the front, remained objectives of vital importance.

"We are promised greatly accelerated shipments of American divisions directly from the United States," General Eisenhower explained to General Montgomery as he set forth his thoughts on pursuit

Ltrs of Instrs; 12th AGP G-4 Jnl, 20 Aug, 12th AGP File 371.3, Mil Obs, I; Maj Gen Manton S. Eddy's Diary, entry 22 Aug.

⁶ Ruppenthal, *Logistical Support*, I, 470-74, and II, Ch. II; see ANCXF to SHAEF, 15 Aug, SGS SHAEF File 373/2.

operations beyond the Seine, "and it is mandatory that we capture and prepare ports and communications to receive them. This has an importance second only to the destruction of the remaining enemy forces on our front." The speed of Bradley's advance east of Paris, General Eisenhower felt, would be governed by the speed with which the Breton ports could be secured and the supply situation improved.⁷

The opening attack on the most important of the Breton ports, Brest, coincided on 25 August with the start of the pursuit beyond the Seine. Generals Eisenhower, Bradley, and Patton anticipated quick success on both fronts, and the Supreme Commander talked of sending the VIII Corps to secure Bordeaux very soon—as soon as the Breton ports fell.⁸

A fortress city of 80,000 people situated on the northern shore of an excellent landlocked roadstead of ninety square miles, Brest had been a major base of the French Navy. Because it was primarily a naval base and remote from the industrial centers of France, Brest had never attained commercial importance. In World War I, the American Expeditionary Force had used it as the principal port for the direct movement of troops from the United States to France. Though the cargo-handling facilities were not as good as at other French ports, Brest offered the Allies an excellent deep water harbor. The railroad from Brest to Rennes, along the north

⁷ Ltr, Eisenhower to Montgomery, 19 Aug, SGS SHAEF File 381, Post-OVERLORD Plng; Eisenhower to CCS, CPA-90235, 22 Aug, SHAEF G-3 Ops A 322.011/1, Comd and Contl of U.S./Br Forces; see 12th AGp Ltr, Rpt of Staff Visit . . . to Hq VIII Corps, 16 Aug (Bradley-Middleton conf), ML-205.

⁸ 12th AGp Memo for Recd, 19 Aug, ML-205.

shore of Brittany, had been captured in good condition, and supplies discharged at Brest could easily be transported to the troops in the interior of France.⁹

Conscious of the deficiency of unloading equipment at Brest and of the probability that the Germans would destroy all facilities before letting the port fall into Allied hands, the Allies had drawn plans for constructing a port complex at Quiberon Bay. Yet in order to use not only Quiberon but also Lorient, St. Nazaire, and Nantes, the Allies first had to clear the sea lanes around the Brittany tip—that is, eliminate the German naval base at Brest and seize the submarine pens there.¹⁰

In the same way that the Allies thought the fall of St. Malo would weaken the German will to resist at the other port cities, they hoped that the reduction of Brest would affect the morale of the garrisons at Lorient and St. Nazaire. After Brest, the Allies intended to attack Lorient "if it was still holding out."¹¹

Thus it came about that as the Allies plunged into pursuit of the retreating enemy east of the Seine, more than fifty thousand U.S. troops became involved in siege operations against the fortress of Brest, three hundred miles west of the front.

⁹ See above, Ch. XXII.

¹⁰ Ruppenthal, *Logistical Support*, II, Ch. II; 12th AGp Ltr of Instrs 6, 25 Aug. The VIII Corps AAR's of August and September give excellent accounts of the action at Brest and have been used throughout the chapter as the basic sources; see also Kenneth Edwards, *Operation NEPTUNE* (London: Collins, 1946), pp. 264-69.

¹¹ Middleton-Macon Conf Notes, 17 Aug; VIII G-2 Est 6, 15 Aug. All documents in this chapter, unless otherwise noted, are in the VIII Corps G-3 Journal and File.

The Problems at Brest

Brittany had become the province of General Middleton and the VIII Corps when they entered the peninsula by way of Avranches on the first day of August. Before the first week was over, the majority of the Germans had fled the interior portions and taken refuge in ports designated by Hitler as fortresses: St. Malo, Brest, Lorient, and St. Nazaire. The only enemy forces in the interior were small detachments that hid by day and attempted to reach a fortress port by night.

Though the Germans inside the fortresses displayed little penchant for sallying forth, they had to be contained until means to eliminate them became available. Excluding those at St. Malo and a small force at Paimpol, Middleton estimated that approximately 35,000 Germans (about 10,000 field forces and 25,000 naval, marine, and miscellaneous garrison troops) remained in Brittany. He judged that about 16,000 troops (half of which were field forces) garrisoned Brest, 9,500 the Lorient area (including Concarneau and Belle-Isle), and 9,500 St. Nazaire.¹² (*See Map VIII.*)

Middleton's primary mission, after the fall of St. Malo, would be the capture of Brest, but the forces then available to him were insufficient for this and his other tasks. The whirlpool that was sucking Allied forces eastward to the Seine and beyond left the VIII Corps with responsibility for a widening gap between its forces in Brittany and the southern flank of the Third Army. Eventually Middleton guarded a south-

ern flank two hundred and fifty miles long. When he received, because of a typographical error, a telegram intended for the VII Corps, telling him to "take over the Melun bridgehead" on the Seine, he replied, "Can't do it; stretched too far already."¹³

Having lost the 4th Armored Division to the XII Corps, Middleton covered the Nantes-Angers area with the 2d Cavalry Group and a regiment of the 80th Division. He had the bulk of the 6th Armored Division at Lorient, a small combat command of the 6th and a few 8th Division troops at Brest. With Task Force A clearing the Paimpol area, the 83d Division heavily engaged at St. Malo, and the 8th Division protecting Rennes, the capture of Brest and the protection of an ever-extending front along the Loire River were beyond the capacities of the corps. To permit the 83d Division (upon the reduction of St. Malo) to assume the less wearing mission of patrolling the Loire River, and to reinforce the 8th Division and Task Force A scheduled for action at Brest (several thousand FFI members under Colonel Eon were also available for action on the periphery of Brest), Bradley transferred from the First Army to Middleton the 2d and 29th Divisions, which had been pinched out near Tinchebray during the reduction of the Argentan-Falaise pocket, and two Ranger battalions, which had been performing rear-area guard duty.¹⁴

¹² VIII Corps G-2 Est 6, 1800, 15 Aug; 12th AGP Plng Sec Memo, 20 Aug.

¹³ XX Corps Msg, 25 Aug, and reply, VIII Corps G-3 Jnl.

¹⁴ 2d Cav Gp Unit Rpt 1, 15 Aug; 319th RCT FO 5, 15 Aug; Memos, Maddox for Evans and Evans for Maddox, 25 Aug; Memos, Gaffey for Middleton, 14 Aug, and Middleton for Patton, 14, 15, and 19 Aug; Bradley to Hodges and Patton, 18

At Lorient General Grow, the 6th Armored Division commander, chafed under his static containment mission and wrote Middleton "a plea for the characteristics of the Division to be exploited to the maximum at the earliest practicable date."¹⁵ Middleton appreciated Grow's eagerness to get into the main operational stream outside Brittany, but considered the presence of an armored reserve essential. Grow then went to see Patton, who told Grow to move a combat command to Orléans; on the way, the troops were to clear small German groups that were still a nuisance along the Loire River. At least part of the 6th Armored Division would thus be closer to the main body of the Third Army and more quickly available to Patton. CCB started out of Brittany on 28 August, forced a small group of Germans on the north bank to evacuate to Saumur, found no other enemy forces north of the Loire River, and eventually moved to Montargis.¹⁶

Meanwhile forces gathered for the attack on Brest. The Communications Zone headquarters took responsibility for Rennes and relieved the 8th Division, which reached Plabennec by 18 August. The 2d Division arrived at Landerneau on 19 August, and the 29th Division assembled just south of Lannilis four days later. With Task Force A and contingents of the FFI also nearby, Middleton was ready to commence his operation

Aug; TUSA Dir, 17 Aug, and Msg, 23 Aug; 12th AGp Ltr and Ltr of Instrs 5, 17 Aug; Journal des Marches.

¹⁵ Grow to Middleton, 20 Aug.

¹⁶ Memos, Middleton for Patton, JTR for Evans, 15 Aug, Middleton for Grow, 18 and 21 Aug; 6th Armd Div FO 14, 28 Aug; TUSA Operational Dir, 27 Aug; Patton to Middleton, 2 Sep; Read to Grow, 30 Aug, 6th Armd Div CCB Unit Jnl.

against Brest as soon as adequate supplies could be stocked. (*Map XV*)

Adequate supplies were as much a problem for Middleton as they were for the commanders driving east from the Seine. By far the most serious shortage for the siege-type action about to take place at Brest was in artillery ammunition. The shortage was already plaguing the corps at St. Malo, and on 10 August Middleton had warned the Third Army that he foresaw heavy ammunition expenditures at Brest. Patton promised that even though the Third Army might be rationed in ammunition, he would see to it that the VIII Corps was supplied.¹⁷ When the army requested formal estimates of the Brest requirements, Middleton based his reply on the St. Malo experience and on the expectation of using an armored division and three infantry divisions supported by thirteen battalions of corps artillery. He requested an initial stock of 8,700 tons of ammunition, plus a replenishment allowance of 11,600 tons for the first three days.

The Third Army staff considered the request excessive on two grounds. It anticipated that only two divisions and ten corps artillery battalions would take part in the operation against Brest, and it believed that the corps had overestimated the strength of the enemy garrison and its will to resist. Setting 1 September as the target date for the fall of Brest, Third Army allotted only about 5,000 tons for the entire operation—less than

¹⁷ VIII Corps G-3 Jnl, entry 13 Aug; Ruppenthal, *Logistical Support, I*, 528ff. is an excellent account of the logistical difficulties at Brest. See also *Conquer, the Story of the Ninth Army, 1944-1945* (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1947) (hereafter cited as *Story of Ninth Army*), pp. 53ff.

a quarter of what Middleton considered essential for the first three days. As it turned out, three divisions and a separate task force supported by eighteen corps artillery battalions—division artillery and tank destroyer battalions brought the total to thirty-four battalions—were eventually to take part in the battle, a force that further emphasized the discrepancy between requirements and stocks.

Third Army's unwillingness to send more than 5,000 tons of ammunition to the VIII Corps reflected the critical nature of supply transportation for the main Third Army drive to the east. In addition, co-ordination between Third Army and VIII Corps was difficult because of the growing distance between the two headquarters. On 25 August the army and corps command posts were two hundred and seventy miles apart. Hoping to alleviate the difficulties, Third Army arranged to have the Brittany Base Section of the Communications Zone provide direct administrative support to VIII Corps. A slight increase in ammunition stocks resulted.

When Generals Bradley and Patton visited the VIII Corps headquarters on 23 August, General Middleton convinced them he needed more ammunition. They immediately authorized 8,000 tons, which they thought would be sufficient for six days, the length of time they considered reasonable for the operation. Expecting the ammunition to be delivered, Middleton launched his attack on 25 August. When all the authorized supplies did not arrive, he had to suspend operations. Three days later he learned that what he had regarded as minimum, Bradley and Patton had considered adequate.

As a result of better co-ordination, better arrangements for ship and rail transportation to the Brest area were made on 29 August. Still, not until 7 September did the corps have enough ammunition stocks to permit resumption of a sustained full-scale attack. Even then, so many agencies were involved that no one knew the exact status of supply or what was en route or on order. Hoping nevertheless that a steady flow of ammunition had been established, Middleton launched another attack on 8 September. He was not disappointed. By 10 September Bradley had assigned the Brest operation first priority on supply. When the operation finally terminated, 25,000 tons of ammunition were in the corps supply point, much of which was later reshipped to the active front, hundreds of miles away.¹⁸

The difficulties in fulfilling the VIII Corps requirements had come from intense competition among the armies engaged in the pursuit for the severely limited overland transport available. Ammunition shortages in Brittany occurred at the same time that gasoline crises affected the pursuit. The VIII Corps used the beach of St. Michel-en-Grève (near Morlaix) to receive LST-shipped items, but the seaborne cargo was not adequate to supply all needs, and trains and trucks had to bring most of the supplies to Brest from Normandy. An airfield near Morlaix was used to bring in emergency supplies and to evacuate wounded.¹⁹ Poor communica-

¹⁸ 12th AGp Ltr of Instrs 8, 10 Sep.

¹⁹ 12th AGp Ltr, Rpt of Staff Visit, 16 Aug, ML-205; Ruppenthal, *Logistical Support*, I, 532; Bradley, *Effect of Air Power*, pp. 70-71; ETOUSA Engr Hist Rpt 10, Combat Engineering, is a useful source and has been used extensively in this chapter.



SUPPLIES FOR BREST. *Trucks leaving LST near Morlaix for Brest.*

tions, long distances, and weather contributed their adverse effects, but at the bottom of the difficulties was improper co-ordination for the Brest operation at all the echelons of higher command due to the optimistic initial belief that Brest would fall quickly.

Another headquarters became involved in the Brest operation on 10 September, when VIII Corps passed from Third Army control to Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson's Ninth U.S. Army, operational five days earlier at Rennes. The Ninth Army assumed responsibility for protecting the southern flank of the 12th Army Group and for conducting opera-

tions in Brittany. In addition it had the task of receiving, processing, and training units arriving in France. General Bradley had thought of inserting the Ninth Army into the line during the pursuit east of Paris, but the speed of the advance and logistical difficulties prompted him to assign it to Brittany. To permit Middleton to give undivided attention to Brest, General Simpson placed the 6th Armored and 83d Divisions, which were not involved at Brest, directly under his own control. Almost immediately afterwards, when Bradley called for troops to augment the forces in the pursuit, Simpson accelerated

the movement into Brittany of the 94th Division, commanded by Maj. Gen. Harry J. Malony, in order to release the 6th Armored Division. Around the middle of September, after the newly arrived division assumed the job of guarding Lorient, the 6th Armored Division finally moved eastward to rejoin the Third Army.²⁰

The problems of getting the operation started and keeping it in motion were matched by the task of reducing the defensive complex of the fortress of Brest.²¹ (*Map XIV*) The city itself, originally on the slopes of hills on both sides of the Penfeld River, spread over several neighboring communities, among them Recouvrance and St. Pierre-Quilbignan on the west, Lambézellec on the north, St. Marc on the east. The city proper and the small commercial port area are east of the river; the western side, known as Recouvrance, includes the naval base, with extensive repair shops, drydocks, quays, barracks, storehouses, and U-boat shelter pens.

The countryside around Brest, a gently rolling plateau, presents a pattern of small hills and low ridges separated in some places by narrow deep-cut valleys, the whole criss-crossed by numerous streams. The Germans used these terrain features to good advantage and organized a system of positions of various kinds and in varying strengths to establish a defense in depth.

The defensive works ranged from simple trenches to concrete pillboxes, casemates, and gun emplacements. Ob-

stacles included barbed wire entanglements, mine fields, and antitank ditches. The Germans incorporated into their defensive system a number of old French forts, built before the Franco-Prussian War and located in the western and northwestern suburbs of the city. Even the high ramparts of an ancient fortress at the mouth of the Penfeld, a work constructed by Vauban in the seventeenth century, had a role in the defense scheme—in some places thirty-five feet high, fifteen feet thick, and protected by a moat, overgrown with grass, vines, and flowers, and serving as a promenade for Sunday strollers, the walls sheltered gun emplacements.

The Germans integrated into their land defenses dual-purpose antiaircraft guns and guns stripped from ships sunk in the harbor by Allied planes. Batteries of coastal and field artillery on the Daoulas promontory and the Quelern peninsula provided additional fire support. Heavy guns near le Conquet, intended primarily to protect the sea approaches to Brest, could also help the landward defenses. Although the Germans considered their twelve batteries of Army field artillery and eighteen batteries of Navy *Flak* inadequate for the task of defending Brest, the Americans were to find them more than troublesome.²²

Approximately thirty thousand troops defended Brest, nearly twice the number estimated by the Americans. The core of the defense was the 2d *Paratroop Division*, composed of tough young soldiers. Their commander, Ramcke, who had gained prominence in the German air-

²⁰ Story of Ninth Army, pp. 21, 28-39, 45-46; 12th AGp Memo for Rcd, 19 Aug, ML-205; 12th AGp Ltr of Instrs 7, 5 Sep.

²¹ See Albert Vulliez, *Brest au Combat, 1939-1944* (Paris, c. 1950), map facing p. 154.

²² MS # B-731 (Fahrmbacher); 12th AGp Immed Rpt 49, German Defenses at Brest, 9 Sep.



ANCIENT WALL AND MOAT on land side, inner fortress at Brest.

borne attack on Crete in 1940, was also the fortress commander. His chief of staff was Colonel von der Mosel who, before Ramcke's appointment, had commanded the fortress. Generalmajor Josef Rauch, the commander of the 343d (Static) Division, was charged with the Daoulas and Crozon sectors.²³

Ordered by Hitler to hold to the last man, Ramcke was determined to do so. If he needed to justify resistance that could count victory only in the number of days the garrison held out, Ramcke could feel that the Allied forces he tied down at Brest and the ammunition he caused the Allies to expend there would constitute just that much less that could be brought to bear on the German homeland. Having evacuated all the

French civilians who might encumber his defense, Ramcke used his paratroopers as nuclei to stiffen the defense of strongpoints held by the miscellaneous naval and static personnel of the garrison.²⁴

Between 13 August, when the 6th Armored Division had started to displace from Brest to Lorient, and 18 August, when the bulk of the 8th Division began to arrive near Brest, the presence of little more than a combat command of Allied troops near Brest led the German garrison to make raids on the countryside.²⁵ These came to an end as U.S. forces gathered. On 18 August the VIII Corps command post moved one hundred and twenty miles to Lesneven, fifteen miles from Brest, to undertake the siege of the

²³ MS # B-427 (Kogard); Vulliez, *Brest au Combat*, pp. 224-25 has a good description of Ramcke.

²⁴ Ramcke, *Fallschirmjager, Damals und Danach*, pp. 46-48, 51; CI 14 (2d Div).

²⁵ *Journal des Marches*.



GENERAL MIDDLETON confers with General Simpson (left) and General Stroh (right) near Brest.

fortress. Though Bradley and Patton thought the Germans would soon capitulate, Middleton figured that Brest would be little different from St. Malo. Several days before the operation began, planners at the 12th Army Group also concluded that the Brest garrison would probably fight to the last man.²⁶

The Fight for Brest

Even before the arrival of all his forces

in the Brest area, General Middleton launched a preliminary operation designed to protect his flanks, isolate his objective, prevent the escape of the garrison across the harbor, and secure observation points on the promontory between Brest and Daoulas.²⁷ Combining the 2d Division's 38th Infantry, plus additional units, with General Ernest's long-standing Task Force A, General Middleton created a unit called Task

²⁶ Story of Ninth Army, p. 24; 12th AGp Plng Sec Memo, 20 Aug.

²⁷ Ninth U.S. Army Operations, I, Brest-Crozon, USFET Hist Div, MS (1946), OCMH Files, is a valuable source.

Force B under Brig. Gen. James A. Van Fleet, the assistant commander of the 2d Division.²⁸ He instructed Van Fleet to attack from Landernau to Hill 154, a dominating feature on the approaches to Brest south of the Elorn River. (*See Map VIII.*)

Task Force B jumped off on 21 August and advanced rapidly for several miles until stopped by a massive volume of fire from positions on Hill 154 and from artillery north of the Elorn. The defenders, soldiers of the 353d Division, were well dug in on a strong position that included a network of trenches around the crest of the hill, eight steel and concrete reinforced pillboxes, and barbed wire entanglements. They had more than twenty-five machine guns, several antitank weapons, and mortars. The strength of the position and the fire power allocated to its defense indicated the importance the Germans attached to its possession.

Supported by tank destroyer and artillery fire, a battalion of the 38th Infantry assaulted on 23 August over rocky terrain that afforded scant cover and concealment. Success was in large part attributable to the action of Staff Sgt. Alvin P. Casey, who though mortally

²⁸ Other components were: three field artillery battalions (from the 2d Division), the 50th Armored Infantry Battalion, a company each of the 68th Tank Battalion and the 603d Tank Destroyer Battalion, and a battery of the 777th AAA AW SP Battalion (from the 6th Armored Division). The components of Task Force A were: the 1st Tank Destroyer Brigade, controlling the 6th Tank Destroyer Group, the 705th Tank Destroyer Battalion, a battalion of the 330th Infantry (83d Division), the 15th Cavalry Group, and an engineer combat battalion. VIII Corps G-3 Msg, 21 Aug. The 38th Infantry headquarters acted in a dual capacity—for the regiment and for Task Force B. Ltr, Zwicker to OCMH, 14 Mar 56.

wounded destroyed a pillbox with grenades.²⁹ Against a total loss of 7 dead and 28 wounded, Task Force B took 143 prisoners and counted about a hundred German bodies on the crest of the hill.³⁰

Having deprived the Germans of an excellent observation post on the eastern approaches to Brest, Task Force B pushed forward to clear the remainder of the promontory. By forcing the Germans to demolish the reinforced concrete bridge over the Elorn River and thereby cut land communication between the promontory and Brest, the force secured Middleton's left flank. The task force used flame throwers, demolitions, and tank destroyer and artillery fire to destroy pillboxes and emplacements. It cleared the entire peninsula by the last day of August and took 2,700 prisoners. Characterizing the action an "outstanding success," Middleton dissolved the task force, sending the 38th Infantry to rejoin the 2d Division, Task Force A to guard the approaches to the Crozon peninsula, and the 50th Armored Infantry Battalion to Lorient to rejoin the 6th Armored Division.³¹

Because the Daoulas promontory juts out into the roadstead southeast of Brest, it provided excellent artillery positions. Middleton dispatched a corps artillery group there to take under fire the rear of the landward defenses around Brest and also German positions on the Crozon peninsula. On the basis of plans drawn by Task Force B, Middleton formed a

²⁹ Casey was awarded the Medal of Honor.

³⁰ Memos, Van Fleet for Earnest, 21 Aug, and Evans for Middleton, 28 Aug.

³¹ CI 15 (2d Div); Buckley, *History of the 50th Armored Infantry Battalion*, pp. 27-28. Other 6th Armored Division elements rejoined the division early in September.