

Seventh Army, and proceeded to force the difficult coastal road. The Eighth Army was near Taormina when the fall of Randazzo made an enemy retreat into the north-eastern tip of the island inevitable, and it was only eight miles south of Messina when the American Third Division hammered a way into the town on August 16. Some idea of the heavy fighting in the thirty-seven days of the Sicilian campaign may be gauged from the fact that the British and Canadians had 31,158 casualties.

After resting and consolidating his forces, General Montgomery informed his troops on the night of September 2 that, "To the Eighth Army has been given the great honour of being the first troops of the Allied armies to land on the mainland of the Continent of Europe." The same night the veterans of the desert moved across the Straits to the Calabrian peninsula.

Seven days later other Eighth Army units landed at Taranto and swept over

the heel of Italy. In the face of little opposition, they hastened to link up with General Clark's hard pressed Fifth Army at Salerno, while other detachments took the east coast route to the Foggia plain.

By storming Potenza on September 22 the Eighth Army was able to change the entire situation on the right flank of the Fifth Army, while the occupation of Foggia six days later made possible a continuous line across the peninsula.

General Montgomery had given Berlin as the final destination of his troops, and, in his message on May 14, on the conclusion of the African campaign, said simply: "Together, you and I, we will see this thing through to the end." But Mr. Churchill, as usual, has spoken the ultimate word. Speaking at Tripoli in February, he told the veterans: "It will be a great honour to be able to say in the years to come, 'I marched and fought with the Eighth Army.'"



This boat, abandoned by the Japanese, proved invaluable in enabling New Zealand patrols in Vella Lavella to cross a deep river.