



Lyman W. Laughinghouse  
Palermo, Sicily - 1943.  
S/N 834-66-16



March 2008

John. Here is a P.S. to what I wrote earlier.

At the end of my 6 weeks of basic training at Gaithersburg, Md. we were assigned to Amphibious Forces and were certainly ill-prepared for the 2nd invasion of North Africa. Things were going badly for the Allies but once we gained better control of things we got more training in amphibious duties.

We were thoroughly versed on the upcoming invasion of Sicily. We were advised of the "do's and don'ts", shown aerial views, photographs, topography, etc. of Sicily. We knew where all the big guns were hidden in the hills and mountains.

Troops, supplies, ammunition, equipment, and many different kinds of ships were assembled in a staging area we called Perry Lake right off of Bezerta (Bezerta). It was from this area I was assigned to an L.S.T. Once we reached our designated area near Licata, we boarded an L.C.S. Our duty was to flank the waves going ashore and to draw and aim and do the firing to protect the troops. When we got near the shore, we ran aground and then walked ashore.

Sometime after our area was secured I was told the L.S.T. on which I left Bezerta (Bezerta) had been sunk. As previously instructed on earlier briefings I went with the Army I helped transport supplies and ammunition through the hills and mountains. The entire terrain



was covered with dense underbrush. I have never seen such rough and God-forsaken areas in my life - before or since.

When we finally reached Palermo I made my way to the Harbor Master and eventually got back with the Navy! Oh happier day - even if I didn't get any Mail or pay for almost a year



# Licata

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Licata** (Greek: Φιντίας; Latin: **Phintias** or **Plintis**; formerly also **Alicata**) is a city located on the south coast of Sicily, at the mouth of the Salso River (the ancient Himera), about midway between Agrigento and Gela. It is a major seaport developed at the turn of the twentieth century, shipping sulphur, the refining of which has made Licata the largest European exporting centre, and asphalt, and at times shipping cheese.

West of the port city there is a series of pocket beaches separated by wave-cut headlands as high as 40 m. (Amore 2002).

## Contents

- 1 History
- 2 Archaeological situation
- 3 Sister cities
- 4 Notes
- 5 References

## History

The site of archaic settlements<sup>[1]</sup>, the city was founded on the right bank of the Salso in 282 BCE by Phintias, a tyrant of Agrigentum, who named it for himself, razing the city of Gela and resettling its population at his new settlement. (Diod. xxii. 2, p. 495.) Phintias laid it out on a great scale, with its walls, temples, and agora. As late as the first century BCE, inscriptions and coins show that the inhabitants retained the name *Geloi*. The setting took advantage of a small natural harbour, about 80 m across, which corresponds to a natural depression along the coast that is now infilled with construction. The site was protected by the headland now named Monte San Michele. At nearby Cape Ecnomus, in 256 BCE the Romans won a major battle in the First Punic War.

Phintias, however, never rose to a degree of importance at all to be compared to that of Gela: it is mentioned in the First Punic War (249 BC) as affording shelter to a Roman fleet, which was, however, attacked in the roadstead by that of the Carthaginians, and many of the ships sunk. (Diod. xxiv. 1, p. 508.) Cicero also alludes to it as a seaport, carrying on a considerable export trade in corn. (Cic. *Verr*.

### Comune di Licata



**Municipal coat of arms**

<b>Country</b>	<span><span></span></span> Italy
<b>Region</b>	Sicily
<b>Province</b>	Agrigento (AG)
<b>Elevation</b>	8 m (26 ft)
<b>Area</b>	178 km <sup>2</sup> (69 sq mi)
<b>Population</b> (as of December 31, 2004)	
- Total	38,812
- Density	218/km <sup>2</sup> (565/sq mi)
<b>Time zone</b>	CET, UTC+1
<b>Coordinates</b>	<span><span></span></span> <span><span><span><span>37°06′N</span>, <span>13°56′E</span></span></span></span> <p>(<a href="http://tools.wikimedia.de/~magnus/geo/geohack.php?pagename=Licata&amp;params=37_06_N_13_56_E_{{{7}}}}">http://tools.wikimedia.de/~magnus/geo/geohack.php?pagename=Licata&amp;params=37_06_N_13_56_E_{{{7}}}}</a>)</p>
<b>Gentile</b>	Licatesi
<b>Dialing code</b>	0922
<b>Postal code</b>	92027
<b>Frazioni</b>	Torre di Gaffe
<b>Patron</b>	Sant'Angelo
- Day	May 5
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.comune.licata.ag.it">www.comune.licata.ag.it</a> ( <a href="http://www.comune.licata.ag.it/">http://www.comune.licata.ag.it/</a> )




iii. 8. 3) But in Strabo's time it seems to have fallen into the same state of decay with the other cities on the south coast of Sicily, as he does not mention it among the few exceptions. (Strab. vi. p. 272.) Pliny, indeed, notices the Phintienses (or Phthinthienses as the name is written in some manuscripts) among the stipendiary towns of Sicily; and its name is found also in Ptolemy (who writes it  $\Phi\theta\iota\nu\theta\iota\alpha$ ); but it is strange that both these writers reckon it among the inland towns of Sicily, though its maritime position is clearly attested both by Diodorus and Cicero. The Antonine Itinerary also gives a place called Plintis, doubtless a corruption of Phintias, which it places on the road from Agrigentum along the coast towards Syracuse, at the distance of 23 miles from the former city. (Itin. Ant. p. 95.) This distance agrees tolerably well with that from Agrigento to Licata, though somewhat below the truth. There is indeed no doubt, from existing remains on the hill immediately above Licata, that the site was occupied in ancient times; and, though these have been regarded by local antiquarians as the ruins of ancient Gela, there is little doubt of the correctness of the opinion advanced by Cluverius, that that city is to be placed on the site of then called Terranova since renamed to its ancient form, Gela, and the vestiges which remain at Licata are those of Phintias. (Cluver. Sicil. pp. 200, 214.)

Licata served as an Allied landing point during the 1943 World War II invasion of Sicily.

## Archaeological situation

Diodorus Siculus (22.2) mentions a large agora with porticos, but since no formal excavation has yet taken place, the Hellenistic and Roman material connected with Phintias comes from chance finds (Stillwell). The ancient site was progressively abandoned as flood-borne river deposits, associated with deforestation of the hinterland (Amore 2002), moved the mouth of the river seaward. On the rocky promontory the ruins of the castle of San Giacomo are still visible near the base of Licata's harbour lighthouse.

## Sister cities

-  Reinheim, Germany

## Notes

- <sup>^</sup> Attested by chance finds of Corinthian, Ionic, and Geloan pottery and figurines, now in the museums of Palermo and Agrigento (Stillwell).

## References

- *This article incorporates text from the public domain Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography by William Smith (1857).*
- C. Amore *et al.*, "Historical evolution of the Salso River mouth, with respect to the Licata harbour system" in Eurocoast/EUCC, *Littoral 2002* (on-line ([http://www.io-warnemuende.de/homepages/schernewski/Littoral2000/docs/vol2/Littoral2002\\_31.pdf](http://www.io-warnemuende.de/homepages/schernewski/Littoral2000/docs/vol2/Littoral2002_31.pdf)))
- Richard Stillwell, ed. *Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical Sites*, 1976: (<http://icarus.umkc.edu/sandbox/perseus/pecs/page.3569.a.php>) "Phintias (Licata) Sicily"

Retrieved from "<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Licata>"



Categories: Cities and towns in Sicily | Municipalities of the Province of Agrigento | Settlements established in the 3rd century BC | Ancient Greek cities | Archaeological sites in Italy | Ancient Greek sites in Italy | Ancient mints | Sicily

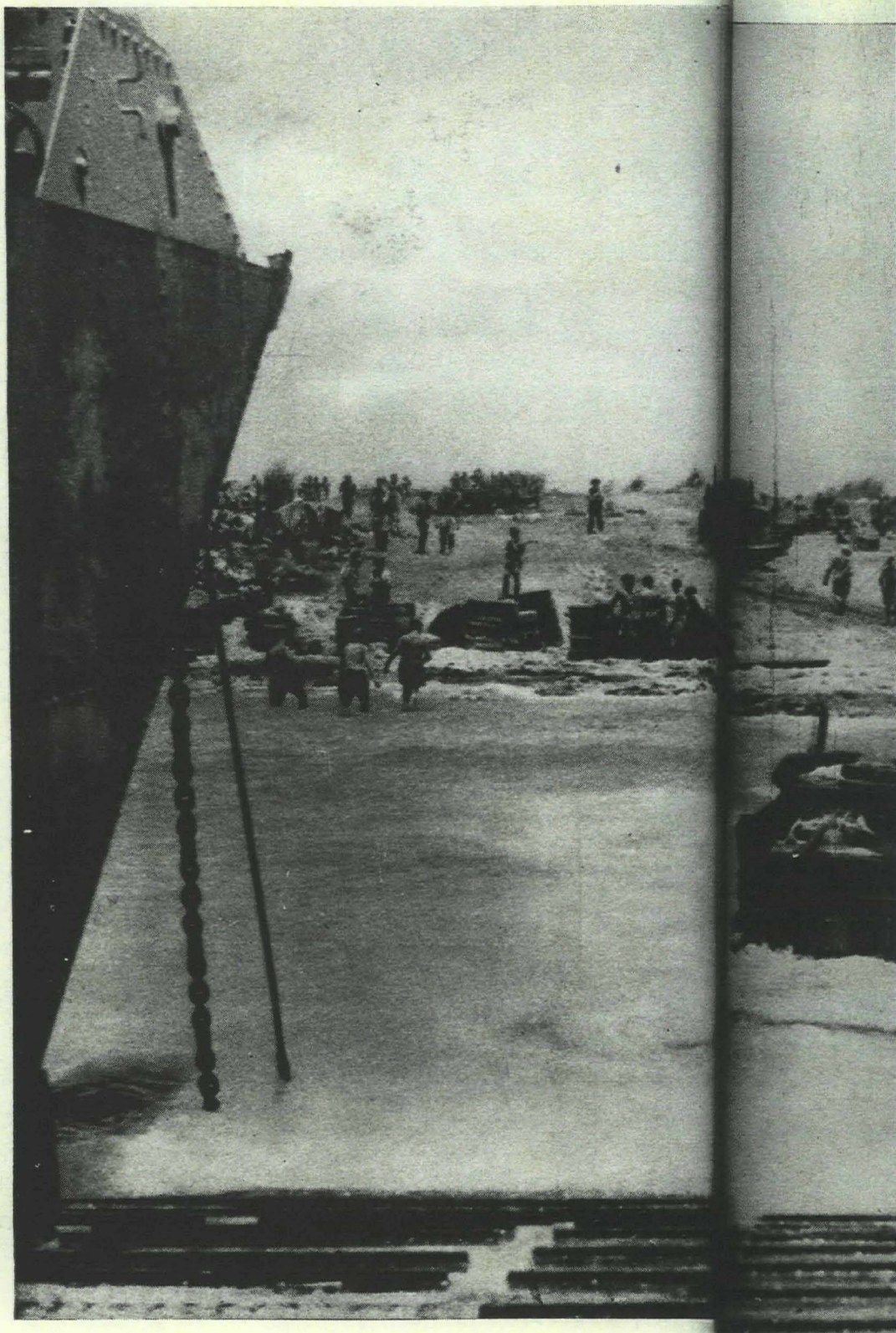
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## Allies continue the Mediterranean offensive

### ALLIED INVASION OF SICILY

At 10 o'clock on Friday night, July 9, gliders packed with Allied troops dropped behind the enemy lines in Sicily, and the invasion of the island had begun. The gliders were quickly followed by paratroops, and through the next two days American and British landing forces made contact with the air borne units, breached the coastal defenses, and established bridgeheads at many selected points. Protected by a great fleet of Allied warships, and by the Allied Air Forces, which had secured air supremacy, mighty reinforcements of men, tanks, guns, equipment, and supplies were successfully landed. Enemy coastal batteries were put out of action by the guns of the Fleet. By July 11 the first immediate objectives had been taken, and three Sicilian airfields were in Allied hands. One of these was at Pachino, captured by British and Canadian assault troops. American forces occupied two airfields at Gela, where the enemy, supported by tanks, made a counter-attack, which was successfully beaten off. Axis forces opposing the invasion were estimated at 400,000, including 100,000 Italians. The German radio admitted that the first phase of the attack had been successful at several points, and an Italian commentator boasted that the Allies would "bite their teeth out" on the strong Italian fortifications. The picture shows one of the many Sicilian landings.





July 9, 1943



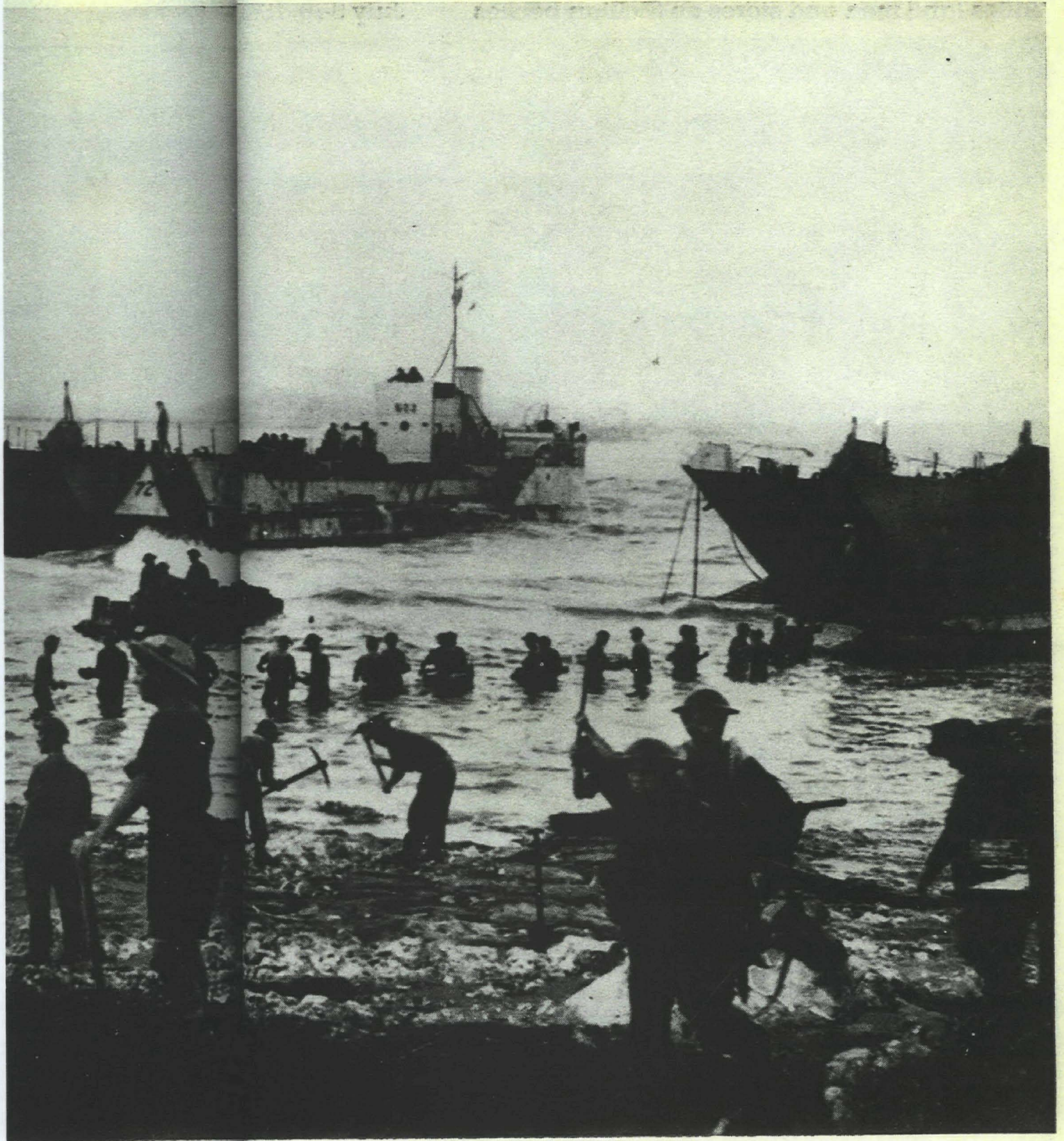




#### SICILY INVADED

By landing in Sicily on 10 July, 1943, Allied troops regained a foothold in Europe for the first time since the collapse of France and the retreat from Dunkirk







## Allies land men and stores on Sicilian beaches

July 9-10, 1943



**ZERO HOUR FOR INVASION ARMADA.** Under the command of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, 3,266 surface ships were engaged in the invasion of Sicily. This mighty armada of the Allies comprised craft of every type, from battleships to L.S.T.'s. In spite of adverse changes in the weather, of rising wind and choppy seas, the convoys of this multitude of ships made their crossings with such precision that the Allied landings on the beaches were carried out exactly to timetable. From long before dawn flare after flare arose from beach after beach at the appointed zero hour to signal "landing successful," and thereafter all the supplies, arms, and equipment of the invading armies streamed steadily ashore. These pictures show: top, a landing party coming ashore, and below, the British safely land a Bren carrier.

## Allied bridgehead



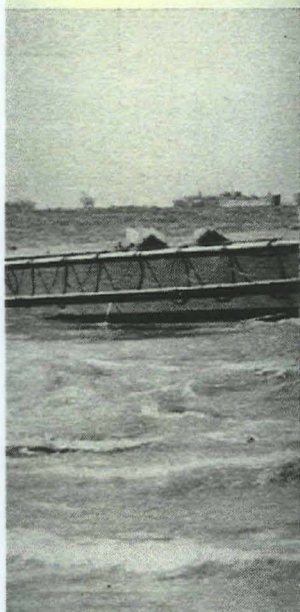
**BRITISH AND CANADIANS** capture of the Pachino peninsula beach, four miles from Palermo, advanced inland to Sicily.



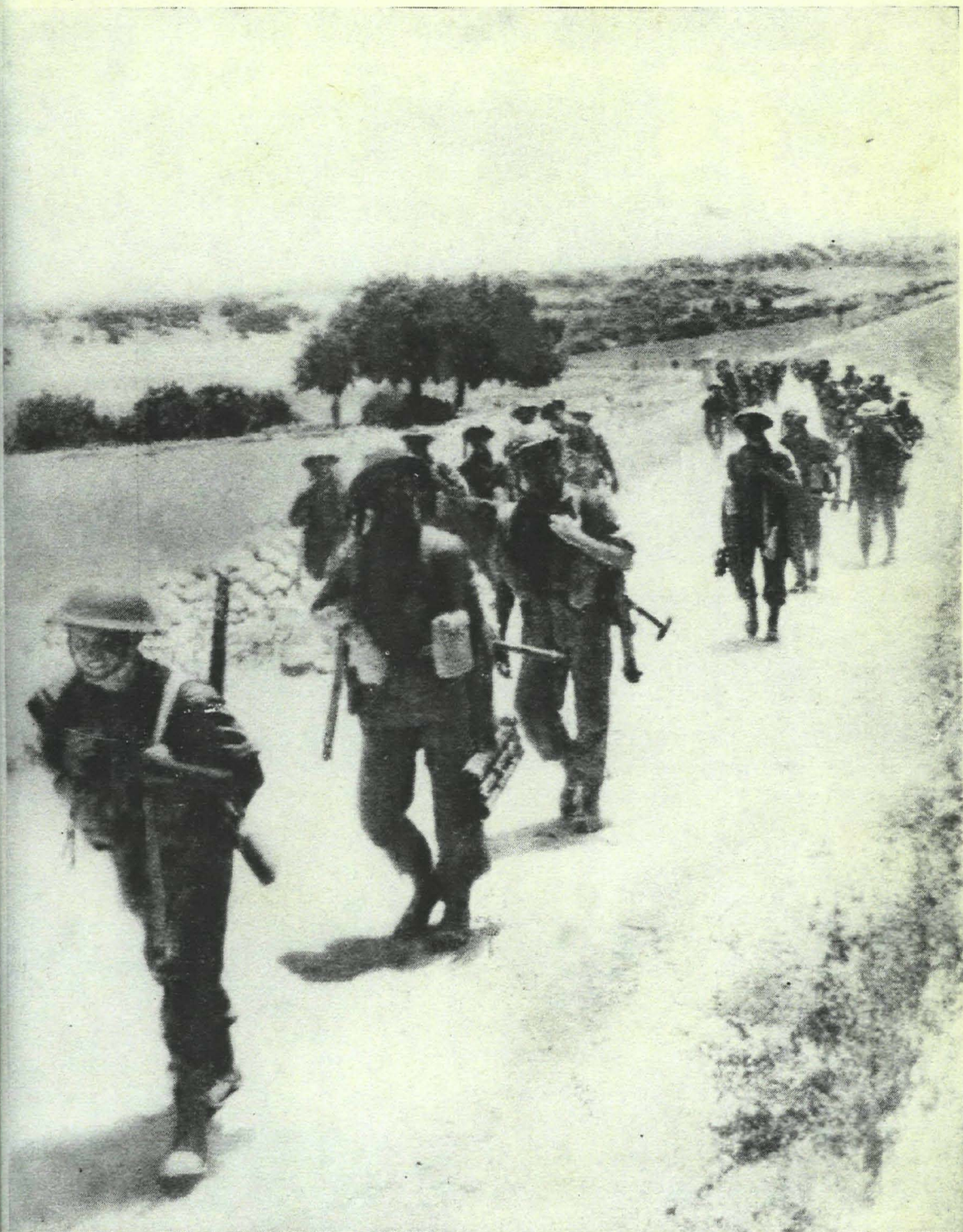
July 9-10, 1943

Allied bridgehead secured

July, 1943



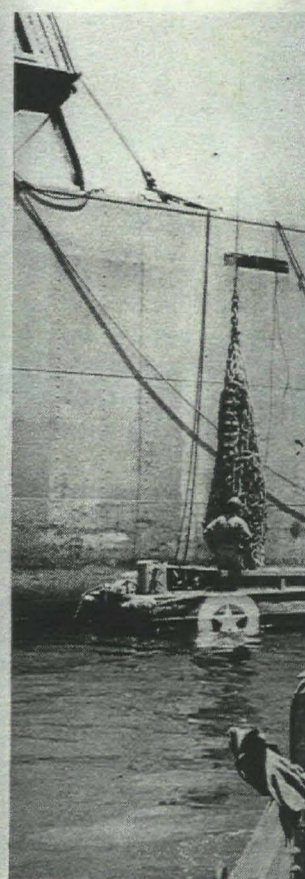
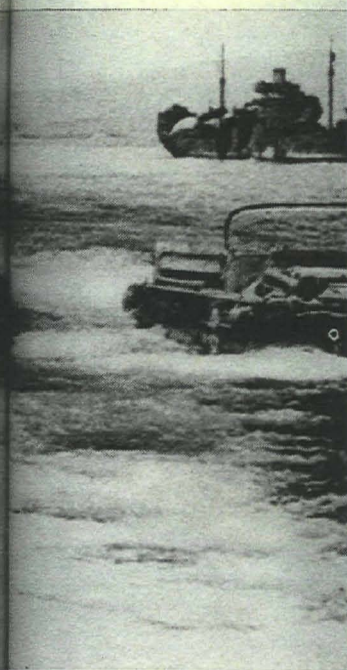
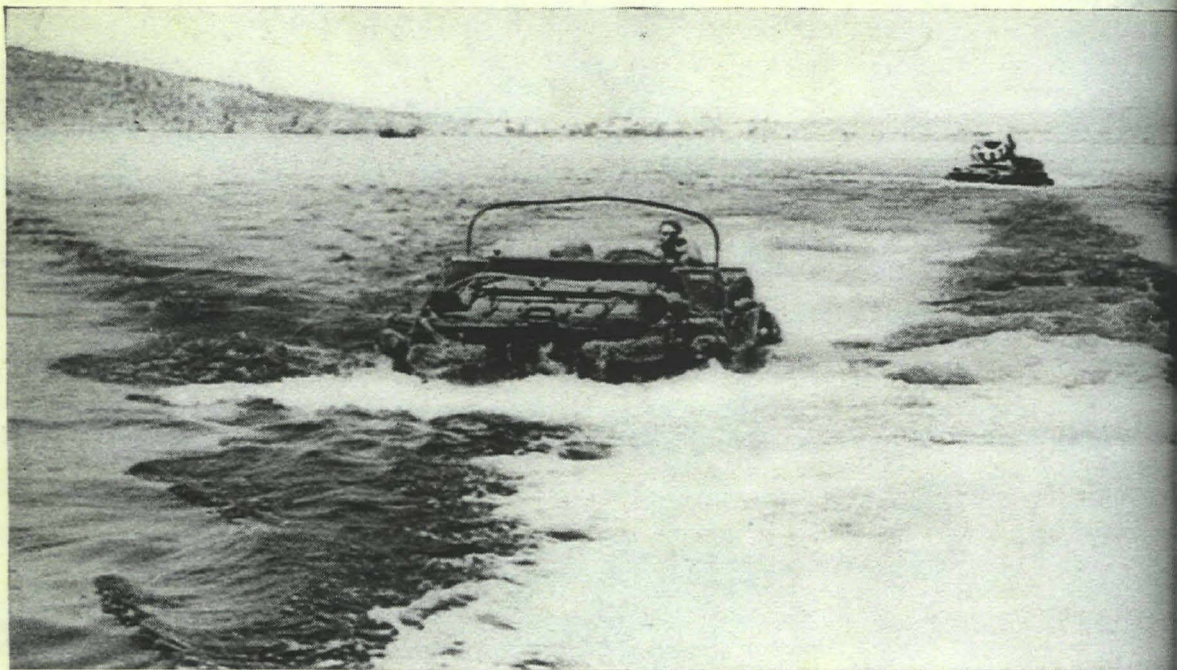
the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham's armada of the Allies comes in the weather, of rising winds with such precision that long before dawn flare after flare successful," and thereafter they landed ashore. These pictures show a Bren carrier.



**BRITISH AND CANADIANS JOIN HANDS.** One of the early successes of the invasion was the determined capture of the Pachino peninsula by British and Canadian assault troops, who landed on Costa dell Ambra beach, four miles from Pachino. They established a bridgehead within twenty-four hours, and then advanced inland to start the hard-fought campaign which was to end in the conquest of Sicily.



**Novel amphibious trucks keep Allied armies supplied**

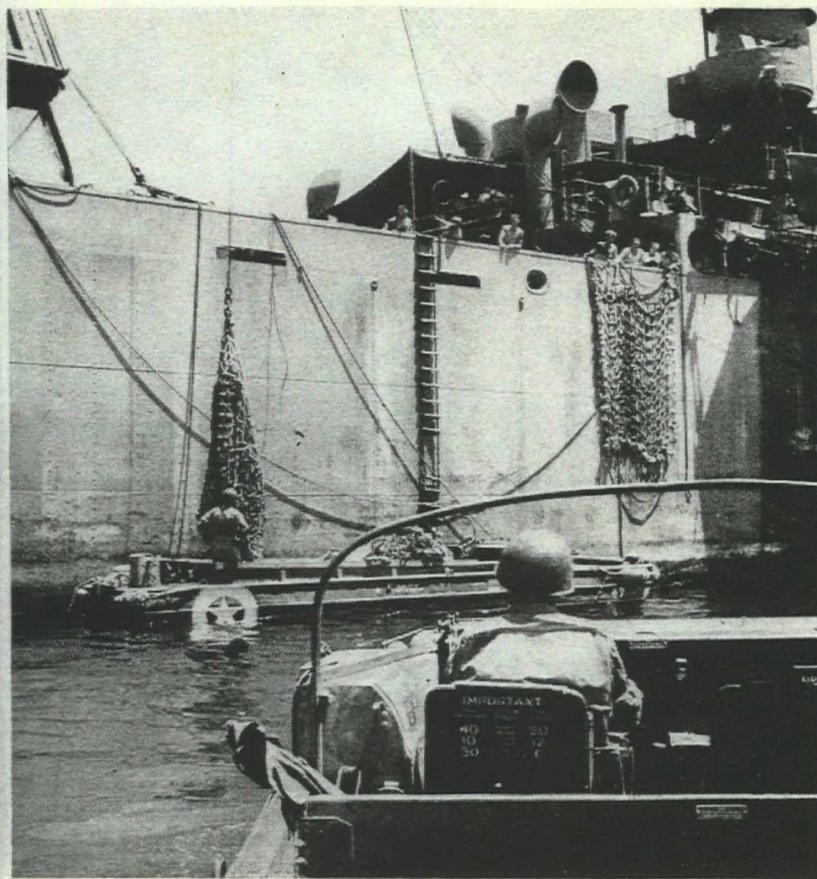
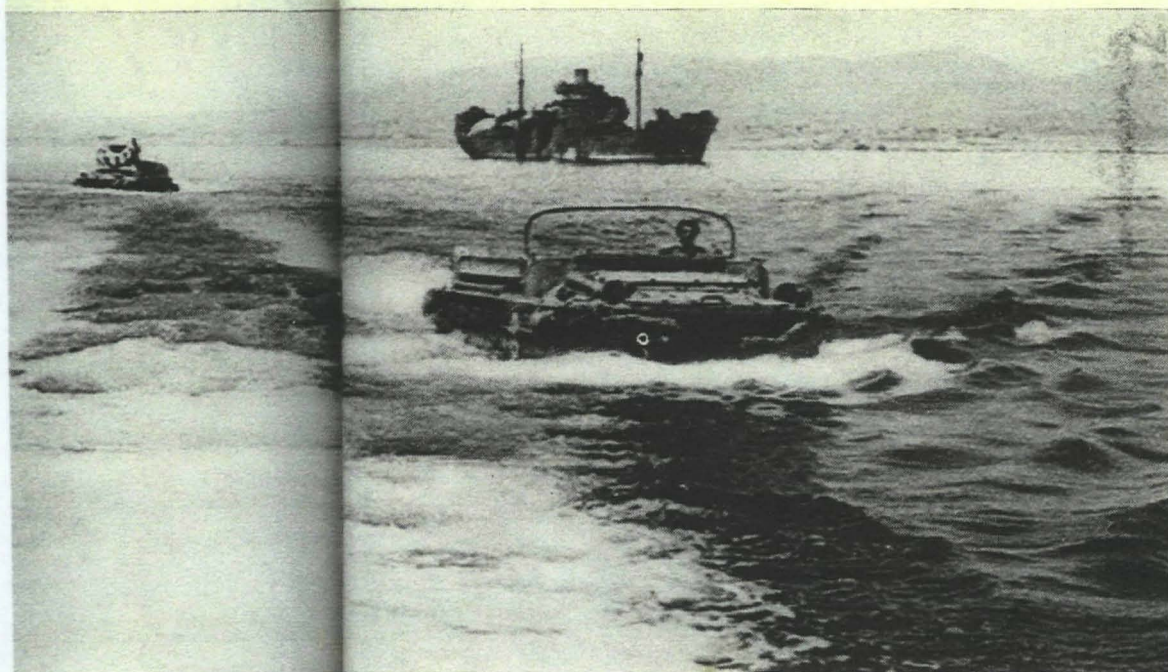




July 10-17, 1943

## FIRST WEEK OF SICILIAN INVASION

At dawn on Saturday, July 10, the first assault troops landed on the Sicily beaches, and the success of the greatest amphibian operation in history was quickly proved. Before seven o'clock that morning all landings were established; Allied infantry were advancing into the interior; a few hours later the harbor of Syracuse was captured. British forces landed east of Cape Passero, Canadians on the western side, while United States forces came ashore at Gela. On the next day the Canadians took Pachino, and its airfield was very soon in use by Allied aircraft. On Tuesday, the 13th, American forces captured Comiso and its airfield, joined up with the Canadians, and commanded the railway from Syracuse to Ragusa. By the next day seven of Sicily's airfields were firmly in the hands of the Allies. The Eighth Army successfully repelled fierce German counter-attacks. During Thursday and Friday the Eighth Army fought desperately for Lentini. The Americans and Canadians advanced and captured half a dozen towns. Lentini was occupied on Saturday, July 17. Pictures show the amphibious DUKWS (known as "Ducks"), which were used with success in the landing operations. This six-wheeled truck has a motor engine which drives wheels on land and a propeller at sea. Top, "Ducks" approaching shore; bottom, left, drawing away from a ship; right, returning for another load





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834-66-116  
United States Navy

Joined the Navy on 01-26-43 at Norfolk, Virginia and was sent that very same day to Bainbridge, Maryland for training. At that time Bainbridge consisted of a mess hall, a barrack, a drill hall and mud, mud, mud. Wood planks were used for side walks. Stayed there 5-6 weeks and sent back to Norfolk and assigned to an LST and sent to North Africa.

At that time, things were not going well for the Allies. We had our major training and duties at Bizerte Tunisia and Mers El Kebria, Algeria.

After the Second assault of North Africa, things began turning around for the Allies and the Allies began their future planning and strategies for winning the war. I began training for amphibious duty. Was assigned to an LST and participated in the invasion of Sicily helping land troops and supplies. The ship to which my LST was attached was attacked and turned. Consequently I had to go with the Army through Sicily keeping transport ammunition. Fighting through the rugged mountains was hard, slow and dangerous. When we finally



reached Palermo I was able to contact the Port Director and get back to Navy duty.

Was assigned to another LST and participated in the invasions of Italy, again bringing in troops and supplies.

When I returned to North Africa I was assigned to harbor tug duty and eventually became skipper of harbor tug YT-184. When Italy surrendered, our harbor tug pulled in and docked our first (former) enemy ship, the heavy cruiser, Raimondo Montecuccoli and was the first American to board the ship. Eventually we turned over our YT to the French ~~and~~ Lease.

I was sent back to the States and had damage control training at Philadelphia Navy Yard and then to Newport, Rhode Island for air craft carrier training. Was sent to Norfolk, Virginia, and assigned to a small air craft carrier, USS Charger for additional training and duties. Was then assigned to the USS Gintietam; then transferred again to the USS Midway (one of the largest <sup>carriers</sup> at that time) which was being completed in Newport News, Virginia. Was aboard when it was commissioned on 09-10-45. I went on its "shakedown" cruise and became an original Plank Owner - Flight Deck.



Became eligible to be discharged or to re-enlist, I selected discharge and was sent to Shelton, Virginia and mustered out 11-09-45.

While in Navy had ranks of A5, S2c, Cx, BM2 and BM1.

While on Harbor tug duty in Oran, Africa, ran into Jack Overman (Joe's younger brother). He was on R & R and we were able to spend some time together before he had to return to his out fit. On the invasion of Sicily I very briefly saw L. Mercer and we managed to say hello and good luck while landing troops and supplies. These are the only two persons from Wilson that I saw overseas.

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John  
Hope this is  
ok for you. I'm  
free to make or delete anything.

We do have some photos.  
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