



‘The Desert Generals Revisited’

An address by Corelli Barnett

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Colleagues, I was much honoured when our President, Professor Brian Bond, invited me to give the lecture at this year’s AGM, and on the topic of ‘The Desert Generals revisited’.

I propose to start by revisiting by own book The Desert Generals, and then go on to revisit the broad topic of --- in lower case ---- the desert generals; or perhaps, the desert campaigns.

My book was first published in hardback in Britain and America in 1960; re-published in a fresh edition with extra material in 1983; and still in print today as a Cassell Military Paperback. It has been translated into French, German, Dutch, Danish, Finnish, Italian, Portuguese, and Japanese.

Now a book is like a battle, in that it has to be launched in particular circumstances, at a particular time, and prepared with such resources as are then available.

To take resources first: in 1958-1960, when I was researching and writing the book, I had a full-time but ill-paid job in public relations, and had to produce the book in my spare time. In a word, no academic firm base.

I should mention in parenthesis that at this period, the late 1950s and beginning of the 1960s, there was anyway little place in British universities for military history. ‘Strategic studies’, with much arcane theorising about nuclear deterrence, yes, or so-called ‘military sociology’, yes, but the study of actual war, very little. Dear old dried up Cyril Falls as Chichele Prof at Oxford, and Michael Howard as a lecturer at King’s, but who else? Michael’s first major work of military history, The Franco-Prussian War, dates from 1963, three years later than The Desert Generals.

So in the late 1950s and early 1960s the banner of military history was kept flying in Britain by non-academic freelances – Basil Liddell-Hart obviously, but also Alistair Horne with The Price of Glory in 1962; John Terraine with Mons: The Retreat to Victory in 1960, the Haig: The Educated Soldier in 1963.

The Desert Generals was therefore NOT written in the classic academic mould, and bore no resemblance to a PhD thesis re-jogged for publication. It was written to appeal to the educated layman, with a narrative as compellingly readable as I could make it. I wanted; as best I could, to bring the desert commanders to life for my readers. Or, to put it another way, to place my readers right there alongside the generals at the map-tables or in front of the talcs when the critical decisions were being taken. And I wanted the book to sell as many copies as possible.



Lacking as I did a stipendiary academic firm base, I had to research and write the book in my spare time in just two and a half years. The writing of the actual narrative took six months. So time itself was also a scarce resource. And I certainly had neither the leisure nor the finance to visit the desert battlefields.

What about resources in available documentation? Nothing was yet open in the PRO, and given the then 50-year rule, would apparently not have been open until the late 1990's. So none of the official correspondence, war diaries, signals, orders, directives, and minutes of commanders' conferences so brilliantly deployed by Niall Barr in his new book The Pendulum of War: the Three Battles at Alamein was available to me. The published volumes of the official UK campaign history by Playfair had got no further than Alam Halfa. The Dominion official histories were extremely useful, and I found the South African history by Agar-Hamilton and Turner the most comprehensive --- especially for the Sidi Rezegh battles during the Crusader offensive in November – December 1941. My basic campaign narratives were therefore based either on such official histories or on Auchinleck's and Alexander's published dispatches. Otherwise, I had to rely on the spate of personal memoirs and other unofficial studies of the desert war already in print up to 1960.

I won't list them all now, because they're in the acknowledgements section of the book. But I will just mention the Rommel Papers edited by Basil; Infantry Brigadier by the New Zealander Howard Kippenberger; Panzer Battles by von Mellenthin; and de Guingand's Operation Victory. For a particular reason, I will come a bit later Montgomery's Memoirs and his El Alamein to the Sangro. And also to Desmond Young's best-seller Rommel.

The really colossal gap in published official sources, and indeed unofficial sources, back in 1958-1960 lay in the field of secret intelligence --- meaning Ultra; still a tightly guarded top secret. Even the extent of 'Y' intelligence --- radio intercepts in the field ---- was still secret. This was one main reason for re-issuing The Desert Generals in 1983 with a fresh commentary to each chapter taking account of the revelations in Harry Hinsley's newly published official history of British intelligence in the Second World War. That edition is still in print as a Cassell Military Paperback.

My own contribution to the source material in 1958-1960 lay in the personal interviews I conducted with most of the leading participants ---- after I'd done my basic reading and knew what to ask them. Again I won't list them all by name, because they're in the acknowledgements, but they included two army commanders; four corps commanders (including Dick O'Connor of Western Desert Force); five div commanders; five BGS's or 'Chiefs of Staff', and one of these, de Guingand, also a DMI. They did NOT include Monty, because he refused to see me, or Neil Ritchie, who was unavailable in Canada.

I think I already realised the frailty of memory in regard to actual facts or the sequence of events. I was primarily interested in what light the interviewees could cast on personal character and personal relationships: and what eye-witness evidence they could furnish about the desert generals' states of mind and behaviour at critical junctures, such as Cunningham's loss of nerve during the Crusader offensive. I am happy to say that some of the quotes I then obtained are cited by Niall Barr in his new book.



I should add that I particularly benefited from long conversations and correspondence with Claude Auchinleck and Eric Dorman-Smith, his acting chief of staff in the field during First Alamein. You must judge how wisely I used their witness.

So much then for resources. What about motivation? Why did I want to write about the desert campaign? Well, as a teenager during the war, I had followed the desert battles as one might follow football and a favourite striker --- in my case, Erwin Rommel. Then, in 1958, Desmond Young published his best-selling biography of the commander of Panzerarmee Afrika. I thought: why not a comparable book on the five British commanders who had fought the Axis in the desert? That was the basic motivation. But also in 1958 Montgomery published his own highly tendentious memoirs, along with accompanying braggardly performances on BBC television. These perpetrated the myth that in the Western desert all had been defeat, retreat and confusion until his own advent in command of 8th Army. This myth even alleged that Auchinleck was intending to retreat from Alamein if attacked again by Rommel. According to the myth, Montgomery instantly cancelled this defeatist strategy, drew up a brilliant defensive plan for the Battle of Alam Halfa, and then went on to win the Battle of Alamein thanks to his 'Master Plan' exactly carried out in the event. Alamein was therefore the turning point of the war as well as proof of Monty's genius. So went the story. We all remember that Churchill himself summed up the myth in a phrase much quoted since: It may almost be said [the 'almost' tends to get lost in quotation]: "*Before Alamein we never had a victory. After Alamein we never had a defeat.*"

It seemed to me clear that this myth was simply NOT justified by the available evidence, and that it was manifestly unfair to Monty's predecessors back to Dick O'Connor. That in particular it did a grave injustice to Sir Claude Auchinleck, who in the First Battle of Alamein in July 1942 had stopped a victorious Rommel in full cry for Alexandria.

So I wrote my book in order to demolish what I believed to be a false version of history, even though it was then the prevailing orthodoxy. I wanted to give due credit to such earlier victories as Crusader and O'Connor's destruction of a whole Italian army, culminating in the annihilation battle of Beda Fomm. That was the aim.

But what were the prevailing circumstances in which the book was to be launched? Here was I, an unknown writer with no academic base, setting out to question both the generalship and the truthfulness of Field-Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, KG, newly retired from the post of Deputy Supreme Commander Allied Powers Europe. In short, I was taking on a national hero with his reputation at its apogee. I was seeking to torpedo a national myth. May I just say here that I had no awareness of the enormity of what I was doing --- no idea of the colossal impact the book would have. Such was the naiveté of a novice writer of 33.

I hope it won't sound like boasting if I say that the impact truly WAS colossal. On the day of publication I was interviewed along with Major General Alex Gatehouse by Ludo Kennedy on BBC Panorama --- at that time a news programme like Newsnight now. The book was serialised in the London Evening Standard. It achieved a 'possible' in terms of review coverage in national and provincial papers, and the reviews themselves often amounted to major articles, in some cases to being really news stories. They ranged from Michael Howard in The Observer --- urbane, judicious, but favourable --- to Randolph Churchill slagging me off across a double-page spread in The News of the World as '*the sergeant who dares to*



criticise field-m Marshals'. Needless to say, the general focus of the reviews was on the book's treatment of Monty as an overrated general and a fibber.

At the 1960 Alamein reunion a month later at the Albert Hall, the book and its author were denounced from the platform by Monty himself and by Oliver Leese. Loud cheers from 3,000 veterans present! Next year, Field Marshall Earl Alexander of Tunis publicly acknowledged that he had decided to publish his 'memoirs', and I quote his own words, 'almost entirely' because of my book.

I leave you to judge, but I do think that it was The Desert Generals which effectively started the historical debate which still continues about the battles at Alamein fought by Auchinleck and Montgomery. And possibly also opened the way for the broader debate about Monty's talents as a general in terms of later campaigns like Italy and North-west Europe.

Niall Barr in his preface to The Pendulum of War is kind enough to refer to The Desert Generals as '*brilliant and iconoclastic*'. I appreciate the comment the more because it comes from a historian who has trawled the mass of documentation now open in the British, Australian, and New Zealand national archives; and who has written what must be the definitive history of the battles at Alamein --- comprehensive in its subject matter, immensely detailed, and certainly impartial.

Yet reading Niall's book made me realise as never before just why my own book caused such uproar in the Monty camp back in 1960, and in the 1980s was still provoking Monty's hagiographer, Nigel Hamilton, to fresh denunciation. The uproar was not because my criticisms were wildly inaccurate and unfair, but because, on the contrary, my fall of shot struck the target with uncomfortable precision. Niall Barr, on the basis of his comprehensive documentary research, concurs with most of the basic points I made back in 1960. To summarise: he proves that Auchinleck was indeed planning to fight Rommel in the Alamein-Alam-Halfa position, and NOT retreat if attacked, as Montgomery alleged. He proves that Montgomery did indeed fight his battle of Alam Halfa on a defensive plan conceived by Auchinleck, Dorman-Smith and 'Strafer' Gott, and from defences that had been constructed, and minefields that had been laid, before Monty's arrival in Egypt. Niall Barr also demonstrates beyond all doubt that Monty's 'Master Plan' for the Second Battle of Alamein did indeed break down in the first twenty-four hours; and NOT because the plan itself was unsound: its objectives being operationally unrealistic. He further shows that the pursuit at the end of the eleven-day battle was slow to get started because Monty had failed to plan and prepare for the pursuit, and because his vaunted *Corps de Chasse* had been consumed or disorganised in the course of the previous attrition battle. Just as I had argued 45 years ago.

I might add that the American historian Douglas Porch in HIS new book on the Desert repeats virtually word for word my 1960 contention that Second Alamein was strategically unnecessary because the Anglo-American 'Torch' invasion of French North Africa 1400 miles in Rommel's rear would have forced him to retreat away --- and that Second Alamein was really a political battle, intended to restore Britain's. and Churchill's prestige by a final purely British victory before the United-Kingdom war effort became subsumed in the Anglo-American alliance.



As I've mentioned, the second edition of The Desert Generals contains extra commentary taking note of the books published since 1960 --- especially Harry Hinsley's revelations about Ultra, but also the volume on Second Alamein and after by Playfair and Morony in the British official history series. This volume agrees that Monty's 'Master Plan' did indeed collapse in the first twenty-four hours.

Harry Hinsley's account of Ultra makes clear that the decision to halt O'Connor and commit his best troops to a campaign in Greece was even more of a folly than I had thought in 1960. Why? Because the gamble was undertaken in the face of Ultra decrypts which actually vastly exaggerated the actual strength of the German army in the Balkans.

But it's on Auchinleck's counter-attacks in the First Battle of Alamein in July 1942 that Hinsley casts decisively new light. In sort, these counter-attacks were not meaningless and futile as Nigel Hamilton and Charles Richardson made out, but closely exploited up-to-date Ultra decrypts and 'Y' intelligence in order to target Rommel's Italian divisions. The aim was to force Rommel to disperse his German striking forces in shoring up the Italians.

Ultra also gave Auchinleck a clear picture of Rommel's increasingly serious position re tank runners and fuel supplies. So it was not unreasonable for Auchinleck to launch his final attempt in Operation Splendour to compel the Panzerarmee to retreat from Alamein.

We should note here that Hamilton in his denigration of Auchinleck in the first volume of 'Monty' simply ignores Hinsley altogether, enough though I know Hinsley let him see a proof copy. We should also note that Charles Richardson was NOT privy to the Ultra secret during First Alamein, and so his denigration of Auchinleck is likewise without substance.

Hinsley also documents how during the attrition battle of Second Alamein, Ultra intelligence gave Montgomery invaluable day-to-day knowledge of Rommel's waning resources in tanks and fuel. In the extra commentary in the second edition The Desert Generals, I cite Hinsley to validate my 1960 contention that Montgomery's pursuit of Rommel, and especially the fortnight's halt before moving against the El Agheila position, showed excessive caution in view of Rommel's extreme weakness as revealed in detail through Ultra.

Before I leave my own book and go on to discuss the desert generals 'in lower-case', I just wish to say that if I were writing the book today, with Monty reduced to life-size, a Plumer rather than a Wellington, and an eccentric rather than a genius, the tone would be less sharply polemical, and both cooler and more detailed.

Now to revisit the desert war in general. Firstly, the grand-strategic framework. As I now see it, the desert war is an outstanding example of what Kitchener in 1915 described as making war as we must rather than as we ought. After the fall of France, the Western Desert was the only place where we could fight the Axis on land. Hence the War Cabinet's decision to develop the Middle East and Mediterranean as a major theatre of war. This meant creating a main base in a backward region --- 'main base' meaning a huge military-industrial complex able to support a theatre ration-strength of some 800,000 men at its peak, and maintain and repair all its weaponry and motor transport.



However, in 1940-42 the Italian Navy and the Luftwaffe barred the direct Mediterranean route to Egypt to all traffic except occasional hazardous complex and all Middle-East campaigning depended on the 15,000 mile sea route from Britain round the Cape and up the Red Sea. That meant a colossal investment in scarce merchant shipping and naval escorts at a time of rising U-boat sinkings in the Atlantic.

Yet the military pay-off for all this investment by land and sea was hardly proportionate. In the biggest battle fought by the Commonwealth forces during the desert campaigns, Second Alamein, they engaged only the equivalent of four and a half German divisions --- as against 190 then engaged in Russia. Pretty peripheral!

Turn the strategic question round the other way, and Rommel's two year desert campaign can be regarded as a tremendously successful, even if unwitting, exercise in division of the enemy. There he was in 1941-42, at the head of just two German panzer divisions and one German motorised division, attracting the principal military effort of the British Commonwealth in the Europe war --- and literally mesmerising the British War Premier. What else matters, cried Winston in 1942, but beating Rommel? In fact, we British have remained fascinated by this fringe campaign ever since ---- viz, the still growing pile of books on it. *Mea Maxima Culpa!*

It was writing my history of the Royal Navy in the Second World War, Engage the Enemy More Closely, which made me think again in this way about the grand-strategic and logistic implications of the desert campaign. Writing that book also gave me a fresh perspective on the decision to stop 'O'Connor and send his best troops to Greece. Churchill and the Cabinet Defence Committee received measured warnings from the three C-in-Cs in the Middle East that to embark on a Greek campaign would be a risky gamble with unpredictable consequences. In the words of one such joint signal on 14 February 1941,

'From the naval point of view the new policy creates a heavy commitment safeguarding the line of supply through the Aegean... we are already completely extended so far as our present resources are concerned...'

When the War Cabinet discussed the matter ten days later, even Churchill acknowledged, and I quote him, that

'the difficulties of maintaining an army on land must not be underestimated....'

In other words, even if the Greeks and the British Expeditionary Force did manage to stop the initial German onrush --- unlikely anyway --- the long-term chances of maintaining the expeditionary force on the Greek front by vulnerable sea communications were doubtful in the extreme.

So today I would say with even more certainty than in 1960 that the Greek adventure was, and I quote "The Desert Generals, *'a mistake the more disastrous because of the alternative objective of Tripoli, which O'Connor believed he could attain.'*

Well, could O'Connor have taken Tripoli before Rommel could deploy a field force?



We can never be certain. What we can be certain of is that the removal of O'Connor himself along with his best troops and their replacement by a green armoured division and a new general, handed Rommel his first desert victory in March-April 1942. And his first crucial opportunity to establish his moral ascendancy over the British command.

Then again, it was writing The Audit of War which made me think afresh about the technological and industrial background to the comparisons between German and British equipment, especially tanks --- a topic explored in detail by Niall Barr: gun versus armour, gun versus gun.

Why did we fail to produce a single tank equal to its German opposite numbers of the time? Why did we come to depend on the American Grant and the American Sherman?

The story starts back in the mid-1930's with the Army's and the War Office's failure to frame a clear doctrine on the role of armour. Should the tank's future role be that of 1918 updated -- close co-operation with a slow-moving infantry assault? Or should it have, as Basil Liddell Hart and Boney Fuller proseletysed, an independent mobile role, with free-ranging manoeuvre and deep penetration of the enemy's front? The result of this indecision was two different types of tank, the 15 miles-per-hour heavily armoured infantry tank, like the Matilda and Valentine, and the so-called 'cruiser' tank like the Crusader. In contrast, the Germans developed all-purpose tanks, what we today would simply call 'main battle tanks' --- increasingly well armoured and up-gunned, and in a technically coherent series : the Mark III, the Mark IV, and the Mark IV Special.

To revert to British developments, the 'I' tank or Matilda was to prove a success in the Desert in its limited role under command of predominantly infantry corps. The real pre-war problem lay with developing the cruiser tank, the backbone of future armoured divisions. It was a technological problem, arising out of the incompetence of the British motor industry, and indeed of British engineering in a wider sense.

The story begins with the War Office's adoption of an experimental chassis demonstrated in 1936-37 by an American engineer named Christie. His key contribution was an all-independent suspension system later successfully adopted by the Red Army. The War Office, however, also adopted the motor, which powered this experimental model --- the First World War designed 'Liberty' aero-engine. This coupled impressive performance when in the mood with appalling unreliability when not. The task of developing a cruiser tank round the Christie chassis and the Liberty engine was given to Nuffield Mechanizations. Nuffield! There's a name to conjure with! A synonym for all that was wrong, and would go on being wrong after the War, with the British motor industry.

Just as with the industry's post-war civilian products, there now followed over-hasty, botched, and piecemeal development, instead of thoroughgoing design and testing. The gearbox of the prototype gave out after only 70 miles, while the steering brakes had a life of only 127 miles. After two months of trials at the end of 1937, no fewer than 47 mechanical defects had been reported. Just about every part, from carburettor and ignition to gearbox, tracks and clutch, had to be re-designed.



When the eventual production model --- now named the 'Crusader', eventually reached the Middle East in 1941, it came off the ships with nuts and bolts only hand-tight. It then proved so mechanically unreliable that the C-in-C Middle East had to reckon on having 25 per cent reserves to cover those in the workshops. What's more, firing tests on the Crusader's armour in 1942 showed that it gave less protection than should have been expected from its thickness --- less in fact than comparable American armour. And what's more, it was difficult to maintain in the field, in that to remove and replace a Crusader's engine took vastly more time than a Grant's. The Germans, for their part, had always kept ease of manufacture and maintenance in the forefront of their minds, and their system of unit assembly much impressed British engineers when they inspected captured enemy tanks in the Desert.

Churchill of course, was a man who simply counted numbers --- whether of men or machines --- and he never understood the significance of the poor reliability of the Crusader when he badgered first Wavell and then Auchinleck to attach without delay.

So Britain had to turn to American technology for rescue. By summer 1942 the Eighth Army's armoured divisions were equipped with nearly twice as many Grants as Crusaders. Writes Playfair in volume III of the official history of the campaign, the arrival of the Grant was regarded

'as a resounding event, for it provided the means of killing German tanks and anti-tank-gun crews at ranges hitherto undreamed of. And this could be done from behind the heavy armour of a reasonably fast and reliable tank'.

By the time of Second Alamein in October 1942 it was the American Sherman that provided Monty with his heaviest punch. It amounted to 252 out of the 1029 tanks fielded at the start of the battle. Add in the Grants and Stuarts, and the American tanks come to more than half the Eighth Army total.

In the meantime, British industry's attempts to develop successor models to the Crusader had veered between outright farce and prolonged delays. For instance, 1900 Covenanters were built, but, because of their innumerable defects, never fought in battle. The Centaur and the Cavalier never even got as far as production. Even ultimately successful designs like the Churchill and the Cromwell suffered from numerous design and manufacturing defects and delays. The specification for the Churchill was issued in summer 1940. In November 1941, the time of the Crusader offensive, the War Office reported that this tank was unfit for sustained operations in the Middle East, or even in the United Kingdom, until sixteen modifications were carried out on the transmission, suspension, and steering. As late as July 1942, the time of First Alamein, Churchills were failing their acceptance tests at only 150 miles.

We also have to consider the complications for the Royal Ordnance Corps and the new Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers of carrying out maintenance and repair work on such a diverse stable of tanks as Grants, Shermans, Stuarts, Crusaders, and 'I' tanks --- and the need to carry equally diverse stocks of spare parts.



All these R&D and industrial factors bore on the operational efficiency and availability of the British armour vis-à-vis the enemy, and on the consequent problems and anxieties of British commanders.

This brings me to the connected question of the co-ordination of armour with other arms in battle. 'Co-ordination' embraces divisional structures, operational doctrine, and fighting tactics. I sketched these topics in The Desert Generals, and now Niall Barr has explored them in great detail. Today I can only telegraph what I now perceive as the main issues.

At first sight, the desert battles seem to vindicate completely Liddell-Hart's and Boney Fuller's pre-war vision of free-wheeling tank manoeuvre in depth, in contrast to the positional warfare of the Western Front. The Cyrenaican Desert provided the perfect arena, virtually devoid of habitation away from the coast, and with few physical features capable of cramping manoeuvre. Think here of the Crusader battle of November-December 1941; Rommel's counter-strokes at the beginning of 1941 and of 1942; and supremely, the Gazala battles of May-June 1942.

In such free-wheeling battles, the British infantry division, an updated version of 1918, and without its own organic transport, was useless – as were Rommel's Italian infantry divs. Tied to the ground in so-called 'boxes'. They were reduced either to being spectators of the armoured battle like the divs in the Gazala Line, or, worse, to being sacrificial goats, like 150 Brigade in that line.

But what I failed back in 1960 to recognise is that there was also a hell of a lot of positional warfare in the Desert campaign. For instance, Rommel's defence of his bridgehead beyond the British minefields during Gazala. Or the long siege of Tobruk in 1941-2. Or on both sides during First Alamein. And, of course, supremely at Second Alamein, where Monty had to breach an updated Hindenburg Line in the Desert, strong in minefields, wire, and anti-tank guns.

Manoeuvre battle AND positional warfare, then. In response, both sides each effectively evolved two armies in one --- first, the panzer and motorised divisions, and second, the infantry, in what Claude Auchinleck once described to me as '*solid divisional lumps*'. That was equally true of the 8th Army's British and Commonwealth infantry divs, and Rommel's Italian equivalents.

But successful attack on a well-posted enemy behind minefields and wire, strong in anti-tank guns, required close co-operation between these two distinct elements, armour and infantry. Plus of course artillery.

This close all-arms co-operation was never achieved by the British. Auchinleck's counter strokes at First Alamein broke down because either the armour was not up in time to exploit the infantry's initial penetration, or because the armour was asked to make its own breakthrough of the enemy's defences, and was destroyed by German anti-tank fire. So what to do? Well, Auchinleck's solution to this chronic problem was to turn the whole of the Eighth Army into all-arms so-called 'mobile divisions' --- trucked infantry with an integral armoured brigade and artillery, and trained together according to a common doctrine.



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This proposal was cancelled by Montgomery, except in the case of the New Zealand Division. Instead, the 8th Army would remain divided between self-contained infantry formations and self-contained armoured formations --- indeed, separate infantry corps.

So whereas Auchinleck had intended that infantry-armour co-operation would be achieved within the division itself, Monty's solution for Operation Lightfoot, the 'Master Plan' for Alamein, was to place a whole armoured corps, the 10th, on the same axis of advance through Rommel's defences as the infantry corps, the 30th. Co-operation would have to be imposed from above at Army level. So you could say that the breakdown of the 'Master Plan' on 23-24 October 1942 in utter confusion with Rommel's minefields marked the nadir of the British failure to integrate infantry, tanks and guns. In fact, you could even say that, given the lengthy time for the preparation of 'Lightfoot' and also the lavish resources behind it, the breakdown was far less excusable than the failure of Auchinleck's hastily improvised counterstrokes in first Alamein.

May I just add a postscript here by way of conclusion? Even in Normandy, British offensive strokes were coming to grief because of a continued failure to integrate the operations of armour and infantry. I think here of the Villers-Bocage battle on 11-to-15 June 1944, and especially Operational Goodwood on 18 July 1944, when once again the armour was ordered to bust its own way through a cunning German defence strong in anti-tank guns --- and failed with heavy loss.

I suppose it's a final vindication of Auchinleck's proposals that today's British field forces fight in all-arms battle-groups compete with integral 'armoured infantry', or, as one might say panzer-grenadiers.

Thank you.

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