

I also ordered 5 Corps to move eastwards with 4 Indian Division and 1 Division, and, in co-operation with the left wing of French 19 Corps, to complete the encirclement of the enemy.

The final attack of 6 Armoured Division was made southwards from Bou Ficha covered by heavy artillery fire and an air bombardment by Western Desert Air Force on 12th May, while 56 Division of Eighth Army shelled the trapped enemy from the south. The fire plan was mutually arranged by wireless. After the bombardment a sea of white flags marked the end of all organised resistance.

In all cases the pursuit was pressed ruthlessly and without pause by night or day by 6 Armoured Division and 4 British Division.

On the American front events moved with equal swiftness, Ferryville and Bizerta being entered on afternoon 7th May by United States 1 Armoured Division and at 1100 hours on 9th May the Commander United States 2 Corps accepted the unconditional surrender of his opponents.

French 19 Corps attacked on 6th May and entered Pont du Fahs on the 7th. During the 8th-11th, after an initial withdrawal, the enemy, on the whole, stood firm in the mountains and any attempt by the French to advance was very heavily shelled. But on the 11th, after a successful attack with tanks and infantry, German officers came in under a white flag and on the 12th resistance ceased, with many thousands of prisoners coming in. It must have been a moment of peculiar satisfaction for the French 19 Corps.

The scenes in the Cap Bon peninsula area and to the south-west during the last three days were amazing. The rout of the German army was complete; prisoners swamped their captors and drove in their own transport looking for the cages. Thousands surrendered without attempting to resist further, while others fired their remaining stocks of ammunition at any target before giving themselves up.

On 12th May Colonel-General J. von Arnim, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief Army Group Afrika, surrendered with his staff to 4 Indian Division and was brought to me at Headquarters First Army.

The disaster was complete.

The total of prisoners eventually reached over a quarter of a million, if the 4,000 odd captured since 1st March are included; of these over half were Germans.

The booty was immense.

Dunkirk was amply revenged.

It was an amazing finish to a fascinating and unique campaign, which highly tested the qualities of the British soldier and proved him still to be as tough, resolute and good humoured as ever before in our long history.

In the later stages the co-operation between Army and Air Forces was excellent and frictionless, despite the difficulties always inherent in operations conducted with forces of different nations.

In the final phase the weight of air support played a very great part in ensuring the overwhelming victory; Army and Air Forces worked as one.

And no man in First Army ever forgot that we owed our daily life and being to the vigilance of the Royal Navy.

Right throughout the campaign we were all of us, in varying degree, thrown into intimate

touch with the armies of our American and French allies, usually under conditions of stress and danger demanding instant decision and the closest collaboration. I say without hesitation that the mutual goodwill, tolerance, understanding, and above all the confidence which each of us had in the other was quite remarkable. Not only senior officers but also all ranks of our three armies soon realised that despite differences of language, customs and processes of thought the other fellow was also giving his best without reservation and that he was to be trusted. Even between British and French the initial and very understandable doubts very soon disappeared in mutual open respect and admiration.

Herein lies much hope for the future.

It has been for me an exhilarating experience.

I count myself indeed fortunate to have had under my orders such loyal and gallant men as General Koeltz and his soldiers of the French 19 Corps: while always my relations with United States commanders and men have been entirely frank, cordial and understanding. I owe much to General Eisenhower for his valient wisdom and encouragement, and to those of his commanders who served under me or with me with such loyal friendship.

The total British losses of First Army throughout the whole campaign amounted to:—

	<i>Killed.</i>	<i>Wounded.</i>	<i>Missing.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Officers...	382	833	307	1,522
Other				
Ranks ...	4,061	11,792	6,235	22,088
	4,443	12,625	6,542	23,610

Of the above, 13,240 occurred during the period 1st April to end of hostilities.

A feature of the campaign has been the highly successful results achieved by early forward surgery. Throughout, the work of the Medical Services, in the care and treatment of wounded and sick and in the prevention of disease, is deserving of the highest praise.

When all have done so much, it is perhaps invidious to select particular services for mention, but I must pay tribute to all ranks of the Royal Army Service Corps and the Royal Army Ordnance Corps, who, despite every difficulty of climate, terrain and enemy action, understaffed and overworked, nevertheless never failed to deliver the goods.

#### APPENDIX "A."

OUTLINE ORDER OF BATTLE ON 20TH APRIL, 1943, OF FIRST ARMY AND 2 UNITED STATES CORPS.

##### 5 Corps—

1 (British) Infantry Division.

4 (British) Division.

78 Infantry Division.

25 Tank Brigade (less 51 Royal Tank Regiment).

##### 9 Corps—

1 (British) Armoured Division.

6 Armoured Division.

46 Infantry Division.

51 Royal Tank Regiment.

##### French 19 Corps—

Division d'Alger (Conne).

Division du Maroc (Mathenet).

Division d'Oran (Boisseau).

Tank Group (Le Coulteux).

1 Kings Dragoon Guards.