



1ST AND 24TH GUARDS BRIGADES



1ST GUARDS BRIGADE

The 1st Guards Brigade took part in a number of key battles during the war. As part of the BEF (British Expeditionary Force) it participated in the Battle for France in June 1940 and the subsequent Dunkirk evacuation. In 1942 it took part in Operation Torch, the allied landings in Algeria and Morocco. After serving with the 78th Division and 6th Armoured Division in Tunisia, the 1st Guards Brigade transferred to Allied Mediterranean HQ to be used as needed in Italy. They were soon fighting alongside the 6th Armoured Division again on the Garigliano salient. They remained with the 6th Armoured through the fighting for Cassino and the Gustav Line, taking part in the breakthrough and the subsequent pursuit. They fought with the 6th Armoured during the push to the Gothic Line. The brigade reinforced the American sector on the Gothic Line in August 1944 holding a mountain taken by the US 88th Division. They ended the war again fighting together with the 6th Armoured Division, taking part in the final mountain battles and into the Po River plain.

24TH GUARDS BRIGADE

In April 1940 the 24th Guards Brigade took part in the battles for Norway, fighting at Narvik between 15 April and 8 June. In 1942 and 1943 the brigade formed part of the 1st Infantry Division and later the 6th Armoured Division during the fighting in Algeria and Tunisia. From 7 December 1943 it served mainly with the 6th South African Armoured Division for the Italian Campaign. In February 1945 it left the command of the 6th South African Armoured Division to become an independent brigade under Eighth Army command. They took part in Operation Grapeshot and Operation Roast from 9 April to 2 May 1945 as the British Eighth Army and US Fifth Army defeated the Axis forces in Northern Italy. The 24th Guards Brigade took part in the liberation of Trieste on 1 May 1945.

