

1ST ARMORED DIVISION

Old Ironsides, the first of the mighty Armored Force, the pioneer in the art and science of armor, the father of other divisions, the first armored division overseas, the first to land on African soil, the first to engage the German troops in World War II, the instructor of others entering combat, the first into Rome, the first of the armored divisions in days of actual field service during World War II.

—Office of the Chief of Military History

Although the nickname 'the Fighting First' truly belongs to the 1st Infantry Division, the 1st Armored Division can just as much claim to be the first of its kind, a template which set the standard for the newly created armored divisions—fielding more than 14,000 soldiers organized in two armored regiments and one armored infantry regiment, along with supporting artillery, engineers, and reconnaissance.

The division's nickname 'Old Ironsides' was chosen by its first commanding officer, General Magruder, in honour of the USS Constitution, one of the first warships of the United States Navy. Magruder appreciated the parallel between the famous warship that founded the US Navy and the 1st Armored Division setting the standard for the new armored divisions.

The division was led into Tunisia by Major-General Orlando Ward, a capable administrator who was hampered by a difficult working relationship with his II Corps commander, General Lloyd Fredendall.

Much of the losses at Kasserine Pass were suffered by Old Ironsides. Ward was furious at having his division broken up into smaller 'penny packet' forces distributed across the front, rather than grouped together en masse where they could mutually support each other.

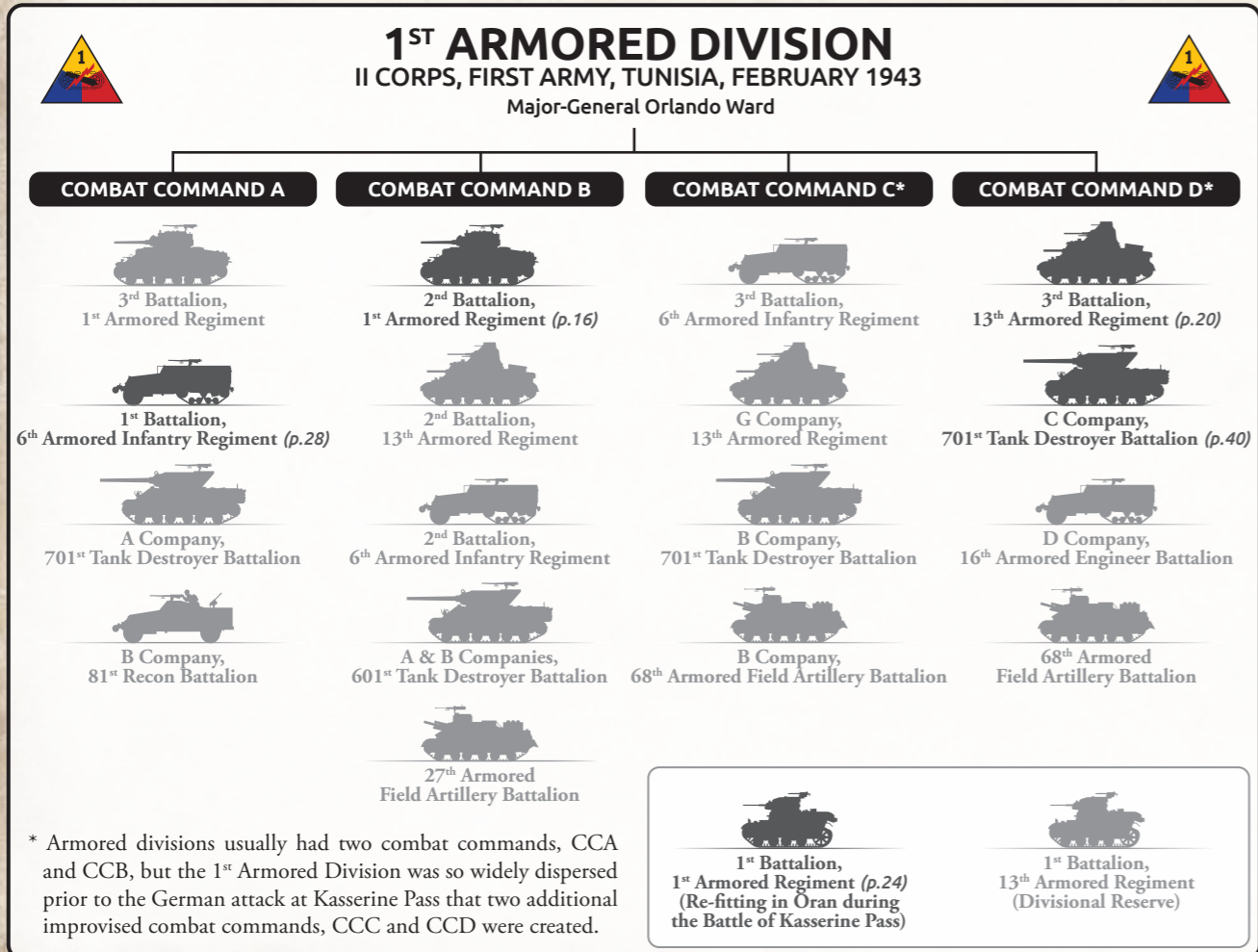
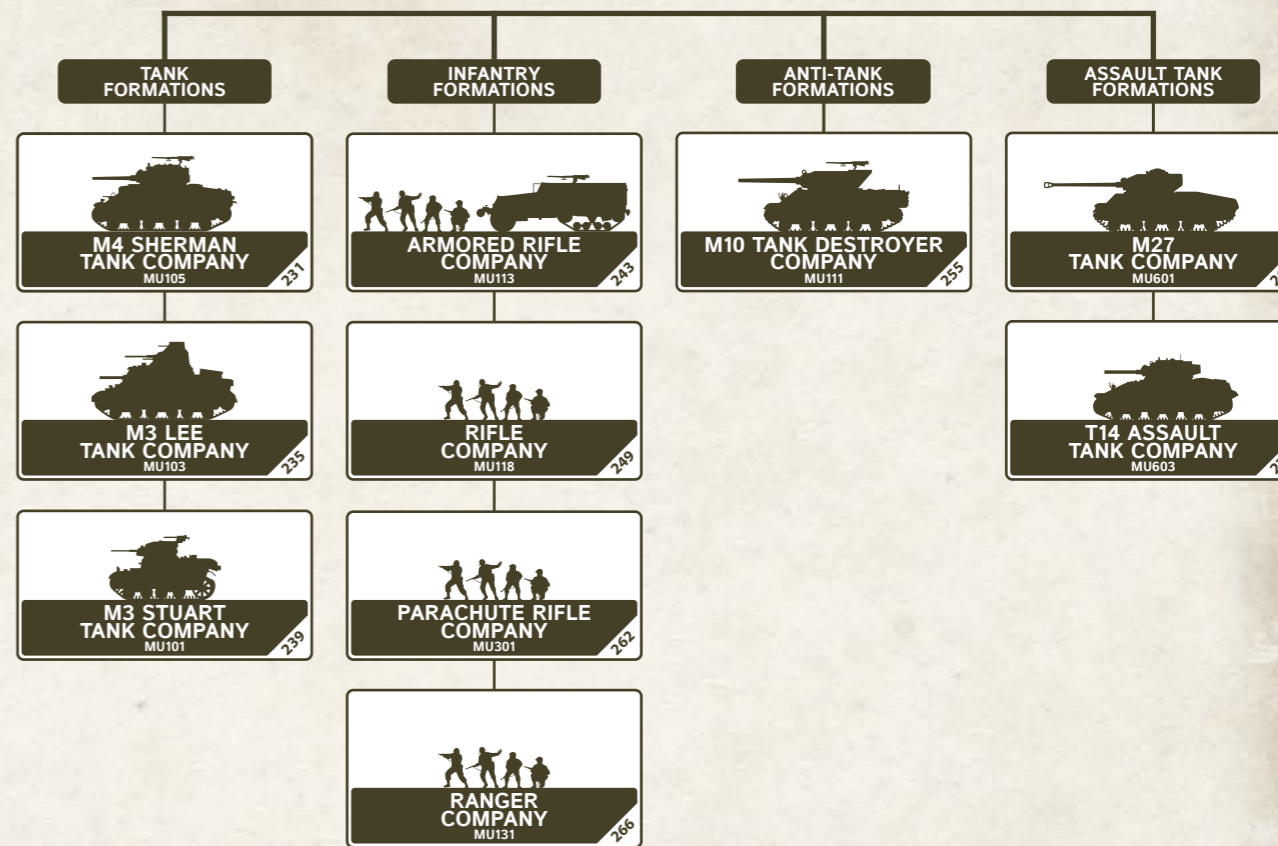
Ward was later relieved of command of the division, as scapegoat for the failings in the Kasserine Pass fighting. He was replaced by Major General Ernest Harmon, who, sent to assess the situation in the Kasserine Pass, had effectively taken control of II Corps and turned the chaos into a successful defence.

With the Tunisian Campaign over, Old Ironsides redeployed to Morocco to re-equip. The heavy losses of the campaign were restored, and the last of its M3 Lee tanks were replaced with the newer M4 Sherman.

Old Ironsides sat out the invasion of Sicily, and later landed at Salerno in Italy. A year of tough fighting followed through the mountainous country, before the final capture of Rome on 5 June 1944.

★ FIGHTING FIRST FORCE ★

Your Force must contain at least one Formation, and may contain as many Formations as you like.



SUPPORT UNITS

You may field one Support Unit from each box.

