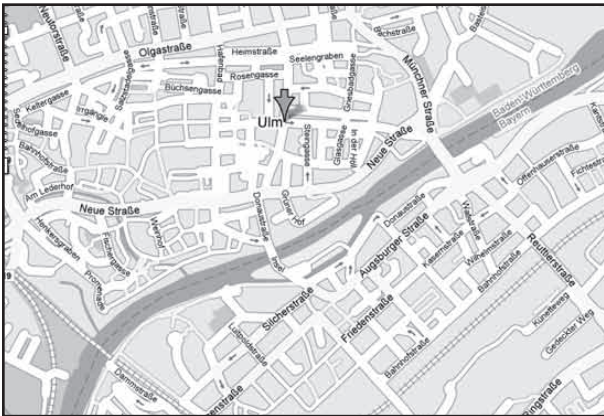


ULM, GERMANY

day 60

The German 19th Army was nearly decimated by April. The German 1st and 7th Armies were in tatters due largely to the American Shermans. Many German commanders were discharging as many troops as possible, fearing and anticipating ultimate defeat.



Present day Ulm

As many troops as possible, fearing and anticipating ultimate defeat.

At this stage of the war, U.S. armies deep inside of their country were capturing town after town. Much to the detriment of the German cause, an order was issued by German High Command to

field officers that, “cities are to be held at all costs. Should battle commanders fail to defend every town and village, they will be put to death as will all civilians who try to prevent battle commanders from doing their duty.”

The 7th Army decided to attack Ulm. It might be of interest to the reader that Ulm Cathedral, built in the early 1500's, is the tallest in the world at 524 feet in height built in the early 1500's.

All armored units were sent in search of all available

bridges across the Danube River between Ehingen and Ulm. Army intelligence reported that German POW's had informed them of plans that the German 1st Army would defend Ulm to the last man.

Just prior to midnight on Monday, April 23, CC A and CC B captured three bridges spanning the Danube. An attack was imminent.

At 8:54 a.m. on April 25, CC R along with the 44th Infantry Division captured Ulm after much resistance. Their entry into the city had to be initiated by navi-



Ulm Cathedral



Ulm Cathedral

gating a series of mine fields which the Germans thought impassible. Caught by surprise, 1500 German troops were captured because the CC R and the 44th had picked their way carefully through the mine fields.

The night of Tuesday, April 24, while CC R had been occupied with attack plans capturing Ulm the next day, CC A and CC B turned south towards Di-

etenheim, twenty three miles distant. There, CC B engineers erected a floating bridge across the Iler.

At 3:00 a.m. a column of Germans trapped on the west bank of the Iler River at Dietenheim boldly attempted to cross the east bank on the floating bridge that the 10th Armored



Present day Dietenheim

Engineers had just completed. The CC B Shermans had bivouacked in a field nearby out of sight of the bridge. The Germans, using the pitch darkness of night and a captured U.S.

truck to lead them, tried to gain a momentary advantage and element of surprise as they approached



the bridge. With the German column following a short distance behind, the captured truck was stopped for questioning by a 10th Armored Division guard on the bridge. The non-English-speaking German driver immediately touched off a small arms fight resulting in the destruction of the German column.

Later that day, April 25, at 2:00 p.m. CC B crossed the Iler River on the battle-scarred, blood-stained floating bridge. Having moved to the eastern bank, CC B at once headed south to Memmingen. The sun was warm and bright. A comfortable fifty-six-degree spring day and sun rise brought the war one day closer to the end.