



November 17, 1941



At the beginning of Operation Crusader, some of the infantry of the 21st Panzer was helping to cover the front, with the tanks in reserve. When the attack came, 21st Panzer was ordered to counterattack any British armor it could find. Five days into the battle, the 21st found the British 7th Armored division at Sidi Rezegh and scored a sizable victory against it, destroying most of its tanks and losing few of its own. The 21st then drove northeast to destroy the Allied infantry divisions but missed them in the desert. They continued forward and linked with the Tobruk garrison. With his supply lines now hopelessly stretched, Rommel was forced into a major retreat and the British had their first victory against the Germans in North Africa.