

For the expected invasion of Malta, the Germans had assembled a brigade of fallschirmjagers from the survivors of the Crete operation. It contained four battalions, each from a different regiment and was commanded by Oberst Hermann-Bernhard Ramcke. When the Malta operation was cancelled, the brigade was sent to North Africa, arriving in July of 1942. At El Alamein, they helped defend the southern part of the Axis line, where they were heavily engaged by a diversionary attack. When the Axis retreat began, they were cut off and counted as lost. The tough paratroopers marched west on their own and captured the British supply convoy for an entire armored division. Now fully motorized, the brigade traveled another 200 miles until it rejoined the Axis forces. The brigade continued to fight in North Africa until the fall of Tunisia.

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