

THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION OF A VISIT TO GIBRALTAR  
BY A MAN WHO WAS THERE RECENTLY WAS BROADCAST AFTER  
THE 10 O'CLOCK NEWS TODAY

Those of you who have been to Gibraltar will know that it has very little level ground. The town lies on the western side of a rock shaped like a sharp piece of cheese, a huddle of buildings overshadowed by the quarter-of-a-mile-high cliffs. There is no room for fortifications anywhere there on the steep slopes of Gibraltar, you would say: no place where you could construct buildings, apparently no shelter from attack.

In the confidence of the days before France fell, no one thought much about this; no one, it seemed, imagined Gibraltar would be attacked. Then came Dunkirk, someone woke up, and a huge job of work has been done in the last two years. Now, if Gibraltar is bombed from the air, shelled from the sea; even if her airfield is lost and invasion troops swarm through the narrow, hilly streets, the rock will still remain to be conquered.

There can be no withdrawal or surrender at Gibraltar. The new underground fortress makes that certain. But it makes certain also that every soldier, sailor and airman there may reach safety, and live in safety while the enemy on the rock is harassed and in constant danger.

In the early days when the military authorities first started to tunnel the rock, they didn't get very far with it. They had no modern blasting or boring equipment, and often had to be content with filling the limestone with water, waiting until it expanded and collapsed. The modern siege experts, some of them Canadians, have put everything that up-to-date tunnelling methods permit into their work. Now, throughout the two-and-a-half-mile length of Gibraltar, the new city buzzes with activity.

I was able to see things that are only the ordinary everyday life of a military garrison there. Yet, going sometimes a thousand feet below the surface, where even the noise of gigantic guns practising is unheard, it was an astonishing experience. There was a great power-house, for instance, hidden in the rock, with whirring dynamos and great silent motors. Busy soldiers worked to supply light, air and power to the new city just as if they were members of some gigantic industrial installation at home.

I saw kitchens with electric ovens and bacon-slicers; barracks with hundreds of comfortable bunks; and repair shops where practically any gun could be overhauled and repaired. There were wide roadways on which roads and railways ran; water mains; electricity cables snaking through miles of tunnels; A.R.P. posts complete with showers, anti-gas chambers and first-aid stations; bakeries, libraries, cinemas and huge stores for food and ammunition. There's a large military hospital named after Lord Gort, hidden inside the rock and one of the stations of intelligence headquarters was there and all the intricate equipment of a big garrison.

I was not allowed to see how the new, underground Gibraltar will attack when everyone is driven inside - if they ever are - but you have my word for it this two years of hard work has not been merely to protect the fighting men of the rock.

Even if every anti-aircraft gun on the rock was smashed it would still be a decidedly hazardous flight for any Axis aircraft going near Gibraltar. An enemy invasion fleet might find Gibraltar in ruins and still be forced to retire, before immense guns it could not see.

The new Gibraltar has a brain centre hidden from attack, and able to control any form of offensive without sending a single man into the open. That is our great secret at the key to the Mediterranean, where men have gone underground with a new idea in warfare.

Whatever our past errors, we have profited by them at Gibraltar.

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