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BY GILLING REPRESENTING THE COMBINED BRITISH PRESS

On the main coastal road with hundreds of shells screaming over head and with blazing buildings acting as beacons the Eighth Army landed on the Italian mainland this morning.

The landing was made practically without opposition and already our troops are spreading out.

The great armada of landing craft ferried the Eighth Army across the Straits under cover of darkness, the first of our troops landing at 4.30 on narrow beaches.

A great barrage of guns from Sicily covered the invasion craft as they crossed the Straits and when our assault troops smashed on to the beaches only a few pillboxes fired off a few rounds before the Italian occupants came out with hands held up to surrender.

The majority of the assault troops did not fire a single shot while establishing the bridgehead for the main force to land. A few Italian people who were living in their houses stated that the Germans pulled out three days ago into the hills.

For many of the assault troops the landing was completely without incident. They landed on the beaches which were neither mined or wired and they formed up and marched off the beaches as though they were setting off for a route march without hearing a single shot fired.

Immediately the infantry had established themselves ashore a bigger type of landing craft nosed their way into the beaches and already guns are trundling along past the orange grove in which I am writing.

Groups of Italian soldiers who surrendered without attempting to put up any kind of resistance are coming down from the hills ready and anxious to surrender.

For the last hour the only sound of war has been the thump of bursting bombs dropped by our planes far back in the hills.

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION