

WITH THE FIFTH ARMY IN ITALY

From Sholto Watt, Representing the Combined
Canadian Press

Nettuno, February 3, 1944

Bearer of one of Italy's most famous names, Young Prince Stephano Borghese is "father" of thousands of Italian civilians in the battle zone of the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead. Villa Borghese, which is a small palace of Classical Italian architecture, stands in a wooded park between the towns of Anzio and Nettuno and the prince is mayor of the combined commune.

The prince is out early and late with officers of the Allied Military Government, and shows the strain of long days of work. He is one of the rare examples of leadership in this stricken country assumed by a member of the Italian aristocracy, which even in peace was not noted for devotion to social service.

The main problem is eleven thousand people whom the Germans evacuated from Anzio and Nettuno, who are housed in temporary buildings in the countryside there are considerable stock of food in this region, which the Allied Military Government has been allocating to civilians so as to spare our own valuable shipping space for military needs. The prince has been assisting in the organisation of food distribution, setting up bakeries and controlling the slaughter of livestock. In the countryside numbers of peasants are his own tenants, but he is assailed daily by the personal problems of multitudes of other civilians in this area. When relatives are sought in Allied Controlled Territory, or when a child is killed by a shell and a priest must be found and burial arranged, the prince is called in. The prince must explain to exasperates that the military authorities will not permit them back in Anzio or Nettuno, which are still under shellfire, and where the roads must be reserved for military traffic and he has to present civilian needs to the military.

The civilian destinies of the beachhead are in the hands of an oddly-assorted trio. There are the prince, a slight, active figure, full of nervous energy and a witty Texan of unceasing good humour, Major Elmer Holmgreen, and there is a massively-imperturbable and efficient police inspector from Scotland Yard, Captain Arthur Mack, both of the Allied Military Government. The prince speaks excellent English and the others now something of Italian, and altogether the civilians are much better looked after than would normally be expected in a small area still the scene of intense fighting. Prince Stephano Borghese is a near relative of the head of his house, Prince Borghese, who is now in Sicily. His own family are in Borghese Palace in Rome.

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

I T A L YFrom SHOLTO WATT, Representing The COMBINED CANADIAN PRESS.With the Fifth Army in Italy.Nettuno, February 2.

The Germans are massing troops to hold the Cisterna road junction on the Littoria-Rome highway, which they must keep if they are to hold the mounting Allied strength in the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead. Numerous battalions of Germans are now grouped around Cisterna, and elements of several divisions have been identified there. Among these are units from some of the Germans' best troops, and it is now clear that some of their best fighting soldiers are now being withdrawn from the Fifth Army's Cassino front to this sector.

However, even with the recent successes on the Cassino front, no early junction of forces is expected here in view of the fact that the terrain between Cassino and the beachhead is very well suited to delaying defensive action. Relatively few men could hold the advance to only a few miles daily.

Counter-attacks are expected on the beachhead, but there is less reason to-day to anticipate a large-scale counter-offensive. The Germans are believed to be having transport difficulties, largely owing to the Air Force attacks on their lines of communication. Their air activity on this sector is also slowed down. In five days during the initial stages of this landing, the Nazis lost two hundred aircraft. They are now concentrating more on the forward lines than on port areas, though every day now we are still turning away three or four sorties. To-day they came over with 25 planes, but reports of damage are small.

In the open, flat country beneath the Laziali hills, where scattered oaks and pines grow in rich, red soil, any one of the frequent stone farmhouses is a potential German fortress. Sometimes self-propelled guns are concealed in them, with the back walls of the houses knocked out. The enemy is specialising on machine-gun and mortar fire to keep our troops away, but on one British sector at least German infantry is described as not so hot when it comes to close-quarter fighting.

But this beachhead is now the scene of a hard struggle at several points around the perimeter. To-day I visited the forward areas, and the front lines could be marked by columns of smoke spaced around the segment of a circle which we hold, eight miles deep and fourteen miles long, based on Anzio and Nettuno. On one sector where the infantry pushed along the road towards Albano in the Laziali hills they had the enemy on either side of them, only two or three kilometres on each side of the road. In villages ahead, the Italians are refusing to leave their houses, though the places are /sometimes shelled

sometimes shelled by both sides, and numbers of them died in collars because they would not obey either German or Allied instructions to leave.

On this same road I witnessed German strafing from the air only three or four hundred yards ahead. Four aircraft - of a 25-plane raid - banked down on the road behind us and were overhead before we could stop the Jeep and dive for the ditch. Firing burst out all round, and black puffs of ack-ack covered the sky above. Ahead, planes dived down and fired, and as quickly soared up and made away. We moved forward and found a vehicle strafed and a soldier lying dead beside it. Then from the clouds plunged the avenger, one of our fighters. In a matter of seconds one enemy plane was shot down in the fields ahead and others were streaking for home, and a sudden eerie quiet fell on the road.

This road, which is long and straight, is very tempting for air strafing. Yesterday the enemy tried the same trick and shot up an ambulance with six men, but only lightly injured the driver and once again one of four attackers was destroyed.

From points on our bridgehead you can see the towers of the now silent Rome Radio. This afternoon to the north-west there were billows of black smoke from the position I judged to be the mouth of the Tiber. I visited one British headquarters not far from the enemy lines which is sometimes a disagreeably active place. Yet Italian farm-labourers are still pottering around the barn, their steers ruminating in the enclosures. Soldiers were brewing tea - British soldiers count it a day given to perdition when they do not brew tea - and here a British officer told me of the situation around. It was a matter of holding certain particular positions till armour could be brought up to blast the Germans from the farmhouses. The road was very deceptive, being primitive tracks off the main highway, and there had been hair-raising adventures at night. There was one tragic mistake two nights ago, four officers running into the German lines being killed by machine-gun fire. "One of them", he said, "was my twin brother", and he paused, "but you will be wanting to hear about the battle positions. I'll show you on the map".

Yet another night adventure I heard of at this Headquarters had a happier issue. The ration truck had gone out but missed the way and the driver, reaching what he thought was his destination, called out "is this the Blanks?" He was answered in German and turned the truck around more than quickly, but the Germans opened up fire. He and the brew jumped for it and ran.

It is noisy at night around here. There are very frequent air-raid alarms, and raids are not so infrequent. There is shelling so far every night on the ports we use. These factors spoil the amenities of the desirable seaside villa where I write. It is called "Villa Virtue" by the correspondents, virtue being enforced rather than voluntary, and it is situated on "Bomb Bay".

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

V.C. RETURNS TO E.A. COMMAND TO SEE ACTION

Back in East Africa Command because he knows and likes African troops and because he believes now is the time to go East and see some action is Major E.C.T. Wilson, who won the Victoria Cross in Somaliland.

"I have always wanted to come back," he told a military correspondent, "because I have the happiest recollections of Myasas and Somalis and, from the little news one gets in the home Press about East Africa, I gathered that now was the time to come and see some action. I am a very keen African soldier and very anxious to see the African troops in action against the Japanese as I know something of their potential fighting qualities.

"Although I have no knowledge of jungle warfare, I would back the East African and the Somali against all comers for cheerful toughness, natural aptitude for fieldcraft and ability to stand up to a bad climate.

"I am confident they are reaching a standard which will give the Japs a very nasty headache."

Major Wilson, a Regular Officer, whose home is at Much Haddam, Hertfordshire, is in the East Surrey Regt. In 1937 he was seconded to the 1st Bn. K.A.R. in Tanganyika, and served with that battalion until the following year.

He was then sent up to Somaliland to take command of the Nyasa Company of the Somaliland Camel Corps. He gave up that command in February 1940 to form a Vickers machine-gun Company of Somalis.

It was with this company, under the command of the Northern Rhodesian Regiment, that Major (then Captain) Wilson, suffering from malaria and untended wounds, helped to hold off Italian attacks for several days in spite of heavy casualties. His and the company's efforts earned him the Victoria Cross.

He was captured when British Somaliland fell and taken to Adi Ugri, in Eritrea; he was released by General Platt's forces on April 1, 1941.

After his release, Major Wilson went to the Middle East and there joined the Long Range Desert Group - band of adventurers whose exploits far behind Rommel's lines make some of the war's most thrilling reading. He was adjutant and then Second-in-Command of the LRDG and saw plenty of active service with them.

In June 1942 Major Wilson went home and joined a battalion of East Surreys. He was married last May.

"I had a year's training and a bit of a change," he said, "and then asked to come back to the K.A.R. I had had four years in East Africa, considered I had a good knowledge of Nyasa natives, spoke their language fluently and I had also learned Swahili, so I felt I knew more about that sort of soldiering than any other. And here I am.

"Although I have only been back a couple of days, several Nyasa and Somali askari that I knew before have come up and greeted me."

Major Wilson's family has an old link with East Africa - his grandfather, the Rev. C.T. Wilson, was one of the missionary pioneers in Uganda last century.

"TISH" FELL OVERBOARD.

While the officers of H.M.S. NEWPORT, formerly an American destroyer, were having dinner when the ship lay at anchor in Scottish waters one night recently, there was an ominous splash outside.

It came just as they were finishing soup. The quartermaster, half-slithering, half-jumping down the ladder, burst into the wardroom.

"Tish has fallen overboard!" he panted.

In a flash the officers were making for the ladder. Tish was the ship's mascot, a seven-months-old puppy. She was the favourite of the ship's company and regarded as a lucky omen.

First on the upper deck was Sub-Lieutenant Michael Joseph, R.N.V.R. By the time the First Lieutenant arrived, Joseph had stripped naked. Then, with a line round his waist, he dived into the icy water.

In the brilliant moonlight, the officers on deck could see Tish struggling twenty yards from the ship. By shouts they directed Joseph towards her. Just as she stopped swimming, Joseph grabbed her by the scruff of the neck and held her up.

"I was only in the water about five minutes, but it seemed ages," said Sub-Lieutenant Joseph. "I've never been so cold in my life."

The First Lieutenant, Lieut. J.P. Evans, D.S.C., R.N.V.R., of Bristol, said; "Nobody knows how Tish fell overboard, but it was a near thing. The temperature of the sea was only 38 degrees Fahrenheit, but fortunately it was calm. Another few seconds and Tish would have gone. Our motor-boat picked them both up. Joseph was almost as stiff as Tish, but he recovered more quickly.

"Inside a quarter of an hour he was back finishing his dinner. We had to wrap Tish in warm blankets and give her a drop of brandy before she was herself again.

Tish, a black-and-tan mongrel, was bought for 12/6d. at an Edinburgh dog shop last October. "But for all that, she's important to us," added Lieutenant Evans.

Sub-Lieut. Joseph, who is twenty-two years old, lives at Newbury, Berkshire. He has been in the Navy for two-and-a-half years, and received his commission eighteen months ago. After the war he wants to be an actor. His father is Michael Joseph, head of the well-known firm of publishers.

H.M.S. NEWPORT, commanded by Lieut.-Commander W.A. Grinham, R.N.V.R., of Bristol, has steamed more than 20,000 miles in the last six months.

Both Lieut.-Commander Grinham and Lieut. Evans belonged to the Severn Division of the R.N.V.R. before the war.

CENSUS OF CHANNEL ISLAND REFUGEES

RECORD BEING COMPILED

A census is being taken of all refugees from the Channel Islands who came to Britain after the fall of France in the summer of 1940.

Its purpose is to give the Channel Islands Refugees Committee, which looks after welfare questions, an up-to-date record of each refugee.

The Committee, of which Lord Justice du Parcq is Chairman, and on which the Ministry of Health is represented, feels that a record of this kind will be invaluable when the time comes for making arrangements for the return of Channel Islanders to their former homes.

The census when completed will give, among other information: present and home addresses and present and past occupations.

It is estimated that there are about 30,000 Channel Islanders living in different parts of the country, about half of whom are in Lancashire, the West Riding, Cheshire and Scotland. There are also large colonies in the Exeter, Bath and Bristol areas.

Refugees who have not received a census form are asked by the Committee to apply for one at the nearest Citizens Advice Bureau which handles Red Cross messages. So far forms have been completed covering 6,000 adults and 3,000 children under 16.

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MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

ALAMEIN CLUB IS CAIRO'S "WEMBLEY STADIUM"

There are no pay kiosks and turnstiles at the Alamein Club, Cairo, and at Weekends thousands of men and women of the Allied services stream into the ground to see Soccer and Rugby matches that would come under the "first-class fixture" classification in their home lands.

"The best games - free!" is the policy of the club's go-ahead committee.

As its name suggests, Alamein Club commemorates the desert victory and the spacious ground, with club-house, stands and nearby swimming pool, is the gift of the Egyptian people to the men and women who flung the Axis out of Egypt and, later, via Cape Bon, all Africa.

The committee is made up of officers of the British, U.S., S.A. and N.Z. forces and Egyptian supporters and the club has since its opening in Autumn 1942 quickly become the hub of the services' sporting world here.

Located on Gezira Island, only a few minutes walk from the centre of Cairo, the ground is probably the only one in the world where Rugby and football can be watched against a background of tall palm trees and bright dhow sails on the nearby Nile. Crowds of 15,000 are "average" and when a United Nations sports festival was staged at New Year, it is estimated 40,000 attended over the two days to see first-class Rugby, American gridiron, Soccer and baseball games.

Wanderers, pick of all British football talent in Egypt, play here against crack Egyptian teams; it is the happy hunting ground of the unbeaten South African Rugby XV; New Zealand, R.A.F. and Army XVs battle on its trim turf - and next summer its big cricket "circle" will be shared between the best cricket XIs in Egypt and star American baseball squads.

The club also offers a well-furnished lounge, an open-air cafe bright with striped sun umbrellas and facilities for most games.

Dances and boxing shows are other attractions.

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST, OR USE ON CLUB TAPES
BEFORE 0830 B.S.T. (i.e. FOR EVENING PAPERS) ON
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1944.

THIS EMBARGO SHOULD BE RESPECTED OVERSEAS BY PREFACING
ANY MESSAGES FILED WITH THE EMBARGO.

H.M.S. SUFFOLK'S RECORDS RECORD

H.M.S. SUFFOLK, famous participant in the BISMARCK action, claims to hold more records than any other ship in the Royal Navy - a claim which no one disputes, as the records are gramophone records and the ship has been unofficially adopted by His Master's Voice.

"It all began," said Lieut.-Commander J.A. Stobart, R.N.V.R., the ship's entertainment officer, "when some people from the H.M.V. works came on board to see some equipment which they had made operating under service conditions. We struck up a friendship and soon afterwards they wrote to ask if they could adopt us. Did we hesitate? We did not!"

Already H.M.S. SUFFOLK has received many things besides records from the generous workers at Hayes, Middlesex - books, magazines, games, a special all-round microphone for the ship's broadcasting "studio", and a cheque for £100 were among the first presents to arrive. Then a photograph of H.M.S. SUFFOLK was used for H.M.V.'s staff Christmas card and as early as the end of September, 1943, nearly 3,000 copies had been/sold

sold for the benefit of the "Suffolk Fund". "Suffolk Week" was held in October at the works, with entertainments every day in the canteen during the midday and midnight lunch breaks. The sale of programmes brought in £50. On another occasion, a dance was held at the H.M.V. recording studios, at which Victor Sylvester, Geraldo and Felix Mendelssohn gave their services. This made a profit of £93 for the fund.

Another dance organised by the Shop Stewards made £55. The proceeds of the H.M.V. Christmas Draw are expected to have added another £300, and future plans include boxing shows, raffles, weekly collections, whist drives and more dances.

The officers and men of H.M.S. SUFFOLK are doing all they can to try to repay this kindness. They sent the firm a carved ship's crest for Christmas; and at each port of call they hope to buy a collection of local curios as prizes for H.M.V. dances and whist drives. Another scheme the gramophone company is anxious to encourage is "Pen-Friendships." Several of the ship's company are already corresponding with workers at Hayes.

This influx of recorded talent has by no means damped the enthusiasm of the ship's company to entertain themselves and others. At Durban they put on a first-class radio programme and the weekly concert is a big event in the ship. The Royal Marines band on board can provide classical or dance music and one of its members used to be first violinist in the B.B.C.'s Scottish Orchestra. The entertainments officer must have been heard by many millions, for before the war he was one of the famous Kentucky Minstrels choir.

At least one of H.M.S. SUFFOLK's other records was broken this year. Although she has steamed over 150,000 miles during the past three years some of her ship's company have always managed to spend Christmas at home. In 1940 she was at Glasgow, in 1941 at South Shields, and in 1942 at London, but last year her crew were not able to get ashore.

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NAVAL AFFAIRS

3,500-MILES JOURNEY TOOK 30 YEARS

BENGHAZI - Men of a Bigerian Pioneer company shopping in the market here have found 82-years-old Alhaddji Abu Bakara, priest and trader, who left his village, Kofa Dala, near Kano, Nigeria, over 60 years ago to perform the Moslem rites at Mecca and has never returned.

His journey to Mecca and then on to Benghazi, a distance of 3,500 miles, took him 30 years.

This is how he covered the distance:

FROM KANO TO DAURA, LAKE CHAD AND THE GULF OF ADEN -- BY FOOT

TO PORT JIDDA, MEDINA AND MECCA -- BY CAMEL CARAVAN

FROM MECCA TO CAIRO, ALEXANDRIA AND BENGHAZI -- BY FOOT AND CARAVAN.

Priest and trader still, Alhaddji Abu Bakara has been a cloth merchant in Benghazi for nearly 30 years.

One of his sons is in the Sudan; the other, aged 32, is an Imam (religious instructor) and lives with his wife and child in Benghazi.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

R.A.F. FILM CAMERAMAN WINS D.F.C.

Pilot Officer J.E.F. Wright is the first R.A.F. film cameraman to be awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in this war.

His citation states that he has taken part in numerous operational sorties and has produced many outstanding film records. He has always displayed exceptional enthusiasm and skill taking part in fighter sorties by day, and performing experimental camera work on night sorties. His courage and devotion to duty have been of a high order, and his skill has contributed greatly to the film record of the Sicilian and Italian campaigns.

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Wright, who is aged 21, has both baled/and been shipwrecked. His ship was torpedoed by an He.111 in the Mediterranean. It was badly damaged but successfully beached, and there were no casualties.

The parachute descent occurred in October last during an attack on a road junction north of Isernia, on the Italian central sector.

"While on our bombing run", said P/O Wright, "we ran into heavy A.A. opposition, and our starboard engine was put out of action. The navigator was wounded. After the run we were hit again in the port engine's petrol tanks. Both engines were then useless and the aircraft more or less out of control. We had to bale out and all landed safely, including the wounded navigator, three or four miles inside our own lines, where we were picked up by the Canadian troops."

Wright's home is at Ickenham, Middlesex. Before the War he was working as an assistant cameraman at Technicolor Ltd., near Uxbridge.

P/O Wright joined the R.A.F. in 1942, and after a course of training was posted to the R.A.F. Film Production Unit. He took his camera on bombing operations by Venturas in daylight over France and Belgium - Morlaix airfield and Zeebrugge Harbour were among the targets - and by a coincidence the pictures which he took on his first operation (over Morlaix) were publicly shown in a news-reel issue which also included pictures taken during a bombing operation over Italy by his father, Mr. E.J.H. Wright, a British Paramount News cameraman.

In June 1943, P/O Wright went overseas to North Africa and from there to Malta, where he started work with Boston and Baltimore bombers operating over Sicily. As soon as airfields were available he crossed to Sicily and joined a U.S.A.A.F. Mitchell Squadron, but continued to work with the Bostons and Baltimores.

At this time the latter were co-operating with the Army advancing in Northern Sicily, but the Baltimores and Mitchells were also bombing targets on the mainland of Italy. P/O Wright was flying with them when, later, they co-operated with the Army at Salerno.

He moved to the mainland with the Baltimores towards the end of September, and was taking pictures over Naples at the time of its fall. He has also had a spell with Coastal Command at Gibraltar, going on operational flights over the Atlantic in Catalinas.

Photograph available at B.I.P.P.A.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST IN OVERSEAS BULLETINS OR USE ON CLUB TAPES BEFORE 2330 B.S.T. ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, (i.e. FOR SATURDAY MORNING PAPERS). NOT TO BE BROADCAST IN THE MIDNIGHT NEWS OF FEBRUARY 4/5.

THIS EMBARGO SHOULD BE RESPECTED OVERSEAS BY PREFACING ANY MESSAGES FILED WITH THE EMBARGO.

THE BUFFS IN ITALY

The Buffs have been fighting in Italy with the Eighth Army. They landed in Termoli early in October, and were immediately engaged in very severe fighting, beating back many enemy attacks and helping to establish our positions on the line of Biferno. Later in the month they were in action along the coastal road advancing upon the Trigno. Their formation repulsed a number of enemy counter-attacks in the Petacciato area during October and launched an attack across the Trigno, with naval support, on November 3.

The Buffs fought in Sicily on the central front. They were confronted with stiff opposition in the hilly country south and south-east of Etna, but the regiment had pressed forward to the Centuripe area by the beginning of August.

The regiment played a very prominent part throughout the North African campaign, in which they served with the First Army. They were among the first troops who arrived, and the formation in which they served - fighting beside French troops - beat back enemy attacks in the Medjez-el-Bab area on February 26, taking 150 prisoners in the action. On April 9 came the actions of Jebel Mahdi and Chaouach, which cost the enemy nearly 1,000 prisoners, as well as anti-tank and infantry guns, and two days later this same formation captured more prisoners when they / advanced

advanced to occupy the high ground west of the road running north and south through Goubellat.

The regiment was also represented in the famous Army of the Nile, and played a big part for many months in the operations in the Western Desert.

The Buffs fought in Flanders in 1940 over familiar ground. At Oudenarde on May 20-21 they fought on a battlefield on which Buffs had fought in 1708. Later, at Armentieres, Ypres and Bailleul they met the same enemy they had faced there in 1915.

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MILITARY AFFAIRS

From BASIL GINGELL, representing the Combined British Press

With the Fifth Army, ^{in Italy,} February 3

When the Germans made their counter-attack near Cisterna, in the forefront was a German war correspondent complete with camera ready to snap pictures of the great success his troops achieved. Each time an opportunity presented itself for a picture, an officer restrained him, bidding him wait, for there were better things to come, he said, and there was no use in wasting plates. The correspondent, obedient yet with all his professional feelings outraged, refrained from clicking the shutter. Then something happened which neither he nor the officer had foreseen. American troops drove back the counter-attack, and in doing so the photographer, with over a hundred more troops, was captured. To his captors he complained that he had been unable to take a single picture. I saw him in the prisoners' stockade with the scores of other prisoners who now arrive daily from this sector, and he was still annoyed. Fierce and bitter fighting has ranged Cisterna now for four days, and in one sector alone an officer told me he counted more than 200 German dead. One platoon took thirtyfive prisoners in mopping-up operations after a counter-attack, and I watched a hundred and fifty brought in by lorries from the area. The Germans' positions are dug out of the soft soil around the railway line from Rome to Naples and have in some areas been greatly affected by our shelling.

That the supply position is causing the enemy some embarrassment is evidenced by the story told when two Germans were captured after crashing into a ditch with their car. It was necessary for them to drive forty miles to get their rations, and then bring them back along a road that was under fire. Thinking to avoid shelling, they tried to make a short cut, with the result that they found themselves challenged and, making a dash for it, overturned their car into the ditch. One of the men was seriously injured, and the other had a broken arm. The weather still holds good, and further reinforcements and supplies have arrived to this sector. One of the luckiest actions fought in this area was that of a body of our troops around Cisterna. This force had with them a wireless set on which a sergeant was keeping touch with his base. It was known that fighting in the area where he was operating was very sticky, because German defences had concentrated in the area. The men, being over the wireless sets at the little headquarters in a ruined farm building along the road, strained their ears for news of this party ahead. There came a message from the sergeant, "the enemy is closing in all round, but they will have to dig us out". Then there was silence. Still more German regiments are sending units to contain this sector.

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

NOT to be published

4.2.44. - No. 16

before 1.30 p.m.

SOUTH EAST ASIA COMMUNIQUE NO. 32

B.S.T.

New Delhi,
February 4, 1944

ARMY

In the Hukawng Valley our forces continued to advance in all areas. To the north and west of Taihpa Ga, American-trained and equipped Chinese troops were engaged on the 3rd February in eliminating small groups of Japanese, some of which had been surrounded. No contact was made in the Taro area.

In the Kabaw Valley on the 2nd February our forces occupied Ngapun, 20 miles south south east of Tamu without opposition, and also several hill features two miles further to the south south east. Our troops, advancing south along the track Kyauchaw-Dathwokyauk Auk, encountered some enemy opposition about one mile south west of the latter place.

West of the Mayu ridge, during the night 2nd/3rd February, there was patrol activity and exchanges of fire.

AIR

R.A.F. dive-bombers of the Tactical Air Force, Eastern Air Command, on 3rd February twice attacked enemy positions near Maungdaw. Nearly all their bombs were concentrated in the target area. On the first attack the dive-bombers were escorted by fighters.

In the Kabaw Valley, on the Upper Chindwin on 2nd February and again on 3rd February, fighter-bombers attacked Japanese concentrations with bombs and machine-gun fire. On 3rd February fighter-bombers also attacked an enemy camp south of Fort White.

On the Mayu Peninsula waterways and as far south as Rangoon single and twin-engined fighters shot up rivercraft and motor transport. Among the sampans attacked were five which were carrying troops. In all, four large and three small rivercraft were destroyed and five more damaged.

A large formation of U.S. fighter-bombers of the Tactical Air Force, Eastern Air Command, attacked the Okshitpin bridges across a branch of the Irrawaddy between Promé and Taungup, in Southern Burma on February 3rd. The Westernmost bridge was made unserviceable, and the eastern bridge damaged by heavy bombs. All Japanese camps on the road between Promé and Taungup were heavily strafed.

Fires were started and motor transport destroyed.

Air Ministry News ServiceAir Ministry Bulletin No. 12843RAIDERS BROUGHT DOWN

Three Do.217s and a Ju.188 were destroyed in raids on this country during the night, while a fifth enemy aircraft was shot down by a Canadian intruder crew as it was going in to land at an enemy airfield.

Other intruder aircraft bombed and shot up enemy airfields in N. France.

One Dornier was shot down over this country by a Mosquito piloted by a flying officer with a warrant officer observer. It brought the total of enemy aircraft destroyed by the squadron, commanded by W/Cdr. John Cunningham, D.S.O., D.F.C., to at least 202, with many more severely damaged.

After a short chase, their cannon gun attack blew up the raider which crashed into the sea in flames.

Another raider, believed to be a Ju.188, was blown to pieces by a Mosquito flown by a 35-year-old Czech flying officer with a Czech observer. The flying officer, a former Czech airline pilot, fought in France with a French squadron, came to England when France fell and flew a Hurricane in the Battle of Britain in the first Czech fighter squadron formed in this country.

"The Ju.188 was a sitting bird, he said. "The Hun didn't know what hit him I am sure. It caught fire and broke up in many pieces."

A Dutchman, a flight sergeant in a New Zealand Mosquito squadron scored his first success when he and his sergeant observer shot down a Dornier 217 as it was coming in, sending it - and its bombs - spinning down in flames into the sea.

To make sure of its destruction the Mosquito followed the Dornier down as it dived hitting it repeatedly with cannon shells.

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Air Ministry No. 12845

AIR MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY COMMUNIQUE

Early last night and in the early hours of this morning there was some enemy activity mainly over South East England, including the London area, and over parts of East Anglia. Bombs were dropped at a number of points. Some damage was done and the casualties include a small number of people killed.

It is already known that four enemy aircraft were destroyed.

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4.2.44. No.20.

Air Ministry Bulletin No.12844

AIR MINISTRY COMMUNIQUE

Last night Mosquitos of Bomber Command attacked objectives in Western Germany. Mines were also laid in enemy waters.

Intruders on patrol over Northern France destroyed an enemy aircraft.

None of our aircraft is missing.

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THE BRITISH EMPIRE MEDAL (MILITARY DIVISION)

903171 GUNNER DAVID GEORGE SEACOMBE MOORE, Royal Regiment of Artillery

Place of birth: Four Oakes, Birmingham. Address of next of kin: Eastbourne.

On a night in August, 1943, a bomber crash-landed near POLEGATE, caught fire and burned out to a total wreck. Two police officers, the first to arrive on the scene were followed in a matter of seconds by Gunner Moore. The three together forced an entry into the rear gunner's turret and satisfied themselves that nobody was trapped in the fuselage. They then made every possible effort to locate the crew in the blazing aircraft but were handicapped by the terrific heat and continuous explosions of the ammunition and flares, and also by a tree trunk which had been knocked down and carried forward by the machine and had fallen on to the fuselage and caught fire. Gunner Moore found a member of the crew lying in the field in front of the machine. The injured man was picked up and placed in a car and conveyed to hospital. As this was the only member of the crew to be found up to this time, it was assumed that others were still in the blazing aircraft, but in spite of an extensive search they could not be found. (Two injured men had escaped from the wreckage, three had baled out over the Channel, and next morning four bodies were recovered from under the wreckage in the forward part of the aircraft, upon which the tree had been brought down.) As the fire was spreading towards the tail of the aircraft Gunner Moore and the police officers emptied the magazine in the rear gunner's turret.

During the whole time Gunner Moore showed great courage in assisting the police and gave no thought for his own personal safety.

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SERGEANT WILFRED DAVIES, 15th Glamorganshire (Gower) Bn., Home Guard.

Place of birth: Three Crosses, Glam. Address of next of kin: Llangennith, Glam.

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PRIVATE GEORGE ERNEST REES, 15th Glamorganshire (Gower) Bn., Home Guard

Place of birth: Three Crosses, Glam. Address of next of kin: Llangennith, Glam.

On 11th December, 1942, a report was received to the effect that Royal Air Force personnel were in danger off BURRY HOLMES. Sergeant Davies instructed Private Rees to accompany him and they went to the point indicated where they saw five men clinging to the rocks in the sea some distance from the mainland. These men had been for three days in a rubber dinghy without food and were totally exhausted. In extremely dangerous conditions, at high Spring tide and in a raging storm, Sergt. Davies and Pte. Rees plunged into the open sea to render assistance. They reached the five men, rendered first-aid to them and remained with them for two hours until the tide had receded sufficiently for them to be helped to the mainland. But for such assistance all five men would unquestionably have lost their lives as they were in imminent danger of being washed away in the storm. The actions of Sergt. Davies and Pte. Rees called for the greatest bravery and determination and resulted in the saving of the lives of the five Royal Air Force personnel.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

LANDING IN ITALY

With Fifth Army in Italy
February 4, 1944

By Basil Gingell, Representing the Combined British Press

Through this encampment the patrol stole cautiously hearing the voices of the enemy talking in that curious hushed tone that one automatically adopts by night near the front. The patrol continued noting dispositions and those facts and figures essential to such reconnaissance, then by a circuitous route they returned to their base. Just a routine patrol, but like every one of these nightly sallies fraught with peril at every turn and calling not only for courage but for alertness coolness, and a high degree of skill. /while our own patrols are engaged upon this work the enemy is attempting similar excursions. There is a tenseness through the hours of darkness as the men listen for the telltale crackle of a broken twig that may give the enemy away. It is a tenseness that none can help but feel though all around is seemingly still. With daylight, much of this feeling disappears, when the guns thunder again and along the dusty roads the wheels start turning.

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

4.2.44 No. 25.

MIDDLE EAST AIR COMMUNIQUE

R.O., R.A.F.

4.2.44

Continuing their attacks on enemy shipping in the Aegean Sea area, R.A.F. fighter and bomber aircraft have scored further successes.

During the night of February 1, Sunda bay was bombed, bursts being seen in the harbour area. On the following night, medium bombers attacked a large merchant vessel north of Patmos. It was left burning fiercely. Some hours later, fighters found the vessel still on fire. Another formation of fighters attacked and left in a wrecked condition four sailing ships near Paros Island.

Yesterday, our Spitfires shot down a Ju.88 north of Cyprus.

From these and other operations three of our aircraft are missing.

4.2.44. - No. 26

MEDITERRANEAN COMMUNIQUE NO. 14.

Allied Force Advance
Headquarters, Mediterranean
February 4th, 1944

ARMY:

On the main 5th Army front our troops are engaged in heavy fighting on the outskirts of Cassino. Enemy counter-attacks launched in the mountains north of Cassino were all repulsed. 5th Army troops on the Anzio front are improving their positions. On the 8th Army front our troops occupied the village of Torricella.

AIR:

Again yesterday weather limited operations, but our bombers and lighter aircraft bombed rail facilities at Sulmona, Manoppello and Stinigliano. Between Sulmona and Rome, motor and rail traffic was attacked by fighters and fighter-bombers. Patrols were maintained over the battle areas. Five enemy aircraft were destroyed. Two of ours are missing.

NAVY:

The bombardment of the coastal area in the vicinity of Formia has been continued by vessels of the French and Netherlands Navies, and has been particularly successful to the North and North-east of Formia.

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST IN OVERSEAS BULLETINS OR USE ON CLUB TAPES BEFORE 2330 B.S.T. ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1944. (i.e. FOR SATURDAY MORNING PAPERS). NOT TO BE BROADCAST IN THE MIDNIGHT NEWS OF FEBRUARY 4/5

THIS EMBARGO SHOULD BE RESPECTED OVERSEAS BY PREFACING ANY MESSAGES FILED WITH THE EMBARGO.

CHOCOLATE AND SWEETS RATION

There will be no change in the amount of the ration or in the value of personal points coupons for ration period No.8 which begins on Sunday, February 5.

The amount of the ration for the 4-week period remains at 12 cbs. The points value of chocolate and sweets remains at 16 personal points per lb. except that sweets with the maximum price of 1s.4d. per lb., when sold at not more than 8d. per lb., and all other sweets and chocolates when sold at not more than 1s.0d. per lb. have a points value of 8 personal points per lb.

The coupons valid for ration period No.8 are the "D" and "E" coupons numbered "8" on page 29 of the ration book. This page may be detached from the book and used by itself, provided that the name and the National Registration number of the holder have been inserted. The value of the coupons remain at:-

"D" coupons.....	1 point each
"E" coupons.....	2 points each
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MINISTRY OF FOOD

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST IN OVERSEAS BULLETINS OR USE ON
CLUB TAPES BEFORE 2330 B.S.T. ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1944 --
(i.e. FOR SATURDAY MORNING PAPERS)

NOT TO BE BROADCAST IN THE MIDNIGHT NEWS OF FEBRUARY 4/5, 1944.
THIS EMBARGO SHOULD BE RESPECTED OVERSEAS BY PREFACING ANY
MESSAGES FILED WITH THE EMBARGO

EXTRA ALLOCATION OF DRIED EGGS

The Ministry of Food announces that a double dried eggs allocation
will be available during the four-week period February 6 to March 4, as
it was during the four-week period from January 9 to February 5.

During this period every holder of R.B.1 or R.B.4 can obtain two
packets and every holder of R.B.2 four packets.

MINISTRY OF FOOD

Air Ministry News Service

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 12846

WOUNDED POLISH GUNNER FIGHTS ON

Wounded in the face and hands by perspex splinters during a moon-light combat over the Bay of Biscay last night with an enemy aircraft, the rear-gunner of a Coastal Command Polish Wellington continued firing until the enemy disappeared. Only on the way back to base did he tell his captain that he had been wounded.

The enemy made three attacks on the Wellington. The fight lasted five minutes and red sparks were seen from the enemy's direction before it was broken off.

The rear-gunner, a Flying Officer, who was a railway official in Poland before escaping to join the R.A.F., was wounded in the first attack.

"I was too busy firing to think about my wounds," he said. "The enemy came in very fast, and his attacks ranged from 180 to 400 yards."

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST IN OVERSEAS BULLETINS OR USE ON CLUB TAPES BEFORE 2330 B.S.T. ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1944 (i.e. FOR SATURDAY MORNING PAPERS).

NOT TO BE BROADCAST IN THE MIDNIGHT NEWS OF FEBRUARY 4/5, 1944
THIS EMBARGO SHOULD BE RESPECTED OVERSEAS BY ERASING ANY MESSAGES FILED WITH THE EMBARGO.

COAL OUTPUT AND DISTRICT PERFORMANCES

4 WEEKS ENDED 22nd JANUARY, 1944

COAL OUTPUT

The out put of saleable coal in the four weeks ended 22nd January, 1944, averaged 3,495,500 tons per week compared with 3,662,600 tons per week in the previous four weeks (ended 25th December). Owing to the inclusion of both the Boxing Day and New Year holidays in the period under review, the output is not comparable with that for the corresponding period a year ago when the New Year holiday only was included.

Transport difficulties again involved a loss of coal production which amounted, on the average, to 31,500 tons per week. Disputes accounted for an average loss of 14,200 tons per week.

The production statistics of average weekly output of saleable coal for the past twelve months, with corresponding figures for the previous year, are given in the Table below:-

(Cont'd)

<u>TABLE</u>	<u>1943-4</u>	<u>Corresponding period a year ago</u>
4 weeks ended 20th February, 1943	4,016,400 tons	(4,028,000)
4 weeks ended 20th March, 1943	4,013,700 "	(4,074,600)
4 weeks ended 17th April, 1943	4,005,200 "	(3,739,800) x
4 weeks ended 15th May, 1943	3,624,600 " x	(4,103,900)
4 weeks ended 12th June, 1943	3,936,600 " x	(3,724,800) x
4 weeks ended 10th July, 1943	3,579,700 " x	(3,987,200)
4 weeks ended 7th August, 1943	3,097,800 " x	(3,339,300) x
4 weeks ended 4th September, 1943	3,767,800 "	(3,978,900)
4 weeks ended 2nd October, 1943	3,819,400 "	(4,076,100)
4 weeks ended 30th October, 1943	3,908,000 "	(4,124,500)
4 weeks ended 27th November, 1943	3,815,100 "	(4,126,600)
4 weeks ended 25th December, 1943	3,662,600 " x	(3,880,100) x
4 weeks ended 22nd January, 1944	3,495,500 " x	(3,813,400) x

x Holidays

The production from opencast workings has not been included in the above figures. In the four weeks ended 22nd January, this production averaged 76,800 tons per week. During the previous four weeks, an average of 86,600 tons per week was produced.

OUTPUT BONUS AND DISTRICT PERCENTAGES

The certified district percentages of standard tonnage are as follows:-

Northumberland	94.5%	South Staffordshire & Worcestershire	89.6%
Cumberland	88.8%	Shropshire	96.4%
Durham	89.9%	Warwickshire	93.7%
South Yorkshire	89.9%	South Wales & Monmouthshire	85.9%
West Yorkshire	87.2%	Forest of Dean	87.9%
North Derbyshire	94.2%	Bristol	93.0%
Nottinghamshire	94.8%	Somerset	✓
South Derbyshire	98.9%	Fife & Clackmannan	90.8%
Leicestershire	106.9%	Lothians	92.0%
Lancashire & Cheshire	92.5%	Lanarkshire	88.1%
North Wales	88.3%	Ayrshire	ø
North Staffordshire	92.0%	Kent	✓
Cannock Chase	91.2%		

A bonus of 1/6d per shift is, therefore, payable in the Leicestershire district.

ø The standard tonnage of this district is under review by the Local Reviewing Authority in accordance with paragraph 2 of the rules governing the operation of the Scheme.

✓ Not yet available.

4/2/44 - No. 34

LANDING IN ITALY

BY VAUGHAN THOMAS REPRESENTING THE COMBINED

BRITISH PRESS AND RADIO

With the Fifth Army
February 3

The day has passed in a consolidation of our positions after the heavy fighting of the last few days. The Germans are harassing our forward troops with heavy gunfire. At night the enemy is carrying out his usual policy of active patrolling. These patrols can be exciting affairs. In the dark rival patrols can pass within a few feet of each other. One sergeant heard a rustle alongside him and thinking it was one of our men, put out his hand, he said, to keep contact. He was amazed to find the man wearing a great coat. All his men were without them, so he realised the man was a German and shot him. without the rest of the enemy patrol suspecting his presence.

The weather is overcast. The enemy is still building up his strength for a possible counter attack and is prepared to make a bitter fight of it.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

4.2.44 - No. 35

LORD SWINTON TO VISIT SOUTH AFRICA

Lord Swinton, Resident Minister in West Africa, will shortly be paying a brief visit to the Union of South Africa at the invitation of General Smuts.

COLONIAL OFFICE

THIS DISPATCH SHOULD PRECEDE THE CABLE RECEIVED

4.2.44 - No. 37

EARLIER AND ISSUED AT 1.45 P.M. AS No. 24.

LANDING IN ITALY

By BASIL GINGELL, Representing the Combined British Press

With the Fifth Army in Italy
February 4

Though darkness stills much of the activity upon the Anzio sector of the Italian battlefield, night no less than day has its movement. If the hurrying of vehicles over the roads that intersect the plain is reduced and the myriad noises of an army consolidating and preparing for further efforts slackens, in the comparative stillness of the night more stealthy and sinister movements are afoot.

Through brushwood and ditches and across muddy fields, patrols rush out on foot under a waning moon guided by the stars. Now and again a gun flash illuminates the scene for a brief period leaving it afterwards darker than ever, or perhaps one sees shimmering in the distance some phantom will-o-the-wisp light whose origin one can only guess.

In such eerie surroundings patrols leave their camps where men sit around fires smoking, yarning or re-reading letters from home. I met one such patrol returning from a sortie in which they had penetrated deeply behind the enemy lines. They had struck out across the fields towards a certain road but finally, the enemy barring their way, they skirted the road and wood. There it was necessary to exercise all their knowledge of woodcraft and all their resources, for they came upon a group of German tanks hidden under the trees and an encampment of their crews.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

4.2.44 - No.42

HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES ARMY

COMMUNIQUE 170

It is announced by Headquarters, European Theater of Operations, United States Army, and the Air Ministry (A.M.No.12852) that the U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe in their sixth major operation in seven days attacked Frankfurt, important industrial and communications centre, and other targets in western Germany today.

Strong forces of Liberators and Fortresses were escorted by Thunderbolt, Lightning, and Mustang long range fighters and supported by R.A.F., Dominion, and Allied Spitfires and Typhoons.

Only weak enemy fighter opposition was encountered, the bombers destroying four and the fighters shooting down eight enemy aircraft.

From these operations, 21 bombers and one fighter are missing.

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On no account for publication in
British Evening Newspapers

4/2/44 - No. 43

Not for broadcast in the B.B.C. Home
Service before 0030 B.S.T. Feb. 5th, 1944

LANDING IN ITALY

Anzio Bridgehead, Friday morning

By Norman Clark, Representing the Combined British Press

The enemy is now making a determined show of strength on this bridgehead front of the Fifth Army. His troop movements into the area have increased; in the Cisterna sector the German forces grouped there are probably doubled. The battle for the town began on Monday. All along the line the initiative remains with us - as it has done since we gained the advantage of surprise by landing on the beaches here a fortnight ago. We rather than the enemy are maintaining pressure as if the High Command was not delivering a heavy blow at us.

In this area, where our line encroaches almost to the outskirts of the town, the enemy infantry are digging in along the line of the railway tracks to the west and in banks and stream-beds to the south and south-east.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION