

BIG GUNS BOMBARD ANZIO AREA

FROM NORMAN CLARK REPRESENTING COMBINED BRITISH PRESS

Anzio Bridgehead

Wednesday Noon

More longrange siege guns have been brought up by the enemy to bombard the Anzio area. This is, no doubt, an attempt to interfere with the unloading of shipping in the port. Since yesterday evening, when a second railway gun was reported to have been hit and derailed, the new big guns have been firing persistently. Shells have fallen over a wide area and the range of airbursts has been increased to cover almost the whole bridgehead.

Heavy shelling during the night was co-ordinated with a number of air raids which continued after dawn. There have been two more sneak dive bombings this morning. But for all this prodigal expense of steel and explosive the enemy has little to show in results. At least the shells have done no damage that I have been able to see or find - and I counted more than forty shellbursts in one hour.

The voice of the Allied artillery has also been loud today. The gunners, not only today but every hour of the stiff fighting last week when a major scale enemy attack was broken, have worked tirelessly giving the infantry decisive support when it was called for.

I heard of one battery which has been fighting since Alamein. The commanding officer told me that during twenty four hours last week the battery fired 720 rounds - "and we have never got near that figure before" he added. Between the gun crews of both sides it was a trial of endurance - and Allied strength triumphed.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

By Vaughan Thomas, representing the Combined British Press and Radio.

With Fifth Army in Italy,
February 17, 1944

We have now met and are holding another German attempt to reduce our beach-head. There is no doubt now in everybody's mind here that this is another major effort. The Luftwaffe has reappeared in force with heavy night attacks on port and shipping and continual day attacks on Anzio and our forward troops with antipersonal bombs. Long-range shelling has now reached a new intensity and shells fall with monotonous regularity into the beach areas.

All yesterday, the Germans flung big forces against our lines and attacks were not confined as before to one sector. There are three main thrusts, but the most determined is along the old line of the main Anzio road. Here the enemy holds the factory at Carracetto, but at the end of the day our lines were intact and our artillery had a field day against the masses of German infantry. As ten tanks emerged from the bridge of a disused railway in front of Carracetto guns and anti-tank guns had point blank target and the ten tanks were left smoking along the coverless roadside.

The weather yesterday was mainly fair with cloud patches and these may have influenced the enemy to launch an attack, while the full weight of our air cover was unable to operate. Our bombers are now returning in full strength and this morning the sky is clear and there is promise of a good Airday.

Yesterday the main defence was with artillery but it is to be expected that the Germans will resume the attack on to our infantry positions and employ the usual tactics of night infiltration. There is no disposition here to minimise the determination of the Germans. But general feeling on our side is that "we are all set for the Germans."

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

18.2.44. - No.4.

LONG RANGE SHELLING ON ANZIO

With the Fifth Army,
February 17, 1944.

By BASIL GINGELL representing the Combined British Press

The attack on the northern sector of the beachhead, describedⁱⁿ/today's
communique, continues. The present effort is, at least, as strong as
his major effort of last week which petered out after three days fighting.
It demonstrates how fiercely he has employed his breathing space between
attacks.

Long range shelling into the shore area has increased. In no part
of the beachhead can one get away from the noise of battle although the
enemy's main push centres on the relatively narrow front. His casualties
have already been enormous but by the weight of his attack he seeks to
progress.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

SOUTH EAST ASIA COMMUNIQUE No. 46

New Delhi,
18.2.44

ARAKAN

During the 16th February steady progress was made by our forces in all sectors and a definite improvement in the general situation has been reported.

West of the Mayu range our artillery intensively shelled enemy positions and several parties of Japanese were seen leaving the area concerned.

In the Ngakyedauk Pass area operations are continuing against stiff enemy resistance. At one point especially the enemy sustained considerable casualties.

East of the Mayu range our infantry, supported by tanks attacking from the East, made some progress but another of our attacks from the north came under very heavy enemy fire and was held up. Slightly to the North of this area, one village was cleared of the enemy by our forces.

KALADAN

West African troops continue their advance southwards and active patrolling is being carried out.

TIDDIM

No enemy activity has been reported. Our troops have occupied an enemy position west of Fort White..

HUKAWNG VALLEY

Fighting continues and an enemy position north-west of Taipha Ga has been overrun. Chinese troops occupied a village south of Taipha Ga without opposition.

AIR

R.A.F. medium bombers of the Strategic Air Force, Eastern Air Command, bombed Toungoo airfield on the night of 16th/17th February. A storage area at Taungup also was attacked. Railway and transport objectives in the same areas were attacked in daylight by twin-engined fighters and bridges severely damaged.

In Northern Burma on 16th February, R.A.F. dive-bombers and later two sorties of fighter-bombers attacked an enemy-occupied village ten miles east of Hnalin. The area was thoroughly machine-gunned. A force of fighters also attacked the village and started large fires.

On the same day U.S. medium and fighter-bombers of the Tactical Air Force destroyed three locomotives in the area south of Wuntho. Other U.S. fighter-bomber formations attacked troop and supply formations in the Kanaing Malawbun Lonkin and Myitkyina areas.

In the Arakan, R.A.F. escorted dive-bombers attacked an enemy position north of Rathedaung, while another dive-bomber raid was made north-east of Maungdaw. Fighters carried out offensive reconnaissances in the area and attacked gun positions and enemy transport and river craft.

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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 18 1944

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

ADMIRALTY'S ONE-ARMED GUARD RETIRES

The one armed man, who for many years has stood guard over the Admiralty's main entrance, and to whom all official passes have had to be shown, whether the bearer be a Midshipman or an Admiral, has just retired.

Many senior Naval Officers leaving the Admiralty on Wednesday evening stopped in the main entrance hall to shake hands with and to say good-bye to Mr. Edward T. Jewell, the Admiralty's chief porter.

For many years, one of the most familiar figures in the Admiralty, Mr. Jewell retired on his sixty-fifth birthday, after 42 years service.

Before he went to the Admiralty in 1902 where he was employed first as a messenger, and later as chief porter, he served in the Royal Navy as a Leading Seaman. He received his training in H.M.S. LION and subsequently served in the LIBERTY, the BENBOW, the BARROSA, the FLORA and the ARGUS, as well as at several shore establishments. For some time he was on the West African coast in a cruiser.

It was while he was serving in H.M.S. DEFILANT that he lost his right arm. This made it necessary for him to leave the service, but as soon as he had recovered from his injury he became an Admiralty messenger.

As chief porter, Mr. Jewell has met many distinguished visitors at the Admiralty. Those he remembers best are General Smuts, Mr. Churchill, Lord Selborne, Lord Tweedmouth, Mr. Mackenzie King and Venizelos.

Before he left his desk in the main entrance hall for the last time, Mr. A.V. Alexander, the First Lord of the Admiralty, shook hands with him and wished him a happy retirement, and others who said good-bye were Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham and Admiral Sir C.E. Kennedy - Purvis, Deputy First Sea Lord.

NAVAL AFFAIRS

NOTE - PICTURE AVAILABLE AT P.N.A.

18/2/44 - No.16

PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE ACT, 1939

The Home Secretary's quarterly report to Parliament on the number of Orders made under the Prevention of Violence (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1939, shows that three Expulsion Orders were made during the period 1st October to 31st December, 1943. This brings up to 189 the total number of persons against whom Expulsion Orders have been made since 28th July, 1939, when the Act came into force.

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HOME OFFICE

EMBLEMS FOR R.A.F. PERSONNEL MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES

Despatches emblems, wound stripes and chevrons for war service have now been introduced and are subject to the conditions outlined below. Personnel of the following classes are eligible:-

- (1) Officers and airmen of the British, Dominion, Indian and Colonial Air Forces.
- (2) Members of Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service and its reserve.
- (3) W.A.A.F. officers and airwomen.
- (4) V.A.D. members.

"DESPATCHES" EMBLEMS

The emblems are in bronze, in the form of a single oak leaf and distinct from the pattern authorised for mentions in despatches during the Great War. One type is designed to be sewn on blue-grey uniform and another to be affixed by safety-pin to tropical uniform. The emblem is to be worn in respect of mentions in despatches and commendations gazetted, for service during the war commencing 3rd September, 1939, as a member of one of the classes specified above, or during previous naval or military service, or in civil life. Only one emblem is to be worn, irrespective of the numbers of awards received. The emblem is not to be worn during the war on a medal ribbon, but is to be affixed to the uniform in the position in which a single ribbon would be worn, or in the position in which a ribbon would be placed immediately after those already worn. It is to be affixed horizontally with the stem towards the wearer's right.

WOUND STRIPES

The stripes denoting wounds sustained in the present war are of gold braid five thirty-seconds of an inch wide and one and a half inches long. Those denoting wounds sustained in previous wars are of red rayon of similar dimensions. One gold stripe is to be worn for each occasion on which certain wounds and injuries are sustained during the present war, but only one red stripe will be worn irrespective of the number of wounds sustained. Broadly speaking, wound stripes will be worn in respect of all wounds and injuries directly due to enemy action and sustained while on duty. In the case of personnel serving in operational commands (and in operational units in non-operational commands abroad), wound stripes will be awarded whether the wounds or injuries are incurred on duty or otherwise. The stripes will be worn vertically on the left forearm, with the gold stripe or stripes in

/front

front of the red stripe. They may be worn with plain clothes after discharge or transfer to the reserve. The grant of a wound stripe does not confer any claim to financial recognition.

SERVICE CHEVRONS

Chevrons are printed in red on a blue-grey background for wear with blue-grey uniform, and on a khaki background for wear with tropical uniform. One chevron will be worn for each completed year of service in the present war. Service in the Navy, Army, Home Guard, Police, N.F.S., Merchant Navy, Civil Defence organisations and other services to which the scheme applies, may be aggregated with Air Force service for the award of chevrons. Chevrons are to be worn on the right forearm, apex uppermost, and may, if desired, be worn with plain clothes after discharge or transfer to the reserve.

GENERAL

Applications for the issue of despatches emblems, wound stripes and chevrons must be made to C.O.'s of units.

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SHIPBUILDING POSITION ON TYNESIDE

A deputation representing the conference of all Tyneside local authorities, Members of Parliament and Trades Unions waited upon the First Lord of the Admiralty to-day to put forward their views upon the present and future ship-building position on Tyneside.

The First Lord, who was supported by the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty, promised that the statements made to him would receive the fullest consideration.

The members of the deputation were as follows:-

Councillor Clements,	Lord Mayor of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Councillor J.M. Connolly,	Newcastle City Council
Alderman R. Irvin,	Tynemouth County Borough Council
Councillor Melia,	Wallsend Borough Council
Councillor G. Diggle,	Mayor of Jarrow
Alderman McArdle,	Chairman of Shipbuilding and Engineering Confederation (Tyne)
Mr. A.M. Yule,	Vice Chairman of Shipbuilding and Engineering Confederation (Tyne)
Mr. G. Steele,	Secretary of Shipbuilding and Engineering Confederation (Tyne)
Mr. J. Bowman, M.B.E.,	Amalgamated Engineering Union
Mr. T. Magnay, M.P.,	Gateshead (Chairman of the deputation)
Sir Alexander Russell, M.P.,	Tynemouth
Mr. J.R. Leslie, M.P.,	Sedgefield
Mr. Chuter Ede, M.P.,	South Shields
Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P.,	Jarrow
Mr. Alfred Denville, M.P.,	Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Central
Mr. Fred G. Egner,	Town Clerk, Tynemouth Borough Council.

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ADMIRALTY

MEDITERRANEAN COMMUNIQUE No. 28

Allied Force Advance H.Qs.
18.2.44

SEA

A British warship on February 16 shelled troops and their transport; in the Formia area fires were started and enemy guns hit.

LAND.

Heavy enemy attacks on the Anzio beach-head positions have been beaten off by British and American troops of the 5th Army.

On the main 5th Army front there was hard fighting around a height Northwest of the Cassino Abbey.

Severe weather on 8th Army front prevented large scale activity. Aggressive patrols engaged the enemy.

Our artillery was active on all fronts.

AIR

Yesterday, large forces of heavy, medium and light bombers operated in the battle area and attacked objectives in the vicinity of Frascati and Albano. Other medium bombers attacked shipping off the west coast of Italy, scoring hits at San Stefano, Marina Di Pisa and Forte Ercole.

Night bombers attacked the Campoleone-Albano areas last night. Fighter-bombers attacked the jetty and barracks at Igoumenitsa in Greece.

During these operations, three enemy aircraft were destroyed. We lost nine.

M.A.A.F. flew approximately 1500 sorties. Enemy activity over the beach-head was estimated at approximately 185 sorties.

During operations on February 16 one more enemy aircraft was destroyed in addition to those already reported.

BRIDGEHEADFrom Vaughan Thomas, Representing the Combined British Press and RadioFebruary 17, 8 p.m.,
Despatch 59.

The German attack goes on, with bitter fighting still continuing and the thunder of guns still echoing over the beachhead.

I have been up watching the battle. From the edge of a patch of heath I could see the whole area where the Germans are seeking a vital decision. It is surprising how small it is - ploughland on either side of a straight road is the cockpit of the struggle. To-day there is hardly a yard of this cockpit without its shellburst, with thick columns of white smoke where the German shells are falling on our forward positions. The background of blue Alban hills is smudged over by bonfire blasting near the factory.

Down the coverless road German tanks start to crawl into the battle storm. Our guns plaster them, and the road becomes a line of leaping earth fountains. Black specks, men jump out in illusive shelter ditch as the leading tanks flare with oily smoke pouring out. The guns keep up a continual clamour and there is no let-up for a moment in the fury of the fire. Down the road in a small wood I stood with a troop of our guns that had fought through the desert campaign. Through a megaphone the Gun Position Officer shouted orders. He was concentrating on the immediate job amid the enemy airbursts overhead. For him the battle is fought on map references and numbers. Calculations are made and the guns stand waiting. Then from pits and camouflaged positions all around an earsplitting series of explosions rocks the woods as a new weight of metal is flung on to the German lines to help our hard-fighting men out in the battle-torn cockpit.

During the last German attack on the bridgehead one of these guns fired 703 rounds in twenty-four hours. That number may be exceeded before the end of this German punch.

It was a perfect day for air operations and the sky over the bridgehead was as noisy as the land. A continual stream of bombers passed over while Luftwaffe fighters sought to dive through our fighter screen to attack back areas. It seemed there was never a moment without the crackle of fighter guns in dogfights, or the popping of our ack-ack around the port of Anzio. The Germans now obviously accept heavy losses and are prepared for more in the attempt to break our line with all-day long-range shelling on the port area.

AIR MINISTRY BULLETIN NO. 12965

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST IN OVERSEAS BULLETINS OR USE ON CLUB TAPES BEFORE 2330 HOURS FEBRUARY 22, 1944. (i.e. FOR WEDNESDAY MORNING PAPERS). NOT TO BE BROADCAST IN MIDNIGHT NEWS OF 22/23 FEBRUARY, 1944. OVERSEAS MESSAGES SHOULD BE PREFACED WITH THIS EMBARGO.

ROYAL AIR FORCE AWARDS NO. 762

The King has been graciously pleased to approve the following appointments and awards in recognition of conspicuous service in operations against the Japanese:-

Additional appointments in the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:-

As Commander

Acting Air Commodore Sidney Wallingford, Royal New Zealand Air Force.

As Officer

Wing Commander Eric Maple Lewis, Royal New Zealand Air Force.

As Member

Flight Lieutenant Ronald Lindsay Meynell, Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross

Acting Squadron Leader Michael James Herrick, D.F.C., Royal Air Force.

Distinguished Flying Cross

Acting Squadron Leader John Henry Arkwright, Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Acting Squadron Leader John Anderson Oldfield, Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Acting Flight Lieutenant Robert Hamish Balfour, Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Flying Officer Aitken Maxwell Davis, Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Flying Officer Leonard Adolphus Rayner, Royal New Zealand Air Force

Distinguished Flying Medal

N.Z. 41450 Flight Sergeant (Now Pilot Officer) Trevor Edward Ganley, Royal New Zealand Air Force.

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DIRECTORATE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS.
AIR MINISTRY

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST IN OVERSEAS BULLETINS OR USE ON CLUB
TAPES BEFORE 2330 B.S.T. ON FRIDAY, 18/2/44 (i.e. FOR SATURDAY
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THIS EMBARGO SHOULD BE RESPECTED OVERSEAS BY PREFACING ANY MESSAGES
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THE 30th CORPS IN SICILY

It is announced that the 30th Corps took part in the Sicilian campaign. The Corps - under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir Oliver Leese - landed in the south-east corner of the island on July 10, and advanced swiftly through central Italy, forming the left wing of the Eighth Army's attacking line.

Its way lay through Ragusa, Vizzini, Enna and Leonforte, then past the chain of strongly defended mountain towns, including Agira, Regalbuto, and Centuripe; until, pressing forward to the east of Catania and Mount Etna against opposition which was often formidable, and overcoming many difficulties in mountainous country in which the enemy had demolished most of the existing tracks, it took Bronte and Maletto before linking up with the Americans at Randazzo. Later, formations coming under General Leese's command took Taormina during the third week of August, and entered Messina from the south after the Americans had marched in from the north.

General Leese arrived in Egypt in September, 1942, and commanded the 30th Corps from the time of El Alamein until he took over command of the Eighth Army. His Corps played a very big part in our attack at El Alamein, when for 12 days the Englishmen, Scotsmen, Australians, South Africans, New Zealanders and Indians commanded by him fought their way forward, crushing furious counter-attacks. There followed the chase of the Axis armies across Africa, with the 30th Corps in pursuit; to gain further laurels at Mareth, where it was particularly hotly engaged, in the grim battle of Wadi Akarit, and in the operations at Enfidaville.

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MILITARY AFFAIRS

18.2.44 - No.31

The King has been pleased to approve a recommendation of the Home Secretary that Mr. Alfred Thompson Denning, K.C., be appointed Recorder of Plymouth in succession to Mr. John Graham Trapnell, K.C., who has been appointed an Official Referee.

HOME OFFICE

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST IN OVERSEAS BULLETINS ON USE ON CLUB TAPES BEFORE 2330 B.S.T. ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1944 (i.e. FOR SATURDAY MORNING PAPERS).
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TRADING WITH THE ENEMY

ADDITIONS TO "BLACK LIST"

The Board of Trade announce that they have made a new Order which comes into force on 21st February, containing changes in the "Black List" of traders abroad with whom it is unlawful to have dealings of any kind.

Copies of the Order -- the Trading with the Enemy (Specified Persons) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order, 1944 (S.R. & O. 1944 No. 138) -- will be available, price 3d, through booksellers or newsagents or direct from H.M. Stationery Office, Kingsway, London, W.C.2, on 21st February.

Persons owing moneys to, or holding or managing the property of specified persons are reminded that they are under statutory obligation to report particulars to the Custodians of Enemy Property.

BOARD OF TRADE

18/2/44 No. 37

OFFICIAL ADMIRALTY COMMUNIQUE

The Board of Admiralty regret to announce that H.M. minesweeper Clacton (Acting Lieutenant Commander L.S. Shaw D.S.O., R.D., R.N.R.) has been lost.

The next of kin of casualties have been informed.

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ADMIRALTY

18/2/44 - No. 39.

AIR MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY COMMUNIQUE

Air Ministry No. 12981

During daylight today there has been nothing to **report.**

It is now known that two further enemy aircraft were destroyed on the night of February 13/14. This makes a total of eight enemy aircraft destroyed in raids on this country during that night.

18/2/44 No. 41

GERMANS STILL ATTACKING

By Vaughan Thomas Representing the Combined British Press and Radio

With the Fifth Army in Italy
February, 18.

There is no let-up in the fury of the German attack on the beachhead. It continued this morning and savage fighting is now taking place in the area of the main Anzio-Albano road. The enemy is accepting all losses in an effort to continue his attack and is supporting it with heavy artillery concentrations and tanks.

Yesterday our air intervened in the battle with the heaviest close support we have yet seen here.

Today is cloudy and heavy rain fell in the night.

Some units have been engaged in continuous fighting since the German attack was renewed. There is no doubt that this is a real all-out attack but our men are resisting bitterly. The square mile of battle - torn ploughland was a blazing hell of shell fire this morning and our tanks and the German infantry fought a furious battle.

His main tank forces are probably not yet committed but an armoured clash cannot now be far away.

The enemy is keeping up the intensity of his air attacks with all - night raids on the port and the heaviest longrange shelling.

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

A BATTLE CAULDRON

BY NORMAN CLARK REPRESENTING THE COMBINED BRITISH PRESS

With the 5th Army in Italy,
Anzio Bridgehead Thursday night.

To peer today across the rolling open country of wet, brown farmlands dotted with the red roofed white settlements was to look into a cauldron of battle.

Never before, I suppose, have I seen anything so closely comparing with imaginings of battle scenes on the screen or in an illustrated paper impression. All arms were locked in a crowded chaotic scene. Tanks were burning, guns were raising curtains of dust and smudges of smoke where shells landed to smother a position.

Into this from time to time flew the bombers and everybody's preoccupation for the moment was with the action in the air. Flying Fortresses have been followed by Marauders and Bostons at short intervals. No sooner have the pockmarks in the sky from the enemy's flak disappeared than a barrage which must be the heaviest ever in Italy has gone up again.

We have seen planes on both sides hit, and, in flames, wing leaving fuselage, twirl and dive to the ground. Parachutes have blossomed in the sky - I saw as many as three swinging to earth at one time and, at the same time a launch cutting through the sea to the rescue of another that sail-like on the horizon was supporting another airman.

The bombs we have dropped have started big fires in the enemy lines and black oily smoke has drifted over our lines.

Through all the noise of battle one's eyes have picked up again and again ambulances, Red Cross against the white, jolting over the shell-craters in the long straight road. The rest of the close fighting one had to imagine. You cannot get near enough to-day to see it, but you can hear the short, sharp spatter of machine-guns somewhere in the wet fields.

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION