

Issue No. 1031.....14..1..1941.
 Title: Surprise Attack.
 Track: Fight..End Heritage of Desert.
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 Lines: Stag.
 Voice: do.

Down the narrow Albanian valleys, over the bleak mountain passes, the disordered Italians have fled from the hammer strokes of the Greek Army. It has fallen to the valiant Greek soldiers to deal Fascism a blow from which it is unlikely to recover. Overcoming the well-nigh insuperable obstacles of winter-campaigning in mountain country the advance guard of the Greeks swept the boasted mechanised-might of Italy headlong towards the Adriatic Sea. On paper the inadequately equipped attackers had little chance. In reality the brilliant Greek exploits showed that the gallant spirit and the good cause make an invincible combination. Their motor-transport was confronted by demolished bridges at most of the mountain streams in their path.

(TV) Delay was brief. More proof that the Italian retreat had become the rout of a demoralized army was afforded by the pile-drivers they had left behind here, after going to the trouble to blow up the bridge. The Greek lorries were soon going over.

Albanian refugees trudged back to the homes from which the Italians drove them early in the campaign. The friendly Greeks were now nearing Argyrocastro - a strategic point which the Duce ordered his army to defend at all cost. The Italians burned the town before they fled, but nothing could disguise the fact that they were badly beaten - all the spirit knocked out of them.

(SV REFUGEES) More refugees were met here, civilians who had been in Italian hands and then been released - no doubt because the enemy had enough on his plate without hostages. It was only the shell of Argyrocastro that the advance guard entered, but in abandoning the town the Italians did more than leave guns and ammunition behind - they lost a key position and so had a further retreat forced upon them.

(CU MACHINE GUN) Light machine-guns came in for examination, the Italian equivalent of the Bren gun. Mopping up was ordered. The ruined buildings were combed for stores and arms.

(LV MONUMENT) When the free world applauded the capture of Argyrocastro it little knew that the spearhead troops lived for days on nothing but bread, fighting winter battles on the sparest of diet. The Italians, in their pell mell flight, abandoned lorries as well as stores.

GREEKS ENTER ARGYROCASTRO ...continued.

The Greeks treated their prisoners well. They sent them back to base in captured troop-carrying coaches, fitted with bullet-proof glass. Some light tanks were captured too- very welcome to an army not too well off in mechanised equipment.

6 scenes without voice

Greek artillery officers thought they had caught up with the enemy rearguard when their instruments ranged over the hills behind which lies Tepeleni.

(GV) Tepeleni is the western stronghold of the line, which the Italians hoped to maintain, running from Klisura. Tepeleni itself was stubbornly defended. Orders to fire were given to this battery, but at the last moment the gunners did not shoot; it was not the enemy, but a converging Greek column they had observed - more troops to assault Tepeleni and eventually, Valona itself - gallant men, some with only half a blanket and worn-out boots to protect them against the winter nights.

(ON HORSE) Steadily the Greeks pushed on. The Italian commander General Soddu has resigned. When this dispatch left the front the Greeks faced the last range of mountains separating them from Valona and resounding victory.
