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OUR GREAT ADVANCE.....

MIDDLE EAST OFFENSIVE -- CONTINUED.

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We bring you the latest pictures of the Nazi's November nightmare in the Middle East. A pictorial document illustrating the great advance through Egypt into Libya. The unrelenting pressure on the retreating enemy was kept up by land and air. With the Axis defences completely broken and the Afrika Corps on the run, the big chase began. With no time even to evacuate equipment, dozens of Nazi planes at Fuka aerodrome were left behind, so rapid was the 8th Army's advance.

German gliders used for transporting troops also hastily abandoned in the headlong flight west. One of the biggest captures was General Ritter von Thoma Commander of the Afrika Corps, who fell into the bag with a lot of other desert wild fowl. On arrival at advance headquarters he was met by General Sir Bernard Montgomery - a generous victor.

The entry into Mersa Matruh was made after some stubborn fighting. The town bears much evidence of the fighting which has swept through it during two years of desert warfare. Marks of shelling, marks of bombing, and Marks and Spencers.

One of the first jobs was the searching of ruined buildings for some of those stragglers always to be found when moving day comes round.

The three Musketeers - Bathos, Pathos and Dartoutagain.

Matruh Harbour is now a graveyard of sunken supply ships and battered wharves. A wrecked seaplane fills the foreground.

One thing that stands out in this wonderful story of success, is the overwhelming numbers of prisoners taken. If our men were too busy to bring them back, thousands trudged back without a guard. They chucked their hats in and walked out of the war.

Masses of our heavy tanks were soon speeding out of the town for their next objective.

Then the rains came. When the weather began to break we were up against a problem. But despite floods and acres of sticky mud our columns pressed on, buoyed up by the knowledge that this time Rommel was outpunched and hotfooting it to the west.

We pause for a second at a wayside scene. Dejected Italians sheltering beneath the wreckage of a plane waiting to be picked up. Nobody seems to want them.

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Once leave the solitary good road along the coast and the mud is as noisome as Goebbels propaganda. At intervals along the victory route, great accumulations of Axis material (much of it brand new) was heaped up like a chain of salvage yards. Rommel's losses in equipment alone will be hard for him to replace.

The first of our columns passed through Sidi Barrani after the enemy had evacuated it. An easy capture but by now it was expected that Rommel would make a stand in the region of Sollum. Around Hellfire Pass our cameraman paused in his drive forward to photograph the sight of our transports moving up, and another equally impressive sight; a long line of prisoners footing their way back. The demoralising effect of our swift advance is all too apparent.

Where the single track railway runs back to El Alamein, trucks are filled with more men and the track is cleared for the prisoners' special.

Now we travel with allied airmen over the advancing 8th Army to witness the flying artillery in action. Right round the clock British and American Squadrons knocking the stuffing out of an army in full retreat. Out of the clouds comes a German fighter but a burst from one of the gunners sends him down in flames. For our trouble our bomber has a splintered glasshouse. And now our boys go to work with the gloves off.

Half a dozen dilapidated men coming forward to surrender as our men march into Tobruk. Booby traps and landmines there are in plenty and it pays to tread warily. Step lightly there pass, the roads are dangerous.

Once again in Tobruk there's the question of substituting flags.

As an introduction to some of the finest battle pictures ever taken, we pay wholehearted praise to some of the bravest men in the army - the desert minesweepers, facing infinite danger so as to clear a path through minefields to permit our armour a safe run-through. Heroism like this is just another job to them, but when the battle breaks out, every tank-man and lorry driver breathes a prayer for the men who let them through. Now comes the moment when Rommel hits back in a vain attempt to stem the tide of advance. Don't think it's been without losses and suffering on our part. Where Rommel is there's no let-up in fighting. And that's how it's going to be until he's got nothing to fight with.

No! this is not where you came in, but just another river of prisoners streaming to the sea of captured men behind the lines. So willing were they to surrender that they turned their own lorries about and drove without an armed escort. These Latin leftovers were passive enough in defeat, but stories of brutal treatment by them of our own men in captivity have shown them up to be just about as odious as their Teutonic bosses in that respect.

Night in the desert sees no respite from the constant hammering on an enemy which has to be and will be crushed out of existence.

Now comes the prelude to Benghazi, Jedabya and the advance wall of Rommel's remains backing up against Tripolitania. Artillery duels flare up with indescribable fury.

Across the face of the desert there moves a swarming mass of men. Without exception this is the most amazing sight we have set eyes on. Thousands of half-starved Italians

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streaming in, in isolated bodies and joining up with the tattered tribe of lost men.

We like to end this pictorial trek across Libya with one more tribute to General Montgomery. This is the hour of strong men such as he. "Westward look the sky is bright".