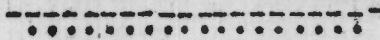


BOMBARDMENT OF BARDIA



Issue No.1004..11..10..'40.
Title: The Fight.
Track: The Man I Killed.
Discs: 487.535.529.314.232.317.
Lines: Stagg.
Voice: do.

Sailing orders were received by the Mediterranean Fleet Battle Squadron, stationed at Alexandria and the advance guard of destroyers put to sea. The squadron was setting out to bombard the Italian-occupied town of Bardia, near the border of Lybia. Anchor chains now shed their harbour-mud. Battleships were detailed for this action; capital ships of the kind which have since considerably strengthened our naval forces in the Mediterranean. Very slowly the majestic ironclads nosed their way out. In the old naval tradition, from every ship, the lead was heaved - verifying the vessel's position according to the Admiralty chart.

Navigators charted the course westwards, parallel to the coast-road which is Graziani's only alternative to a march through the desert. At Bardia, Italian advance-base, the enemy had stored petrol and ammunition. Hence his airplanes were certain to be on watch. Sure enough lookout-men reported Italian bombers bearing down on the men-o'-war. Already at action-stations the gunners opened fire.

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The bombers were beaten off and the ships of the battle-squadron were now in sight of the enemy harbour. Bardia was visible through powerful glasses, though it was 15 miles away. The great 15-inch guns were swung round. The target was in range. In a second or two the battle-squadron hurled its broadsides against the enemy base.

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On the right of this picture see the spotting plane of the Fleet Air Arm.

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Bardia was in flames. "All targets hit" was reported by the returning aircraft. The flying eyes of the navy give invaluable help to the gunners, correcting errors, ensuring that nearly every shell scores a smash hit. In the air, on the sea, on the land, Britain is ready for the coming fight in the Middle East.

