

ALL SET FOR GRAZIANI

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Title: Archers.
Tracks: The Ascension of Valkyrie,
The Fight,
The Man I Killed.
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Lines: Stag.
Voice: do.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore, R.A.F. head in the Middle East, journeyed by plane to inspect a contingent of Australian airmen serving in Egypt. Sir Arthur, who has since superintended the brilliant R.A.F. operations in Greece, greeted these men not only as a fellow-pilot - he is an Australian himself and met them as a fellow-Countryman. They invaluable strengthen our growing forces barring the way to Marshal Graziani.

Armoured-car units are attached to the R.A.F. in Egypt. Their purpose is to defend our advanced aerodromes in the Western Desert, and to escort supply convoys. Between the opposing armies the no-man's-land of desert waste would favour the swift raids of marauding parties, but for the vigilance of the mechanized patrols.

Smoke on the horizon indicated an outpost set on fire before the Italians fled. For several reasons - our well-disposed defences among them - Graziani hesitates to launch his attack. The new Italian booby-bombs explode at the slightest touch of the unwary. Egyptian fellaheen are helping to dig tank-traps. For Graziani delay is dangerous. Almost deprived of supplies from Italy his army must by next spring either conquer or starve.

In the air our advantage is increased by the Hurricane squadrons recently sent to Egypt. In some ways superior even to Spitfires, though not quite so fast, Hurricanes are streets ahead of any enemy fighters in Libya. Since these pictures were taken 15 R.A.F. fighters overwhelmed a force of 60 Italians over the desert, destroying 10, routing the rest. Now the Hurricanes were loading up for their first flight over enemy country, optimistically hoping the Italians would accept the challenge.

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Stirring up a minor sand-storm the Hurricanes gathered speed over the desert as they took off. Already in flight with an accompanying formation British Paramount News cameraman soon secured pictures of outstanding beauty - the finest ever taken of Hurricane squadrons in flight - a vivid cinematic record of Wings over Libya.

Only one thing is lacking from these pictures. They don't show Italian planes. The enemy very wisely stayed at home, with a bad dose of Taranto Blues. Italian prestige is at a low ebb nowadays. At sea they can't cope with the Royal Navy; their air-raids have been a flop; and on the land the Greeks have a nasty word for them. If the Middle East is destined to stage the decisive battle of the war the R.A.F. will see to it that in the air overwhelming victory will be ours.
