

MONASTERY BOMBED

Anzio Harbour is daily under fire, but the beach-head holds fast. A critical situation was resolutely taken in hand, and the commander-in-chief, Gen. Alexander, supervised the landing of timely reinforcements.

Meanwhile, on the putskirts of Cassino, the battle raged for the possession of that strategically important town. For weeks we held the disadvantageous position dominated by Mount Cassino, the famous monastery on the top of which *had* ~~has~~ been turned by the enemy into a fortress. Nevertheless under the relentless pressure of the 5th Army the Germans were pushed further and further back.

(9 out)

(3 af CU mortar) By this time the Allies had a foothold in Cassino. German prisoners confirmed our suspicion that the enemy had very heavily fortified the Monastery, ~~the monastery~~ and the Allies had to choose between sacrificixing many British and American lives, and bombarding the ~~monastery~~ Edifice on whose site the Benedictine Order was founded 1,400 years ago. There could be only one choice.

Many thousand leaflets were fired ~~in special shells,~~ *announcing our intention of bombing the building.* ~~announcing our intention to bomb the monastery.~~ "Italian friends, Beware," warned the leaflet, "The time has come when we must train our guns on the monastery. Leave it at once."

At 9.30, Fortresses, ~~Marauders~~ <sup>air-</sup> and Mitchells made the first ~~air-~~ attack.

200 bombers took part, in seven waves. Roman Catholics were among the bomber crews.

(65 Troop)

Fire bombs destroyed the network of machine-gun nests on the hillside.

(3 af bombers in air) ~~causing~~ military necessity, the stern choice of war, compelled the allies to bomb this famous building, which the enemy had fortified in deliberate contravention of the laws of war. When the last wave passed on, the monastery was a fortress no more.