

Box 11881

D-10/P20

DOPE ON THE CASSINO OP

Object of this operation was to crush the German strong point that sits in the trough of the Liri Valley at Cassino.

Bombardment was supposed to deny to the Germans the use of the town as a "prepared position", seeking the Allied push down Highway 6 toward Rome.

After the Allied Ground Forces had been held at this point for long and bloody weeks, the Allied Air Forces under the command of Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker, took a crack at the monastery overlooking the town of Cassino. From this peak, German guns had raked every effort to push through the town. But after the bombardment of the heights, the Allied Ground Forces, in spite of a gallant assault, didn't quite take the position.

From that point on, it became obvious that the full weight of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces would have to be hurled into the battle for Cassino.

But before the tactical phase of the operation, a strategic target was hit: The Marshall's Yards at Florence, long spared from air attack because of the priceless art treasures stored or housed there.

Dozens of targets had been hit all around Florence, in an effort to cut the rail lines that supported both the Anzio Beachhead and the Cassino area from the North.

But now, as a preparatory "left jab" for the Cassino punch, the "Bridge-busting" B-26 Marauders of the Tactical Air Force reached out from their bases in Sardinia and smashed the rail yards at Florence.

And then as soon as the weather cleared over the Cassino area, the whole weight of the MAAF struck at the battered town that sheltered the armor and anti-tank guns of the Hans.

The attack opened at 8:40, when the B-25 Mitchells of the Tactical Air Force (U.S.) dropped their bombs across the entrance to the town of Cassino.

A strong wind cleared the target of smoke and dust, and at 8:50, another wave of B-25s hit the target. Again the target was cleared by the wind and again a wave of Mitchells came over and dropped their bombs.

At 9:20, the first of the heavies from the Strategic Air Force bombed the target -- B-17s of the 15th Air Force (US).

At intervals timed to permit the wind to clear the target, 8 more waves of heavies came over the target -- alternating between B-17s and B-24s.

Not since the critical week on the beachhead had the heavies been called in on a "close support" job like this. Great care was taken to achieve accuracy on this operation -- in spite of flak, the last group of Liberators, finding the target still smoked as they went into their bombing run, held their lead, wheeled, flew off and came back for a second run.

And after the heavies, the B-26 Marauders from the Tactical Air Force closed the show, in three successive waves, the last at sharp noon.

While the shadow of the last of the B-26s was still across the target, the artillery of the 5th Army opened up and walked across the town, rushing out to include the Duca Palace (large white building in the foreground) and the Roman Amphitheatre (left upper in most frames).

Box 1881

And while the artillery barrage -- heaviest in the Italian campaign--was raking the whole area, the dive-bombers and fighter bombers of the Tactical Air Force were working over the road junctions and troop concentrations behind the town. Joining this attack by the fighter-bombers were the Baltimores of the RAF Desert Air Force, (Dive-bombers were the famous "Invaders", the A-36, modification of the Mustang and P-51. The fighter-bombers were the P-40 Kittybombers that had come with the 8th Army all the way across the desert campaign).

The medium and light bombers of the Tactical Air Force that had opened the attack in the morning, returned to base as soon as they hit their target and bombed-up for a turn-around. Their targets in the afternoon were road junctions and armor concentrations behind the town, where the Germans had assembled to stop the Allied assault.

Total sorties flown on this job were approximately 3,000. Total tonnage of bombs dropped was about 2,500.

Losses from enemy fighters were zero -- no enemy fighters dared come into the area. A few enemy flak guns opened up with considerable effectiveness behind the town -- but dive bombers quickly silenced most of those.

From dawn to dark over the entire area, during the heaviest concentration of bombs on a single area so far in the war, the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces enjoyed complete and unchallenged control of the air.

And while the bombers were working on Cassino, the fighters of MAAF were spreading their daily "umbrella" over the beachhead back of Anzio.

NUMBER

CAMERAMAN'S CAPTION SHEET  
 OLYMPIC KINEMATOGRAPH LABORATORIES, LTD.  
 BRITISH PARAMOUNT NEWS DEPT.  
 SCHOOL ROAD, LONDON, N.W.10

DATE MAILED  
 March 9th '44

*Box*  
*11850*

CAMERAMAN E. J. H. Wright SOUNDMAN \_\_\_\_\_  
 STORY COVERED: Preparations for attack. LENGTH EXPOSED 500 ft  
 PLACE OF EVENT: Italy HOW SHIPPED \_\_\_\_\_  
 STOCK USED: Plus X EMULSION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ COVERED BY  
 BRITISH PARAMOUNT NEWS

VERY IMPORTANT! WRITE PLAINLY—SPELL NAMES CORRECTLY—USE TYPEWRITER IF POSSIBLE

SCENE NUMBER	COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF SCENES	FOOTAGE IND.	CAMERA SPEED	LIGHT COND.	LENS USED
	<u>NOTE FOR CENSOR.</u>				
1.	This material will not be used until the next attack on Cassino takes place and it is feasible to suppose that this may have happened by the time this film reaches England and U.S.A.....				*
2.	Continuing my wanderings around the Front it was evident to me that extensive preparations were being made for the next attack on Cassino, new tank roads were being made existing roads were being renovated rapidly, brush wood was being cut and stacked in forward dumps, to be used against the appalling mud conditions which occur as soon as it rains in this country and which does much to slow up an attack if not altogether stop it,				
3.	duck beards and steel matting ready for use in making bridge diversions after the Germans blow up the bridges on their retreat, as inevitably they must, Troops being concentrated, ammunition dumps moved forward and replenished, Guns being rebarrelled and repaired.				
4.	You have read in the papers that rivers in this country rise very rapidly and a study of the map will show that we have many rivers to cross, these rivers are now swollen as the result of torrential rain and large areas of the countryside are flooded. (air shots)				
5.	Such conditions add very considerably to the work of all branches of the engineers, for instance I found a small company of New Zealanders who were taking time out to do a little quarrying to provide the necessary rubble to make and repair the roads already mentioned... Major Gowan and Sergt. Thompson whose idea this was were quite amused with their new role as super "navvies".....				
6.	All scenes necessary to this story are covered, suggest you use some of the mud scenes sent you some time ago, the conditions are the same, I thought it would help build up any story you may release on the final fall and capture of Cassino.				
7.	So far as I can make out this material has not been covered by A.F.P.U.				
8.	<i>Passed subject to this proviso.</i>				

PASSED FOR PUBLICATION  
*[Signature]*  
 FIELD PRESS CENSOR

WHICH OTHER SOUND NEWS REELS COVERED STORY none  
 " " SILENT " " " " none

NUMBER

CAMERAMAN'S CAPTION SHEET  
 OLYMPIC KINEMATOGRAPH LABORATORIES, LTD.  
 BRITISH PARAMOUNT NEWS DEPT.  
 SCHOOL ROAD, LONDON, N.W. 10

Box  
 11850

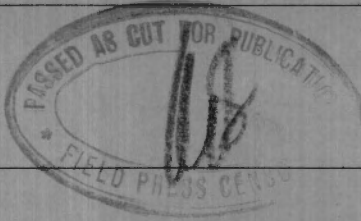
DATE MAILED  
 March  
 9th  
 1944

CAMERAMAN E. J. H. Wright SOUNDMAN \_\_\_\_\_  
 STORY COVERED: Indian troops preparing to go into action LENGTH EXPOSED 200 ft  
Italy.  
 PLACE OF EVENT: \_\_\_\_\_ HOW SHIPPED \_\_\_\_\_  
 STOCK USED Dupont 2. EMULSION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ COVERED BY BRITISH PARAMOUNT NEWS

VERY IMPORTANT! WRITE PLAINLY—SPELL NAMES CORRECTLY—USE TYPEWRITER IF POSSIBLE

SCENE NUMBER	COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF SCENES	FOOTAGE IND.	CAMERA SPEED	LIGHT COND.	LENS USED
1.	In some of my wanderings round the forward areas I found these Indian Gurkhas, members of the 7th Indian Infantry Brigade Recon. Squadron being prepared for the next attack to be made on Cassino. These are the men who will be first in the attack on their sector when the time comes.				
2.	There is nothing much in the material but I thought it might come in useful for build - up purposes, or library. Scenes covered:				
3.	Gurkhas cleaning machine guns etc on Carriers Receiving a lecture on tactics to be employed, from Gurkha officer. JEMADAR MANBIR THAPA Clearing up mud to enable vehicles to get out of camp Drinking their mid-day tea (this is not an advert for Liptons) Gurkha reading Urdu to a less fortunate comrade who cannot read.				
4.	Ment <del>being</del> taking a bath which they do with great frequency notwithstanding the cold weather Gurkha MP directing traffic through wrecked village The white officer with dark forage cap is their				
5.	Commanding Officer Major M. L. Cruickshank, M.C. whose father commanded the Regiment before him. Men in bivouac				
6.					
7.					
8.					

CENSORED



WHICH OTHER SOUND NEWS REELS COVERED STORY none  
 " " SILENT " " " " none

INSTRUCTIONS: GIVE FULL DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH SCENE AND ALL HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL FACTS POSSIBLE. SHIP ALL FILM PARCEL POST, SPECIAL DELIVERY TO ABOVE ADDRESS. SEND THE PINK ORIGINAL OF THIS FORM WITH NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS BY SPECIAL DELIVERY MAIL. PLACE DUPLICATE IN CAN CONTAINING NEGATIVE.

NUMBER

CAMERAMAN'S CAPTION SHEET

OLYMPIC KINEMATOGRAPH LABORATORIES, LTD.

BRITISH PARAMOUNT NEWS DEPT.

SCHOOL ROAD, LONDON, N.W. 10

DATE

15.3.44

CAMERAMAN E. J. H. WRIGHT. SOUNDMAN Box - 11869  
 STORY COVERED: AIR BOMBING OF CASSINO LENGTH EXPOSED 400 ft  
 PLACE OF EVENT: CASSINO ITALY HOW SHIPPED via Major McCreary  
 STOCK USED Plus X EMULSION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ COVERED BY BRITISH PARAMOUNT NEWS

VERY IMPORTANT! WRITE PLAINLY—SPELL NAMES CORRECTLY—USE TYPEWRITER IF POSSIBLE

SCENE NUMBER	COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF SCENES	FOOTAGE IND.	CAMERA SPEED	LIGHT COND.	LENS USED
1.	I covered the first raid of the day as per attached sheet. But				
2.	due to very violent evasive action on the part of the pilot- could not obtain more than 30 ft of the actual bombing				
3.	however as most of the bombs fell outside the town, it doesn't matter. I then went to a Piper Cub airfield & borrowed a Cub				
4.	for the afternoon for which I filmed the very heavy artillery barrage also direct bombing attacks on town and Abbey.				
5.	There is a short coverage of bombing crew at plane and dough nut at end of mission				
6.	During this bombing mission and entirely due to the evasive action, my 2" inch lens and				
7.	my 6" inch lens was lost out of the ship, please give Major McCreary at least another				
8.	2" lens plus Eymos mount to bring out to me quickly				

WHICH OTHER SOUND NEWS REELS COVERED STORY Moretone on ground  
 " " SILENT " " " " Pathé News of New York on ground

INSTRUCTIONS: GIVE FULL DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH SCENE AND ALL HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL FACTS POSSIBLE. SHIP ALL FILM PARCEL POST, SPECIAL DELIVERY TO ABOVE ADDRESS. SEND THE PINK ORIGINAL OF THIS FORM WITH NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS BY SPECIAL DELIVERY MAIL. PLACE DUPLICATE IN CAN CONTAINING NEGATIVE.

COPY OF BRITISH PARAMOUNT NEWS DOPE SHEET.

~~XXXXXX~~

6-101980

Cameraman.... E.J.H. WRIGHT.  
Story..... AIR BOMBING OF CASSINO.  
Location.... CASSINO. ITALY.

+++++

I covered the first raid of the day as per attached sheet. But due to very violent evasive action on the part of the pilot could not obtain more than 30ft of the actual bombing, however, as most of the bombs fell outside the town, it doesn't matter. I then went to a Piper Cub airfield and borrowed a Cub for the afternoon from which I filmed the very heavy artillery barrage also dive bombing attacks on town and abbey.

There is a short coverage of bombing up, crews at plane and dough-nuts at end of mission.

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NUMBER

CAMERAMAN'S CAPTION SHEET

OLYMPIC KINEMATOGRAPH LABORATORIES, LTD.

BRITISH PARAMOUNT NEWS DEPT.

SCHOOL ROAD, LONDON, N.W. 10

DATE MAILED

17. 3. 44

Box 11876

CAMERAMAN E.J.H. Wright. SOUNDMAN \_\_\_\_\_  
 STORY COVERED: Capture of the town of Cassino. LENGTH EXPOSED 300feet  
 PLACE OF EVENT: Italy. HOW SHIPPED \_\_\_\_\_  
 STOCK USED Plux X EMULSION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ COVERED BY BRITISH PARAMOUNT NEWS

VERY IMPORTANT! WRITE PLAINLY—SPELL NAMES CORRECTLY—USE TYPEWRITER IF POSSIBLE

SCENE NUMBER	COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF SCENES	FOOTAGE IND.	CAMERA SPEED	LIGHT COND.	LENS USED
1.	and only Today I was the first war/Correspondent to enter the town of Cassino during its capture by the New Zealanders and Indians. When I left the town there were only two or three isolated pockets of resistance to be overcome, consisting of odd German machine gunners who will be cleaned out during the night I am convinced. The town is completely devastated by the colossal air bombing and artillery shelling to which it has been subjected and due to the odd German machine gunners it was not prudent to expose myself too much to climb up on top of the heaps of rubble with a view to obtaining general views of the desolation, as it was I was under mortar fire which I filmed fortunately it was just short of my camera position. I worked my way through the town as far as I could and caught some German shells falling in front of me, trying to range on the town, and positions held by the New Zealanders. On my way down a mountain road going to the town I saw a barrage of smoke shells being laid to cover up the tanks which were rolling down Route 6 it should be just possible to see the dust trails of the tanks entering the smoke screen in the distance.				
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.	Unfortunately I have lost my 6 inch lens (and 2 inch) during the last bombing raid I covered, and which I have already advised you. I am considerably hampered in coverage of this description with only one lens (and one camera).				
6.	While I was in the town a small patrol came in to a post to report the position of one of the German machine gun posts, I was present while the man gave his report, then he asked for a drink of water, after which he said something had hit him in the back while he was coming in, a medical orderly pulled up his shirt and disclosed a shrapnel wound, I asked them if they would come outside to dress the wound so that I could get a picture, they agreed, so, although the scene was 'staged' for the camera the event is genuine. So is the story. It is just typical of the fortitude of these magnificent New Zealanders. There were no Indians in the town, they are up on Abbey Hill, capturing the Abbey, as I write this and will be the subject of another story. Tanks (American) played a very important part in the capture of the town and the pictures I took previously and today shown something of what these tank boys have to go through.				
7.					
8.					

WHICH OTHER SOUND NEWS REELS COVERED STORY None.

„ „ SILENT „ „ „ „ None. I think A.F.P.U. covered somewhere.

INSTRUCTIONS: GIVE FULL DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH SCENE AND ALL HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL FACTS POSSIBLE. SHIP ALL FILM PARCEL POST. SPECIAL DELIVERY TO ABOVE ADDRESS. SEND THE PINK ORIGINAL OF THIS FORM WITH NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS BY SPECIAL DELIVERY MAIL. PLACE DUPLICATE IN CAN CONTAINING NEGATIVE.

A.679/4/2 (contd.).

Roll 1.

Various long shots of the first wave of bombers. Including men in foreground.

Bombs exploding and the town being obliterated by the smoke and dust.

Roll 2.

Repeat of last roll, with the exception of 50' shot on 6" lens, panning along with a 'stick of busting bombs on enemy outposts'.

Roll 3. 6" shot, panning slowly along the bursting bombs. last shot. Pan from men looking at bombing to the Cassino valley full of smoke and dust.

Group of American and New Zealand soldiers looking up at bombers and at Cassino.

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ARMY FILM UNIT.  
DOPE SHEET

Cameraman: Sgt. Jessiman.  
Story: Bombing of Cassino  
Location: Cassino  
Length: 100 ft.  
Date: 15.3.44.

KLD

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A.679/4/3

After weeks of waiting for the correct weather conditions, Cassino was bombed today, according to plan. First by medium and then heavy bombers.

Various shots of Cassino and Monastery Hill prior to bombing and with bombing in progress.



MOVIE TONE DOPE SHEET

*Wootton*  
Cameraman: P. Wyand,  
Story: Attack on Cassino.  
Date: 15th March,  
Location: Cassino, Italy.  
Length: 1,600 ft.

*Screened*  
*20 Mar 44*  
*yes*  
**Box 11882**

B.428/DL2. General Cannon, U.S. Air Corps discusses plans of operation with Allied War Chiefs.  
General views of Cassino.  
Bombing of town by Mitchells and Forts (Various lenses).  
Shots of planes.  
Follow shots of bombs dropping (unable to show them leaving plane, as they were released right overhead).  
Bombing, tilt up to plane.  
Bombing.  
Artillery barrage and smoke screen is layed as last bombing attack is made.  
Artillery barrage,

ARMY FILM UNIT.  
DOPE SHEET

Cameraman: Sgt. Meyer.  
Story: Infantry moving into position.  
Location: Anzio Bridgehead.  
Length: 200 ft.  
Date: 14th March, 1944.

*no*

A.679/1/1 This Btn. were among the first troops who made the original landing at Anzio.  
Movement of infantry by daylight is possible only in wooded areas, and the following roles show a section of the above moving into position.

Roll 1.  
L.S. In single file a Section moves forward under cover of trees.  
L.S. Same different angle.  
L.S. Same troops take up extended order.  
L.S. Section moves passed camera in extended order.

Roll 2.  
L.S. Mortar team (2") set up ready for defence of wood.  
M.S. Same - but different angle.  
L.S. Bren gunners and Rifleman take up defensive position.  
C.S. Rifleman lights cigarette whilst waiting for Section Leader's orders.  
C.S. Sgt. looks through brush for signs of enemy movement.  
C.S. Rifleman relaxing with a big sight of relief.

ARMY FILM UNIT.  
DOPE SHEET

Cameraman: Sgt. Wootton.  
Story: Shelling and bombing of Cassino.  
Location: Cassino.  
Length: 300 ft.  
Date: 15.3.44.

*no*

A.679/1/2 Roll 1. Shows 1st, 2nd and 3rd wave of bombers attacking Cassino on Monastery Hill.  
Roll 2. 6" shots of bombing including oncoming planes and first phase of shelling.  
Roll 3. 25 pdrs. battery (Indian Div.) in action at Cassino.

E.203/20.3.

ARMY FILM UNIT.  
DOPE SHEET

Cameraman: Sgt. W. Jordan.  
Story: Cassino.  
Location: Cassino.  
Length: 400 ft.  
Date: 5th March, 1944.

yes  
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Box-11880

A. 679/1/3 Soon after the bombing of Cassino our infantry attacked the strong points around the town, weapons of all kinds were used to drive the Hun from his well dug in positions.

Roll 1. Men of a New Zealand Infantry Coy. man handle their six pounder anti-tank gun into position in front of Cassino.

Roll 2. A six pounder anti tank gun (New Zealand) in action firing H.E. into Spandau positions on the hillside behind Cassino. The Germans return the fire the shells landing close to the New Zealand gun position.

Roll 3. (a) Firing at a fast rate of fire the Anti-Tank Gun puts as much as H.E. into the German positions as is possible in the shortest possible time.

(b) Captured outside Cassino a German 75 mm. gun is made good use of by the New Zealanders who use up the ammunition the Germans had kindly left behind.

Roll 4. The infantry attack and advance towards the town under cover of the smoke screen from our shelling driving the Germans out of their forward positions with Bren gun and rifle fire.

ARMY FILM UNIT  
DOPE SHEET

Cameraman: Sgt. Jordan.  
Story: Bombing of Cassino.  
Date: 15.3.44.

NW

A.679/4/1  
Roll 1  
Various shots of bombing.  
Roll 2  
Various shots of bombing.  
Roll 3  
Various shots of bombing.

ARMY FILM UNIT.  
DOPE SHEET

Cameraman: Sgt. Day  
Story: Bombing of Cassino and surrounding enemy positions.  
Location: San Michele  
Length: 300 ft.  
Date: 15th March, 1944.

NW

A.679/4/2 In this stage of the 'bombing of Cassino' not only the town itself concentrated upon, but also in surrounding positions, held by the enemy. As wave after wave of bombers attacked from a high level, the smoke gradually spread and became thicker, blotting out the town of Cassino almost completely. In the first 2 rolls, medium bombers were used. Roll No. 3, shows the bombs from the heavy bombers flying at a high altitude.

OVER/...