

1944 THE GRAND ASSAULT 1443

1944 sealed the fate of both Germany and Japan.

After trying years of preparation we shattered the Atlantic Wall in the west and carried the outer defences of the enemy in the ~~area~~ Far East.

Russia gave the Wehrmacht the severest mauling it had yet had.

The defeat of Germany before <sup>next</sup> ~~Autumn~~ <sup>is</sup> almost certain to be the splendid harvest of 1944.

Viewing the vast accumulation of war material over the countryside in the early months of 1944 wiseacres maintained their opinion that there would be no Second Front. In their view <sup>it</sup> ~~the flow of arms from factories on both sides of the Atlantic~~ was no more than a colossal bluff, designed to pin down German forces in the west, while Russia defeated the <sup>even</sup> ~~German~~ army in the east, ~~and Britain and America~~ ~~beated~~ ~~the enemy in the west~~. Nevertheless all who were not over clever knew that the long gestation of the Second Front was drawing to an end. <sup>approach</sup>

Called from Italy to take up a more important command Gen. Montgomery reminded the doubters that intensified bombing, such as was then being carried out, had preceded the invasion of Italy.

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The Italian front had ceased to be of major importance. This mountain country was obviously no rapid way to Berlin. Yet the bombing of Cassino Monastery, though little affecting the war in general, did provide spectacle never 2 B 4gottn.

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Not to be outdone, Nature served up a still finer spectacle in the eruption of Vesuvius.

Russia by this time more a d t measure o t German Army. Fighting over scorched earth a nearly insuperably difficult war ~~was~~ o long kmunications, t Soviet forces liberated Kharkov 7 Leningrad, attacking at many points on a front o 2,000 miles. B4 t year ended t Red Army was in E. Prussia, d captured t oilfields of Ploesti, 7 stood on t highroad 2 Vienna.

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insuperably difficult war of long communications, the Soviet forces had liberated Kharkov and ~~Novorossiisk~~, broke the siege of Leningrad and ~~kept up the offensive~~ <sup>assailed</sup> at many vital points along a front of 2,000 miles.

~~From the rich Ukraine, granary of the Soviet Union, the enemy was flung out. Kiev, capital of the Ukraine Republic, raised its battered head as a free city. Everywhere on the long line of retreat the Germans destroyed with more than military ruthlessness. Nevertheless,~~

~~Before the year ended the Red Army was in Riga, stood on the soil of East Prussia, captured the blazing oilfields of Ploesti and stood at the gates of Budapest and Vienna.~~

In Moscow the Master Race was forced to bite the Russian Dust.

Summoned to conference, now came the Prime Ministers of the Dominions. The senior partners of the British Commonwealth came together as the hour of attack approached. ~~Welcome indeed were Mackenzie King, James Curtain, Field Marshal Smuts and Mr. Winston Fraser.~~

In Downing St. they talked not only of the Second Front but of the world after victory, for which the British Commonwealth must be fully prepared. The hour had now almost struck. Generalissime Eisenhower - outstanding example in history of the successful co-ordinator of mixed armies - revealed himself as a great driving force, a forthright personality. ~~Millions~~ Millions regretted that Britain was not to supply the Supreme Commander, ~~Millions~~ but failing that they knew that there was no man under whom our armies would more willingly serve than Gen. Eisenhower.

(Speech Sandhurst)

The RAF now did the incredible by increasing its already overwhelming attacks. The U.S. airforce joined in. Night and day the allied airforces paralysed the enemy in preparation for what was so soon to come.

Title on D-Day

It was four years since Dunkirk. The tide was now flowing the other way. The medley of little ships that brought the army back from France gave place to a vast fleet of vessels of design unheard of three years ago. The invasion fleet was under way.

At long last the United Nations had embarked on the most hazardous of all military enterprises, the assault of a strongly fortified coast. There was no other course. No one in the High Command now believed that bombing alone could win. The Anglo-Canadian-American armies had to be put on a hostile shore and beat the enemy on land; otherwise the war might go on till the resources of mankind were exhausted and civilisation in ruins.

At far less than the expected cost the landing craft nosed in and the spearhead fought its way ashore. In this contest the Germans were not merely outfought, they were outwitted. Believing the landing was a bluff the enemy did not commit his forces till too late. Ruling out the possibility of landing in Holland, the time and place of the assault were admirably chosen.

At the dictates of allied strategy ~~a large part of the~~ German Army was confined between the sea, the Seine and the Loire. Over these two large rivers <sup>the bridges</sup> were down. ~~If the~~ *Entrap/20/5* enemy ~~could not~~ ~~be~~ ~~driven~~ ~~back~~ ~~into~~ ~~the~~ ~~sea~~ ~~he~~ ~~was~~ ~~doomed~~ ~~to~~ ~~severe~~ ~~defeat.~~ *Ho* While the British and Canadians pinned the enemy down on the left flank the Americans captured Cherbourg well ahead of schedule. A great port, soon to be repaired, was in allied hands.

Visiting the front before the month was out Winston Churchill saw that the most hazardous part of the enterprise was <sup>surely</sup> ~~over.~~ ~~Bayeux~~ ~~was~~ ~~ours,~~ ~~Caen~~ ~~was~~ ~~to~~ ~~fall.~~ ~~from~~ Scarcely ~~was~~ the second Front established ~~when~~ <sup>when</sup> there appeared over London a German aircraft of unusual design - ~~soon to be known, only too well, as the~~ flying bomb. The long heralded secret weapon had arrived. ~~Carrying a ton of explosive~~ <sup>9</sup> it caused immense damage, destroying

in three short months an amount of property exceeding that of the Blitz.

The armed forces rose on that occasion, spared fighter planes to destroy the doodlebugs in the air, guns to shoot them down over bomb alley.

London was again evacuated of children. Nevertheless the secret weapon did not by so much as ten seconds postpone the hour of German defeat.

Over in France the Allies' great need was now for more harbour space. Long foreseeing this requirement Britain had designed two prefabricated ports for the flow of supplies and kept up.

Very soon the Germans had lost the colossal total of half-a-million prisoners. The remnants of their armies were fleeing across the Seine, pursued in the south to the Siegfried Line and in the north to Antwerp and the Scheldt.

On the way Brussels was liberated undamaged, acclaiming the British army with the ecstatic fervour of a city miraculously freed.

In conference at Quebec Allied leaders decided to intensify the war against Japan, now vulnerable to air attack.

Already in the Pacific the Americans had gained tremendous triumphs. Most gratifying of all was the successful invasion of the Philippines. Two years ago, defended three years ago with epic valour, the Americans fought their way back. "I shall return," vowed MacArthur in the dark days, and return he did.

On the western front the island of Walcheren still barred the approaches to Antwerp. There was no direct assault. (All the advantages which lay in its defence the British and Canadians carried it by storm. Their heroism made Antwerp fully available as a port. [The next great offensive would now be fully and thoroughly prepared.]

~~launched.~~

(5)

Not wholly successful, but ever memorable for its brave and brilliant execution, was the Rhineland attack of the allied airborne armies. It was an operation on an unprecedented scale, and it secured the enormous prize of the Nijmegen Bridge, intact over the River Waal.

The attack at Arnhem, to gain footing on the east of the Rhine, did not succeed. Ground troops were unable to connect up and the heroic survivors of Arnhem were recalled to safety. Historians will not fail to do justice to their gallant bid for total victory.

*Monte*  
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L. best equipped ports in Europe  
y soon working 2 capacity as t  
supplies poured in.

Splendidly anticipating the kplete triumph o t Free World  
 z t liberation o Paris. It d long outraged t susceptibilities  
 o all men o culture tt t barbarian sh occupy 7 handsm  
 seat o learning 7 t arts. Now, t 4most Frenchman 2 keep  
 faith unsullied z tr as head o t State, unruffled as ~~h~~  
 traitors' bullets vainly intruded on t triumphant scene.

(~~after~~ cig) Later t Capital o France acclaimed him who  
 in good times 7 bad z always t true friend o France, Winston  
 Churchill. 7 z among t splendid moments o. 1944. Tt  
 tremendous year did n bring kplete victory, b it did C  
 t enemy flung back 2 h own land, t liberation o gt parts  
 o oppressed Europe, t birth o dazzling hope throughout  
 t Free World.

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