

MALTA WELCOMES THE KING.

The very method of the King's coming to Malta was dramatic in the extreme. He came from North Africa on board the cruiser "Aurora". She steamed slowly into Valetta Harbour, its bomb-torn shores crowded with wildly excited people. Nowhere else in the world could a Royal visit have created so profound an impression.

As His Majesty stepped ashore, the Governor Field Marshal Lord Gort, was there to meet him. The King's arrival by sea - within sixty miles of Sicily with its enemy aerodromes and ports heightened the delight of the Islanders. A Sovereign honour bestowed on this wonderful island which stands gloriously in the van of the United Nations in the Central Mediterranean.

The square outside Valetta Palace presented a memorable scene. At least a hundred thousand people in an almost solid mass, cheering and waving as the King came out on the balcony with Lord Gort.

The King was last in Malta 16 years ago. What a lifetime of history has passed between. Yet with what passionate loyalty did the Maltese express anew their lasting and intense affection for the King.

Here are the scenes of unparalleled enthusiasm which swept through the crowds lining every mile of the route. His Majesty drove down Kingsway at the start of his tour of the Island. At intervals along the route, the King left his car to walk through the ruins of a one time beautiful building or to view with sympathetic understanding the remains of houses and places of worship.

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These people have suffered unbelievable hardship and danger. but how fully do they relish this Royal visit coming at a time when victory in the Mediterranean has been so gallantly won. Unstinting in their welcome, the George Cross Islanders throng the streets cheering and clapping through the seven hours the tour lasted.

To draw the comparison is odious; but what a world of difference there is between all this and the drive of a dictator riding in a bullet-proof car. To think of it is to dismiss it from our mind. See the lines of cheering nurses, hospital workers and patients in hospital blue as the King's car comes into sight. Malta is a joyous place; a place where flags jut from balconies and windows in every narrow street and broad highway.

Children throw flower petals like confetti in the path of the King's car. A day never to be forgotten in the proud and glorious history of indestructable Malta. There were moving incidents and moments of infinite emotion shared between Monarch and Malta; but the predominant note was grand elation which came from the heart of a wonderful people.

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MALTA WELCOMES THE KING (PART 2 TRIPOLI)

Putting the calendar back a day, here are some pictures taken during the King's visit to the 8th Army in North Africa. The whole of the King's time abroad was spent among his troops and his people. With little regard for himself, he went among them all. To General Sir Bernard Montgomery he gave the formal accolade of Knighthood. Recognition for the magnificent achievements of a brilliant leader.

The maroon ribbon of the Victoria Cross was pinned by His Majesty to the tunic of a Gurkha Officer, SUBADAR LALBAHADUR THAPA who won the cross for bravery at the start of the Wadi Akarit assault. The King Emperor among men of the 4th Indian Division. The battles they fought, the victories they won, are beyond the power of words to extel. While in Tripoli, following his return from Malta, the King made a call at the General Hospital. The sick and wounded entered very largely into the King's list of activities. Men recovering from their wounds were greatly cheered by this visit.

The Grand Piazza, Tripoli. It was here that the King came on his return to North Africa to inspect 8th Army Units. The Grand Mufti and the Chief Rabbi of Tripolitania were the only civilians present at the ceremony. This is former Axis territory.

At an operation airfield of the Middle East Air Force, Air Marshal Linnell is knighted. A rare picture of the accolade being given by a British sovereign in the field.

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The King spent his last half day on road with his
~~many~~ fighting men. From here he was to take place
for England. The cheers which had accompanied him in all
his travels went with him right up to the time of his
departure. They were lastly to come from the men whom
the King had come to thank.

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