

PATHE GAZETTE: 44/23.

CASSINO SMASHED

And here's the composite story of the attack on Cassino told in British Newsreel, Army Film Unit, R.A.F. and American Army pictures. Bombardment was intended to deny to the Germans the use of the town as a prepared position holding the Allied push down Highway 6 towards Rome. Once weather permitted the whole weight of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces was thrown in, striking at the battered town in which the Germans were solidly dug in.

Following waves of aircraft bring fresh loads of bombs to batter at the formidable array of block houses and strong points which guarded this bastion of the Gustav line. Reinforced concrete gun pits built into solid rock; machine gun nests thickly emplaced in the hill slopes; tanks dug-in beneath the foundations of houses - these were measures which had been taken to make Cassino the toughest nut to crack in the whole Italian Campaign.

Though the whole of Cassino fell about the defenders, for weeks on end the ebb and flow of battle has gone on in this stubbornly contested town. While the shadow of the last attacking planes was still across the target Allied artillery opened up. With General Freyberg's New Zealanders, we see how a gun crew turned a captured German gun on its former owners. Six pounder anti-tank guns firing high explosives engage in a gun duel across the great divide.

For the first time we see how the New Zealand Infantry worked their way closer to the German lines. Yard by yard they drew the net tighter round Cassino.

contd./...

One by one the <sup>new</sup> strong points have to be silenced. These are the first newsreel pictures to come out of the nightmare town of Cassino. Ruin heaped upon ruin. Street fighting where there are no streets - house to house combat where not a building remains whole. To win a pile of stone ..... constitutes an advance. Groups of men become isolated, and friend and foe stalk each other in this wilderness which correspondents have called the Italian Stalingrad. The Hun is determined to make a stand in Italy, to shake the mind of the German people off the defeats in Russia and to calm their fears about the coming invasion.