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**FLORENCE.**

After their stubbornly-contested advance through the last few grimly-defended miles before the Gothic Line in Italy, units of the 8th Army enter the outskirts of Florence. Even so, the Germans still offer stiff resistance, though this can only cause the useless destruction of historic buildings, and the fall of the town is a foregone conclusion. Tanks nose their way forward towards the city- and the enemy. The footsloggers are never far behind.

The Nazis, in spite of their crocodile tears about Florence's Art Treasures, not only defend the city but pour shellfire over its ancient roofs. The smoke in the foreground is caused by enemy guns shelling Florence's only remaining Bridge, the famous Ponte Vecchio. The other five bridges have been blown up by the Germans to delay our advance.

The Allies press on, to consolidate their hold on the southern half of the town, below the River Arno. British New Zealanders, and South Africans share between them honour of forcing their way into this first part of Florence proper.

But the enemy is still holding out in some streets, and our troops have to mop up as they go along. Commandos of an Engineering Unit have a special job - to force an entry into a building that the Germans have been using as an S.S. Headquarters.

The S.S.Staff have gone, but the window makes a good point from which to liquidate snipers. Down a side street a German machinegun post is still in action, but not for

long. Italian partisans have a few old scores to settle.

With the way now cleared, the main body of troops enter the town. Florence's fascists are being quietly taken care of. The rest of the citizens come out to welcome the Allies. The local sign-writer has lost no time in expressing his feelings .... and the rest of the inhabitants do likewise. Since these pictures were taken the whole of Florence has been occupied. One more city to add to the long list of Allied victories.