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44-67

FALAISE, BOMBING RETREATING GERMANS.

Marauders of the Ninth Air Force cross the Channel to massacre the Germans as they try to escape the quickly closing trap round Falaise. Gunners keep enemy pursuit away till the target is reached, and down go the bombs. Thunderbolts, Lightnings, and Mustangs, have all helped to make the pocket holding the Germans, the most heavily-pounded spot in Normandy. These bombs all add their quota to the chaos and confusion below. A heavy cluster goes down to add full measure to the havoc.

This bridge might have provided a chance of escape to the bomb-dazed Nazis, so the Marauders wipe it from the map. Yes, Americans, and R.A.F between them have turned the Falaise gap into the graveyard of the once-proud German Seventh Army.

100403-2

FALL OF FALAISE.

Here's all that was left of Falaise when Canadians entered it after the bitterest fighting in Normandy. The Chateau still holds enemy snipers, until one of our tanks sends in a few 75 millimeter shells. With that bit of trouble cleared away, troops press on into the town - if it can still be called a town.

A spot of bother. Troops have to sprint for it to avoid another snipers nest. Yes, there are still fanatical Nazis holding out in the ruined town, sworn to die for their Fuehrer amid the smoke and flame and crashing buildings.

A bulldozer makes a road through the rubble to let the Allied armour pass. This is total war, which spares nothing in its path - homes, monuments or churches.

Through the desolate, ruined streets trudge those lucky Germans who, dodging the machine-guns of their own S.S.men, have given themselves up as prisoners.

Back come the inhabitants of Falaise to what is left of the town. Their worldly possessions have gone; yet there is hope in their faces, for they are free again. The battle of Falaise is over; the crushed enemy left behind in the pocket is being wiped out; and what little of Von Kluge's armour has managed to escape eastwards is torn to shreds by Allied aircraft as it makes a last desperate dash towards the SEINE