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TOBRUK... OUR DESERT STRONGHOLD.

Tobruk. On the widespread chess-board of war, the Desert stronghold continues to assert itself as a powerful spear-head of offence in the Libyan landscape. In the harbour lie the now rusty relics of Italian vessels. A veritable graveyard of ships sunk during attacks on Tobruk when it was held by the enemy. So complete is our occupation and defence, that British ships now come openly into the harbour bringing supplies and reinforcements for the garrison. Not exactly a health resort, but how the old place has changed - Bren guns billet the boarding houses.

The battle scarred streets in the town are gradually crumbling away under constant attacks by enemy aircraft.

This is Admiralty House. Not quite as imposing as Whitehall, but it's got a grand outlook. Neaby are the office of "The Tobruk Truth", the Garrison's own news-sheet which appears daily despite occasional ~~German~~ Nazi attempts to put it out of circulation. The Editorial offices have admittedly had many moves, but the Australian Sergeant-Editor makes a sign with his fingers rather like the Victory V, and carries on with the job. The one-time Italian Hospital is now used by us for any of our casualties. One of the outpatients is a pet donkey which stopped a bit of shrapnel.

Make no mistake, Tobruk is important. It lies at the extreme Western end of a strategic line which runs for fifteen hundred miles across six countries to an eastern extremity on the Caspian Sea. Reaching out over a hundred square miles of desert our perimeter defences make it an impregnable fortress. The entire defensive system is below ~~ground~~ the surface of the earth. These are some of the modern cavemen of Tobruk. From the air the defences are invisible, but in these caves and underground posts an army of men are continually hitting out at the enemy. What a splendid fighting contribution has the garrison made week after week, month after month since Tobruk became beleaguered in the spring.

Out among the defensive posts on the perimeter within easy reach of enemy guns, is a group of men forming a unique gun crew. A number of army cooks have got themselves a couple of Italian guns and, styling themselves the Bush artillery, lob over hundreds of rounds into the Jerries and Wops. The guns have no proper sights left on them so they draw a bead on the enemy lines with a pole, and let fly. And what's more - they're done a lot of damage.

From sunken gun positions other artillerymen who can't cook, open up against the enemy. An indication of our accurate fire is shown by these pictures of an Italian oil dump going up as the result of a direct hit.

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In many a section round Tobruk wreckage of Italian planes, lorries and tanks are all that remain of a much vaunted Fascist army that met decisive defeat.

Tobruk is firmly in the hands of warriors such as these. An Army of matchless men from the British Commonwealth of Nations who's dogged heroism deserves more than just a passing paragraph. Their heroic stand is writing a page in history as vital as any which hit the headlines.