

TO BENGHAZI AND BEYOND.

42-103

For the third time in this war a British Newsreel cameraman entered Benghazi, when our 8th Army completed the hat trick and took over the second chief seaport town of Libya. Terry Ashwood used his camera to good effect as he moved around the town. As the tanks rumbled by, small boys unpacked their V signs. All the coming and going was a little confusing for them at first, but this time we'd sunk our hooks in Benghazi and the Union Jack was securely planted on the tallest building in the place. Before you entered the door you were invited to wipe your feet. After many months of heavy bombing the Harbour was choked with the wreckage of Axis shipping and blocks of concrete blown from the Jetties and Moles.

Allied raiders had been careful to select their targets. Accurate bombing had left such buildings as the main hospital completely unscathed. British and American bomb aimers don't scatter their missiles like chaff; they pick out such places as the Benghazi Power Station and completely wreck them.

On a tour of inspection came General Montgomery. An informal visit by the man who altered the course of the war by his brilliant leadership. No one begrudges him his hard-boiled eggs. Benghazi became no halting-place, but another jumping-off place for the unremitting drive to El Aghella and beyond.

Surely this must be the work of the Artists'x Rifles.

The Navy opens the Ports along the Libyan Coast as soon as they are taken over by the Army, in order to rush supplies to forward troops. Never let it be forgotten that the Navy was largely instrumental in the 8th Army's success. Into every port and harbour along the route of advance, came barge loads of supplies. Water is as important as petrol; life blood which the Navy took upon itself to deliver. "Roll out the Barrel" - and the sailormen of England did the rolling.

The "No Smoking" notices seem a little out of date.

Sailors have a natural flair for trading. A little sign language and some pigeon-Arabic and more than one sailor has come away with a couple of cackle berries.

The amazing number of Axis Aircraft which were pinned down to their aerodromes by our airmen made the Luftwaffe a back number. The capture of airfields was immediately followed by intense activity to convert them to our own use. Like a swarm of ants, fitters and riggers descended on the enemy aircraft left lying around, repairing and making them air-worthy. To get them safely back to base for examination by experts, the planes have their Swastikas and black crosses painted out and replaced by R.A.F. markings.

One more airfield is occupied.. and a signboard hung out for passing customers.

Remember the German people's cars which the German people paid for and never got? From one of them comes a Squadron Leader to take over one of the re-conditioned German planes. A Stuka dive-bomber which will be studied for new modifications or equipment when it gets bwhind the Allied lines.

It's quite a business this ferrying captured aircraft to the R.A.F. Surgeries.

Tripoli, thenCapitol City of Libya, gets a pasting. This is one of the most important of Rommel's supply bases. It receives almost hourly raids day and night. Every enemy ship entering has to run the gauntlet.

With the Navy exerting its weight in the Mediterranean. The R.A.F. engaged in large scale operations over land and sea, and the stout-hearted two-fisted Army, under General Montgomery forging ahead, ~~the~~ the Crooked Cross in Africa is well on the way to obliteration.