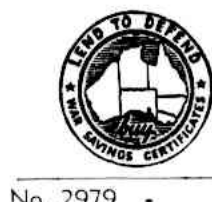


The Optical House of  
CHAS. SANKEY FRASER  
Optometrists,  
246 QUEEN STREET,  
Nearly Opp. Commonwealth Bank.  
HOURS: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
Sats. 9 a.m. to 12 noon.  
And at Townsville.



# The Courier-Mail

GREATEST CIRCULATION IN QUEENSLAND—97,198 DAILY

No. 2979

(Registered in Australia for Trans-  
mission by Post as a Newspaper)

BRISBANE, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 1943

6 PAGES—2d

We Pay Highest Prices for  
**OLD GOLD & DIAMONDS**  
Also Sovereigns, Discarded Jewellery, etc.  
**WALLACE BISHOP & SON,**  
KING GEORGE SQUARE, BRISBANE.

## The Fighting Ninth Comes Home

Australia's Fighting Ninth Division is home from the Middle East. The two Queenslanders at left made light of heavy baggage when they started on home leave. Queensland members of the Provost Corps (below) brought home an 18ft Nazi flag captured by them from a German command post.

Australian Comforts Fund volunteer workers were kept busy sewing on service chevrons for the returned men (below). Right: Sergeant W. G. Wassell, of Brisbane, had a big comforts parcel waiting for him, which interested a comrade, who wore a souvenired Afrika Korps cap.



## 8th ARMY REPORTED BEHIND MARETH LINE; MAKNASSI CAPTURED

LATE CITY: WAR NEWS

THE Eighth Army has outflanked Rommel's Mareth Line, according to Algiers' correspondent of the Columbia broadcasting system.

The correspondent said late last night: "The British force which reached the vicinity of El Hamma has worked its way clear around fortified Mareth positions outflanking the whole of them. El Hamma is 45 miles north-west of Mareth, in other words behind it."

The correspondent also says: "The Americans, after taking Maknassi, have pushed on three miles and have occupied a ridge east of the village."

IN EARLIER EDITIONS

## Counter-Attack Beaten Back

THE Eighth Army's attack on the Mareth Line is still going well, though the enemy is resisting strongly, announced yesterday's Allied Headquarters communique.

"On Monday afternoon Rommel launched a heavy counter-attack, and this was thrown back," the communique added. "Bitter fighting continues."

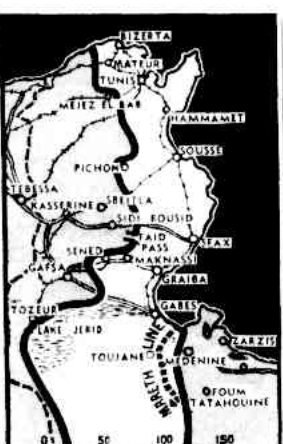
Other reports state that the Eighth Army has driven a wedge into the best defended part of the Mareth Line, and after a great sweep across the desert, has outflanked the Germans.

Simultaneously the Americans behind the Mareth Line are pressing their drive from Gafsa towards the coast, and yesterday captured Maknassi, a strategic town more than half way from Gafsa to the coast.

Algiers radio announced yesterday that the Eighth Army was attacking in the south-west, in an outflanking move against the Mareth line, and another attack had been launched against the plain near the sea.

Powerful tank formations are hammering at the German line," the announcer continued. "Our intense air attacks continue. Fires have been started and planes destroyed on many Axis landing grounds."

Howard Marshall, the BBC correspondent, says that the 8th Army's attack has developed into a two-prong drive—one prong along the coastal road to Gabes



British forces are reported to have outflanked the Mareth Line, and to be 45 miles behind it. Americans are said to be three miles past Maknassi.

and the other a wide outflanking movement through the Matmata Hills to El Hamma, 20 miles to the west of Gabes.

## Strategic Value Of Maknassi

Maknassi, which is only 30 miles from the sea, says Frank Kluckhohn, New York Times' correspondent on the Tunisian front, "Hanks the Grand Dorsal mountain chain and controls southern Tunisia."

"If Allied troops can get behind the Grand Dorsal Mountains," he continues, "they will render useless the present German control of Faid Pass, which threatens our centre."

"To the tune of artillery and machine-gun fire and frantic but useless enemy dive-bombing," he adds, "American infantry took more than 1000 prisoners and captured Bon Hamrah eight miles from el Gharbi and south of the Gabes road."

The Americans have taken 1500 prisoners, nearly all of them Italians, says the Exchange Telegraph Co's North African correspondent. The American forces have been very small.

According to Reuters' North African correspondent, the main German effort still appears to be in the north, where in a further attack they captured Nefza, a small railway station two miles north-west of Djebel Abiod, which is west of Tamera. The British have established a line covering Djebel Abiod.

"One slightly disquieting feature is the enemy's local success in the extreme north, where evidently he is determined to keep open the widest possible corridor to Bizerta," says the Times' military correspondent.

"He has shown skill and pertinacity in this fighting, and generally has got his way, al-

though his losses may have been heavy—as ours have been.

"There seems no particular anxiety over this situation, however, and no feeling that it is likely to affect the plan of operations adversely."

"Very strong American forces are attacking east of Sened, between the northern edge of the Matmata Mountains and the railway between Gafsa and Sfax, says Reuters' North African correspondent. "The Axis forces withdrew from Gafsa and other places, and have established advanced positions on the heights directly west of the lower coast road."

"Light British forces are attacking north-west of Sfax. In an attempt to penetrate the area between Sfax and the Matmata Mountains, (These mountains begin 30 miles west of the Mareth Line, and extend south-eastwards to a point between Sfax and Pouch Tatahouine.)

Berlin radio asserts that Axis forward units at some points in the Mareth area avoided prolonged contact with the British "to be able to engage the enemy under more favourable conditions."

Berlin radio referred to "British and American" units in coastal areas, but it is not known in London whether any Americans are on the coast.

## Complacency Disgusts Our Troops

FAILURE of the people as a whole to appreciate the gravity of the position confronting Australia was severely criticised by the Commander-in-Chief, Australian Military Forces, General Sir Thomas Blamey, in a statement regarding the return of the 9th Division.

"I speak for the Army when I say that if we are to win the united nation must stand behind us and give us its full support," he said.

"The Army is both disappointed and disgusted that where each of us is prepared to give everything, even life itself, for our country's safety, we find far too great a number of our people who fail to realise the serious position which confronts this nation."

"The enemy is powerful and determined. The setbacks we have given him have disturbed his complacent belief in his invincibility. He is preparing to fight to a finish."

"The complete subordination of each individual member of the community to the needs of the nation is the price of safety."

Page 2—Division Wanted To Finish Job; Page 4—Alamein Barrage.

## Big Raid On U-Boat Base

LONDON, March 23 (A.A.P. and Special).—Continued attacks on targets in Germany and occupied territory last night the R.A.F. delivered another heavy blow at the U-boat base of St. Nazaire on the French Atlantic coast.

One of the bombers did not return. Whirlwinds bombed targets in Brittany.

There was slight enemy air activity over the north-east coast of England late last night. Bombs dropped at several scattered points caused some damage and a small number of casualties.

## How Berlin Suffered

Latest reports reaching London from reliable sources give a new picture of the damage done to Berlin by the R.A.F. raid on March 1.

It is now believed that 700 buildings were destroyed, 2000 people were killed, and 30,000 people were rendered homeless.

The Daily Telegraph's Stockholm correspondent, quoting eyewitness accounts, says that the area round Tempelhof airport was burning so fiercely that incoming air forces had to grope their way through black clouds of smoke.

Tempelhof airport itself was not touched, but the railway marshalling yards near by blazed merrily for two days causing untold damage to the goods stored there.

The morale of the residents of Berlin is said to remain surprisingly good. That the destruction is attributed to the British incendiary bombs, which it is stated explode like a hand grenade and hurl a flaming phosphorus substance over a wide area.

## Nazi Drive Now In North Donetz

LONDON, March 23 (A.A.P. and Special).—Stubborn defence of the Russians in the middle Donetz area has forced the Germans to transfer their big offensive to the upper reaches of the river. Violent fighting is now taking place in the Byelgorod area, but the Red Army is firmly holding its positions.

Despite the increased ferocity of the attacks there is nothing to indicate that the Germans have anywhere broken through the main Soviet positions.

The Russians continue their drive towards Smolensk. One column is reported to be only 20 miles from the important town of Yartsevo.

In the north, Marshal Timoshenko is still pressing his attack towards Staraya Russa, while far to the south, in the Caucasus, the Russians have jumped their attack to drive the Germans across Ketch Strait to the Crimea.

Capture of more villages on the Smolensk front was announced on Monday night.

Intense fighting in one sector the Germans were thrown back from the Dmitriev with the loss of 400 men and booty.

Several fierce enemy attempts to break through the Russian position north of Shishov, north-east of Bryansk, were repelled. The Germans in three days fighting in one sector in this area lost 5300 dead.

"We took the offensive south of Byelov (south-west of Rjev) and captured 40 inhabited localities," the communique continued. "Particularly violent fighting occurred for a strongpoint on a hilltop, which the Russians captured after a daring manoeuvre."

"The Russians in the Byelgorod area (in the Northern Donetz) fought defensively against tanks and motorised infantry. Bloody repulsing attempts to pierce their defences."

All attempts to force a river barrier were repelled.

The German attack in the Shishov area is aimed at checking the Russian columns advancing on the Byelgorod front, says the British United Press Moscow correspondent.

The Russians continue driving on Smolensk from the north and east and their spearheads at present are 30 miles apart.

## STRUGGLE IN DONETZ

As a result of the stiffening of the Russian resistance, says the Moscow newspaper Pravda, settlements in the Donetz area have changed hands several times.

Another new feature in German tactics is the breaking up of the large tank forces into small groups. Several of these groups operate simultaneously on a narrow sector searching for weak spots in the Russian defence.

Berlin radio asserts that the centre of gravity in the fighting has shifted south-west of Viazma south of Lake Ladoga, and south-east of Leningrad.

Drawing attention to German references to important fighting near Leningrad, Shlisselburg, and the Gulf of Finland, The Times' Stockholm correspondent says that the Germans expect the Russians to make a strong effort to press from Leningrad to the coast with the aim of freeing the Baltic fleet's passage from Kronstadt.

"The Russians are preparing for large-scale summer offensives, which the Germans hitherto have regarded as their own monopoly," adds The Times' correspondent.

AXIS AGREES ON "NEW WORLD ORDER" PLAN  
NEW YORK, March 23 (A.A.P. and Special).—The Tokyo official radio says that the Board of Information has announced that representatives of Japan, Germany, and Italy at a meeting in Tokyo reached full agreement for building a new world order and for prosecuting the war jointly.

## Australian Move Over S.W. Pacific

CANBERRA, Tuesday.—"Certain important communications" were sent by the Commonwealth Government to the heads of other Governments.

Stating this in the House of Representatives to-day, the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) said that, pending the receipt of the reply, he would prefer to offer no comment on the position in the South-West Pacific area.

He was replying to Mr. Connelan (Lab. Q.), who asked Mr. Curtin whether he had any comments to make on references to this area in the speech of the British Prime Minister (Mr. Churchill).

## Stalemate Over War From Here

NEW YORK, March 23. It is known that Lieut-General G. C. Kenney and Major-General R. K. Sutherland contend that the war against Japan from Australia has gone as far as it can profitably be pressed, says the North American Newspaper Alliance.

Lieut-General Kenney, Chief of the Allied air forces in the south-west Pacific, and Major-General Sutherland, Chief of staff to General MacArthur, are in the United States to seek more planes, men, and equipment for the south-west Pacific.

They say that successful operations in New Guinea and the Solomon have made Australia safe, but it is doubtful whether it would be advantageous to take Rabaul, or even to displace the Japanese from Lae and Salamaua, because when rooted from one spot the Japanese would simply turn up at another. Thus the job of expelling them from hundreds of south Pacific islands would be endless.

## Burma The Key

Lieut-General Kenney and Major-General Sutherland agree that the war against Japan must be fought, firstly, by a constant, increasing air and naval attack against Japan; secondly, by re-taking Burma and re-establishing communications to China.

To these arguments, adds the North American Newspaper Alliance, the British answer that the recapture of Burma would require a major Allied fleet, as well as shipping supplies, in the Far East. Therefore the key to the war against Japan is complete reorganisation of the Mediterranean, to release British naval units and to re-establish the short shipping routes to the Far East.

## Gasmata Airfield Hit Hard

By Allan Jones, Courier-Mail War Correspondent  
NEW GUINEA, Monday.—Some of the largest bombs that have been dropped on a Japanese base in the South-West Pacific were unloaded on Gasmata this morning by Liberator bombers.

Four of the giant bombs were sent to fall in the centre of the flying strip, making holes about 25 feet in diameter. All the bombs dropped fell in the target area.

Gasmata, which is on the south coast of New Britain, is used by the Japanese as a refuelling base for bombers returning from missions in New Guinea. Fighters are also sent out from this airfield to protect convoys setting out from Rabaul.

The hammering the runway received will put it out of commission for some time.

The Liberators were given a top cover of Lockheed Lightning fighters but they met with no interception.

In a daring low level attack, Beaufighters strafed gun positions, wireless station, buildings, and belly tanks filled with petrol.

Pipes and explosions followed the attack.

One of the Beaufighters flew so low that it scraped the tops of trees lining the airfield and reared up as its base with branches caught in the fuselage.

## 700 Japs Killed

Yesterday's communique issued from General MacArthur's Headquarters revealed that our ground forces are now in complete occupation of the Mambare River area, north of Buna.

As a result of our infiltration operations, the Japanese have lost more than 700 killed and upwards of 100 captured since they attempted a landing in the delta on December 13 last.

It is believed that many hundreds more died from starvation and disease, as our troops scoured across many graves when they entered the sector less than a week ago.

Direct hits were scored at Gasmata with 2000lb. bombs. It was stated at Headquarters yesterday that it was the first time that such heavy bombs had been dropped on the place, and the first time that long range fighters had been included in the raids on the area.

The communique read:—  
NORTH-WESTERN SECTOR  
Reconnaissance of the town of Gasmata, 30 miles north of the Mambare River, was made by our heavy units. One of our heavy units bombed an enemy schooner in the harbour.

Close reconnaissance of the sea lanes and waters off the south coast of New Britain failed to disclose any trace of the enemy destroyer heavily damaged the previous night by our air attack.

NEW GUINEA  
Madang: One of our heavy units machine-gunned the town. Finschhafen: One of our heavy units bombed the runway.

Lae: One of our heavy units machine-gunned the town. Milne Bay: Three enemy bombers raided the area shortly after midnight at high altitude. There were two casualties but no other damage. Our fighters intercepted and fired a burst into one of the raiders, which dived away in a damaged condition.

Buna-Mambare Area: Since the conclusion of the Papua campaign our ground forces have steadily infiltrated northward along the coast, successfully clearing the enemy's New Guinea forces from the Ambai, Kumusi, and Opi River valleys, and are now in complete occupation of the Mambare River area, locale of the disastrous enemy landing attempt on December 13, 1942. As a result of these operations over 700 of the enemy have been killed and nearly 100 taken prisoner. Many other hundreds have undoubtedly died of starvation and disease in the swamps where they endeavoured to find refuge from our attacks.

## POOR RESPONSE TO £100M. LOAN SHOCKS CURTIN

CANBERRA, Tuesday. — Deep dissatisfaction with the response to the £100 million Liberty Loan was expressed by the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) to-day.

"I am profoundly disappointed by the small number of people who have so far subscribed to the loan," he said.

"The number of subscriptions to date is unworthy of the country, let alone of the cause for which the country is fighting and of the gallant forces which are doing the fighting."

Beginning to-morrow postmen throughout Australia will deliver to every house that can be reached by postal service a letter from Mr. Curtin appealing for support for the loan, which will close on April 20.

There will be 1,750,000 letters. Pointing out that the people are the greatest special distribution ever undertaken by the Post Office.

Mr. Curtin's letter says the loan is a call to every Australian. "This new money is needed now to buy and feed our fighting men and place in their hands the best equipment that money can buy."

"They have done much, but there is still much to do." Pointing out that the people are being asked to lend, not give their money, Mr. Curtin adds:—

"Nothing matters now but victory to preserve our priceless heritage, liberty. We will win liberty when we have conquered ourselves—when we have ruthlessly set aside everything not essential to a nation involved in

deadly war, dedicated everything we have to the nation's call. "I urge you to support this new loan to your utmost from your savings and current earnings. By April 20 we must have in hand the £100 million for which Australia asks."

"That is the greatest practical challenge yet offered to our patriotism."

Certificates Down  
Sales of war savings certificates to date had fallen short of expectations, the Treasurer (Mr. Chifley) said in a statement read in the Senate. However, it was expected that sales would increase with the intensification of the street savings scheme.

Certificates worth £1,222,000 had already been returned for payment.

Page 3—Crowd Preferred Canadian

## JAPS USED GAS, SAY CHINESE

CHUNGKING, March 23.—A Chinese Army communique charges the Japanese with having used gas in a battle in the south of Hupeh Province, where the Japanese are striving to safeguard their communications with Ichang.

More than 100 Chinese officers and men were affected.

"These mean tactics to camouflage defeat have been resorted to on many previous occasions," the communique added.



soluble arsenic ready for immediate use, for weed and tree killing

5 gallon drums—9/6 per gallon  
Also in powder form

## Q.P.S. SCIENTIFIC STOCK FOODS—

Hibiscus Phosphatate, 62 per cent protein, 10 10 per 100lb. bag, £10/10 per 2000lbs.  
Hibiscus Blood Meal, 78 per cent protein, 11 per cwt., £12/15 per ton.  
Hibiscus Calf Food, 11 6 per 100lb. bag.  
Growing Mash, 11/6 per 100lb. bag.  
Laying Mash, 10/6 per 100lb. bag.

Full lists on application  
Our Big Organisation Is At Your Service.  
Free 1943 Calendar Still Available.

Be sure to fill the third Liberty Loan

## Queensland Pastoral Supplies

PTY. LTD., Bowen St., near Fire Brigade.  
Associated Company Queensland Groceries Ltd., North Quay.

GOODBYE:—Taking their last look at the Middle East, members of the A.I.F. Ninth Division are shown as they were towed in embarkation barges to their transports for voyage to Australia.

—Military History Section photograph.