

## NO OPPOSITION IN SOUSSE

### GERMANS CLINGING TO ENFIDAVILLE LINE

From Our Special Correspondent

SOUSSE, APRIL 12

Sousse fell to the Eighth Army without a struggle. Since Saturday hardly a German had been seen in the town. Just enough troops were left behind to wreck what was left of the town's main engineering installations, the power house, vanes of the water reservoir, the railway works, and what the R.A.F. and U.S.A.A.F. had left of the harbour. As at Sfax they failed to blow up some of the most important bridges in the town.

The first troops of the Eighth Army entered at 9.15 this morning. Though almost as heavily bombed as Sfax, Sousse was better able to bear the ordeal because, unlike Sfax, it has firm soil and rock in which big shelters have been built, whereas at Sfax water was found 18in. below the surface. Many of the inhabitants took refuge in the suburbs, but the town was still kept alive by some hardy survivors, who gave the British the same warm-hearted welcome which they received at Sfax.

The boom of the battle six miles beyond the town is audible as your correspondent is writing. The Germans are clinging to the outposts of the line from Enfidaville into the hills westwards. Already round Sousse there are signs of the ending of the plains, which between Sfax and here have been very rich and beautiful. Under the olive trees, which seem ageless, the rich green of the corn is almost hidden under the scarlet of the poppies and the yellow and white of the marigolds and daisies. The towns are closer together, and the very Arabs seem to have an air of prosperity.

## BRIDGES INTACT

The long straight road is in perfect condition, hardly marred by signs of war. Only two bridges have been blown up from Sfax. Pressure from the west has evidently forced the pace of the German retreat. In this respect there is a marked difference from the road to Sfax from the south, which is milestoned with burnt-out enemy transport. Yet milestone is the wrong word, for at least four or five wrecks can be seen at every mile.

The link with the First Army is noticeable everywhere since the capture of Kairouan. Your correspondent met jeeps, transport, and correspondents from the First Army who had not made an adventurous journey like those from the Eighth Army who sought to join the Americans after Akarit; but merely, so to speak, drove down the road. There is a sense of elation among the men of the Eighth Army because they are among allies who quickly become friends; but, above all, because they feel that the net is drawing closer, and the enemy's superb control, his movements, his ability, and his will to take advantage of every opportunity to delay our advance at infinitesimal cost to himself are fast disappearing. With his back to the sea he is no longer the foe he was.