

- 1941
- Sept. 16, First Axis air raid on Cairo.
- Nov. 16, Formation of new British army in Western Desert announced.
- Nov. 18, British advanced into Eastern Libya on a wide front. R.N. and R.A.F. bombarded Axis positions as far west as Bengasi.
- Nov. 20, British forces advanced 80 miles into Libya.
- Nov. 22-30, British advanced to Gulf of Sirte.
- Nov. 23, New Zealand and Indian forces captured Bardia, Sidi Azeiz and Sidi Omar Nuovo. Main tank battle in Tobruk area.
- Nov. 26, British columns formed junction at Rezegh. Axis forces formed strong positions around Tobruk.
- Dec. 2, Germans broke through Tobruk corridor and effected junction of 2 armoured columns after fierce tank engagement.
- Dec. 3, Reorganization of Middle East Command completed with formation of 9th Army, covering Syria, Palestine, Trans-Jordan and Suez Canal.
- Dec. 6-7, Pitched battle between tanks south of Tobruk, between El Adem and Bir El Gobi.
- Dec. 9-
Jan. 17, **FURTHER BRITISH ADVANCE TO GULF OF SIRTE—**
Dec. 10, Siege of Tobruk lifted; *Dec. 16*, Three main battles at Alem Hamza, Halegh El Olebam and Gazala; *Dec. 19*, Derna airport taken; *Dec. 25*, Bengasi taken; *Dec. 29*, Concentration of Axis forces in Agedabia region; 1942, *Jan. 2*, Bardia retaken; *Jan. 13*, Salum taken; retreating Axis forces made stand on Gulf of Sirte.

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- Jan. 23-
Feb. 8, **GERMAN COUNTER-ATTACK—**
Jan. 23, Germans in Libyan counter-attack advanced 90 miles to northeast and re-occupied Agedabia. *Jan. 28*, Axis forces held on Msus-Soluch line. *Jan. 29*, Axis forces, in sudden thrust from Msus, occupied Bengasi. *Feb. 1*, Axis forces reached Maraua, 85 miles northwest of Bengasi. *Feb. 3*, British armoured columns resumed offensive southwest of Bengasi in effort to arrest Axis drive. Axis forces occupied Derna. *Feb. 8*, Axis drive across Libya halted near Tobruk.
- Feb. 9-
May 27, **RENEWED BRITISH OFFENSIVE—**
Feb. 9, British resumed offensive near Ain El Gazala. *Apr. 7-8*,

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- Axis columns resumed activity 40 miles west of Tobruk. *Apr. 12*, R.A.F. attacked Cretan aerodromes, where Axis aircraft were gathering for Middle Eastern offensive. German columns in Libya forced to withdraw. *May, 27*, Axis forces in Libya advanced to south of Bir Hacheim in attempt to outflank British positions.
- May 28-
June 30, **GERMAN DRIVE TOWARDS EGYPT.**
May 28-29, Axis forces reached within 15 miles of Tobruk. *June 7*, Axis forces retired south and west of Harmat. *June 10*, Allied garrison withdrawn from Bir Hacheim. *June 14-16*, Axis forces reached Acroma; British withdrew from Ain El Gazala; 3 German attacks repulsed in El Adem sector. *June 18*, British 8th Army split into two sections, one protecting Egyptian border and one withdrawing to Tobruk. *June 21*, Axis forces captured Tobruk, Bardia and Bir El Gobi. *June 22*, Axis forces concentrated 12 miles northwest of Fort Capuzzo. *June 25*, British withdrew from Salum, Sidi Omar and Sidi Barrani toward Matruh. *June 27*, Battle for Egypt joined southwest of Matruh. *June 29*, Axis forces captured Matruh. *June 30*, Axis columns swept beyond El Daba, 100 miles west of Alexandria.

Battle of Syria

For preliminary events see pp. 1025-1026, 1941 Year Book.

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- June 8, British and Free French forces advanced into Lebanon from Palestine, towards Damascus from Trans-Jordan and from Iraq along Euphrates River.
- June 9, Allied forces occupied Tyre (Sur) and crossed Litani (Leontes) River.
- June 10, Naval landing parties seized bridges and other vital points on Lebanese coast. Land forces reached within 10 miles of Damascus.
- June 12, Three Allied columns from Iraq occupied Hassetche and Deir-Ez-Zor. Southern columns in fierce battle at Kissoue.
- June 15, Central column captured Jezzine and Sidon (Saida), Vichy troops forced back to within 12 miles of Beirut. On northern front Abou Kemal was captured by column from Iraq.