

ACC 10000/145/45 20044/1/A MONTECASSINO - GENERAL

MAY - 1944 — SEPT. 1945

ASSINO - GENERAL

4 - SEPT. 1945

FROM | DATE | TO

INF/A : 10 MAR : NAVY

20044/1/A/MTAA

MINUTE SHEET NO. 2

Date
6/20/66

(For minute Sheet No. 1 see:
20044/1/B (Part One) MPAA)

25 SET 1945

HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION

APC 394

Subcommission for Monuments Fine Arts & Archives
(Tel. 489081, ext. 442 & 254; 478480)

20064/1/A/MFA

25 September 1945

Dear Don Mauro:

I'm returning to you a booklet lent to this office several months ago which for more than one reason is a valuable document for the history of the Abbey.

I daily await an order which is to take me to MARLBOROUGH home - after more than two years absence from the USA. Should this reach you promptly, I'd be grateful if you would give us a ring (489081, int. 442) on the chance that I might have what I'd deeply desire - a final conversation with you. Should this fail, I'll return to the USA with greetings to various common friends, including Miss Avery, Prof. Rand, and Henry Willard. I am grateful for the many meetings we had together here in ROMA and I wish you to know that I'd be interested in receiving any news (or publications) about the rebuilding of the Abbey. If you could get written up the story of the famous party at ARIMMO, I'm sure the office would like a copy and I know I would.

My address in the USA will be: c/o St John's College, Annapolis, Maryland.

With thanks for your many kindnesses and every good wish, I remain

Very sincerely yours,

R. D. Mauro Inguanez
Collegio B. Anselmo
Piazza Cavalieri di Malta
ROME

8888

RM

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Brnd 3888

R.P.O. Mauro Inguanez
Collegio S. Anselmo
Piazza Cavalieri di Malta
ROME

* *copy of Miscellanea Curieuse 7: Inguanez, Explains Curieuses can*
Carrying a case *Gehr: Ernst Böhm*
405811
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Tel. 489081
Ext. 320

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HEADQUARTERS ALLIED COMMISSION

Inter Office Memo.

19 Jan.

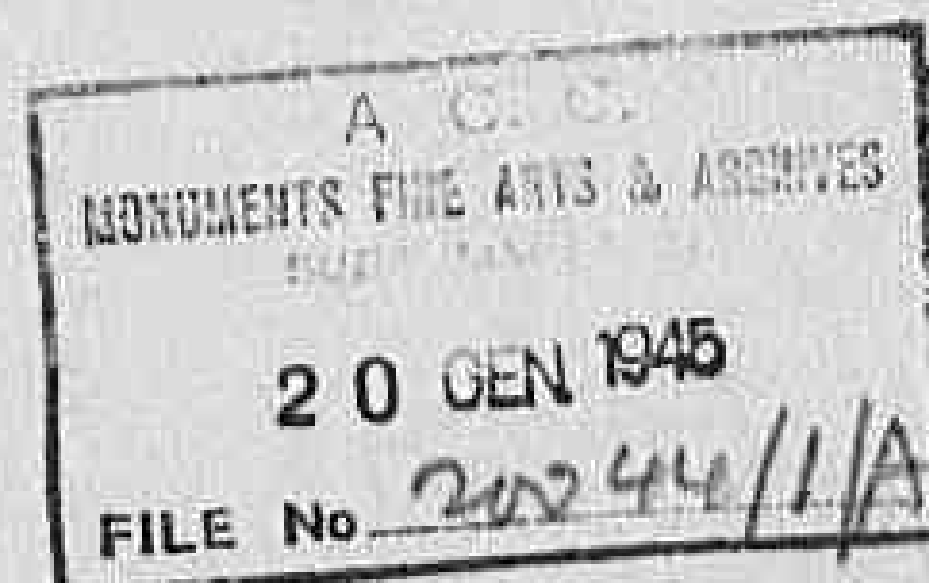
REFERENCE: 093/PWU.
SUBJECT : Art Objects at Montecassino.
TO : Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives S/C.
FROM : P.W. & U. Sub-Commission.

1. I am attaching hereto a translation of a letter sent by the Minister of Public Works to his Genio Civile at Frosinone, regarding the protection of art objects that may be found at Montecassino Abbey.

2. As this is of interest to your Sub-Commission, you may wish to make special arrangements for the protection of such art objects.


L.A. JENNY,
Colonel, C.E.,
Director.

*To forward to
Monuments, Fine Arts & Archives
Frosinone*



3887

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS
Direction General of
Technical Services.
No. 736.

Rome, 17 Jan 1941
To Chief Eng. of Genio Civile
FROSINONE

Subject : Clearing and salvage of
precious materials at Montecassino.

Referring to direction already given in a note
of the 1st Dec 1944, N.1998, your Office is requested
to speed the work of removal of the Montecassino Abbey
debris and the salvage of relics and precious objects
buried there in - in order to prevent a further
deterioration of such objects.

In executing the above-mentioned work, your
Office should follow the directions given in the Circular
of the XIX Div. N.415 of 4th October 1944.

THE MINISTER
Ruini

CIVIL CENSORSHIP GROUP - ITALY

RISERVATA
UFFICIO DI CENSURA

Mod. 8

ROMA

LUOGO

N. di prot. 6335

MITT.

DEST.

SENZA RIMBORSO

Dr. GIROLAMO FANUCCIONE
Collegio S. Anselmo

ROMA

Indicare il luogo del timbro postale quando manca l'indirizzo.

DATA DI COMUNICAZIONE O DEL TIMBRO POSTALE SE LA LETTERA E' SENZA DATA 2/12/44	TIPO DI POSTA DIVERSA	NUMERO DELLA RACCOMANDA =	LINGUA Italiana	PERVENUTA CENSURATA DA =	ALLEGATO =
ANNOTAZIONI PRECEDENTI =	SEGNALAZIONI LOCALI 2 W B INFO. DIV. AC		SEGNALAZIONI DEL C. C. S.		PROVVEDIMENTO ADOTTATO: TRATTENUTA RECISA FOTOGRAFATA INVIATA CON COMMENTI A: INOLTATA TOLTA DAL CORSO AL MITTENTE
ORIGINE CENSURA ITALIANA X CENSURA ALLEATA					

OSSERVAZIONI

GENNA SACRA IN PERICOLO DI CROLLO

".....con le piogge le rovine aumentano, tutto crolla, ad aumentare almeno a impedire la rovina della GENNA DI S. BENEDETTO?..."

A BOMBARDAMENTI IN MARGINE DI ESTINZIONE

".....the rain is causing more ruins and everything is crumbling away. God, at least, S. BENEDETTO'S COLL. be spared destruction?..."

2886

PROVVEDIMENTO ADOTTATO: I
 TRATTENUTA
 RECISA
 TOLTA DAL CORSO
 FOTOGRAFATA
 INVIATA CON COMMENTO
 AL MITTENTE

SEGNALAZIONI DEL C. C. S.

SEGNALAZIONI LOCALI

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ANNOTAZIONI PRECEDENTI

ORIGINE

CENSURA ITALIANA X
 CENSURA ALLEATA

OSSERVAZIONI

CELESTIA SACCHETTI IN FANTASMA DI PROLOGO

".....con le piogge le rovine aumentano, tutto crolla, si
 riuscirà almeno a impedire la rovina della CELLA DI S. BENEDETTO?..

A SECOND CELL IN DANGER OF DESTRUCTION

".....the rain is causing more ruins and everything is crumbling
 away. Can, at least, S. BENEDETTO'S CELL be spared destruction?"

3886

20044/1

CENSORE

4010/

REVISORE

4010

Data d'esame 17.11.44

Aviso speciale

RISERVATA

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT
LAZIO-UMBRIA REGION
MONUMENTS, FINE ARTS & ARCHIVES DIVISION
A.P.O. 394

21 OCT. 1944

FILE No 20044/1

21 October 44

Subject: Abbey of Montecassino

To: Director, M.F.A. & A. Sub-Commission,
A.C.C.

FILE No 3714
778111002

1. On 18th October 44 I visited Montecassino with Don Mauro Inguanez in an Italian Military lorry which was proceeding there to collect certain property of Prince Umberto recently salvaged from the ruins.

2. The present occupants of the Abbey are 5 monks and 16 Italian soldiers all living under the former college. The soldiers act as guards, fetch and carry supplies, the monks search for objects of value and personal property buried under the rubble.

3. Owing to the very limited scale of the present operations the material saved is not particularly impressive. I saw fragments of the 17th century choir stalls, modern religious books, vestments and a miscellaneous collection of small objects doubtless of considerable sentimental value. Of the 56 wooden boxes containing archives and other personal property of the Crown Prince 13 have been saved and the remainder burnt (apparently during the bombardment).

4. "Saint Benedict's cell" is intact.

5. A way of descent has been cleared into the rooms adjoining the Archivio, but the Archivio itself remains blocked: it is reported that this still contains a good series of church Registers from the 17th century and other Notarial Archives for Cassino and district besides other material. Unless reached shortly (impossible without additional labour) these will probably be destroyed by the winter rains.

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6. No attempt has been made to reach the Modern reference library (the part not evacuated). These rooms are a cemetery for the several hundred civilian refugees trapped by the bombardment.

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7. Lack of material and labour prevent the erection of protective devices to shelter those portions of the ruins containing the most valuable material. The only attempt in this direction is on the spot beneath which are the relics of the Saint. Here are some boards and the remains of a rain-proof covering blown away in the wind.

8. The monks are insistent that much could be saved if some additional assistance were possible. They stated that the labour could be found locally and that the problem was food (not wages) and material. In view of the fact that the Abbey can now be reached by road and that there is an encampment of Polish troops immediately at hand, with coming and going of transport, it might be considered practicable for the Sub-Commission to support this plea. The Church authorities should however first come forward with definite proposals.

T.H. Brooke

T.H. Brooke, Capt. K.R.R.C.
Archives Officer, Division
Monuments, Fine Arts & Archives
Lazio-Umbria Region, A.M.G.

APPENDIX 'F'INTERVIEW WITH S. E. DIAMARE, ABBOT OF MONTECASSINO

The interview took place on the 19th September 1944 in Cerro al Volturno, Province of Campobasso.

S. E. DIAMARE narrated the events concerning Montecassino as follows:-

The Abbey was retained as a place of safety and it was thought it would have been respected during the war. Many civilians, largely women and children, had taken refuge in the Abbey and many works of art had been transported to it from Museums in Naples. The situation however began to get worse during the early days of February, and the monks and refugees were obliged to take shelter in a few shelters underground. On the 15th February 1944 the first violent bombardment took place, which destroyed a part of the church and from then onwards the situation rapidly deteriorated. At a conference between the Abbot and all the monks it was decided to abandon the Abbey. Up to that time no German soldier had occupied the Abbey, but troops were scattered all around it. On the 17th February at 0730 hrs all the monks and refugees started on their journey, taking with them the wounded and invalids on improvised hand-barrels. After a few hours walk under artillery fire, all arrived in safety out of the range of artillery and were able to reach Rome in successive stages.

Monsignore DIAMARE was taken to the Vatican in an ambulance ^{car} and placed at his disposal by the German High Command.

Questioned about the works of art belonging to the Monastery and those which had been transferred from other localities, Monsignore DIAMARE replied that two German Officers, a Captain and a Major of the Gbering Division, organised the packings of the works of art belonging to the convent which were transported to the Vatican City. Material belonging to the State was also taken away but to scattered destinations and only on the insistence of the monks was it possible to get these also transported to the Vatican.

On being questioned, Monsignore DIAMARE affirmed that the Abbey and the surrounding country formed part of the German line of defence.

3883

This (with accompanying
Italian text) extracted
from Capt. Maxie's monthly
report for Reg. V dated
25 Sept 44.

B.M. Peebles S/Sgt

30 Sept 44.

20044/1

INCONTRO CON S.E. DIAMARE, ABATE DI MONTECASSINO ⁴⁵_{BIS}

L'incontro è avvenuto il 19 Settembre 1944 in Cerro al Volturmo, provincia di Campobasso.

S.E. Diamare ha così narrato gli avvenimenti relativi a Montecassino:

L'Abbazia era ritenuta un luogo sicuro e si credeva che sarebbe stata rispettata dalla guerra. Molti civili, in gran parte donne e bambini, vi si erano rifugiati e molte opere d'arte del Museo di Napoli vi erano state trasportate. La situazione tuttavia incominciò a peggiorare fin dai primi di febbraio, così che i Monaci e i rifugiati dovettero ripararsi in alcuni locali sotterranei. Il giorno 15 febbraio vi fu il primo violento bombardamento che distrusse parte della Chiesa, e da allora la situazione andò rapidamente peggiorando. Dopo un consiglio a cui parteciparono insieme all'Abate tutti i monaci fu deciso di abbandonare l'Abbazia. Fino a questa epoca nessun soldato tedesco aveva occupato l'Abbazia, ma le truppe erano sparse tutto intorno. Il giorno 17 alle ore 7,30 di mattina tutti i monaci e i rifugiati si misero in cammino, portando con loro i feriti e i malati su barelle improvvisate. Dopo una marcia di parecchie ore, sotto il fuoco dell'artiglieria, tutti giunsero in salvo fuori del tiro dei cannoni e successivamente poterono raggiungere Roma. Mons. Diamare fu trasportato in Vaticano con una ambulanza messa a sua disposizione dal comando tedesco.

Interrogato circa le opere d'arte del Monastero e circa quelle che vi erano state trasportate da altre località Mons. Diamare ha ri-

DELLA DIVISIONE GOERING

ferito che due ufficiali tedeschi, un capitano e un maggiore, fecero eseguire l'imballaggio delle opere di proprietà del Convento che furono trasportate a Roma in Vaticano, il materiale di proprietà dello Stato fu pure asportato ma con destinazione diversa e solo per l'interessamento dei monaci fu possibile farlo trasportare anch'esso in Vaticano.

Mons. Diamare, a richiesta, ha affermato che l'Abbazia e i terreni circostanti facevano parte della linea di difesa germanica.

Directorate of General
Historical Monuments

(Sub-Commission for Monuments,
Fine Arts and Antiquities,
Report on the Bombing of the
Abbazia di Montecassino,
20 August 1944*)

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(lb)).

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*ACC/10000/145/45

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

RCH/sar 47

Sub-Commission for Monuments Fine Arts and Archives

20 August 1944

REPORT ON THE BOMBING OF THE ABBAZIA DI MONTECASSINO1. GENERAL

a. The undersigned made a personal inspection of the ABBAZIA DI MONTECASSINO on Wednesday, 5 July 1944. The following information is submitted relative to this inspection, the conditions found and the circumstances of the bombing from the viewpoint of one of the Benedictine Fathers who was at the ABBAZIA during the entire operation. I was accompanied on my inspection by His Excellency, Ildefonso Rea, the Roman Catholic Bishop of CAVA dei TIRRENI, and the member of the Benedictine Order referred to above.

b. The ABBAZIA DI MONTECASSINO was founded by ST. BENEDICT in the year 529, on the site of the ancient Temple of APOLLO. It has been destroyed twice by earthquake, and each time was completely restored. The church was built in 1637 to replace the original structure founded and built by ST. BENEDICT. The entire property was declared a National Monument by the Italian Government in 1886 and due to the traditional founding and the importance of the ABBAZIA as an Ecclesiastical Educational Institution, it was most highly venerated by the Italian people.

c. The ABBAZIA itself was very difficult to reach inasmuch as the road had been completely blasted away at a number of places and the remaining portion of it was said to have been heavily mined. As a consequence our party climbed the mountain on the west side.

d. The mountainous terrain and valley viewed from the ABBAZIA gives evidence of the strength of the German position in the vicinity. Approximately 250 yards to the northeast is one of the destroyed enemy observation posts. There are mortar positions and other field constructions, particularly to the west of the ABBAZIA, or more properly said, on that portion of the defensive position facing the Allied lines. The closest of the mortar positions was approximately 230 yards from the building itself. I was advised by the Benedictine Monk that the German High Command had issued orders that troops were not

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to enter the building under any circumstances, and he further declared that there were no Germans in the ABBAZIA previous to the bombing. There were approximately one thousand (1000) civilian refugees from CASSINO and other portions of the countryside in the structure, many of whom were killed during the various artillery bombardments and the air attack of 15 February 1944. The Benedictine Monks were evacuated previous to the bombing, but due to their religious fervor, two Monks refused to leave and were present up until the time of its capture by the Polish troops. It was estimated by the Bishop that some 200 dead, as of the date of my inspection, were still beneath the ruins.

2. SHELLING AND BOMBING.

a. The ABBAZIA was heavily shelled on the 5th, 8th and 11th of February 1944, which resulted in serious damage to the upper portion of the structure and almost total destruction of the top floor. The shelling on 11 February 1944 lasted approximately five (5) hours. The bombing raid took place on 15 February 1944; the first flight passed over the building at or about 0945 hours and as a result, the ABBAZIA, for all intents and purposes, was completely destroyed.

b. The entire structure with quarters for approximately 350 persons, the library and picture galleries was reduced to a great heap of stone. The church itself was entirely destroyed, the only elements left standing being a portion of the sanctuary wall. The mass of rubble, covering acres of ground, contained fragments of the marble statuary, frescoes and gold mosaics. The subterranean rooms, passages and tunnels, and the foundations of the entire structure are intact.

c. Immediately after the air bombing of 15 February 1944, the enemy took possession of the ruins and new positions were established. The positions are quite in evidence within the building itself. The graves of four German dead are located in the right cloister, one of which bears a cross dated 16 March 1944. I was informed that the enemy defended certain portions of the structure to the last, thus resulting in additional destruction above that caused by the artillery bombardment and air attack.

3. RECONSTRUCTION.

a. The rebuilding of the ABBAZIA depends, of course, upon the Ecclesiastical Authorities. Its reconstruction or rehabilitation is an utter impossibility. The foundations being intact, the general outline of the structure can be preserved. Every effort is being made, since the building fell in Allied hands, to recover from the debris as much of the remaining portions of the work as can be used. It is not

5. PHOTOGRAPHS.

a. The photographs included in this report were taken by the undersigned during his tour of inspection. Due to the shortage of paper, only one copy of each print is obtainable. The films, however, will be available upon my return to the United States, and as many additional copies as are desired may then be made.

b. A general description of the photographs contained as a part of this report is as follows:

- PLATE 1 The town of CASSINO with the faint trace of the RAPIDO RIVER in the right foreground. This photograph gives some idea of the condition of the town. The ruins blend into the shellied background of the mountain.
- PLATE 2 Another view of CASSINO. The RAPIDO RIVER in the foreground.
- PLATE 3 The ABBAZIA as seen from the road (Highway No. 7) leading to the north.
- PLATE 4 The mountain as seen from our approach. We climbed up through the swale seen in the upper center of the photograph.
- PLATE 5 The terrain further up on the mountain.
- PLATE 6 The valley from a point about one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) the distance up the mountain, showing the valley below.
- PLATE 7 All that remains of the trees that one time covered a good portion of the western slope. They have all been cut and stripped by shell fire.
- PLATE 8 A German Paratrooper "still" beside a small space of cleared ground.
- PLATE 9 More German dead on the west approach to the top of the mountain.
- PLATE 10 One of the hundreds of "dumps" of mortar shells to be seen everywhere.
- PLATE 11 The first view of the ABBAZIA as one gains the top of the mountain. Italian Engineers are seen searching among the debris for mines and "aids".

so much the intent to use the salvaged items in the structure itself, as it is to preserve the character thereof in the new work by a careful study of those parts which are salvaged.

b. There is no definite plan, insofar as I have been able to ascertain, for the actual rebuilding of the ABBAZIA at this time.

4. LOOTING AND VANDALISM.

a. Due to the importance which this position had as a keypoint in the German defenses system of the line, generally east and west through MONTICASSINO, it was visited by a great number of troops. There was a certain amount of "souvenir hunting", particularly on the part of New Zealand troops who were billeted in the nearby town of ARCE. The last evidence of such looting was two days prior to my inspection. Among the marble statues was one representing Saint Peter, dedicated to PETER de MEDIA by SAN GILLO, a fine piece of sculpture which had been recovered intact, and which was by far the most important work of the kind in the church. This statue had been decapitated by troops evidently for the purpose of taking the head as a souvenir. The features of other 18th century statues were destroyed by the use of pick mattocks or other entrenching tools evidently to obtain portions of the features. The Bishop of CAVA DEI TRUCCO was much concerned over the situation.

b. The ABBAZIA had been placed "Out of Bounds", but it was practically impossible to enforce this order due to a lack of sufficient guards. It must be understood that the building itself could be reached by climbing the mountain at any point, and to effectively guard this large area would have required more troops than could be spared. There was a small detachment of Italian Carabinieri at the site as well as an additional detachment of Italian Engineer Troops aiding in the work of salvage. These detachments, however, were not at all effective insofar as Allied troops were concerned. This matter was immediately taken up with the proper Commander, but with a continual billeting of new troops in the vicinity it was very difficult to have orders and instructions carried out. As the troops moved further north there have been no further reports relative to looting or misbehavior on the part of Allied personnel at MONTICASSINO.

c. The guarding of Historical Monuments is one of the very difficult problems which this Sub-Commission has to consider, particularly because Allied troops absolutely cannot be spared for this detail except in the forward combat zones. This leaves the problem of providing guards entirely in the hands of the Italian Government, and the effectiveness of this method is somewhat questionable. There is, however, no other apparent solution to the problem.

- PLATE 12 That portion of the west wall which is still standing. It is shattered, however, beyond repair. The entrance to the ABBAZIA is seen in the lower center of the photograph.
- PLATE 13 View of the west facade looking toward the southeast.
- PLATE 14 View of the west facade looking toward the northeast. The monks are living in rooms shown in the lower left.
- PLATE 15 The remaining portion of the cloister of the left courtyard.
- PLATE 16 The general view of the cloister of the right courtyard. It is in this area that graves of the German dead were found.
- PLATE 17 General view from the left across the central court to the right cloister.
- PLATE 18 One of the many statues found in the rubble showing disfiguring of the face.
- PLATE 19 Close up showing the condition of the library and Picture Gallery in the 2nd floor of the right wing.
- PLATE 20 Graves of German dead in the right courtyard.
- PLATE 21 View of what remains of the great church taken from about the position of the steps leading from the central courtyard to the upper courtyard, directly in front of the entrance. The two large masses are masonry supporting the arch of the Sanctuary.
- PLATE 22 The only portion of the church left standing. This is a close up of the previous photograph.
- PLATE 23 Detail photograph of the right section of the sanctuary wall. Pieces of the gold mosaic frieze can still be seen.
- PLATE 24 Italian Engineers standing on the site of the main altar.
- PLATE 25 Detail photograph of a portion of the right pier shown in Plate 22.
- PLATE 26 His Excellency, Ildefonso Rea, Roman Catholic Bishop of CAVA dei TIRRENA and the monk of the Benedictine Order who accompanied me during my inspection.

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6. Certain of these photographs do not pertain to the ABBAZIA
but are included in this report to give a background to more
clearly illustrate the conditions.

Henry C. Stanton

Henry C. Stanton
Col. Inf., U.S. Army
Spec. Rep. W.D., MFA & A

3875

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HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED GENERAL COMMISSION
APO 394

JWP/ps

Subcommission for Monuments Fine Arts and Archives
(Tel. 433031, ext. 442 & 664; 478430)

7 August 1944

2014/1/12FAA

R.P.D. Agostino Sacconanno, O.S.B. Presepio i PP. Benedettini
Monastero di S. Paolo fuori le Mura - Rome -

426is

Reverend and Dear Father:

Col. Weston, to whom you wrote on 15 July 1944, has been called into the field and has asked me to reply in his behalf. This letter is addressed in care of the monks of S. Paolo at the suggestion of D. Mauro Ingenucci, with whom we spoke today concerning your request.

It is regretted that, after careful consideration, it has proved impossible to comply with your request for transport. No vehicle adapted for moving the objects in question is directly available to the Subcommission and such would have to be requested from higher authority, on whom we are about to make heavy demands for work in forward areas. It is suggested that you attempt to secure transport from the VATICAN.

Very truly yours,

JWP

J.B. TARD PERHINS
Major, R.A.
Deputy Director.

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COPY

~~SECRET~~

For info
nation only

4363

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS
Information and Censorship Section
PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE BRANCH
Unit 12
APO 512

Central D Section, Liberated Italy

August 5, 1944

REPORT ON CONDITIONS IN LIBERATED ITALY NO. 29
Part II Annexes

7 Interview with Monsignor Tardini -

C H U R C H

7 Interview with Monsignor Tardini - 28.7.44.

A PWB officer interviewed Monsignor Tardini who, with Monsignor Montini, is joint Under-Secretary of State at the Vatican. Monsignor Tardini is especially concerned with ecclesiastical affairs.

Asked about the facts which culminated in the destruction of the Abbey of Montecassino, the Monsignor said that a long time ago the Vatican, which foresaw the importance which the Cassino line would have for the Germans defence, had requested both belligerents to make arrangements to spare the Abbey. From both sides sympathetic replies were received and in effect on the Allied side the place was not bombarded, while the Germans gave an undertaking not to put troops or military materials within the precincts of the Abbey. The German commander of that sector of the line, moreover, gave orders that no troops were to go within 300 metres of the Abbey, and for some time this order was scrupulously respected. The existence of this order, however, he only communicated to the Abbot who did not get it back to the Vatican which could have procured its ratification by the German High Command. Before the bombardment, however, the German commander was replaced by another one who countermanded the order, so that for some time prior to the bombing there were about 200 troops and a couple of armoured vehicles within the 300 metre zone.

Monsignor Tardini considers it established as a fact that

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3873
Monsignor Tardini considers it established as a fact that there were never any Germans within the Abbey precincts. The Abbot and the monks were watching all the corners of their building with the utmost vigilance, for they know that once the Germans were in the place would certainly be bombed. Their testimony on this point is incontrovertible.

However, it seemed equally clear, said Monsignor Tardini, that information was reaching the Allied forces that the Germans were using the Abbey as a citadel. From where did this information come. It was possible that it came from the Germans themselves. A destroyed Cassino monastery would be mere useful to them for defence than the

- 2 -

undamaged building which they were pledged not to use - and moreover it would be a most useful propaganda story.

Most unfortunately, continued the Monsignor, the Vatican, owing to bad communications, had no means of keeping directly in touch with the situation, and was unable to put before the Allied High Command the evidence of the monks as to the non-occupation of the Abbey by the Germans.

On the day before the bombardment, leaflets were dropped on the Abbey warning the inhabitants of the forthcoming event. The Abbot and the monks and many refugees were hidden in underground caves and shelters during the ordeal. One of these shelters was pierced and a number of people were killed.

Monsignor Tardini assigned blame for the destruction of the historic building to both sides. The Germans should have kept clear a zone round the building. The Allies should have acted more cautiously on better ascertained facts, though he admitted that it was difficult to avoid the taking of quick decisions in warfare.

3872

74 7 A JED/is

U '634743

HEADQUARTERS REGION 4
ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT
A. P. O. 394

22 July 1944

TO : HQ ACC, Sub-Commission for Monuments, Fine Arts
and Archives

SUBJECT : Montecassino.

FILE No.: R4/O91.4 (I)

1. With reference to your 20044/I/MTAA of the 13th of July, Regional Commissioner, Region IV, and other officers, in company with the Prefect and other officials of Frosinone Province, visited the Abbey of Montecassino, on Tuesday July 18. At the Abbey we also met by chance Lt. Col. Lawson of the HQ Graves Registration Committee at Naples, and his local representative, Capt. Foster, who has an office at Venafro. At the Abbey we were again fortunate enough to meet the Abbot Bishop of Calva. He had been paying a short visit to the Abbey, and he with Don Agostino, the senior resident monk, showed the party over the Abbey.

2. The question of protection for the Abbey had been discussed earlier in the morning with Brigadier Moseley, commanding 55 Area. Brigadier Moseley explained that a guard of 24 Italian Infantry had been placed at the Abbey. In fact, in the course of our visit, we found that the Guard was alert, and in complete command of the approach. We were also assured by the Abbot Bishop that there had been no recent cases of souvenir hunting or irreverent behaviour. In fact, the entire surrounding countryside is at present bare of troops. It therefore appeared to us that the existing notices were adequate, and we did not proceed with the proposal for additional large notices.

[Signature]
Regional Commissioner

HEADQUARTERS

23 JUL 1944

A. C. C.

July, Regional Commissioner, and other officials of Grosinone Province, company with the Prefect and other officials of Grosinone Province, visited the Abbey of Montecassino, on Tuesday July 18. At the Abbey we also met by chance Lt. Col. Lawson of the HQ Graves Registration Committee at Naples, and his local representative, Capt. Foster, who has an office at Venafrò. At the Abbey we were again fortunate enough to meet the Abbot Bishop of Calva. He had been paying a short visit to the Abbey, and he with Don Agostino, the senior resident monk, showed the party over the Abbey.

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ADQUARTAS

23 JUL 1944

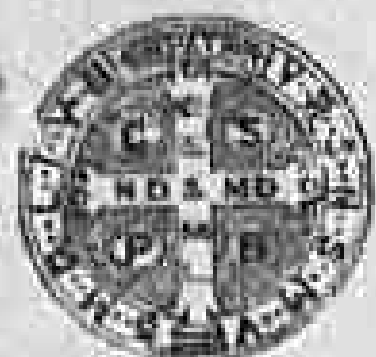
A. C. C.

Regional Commissioner

Copy to:-

HQ ACC (RC & MG Section)
Rome Region
MPAA (Rev. 14/)

3871



MONTECASSINO, July 15. 1944.

4265

Dear Colonel,

A few days ago, you came to visit the ruins of Montecassino and asked whether there were need of a vehicle to carry to Rome the thing that were found. At the time the objects recovered from the ruins were not numerous; at present however many have been recovered and it would be necessary to transport them to Rome.

Recalling your generous offer, I kindly beg you to provide some means of transportation as soon as possible.

Hoping to receive a favourable reply I thank you in advance in the name of the Abbot of Montecassino and of the Abbot of Cava.

Sincerely yours

S. Agostino Jaccarano
monaco di Montecassino

2870

42ADVANCE HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

ETDW/rjj

Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives.

13 July 1944.

20044/1/MFAA

SUBJECT: Montecassino.

TO : Regional Commissioner, Region 4.

1. On Wednesday, 5 July, Col. Newton of the War Department, who is visiting this theatre, inspected MONTECASSINO at my request in the company of the Bishop-Abbot of Cava and of his secretary, who is now resident at the Abbey. Col. Newton reports the following facts.

2. Soldiers, principally New Zealanders, were at that date still visiting the Abbey and carrying away minor souvenirs.

3. On 3 July, the marble statue of St. Peter from the tomb of Pietro de Medici by Sangallo was damaged by New Zealanders, who broke the head off. Finding however it was too heavy to remove they left it lying in the rubble.

4. Three other 18th century marble statues have had their faces chipped off in an effort to obtain souvenirs.

5. It will be seen that the action described in para. 3 took place on 3 July, a week after the issue of 55 Area Orders on the subject (see accompanying file).

6. I append draft for a suggested notice to be erected at the existing entrance to the ruins.

*E. T. De Wald*ERNEST T. DE WALD
Major, Spec. Res.
Director.

Copy to:

Hq. 55 Area
RC & MC Sect.

3869

41

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
R.O. & M.O. Section
APO 394

M.C. F.A.

Ref/310/107/CA.

1 July 1944.

SUBJECT: Abbey of MONT CASSIN.

TO : Officer Commanding, 55 Area, CDP.

1. The attached letter was drafted before your letter was received giving an outline of the very excellent arrangements which you had made. Thank you very much indeed for your most helpful and prompt attention to this matter.

2. I am not cancelling the original letter in view of the report which S.I.B. require.

H. B. LUSH
H. B. LUSH,
Brigadier,
Executive Commissioner.

GWIB/RAC.

Copy to: G.O.C. 3 District, CDP.

done 3868

REAR HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

(Date)

SUBJECT: Authorization for Travel.

TO: Adjutant, Rear HQ, ACC, APO 394.

1. The undermentioned personnel are authorized to proceed to ROME
on _____, reporting upon arrival
(Temp or Perm Dy)
to Adj. HQ, ACC for the purpose of Permanent Change of
Station

RANK	NAME	SERIAL NUMBER	BRANCH OF SERVICE	NATIONALITY
Majr	J.B.W. PERKINS			
Capt	PINSENT			
Capt	TENNOYER			
S/Sgt	PEEBLES			
Pfc	JENNINGS			

2. Travel by _____ is requested.
(Sea, Rail, Motor, or Air Transport)
3. Period of absence will be about Permanent Change
(State period in case of temp duty only)
4. It is requested that transport be made available on _____
or as soon as possible thereafter.
5. The importance of this journey is classified as B
(Classification)
6. Will you please arrange for the necessary orders to be issued.

Copy to:
Transportation Officer

* All journeys will be classified as follows:

- A - Travel of the first importance having an operational aspect when time is of the essence of the journey.
- B - Important visits or tours which it is considered essential should be made as soon as possible.
- C - Journeys which are desirable but not particularly urgent.

40

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 94
Subcommission for Monuments Fine Arts and Archives

JEMP/bmp

30 June 1944

20044/1/VFAA

Subject: Montecassino Abbey.

To : V.P., Administrative Section, ACC.

3867

1. The attached copies of letter and Order issued by 55 Area are forwarded for information.
2. They have been discussed with Lt. Col. Shipp in so far as they affect immediate action.

Wald
ERNEST T. DE WALD
Major, Spec. Res.
Director.

Copy to: R.C. & M.G. Section.

39

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

JUNE/day

Subcommission for Monuments Film Arts and Archives

20041/1/NEFA

30 June 1944

Subject: Montecassino Abbey.

To : Major Quayle, P.A. to Chief Commissioner, AOC.

Ref. your A/OC 000.4 of 28 June 44.

1. Action has already been taken on this matter as follows:

a. Visits of inspection on 25 and 26 June 44 by Capt. A.S. Penoyer of this Subcommission, who reported evidence of considerable trespass and looting.

b. Visit to RE 55 Area on 27 June 44 by Major J.B. Ward Perkins, Deputy Director.

2. As the result of these visits 55 Area have issued the attached order and are undertaking to post suitable notices and to order GEF patrols twice weekly.

3. Further action is in the hands of R.C. & M.G. Section (Lt. Col. Shipp), who hold a copy of Capt. Penoyer's report.

34
ERNEST T. DE WALD
Major, Spec. Res.
Director.

Copy to:
R.C. & M.G. Section

3866

36

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394
Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives

JBP/rjj

20044/1/MFAA

29 June 1944.

SUBJECT: Montecassino.

TO : V.P. Adm. Section, AOC.

1. Submitted herewith for your approval, as agreed in telephone conversation: Col. Cripps and the undersigned, draft of a letter to go forward to O.C., 55 Area, C.M.F., copy to GOC, 3 District, C.M.F. Attached are two copies of the report mentioned in para. 3 of the draft.

34

J.B. WARD PERKINS
Major, R.A.
Deputy Director.

3865

ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION 37

INTER OFFICE MEMO

From: Office of the Chief Commissioner
~~General Headquarters~~

SUBJECT: Montecassino Abbey

FILE No. A/CC 000.4

TO: Monuments, Fine Arts & Archives
Subcommission

28 June 1944

Attached communication has been acknowledged.

Passed to you for such early action as you see fit, and
are able, to take.

37A
J. A. Quayle

J. A. QUAYLE
Major, R.A.
PA to A/CC

20044/1

37A

TRANSLATION

SUPREME COMMAND

Section I -- Operations Office

No. 12392/OP of Prot.

P.M. 135, 25 June 1944

SUBJECT: Montecassino Abbey

TO: Captain Ellery W. Stone, USNR
Acting Chief Commissioner
Allied Control Commission

Dear Captain Stone,

For the purpose of retrieving objects of inestimable artistic value still buried among the ruins of Montecassino Abbey, I have arranged for a unit of the 10th Genio Regiment, under the direction of a competent authority (Padre Rea), to go and recover all that can be found.

It now comes to my attention that individual Allied soldiers -- especially colored -- go frequently among the ruins and carry off objects evidently to save them as keep-sakes.

It is undoubtedly a question of soldiers who do not understand the very serious damage which, with the removals pointed out, is caused to the collection of relics of the historical Abbey.

To avoid this most serious inconvenience I have arranged, in agreement with the commander of the Allied Police (PBS), that a special guard service be activated by the Royal Carabinieri.

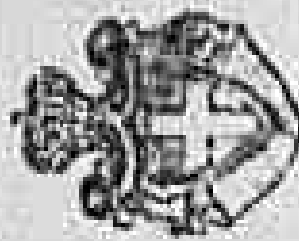
Knowing the deep interest which the Allied Authorities have always shown for the preservation of Italian art treasures, I consider it opportune to inform you of what is being done so that you may take any immediate action you deem necessary.

/s/ A. Infante

ADOLFO INFANTE
MAJOR GENERAL, FGS

Trans - Sgt Shenfield/lws

388
Implicite
action taken



COMANDO SUPREMO

I Reparto - Uff. Operazioni

P.M. 135, 25 Giugno 1944

37A

Al Capitano di Vascello
BILLY W. STONE
Vice Presidente della Commissione
Alleata di Controllo

N° 12392 / Op. di prot.

O G G E T T O: Abbazia di Montecassino.

Caro Comandante Stone,

allo scopo di ricercare
gli oggetti di inestimabile valore artistico che ancora sono sepolti fra le macerie dell'Abbazia di Montecassino ho disposto perché un reparto del 10° Reggimento Genio proceda - sotto la direzione di un valente cultore (Padre Rea) - al ricupero di tutto quanto è possibile ritrovare.

Mi viene ora riferito che militari isolati alleati - specie di colore - si recano spesso fra le macerie ed asportano oggetti da conservare evidentemente a scopo di ricordo.

Si tratta, indubbiamente, di militari che non comprendono il danno gravissimo che, con la sottrazione accennata, viene arrecato alla raccolta dei cimeli della storica Abbazia.

Ad evitare il gravissimo inconveniente ho già disposto perché - in accordo con il Comandante della Polizia Alleata (P.B.S.) - sia attuato uno speciale servizio di vigilanza da parte dei CC.RR. -

Conoscendo il profondo interessamento che le Autorità Alleate hanno sempre dimostrato per la conservazione dei tesori artistici

Caro Comandante Stone,

allo scopo di ricercare gli oggetti di inestimabile valore artistico che ancora sono sepolti fra le macerie dell'Abbazia di Montecassino ho disposto perché un reparto del 10° Reggimento Genio proceda - sotto la direzione di un valente cultore (Padre Rea) - al recupero di tutto quanto è possibile ritrovare.

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Conoscendo il profondo interessamento che le Autorità Alleate hanno sempre dimostrato per la conservazione dei tesori artistici italiani ritengo opportuno segnalare il fatto a V.S. per quelle ulteriori disposizioni che riterrà di impartire al riguardo.

IL GENERALE DI DIVISIONE F.G.S.

(Adolfo Infante)

A. Infante

386

Mem 47A
4-3467

SUBJECT: Protected Monuments

Re: 55 Area

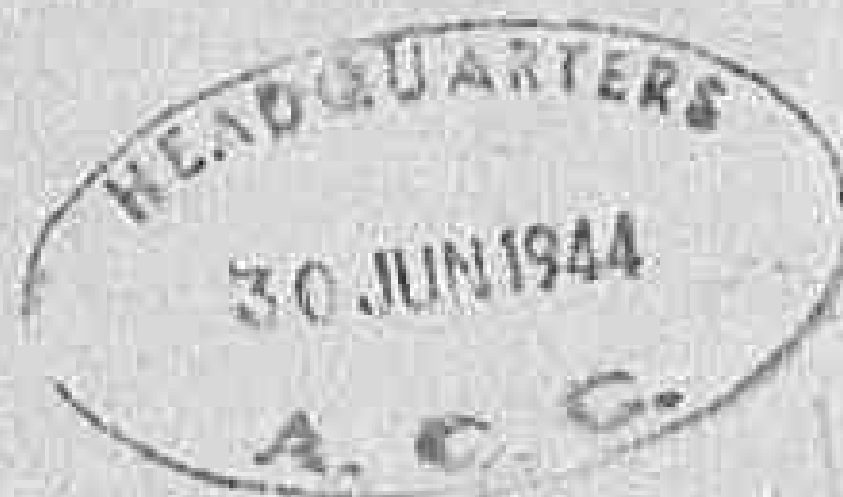
55/57/A

27 Jun 44

1 Odn Corps
2 US Ltr
7 Army Bde
21 Army Tr Bde

Copy to: Main Bn, 400, GSP
3 District

1. Reference the attached area order.
2. AGI have reported definite cases of theft of holy relics from the Vatican property at Cassino, by irresponsible soldiers.
3. It will be appreciated if you will be good enough to take such action as you consider effective to prevent such vandalism.



DWG/ODD

RAS Mowley

Brigadier,
Area Commander.

- 6 -

AFMST OPLMR

239.

PROTECTED MONUMENTS

1. It is again emphasized that the MONASTERY at CASSINO is a sacred and historical property owned by the VATICAN.

It is OUT OF BOUNDS.

Already articles of no intrinsic worth but of much religious importance have been looted from the Monastery by troops; such thefts from holy property discredit every soldier concerned therein.

2. Notice boards show that the Monastery is out of bounds.

A military guard is now posted there and GMP patrols include it in their rounds. 3862

3. Should any bona fide parties specially desire to visit the Monastery application will be made to HQ 55 Area for a permit. If a permit is granted, each party will always be in charge of an officer and, if possible, be accompanied by a Chaplain.

Applications will specify the numbers, by ranks, in the party, the name of the officer to be in charge of it, and proposed date of visit.

(A 57)

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 994

ZOOHA/1/MPA

June 44

SUBJECT: Abbey of MYTE CASINO

TO: Officer Commanding, 35 Area CBF.

- 1 This letter is to confirm arrangements made verbally between Lt Col GRAY, AM & QSM, and Major BRIDGE, APC of your HQ, and Major WARD RUMBLE of the Monuments, Fine Arts & Archives Sub-Commission, Allied Control Commission.
- 2 In view of the continued and heavy infraction of OUT-OF-BOUNDS orders at MYTE CASINO town and Abbey (confirmed by Officers of your staff) and of the reports of looting by Allied Personnel which appear to represent a serious breach of discipline and one likely to have the most unfortunate repercussions, I understand that your HQ is prepared to take the following action:
 - a To publish in Area orders an order placing the Abbey strictly out-of-bounds, and to request 3 District to take similar action.
 - b To revise and add to the OUT-OF-BOUNDS/OUT-LIMITS notices on the main road and approaches to the Abbey.
 - c To send a CBF patrol at least twice weekly (including Sunday - Visitor's Day) to take names of all persons found.
- 3 I attach a report by Captain A.S. PERMYER of APC on conditions at the Abbey. Major BRIDGE requested this for forwarding to S. I.D.

M.S. LUNE
Brigadier
Executive Commissioner
Allied Control Commission.

Copy to: G.O.C. 3 District, C.M.F.

Dispatched
See 41

Sent 30 June
to F. Com for
AS. & dispatch
AND

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives.

20044/1/MPAA

SUBJECT: Montecassino - Looting; Protective Measures.

TO : Director, MPAA Subcommission, ACC.

1. The present report is an expansion of that submitted earlier this date and made possible by a further visit to MONTECASSINO made by the undersigned, accompanied by S/Sgt Peebles, 26 June 44 (actual time at Abbey 1700 hrs. - 2000 hrs.). Certain data from the earlier report are repeated here.

2. The mission on 26 June 44 was threefold:

a. To secure a more detailed and, so far as possible, factual account of the looting done to date (see below para. 8 ff).

b. To furnish O i/c Italian Military engineers stationed there a pro forma for OFF LIMITS signs to be erected. (See below, para. 6 b.)

c. To forestall any looting attempted during the visit itself and to secure particulars concerning personnel making such attempts. (See below, para. 7.)

3. Procedure during visit. To make best use of time available, the undersigned took evidence mainly from the O i/c Italian Engineers (see para. 5 b) and photographed the more important tangible evidence available, while Sgt. Peebles took the more detailed statements of the representative of the Abbey of Cava (see para. 5 a). The report as a whole represents the ~~present~~ evidence from all sources.

4. Existing Controls Limiting Access to Abbey.

a. The position set out in ltr. 20044/1/MPAA of 19 June 44 remains substantially unchanged in respect of approach from the town level. Time did not permit reexamination of OFF LIMITS sign referred to there (para. 1 a), which appears to be the firmest warning of its kind observed up to now. Its location, however, prevents it from having much effect on foot-traffic, most of which advances to the top from quite another quarter.

b. On Highway 6, at Bridge 70 over RAPIDO RIVER, about 1 mile short of CASSINO, the following notice is conspicuously posted:

CASSINO

IT IS FORBIDDEN TO LEAVE ROAD THROUGH TOWN ANIMATED,

OR TO STOP YOUR VEHICLE ON THIS VITAL ROAD. The ruins

are full of mines and booby-traps. YOU'VE BEEN WARNED.

2050

34 bis

(34 is an

abridgement

of this)

27 June 1944

a. To secure a more detailed and, so far as possible, factual account of the looting done to date (see below para. 3 ff.).

b. To furnish O i/c Italian Military engineers stationed there a PRO Forma for OFF LIMITS signs to be erected. (See below, para. 6 b.)

c. To forestall any looting attempted during the visit itself and to secure particulars concerning personnel making such attempts. (See below, para. 7.)

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b. On Highway 6, at Bridge 70 over RAPIDO RIVER, about 1 mile short of CASSINO, the following notice is conspicuously posted:

CASSINO

IT IS FORBIDDEN TO LEAVE ROAD THROUGH TOWN ANYWHERE,
OR TO STOP YOUR VEHICLE ON THIS VITAL ROAD. The ruins
are full of mines and boobies. YOUVE BEEN WARNED.

3859

c. Similar notice unceremoniously placed at road-bend within the town:

DANGER

MINES AND BOOBY TRAPS IN RUINS.

KEEP TO ROAD AND CLEARED AREAS.

d. It appears quite probable that these notices were intended to refer only to the wired-off ruins of the town itself; they certainly at any rate admit of that interpretation.

e. Stationed at Bridge 70 are a small group of Carabinieri, who stated their job was to check on civilian movement. No civilians carrying Abbey-loot had been observed, but British Officers carrying two testine from Abbey choir were noticed.

(1)

5. Italian Personnel in charge at the Top. Since 20 June 44 Italian personnel have been stationed in or near the Abbey ruins, as follows.

a. R.P. Don Eugenio De Palma, O.S.B., secretary of the Abbot of Cava. Only Benedictine there. Arrived 20 June 44 in company with the Abbot of Cava and an Italian Major, the two latter descending the same day. Padre De Palma has stayed on continuously, under the very trying conditions imposed by the situation. Representation from Cava at Montecassino to supervise the work of protection and initial stages of clearance had been instigated by request from Rome of the Abbot of Montecassino and approved by S.A.R. Il Principe di Piemonte, the VP, Adm Sect, ACC, and the Director, MEIA Subcom. The Abbot had been delayed, 19 June 44, at control point, S. PIETRO IN FINE (G 9716) pending permission to pass, actually granted for the following day. (Document in P. De Palma's possession).

b. Tenente Giovanni Molteni of the 10th Engineer Regiment (S. Maria C.V.) and 16 enlisted members of the Regiment. Sent by order of Colonnello Messore, C.O. 10th Eng. Arrived 20 June 44. The Abbot of Cava's plan to send Engineers had received official Italian approval of S.E. Genl. Messe, Capo di Stato Maggiore Generale. From one of the other of these officers it is supposed that instructions had passed down to Col. Messore. No evidence available that A.G. at lower levels, had been interested in the project. No trouble at traffic-control point, through on 14 June 44 a Sgt. of the Engineers and 6 soldati had been refused passage at S. PIETRO IN FINE.

Except for part of one day, when he reported to his superior at S.M.C.V. on the difficulties of carrying out his assignment, Ten. Molteni, who appears to be an effective officer and to be interested in the work, has been continuously on the job. His mission, he states, was threefold: (a) to sisterize living-quarters for such of the Benedictine community as would soon return, (b) to examine and evaluate the damage received by the fabric and the loss of movable objects, (c) to furnish, so far as possible, guard protection. He was to keep his group at work for 10 days. See para. 6 for work accomplished thus far.

The Engineer group are billeted in a long, vaulted passage with outside, ground-level entrance at NW corner of Abbey. They brought own food, now nearing depletion.

c. A Maresciallo and 20 Carabinieri, Gruppo di Caserta, who arrived 26 June 44, by order of Capitano Brennio del Grosso, armed, but virtually without provisions and tents. Rough shelters were being erected near the Engineer billet - an effective location since normal approach to ruins is from that side. Regular tours of guard duty etc. would begin on 27 June 44.

6. Accomplishments of Italian Custodians.

a. Creation of hidden deposits. One such is located above the Engineer billet, in quarters which form part of the Museum of Natural History. Access hereto has been blocked at various points and is believed possible only by a ladder (removed and hid when entry by visitors was threatened or seemed likely) placed with foot on floor of Engineer billet, far end. Another deposito houses recovered remnants of the carved choir stalls, another (already violated but not completely emptied - in the Torre di S. Benedetto complex) contains ordinary crockery and tableware picked out of the ruins.

3859

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b. Black chalk sign (in English) erected (23 or 24 June 44) over entrance to Engineer billet: OUT OF BOUNDS/GUARD HOUSES. The following are forms submitted for posting at various approaches to Abbey, pending official notices: OUT OF BOUNDS/OUT LIMITS TO ALL RACES. NO TRESPASSING. Whether paint and brush could be found was not clear.

c. Barbed wire barricade providing effective discouragement to entering ruins of choir and access to intact portions of crypt (Benedictine mosaic, painting, reliefs). Padre De Palma was informed by Sgt. Pedales that rolls of German barbed wire were available on the road not far from the top.

d. Diary of events. Maintained by Padre De Palma, available as evidence to ACC but not borrowed since needed for the proximate visit of Abbot of Montecassino.

e. Inventory of important objects placed in depositi ² (2)

f. Discouragement (in some measure effective) against looting. Visitors were regularly accompanied about ruins, and warning and supplication used when attempts were made to remove objects of value. Padre De Palma the day before had minimized the effect of such pleas (see former report, para. 3).

7. Visiting Troops. None observed during three hours at top. Seven (5+1+1) encountered on road up were reasonably clearly in possession of no loot. All were New Zealanders, stationed (with possible exception of one) at ANCE (G 6532), on Highway 6, about 15 miles beyond CASSINO. The group of 5 stated they belonged to 7 Field Eng. Coy and had company permission to visit ruins. The other two were in Signals (Inf Sigs). All denied having seen in orders anything preventing such visits.

LOOTING BY ALLIED TROOPS.

8. For the general position see paras. 3ff. of earlier report. The seven days of occupation were described as "una settimana d'Inferno". The Benedictines can understand how enlisted men, improperly instructed in the facts, will act as scores of pilferers, ineffectually resisted, have already acted, ~~but~~ but he is hurt by similar action on the part of officers and also in the face of petition from the Abbot of Cava during the hours of his visit. Visiting troops would sometimes begin by asking for the Museo or the Tesoro, or for a testina as a souvenir - indication that word had spread among them of the presence of desirable keepsakes in the Abbey and that souvenir-hunting was a conscious purpose of the visitors.

9. From the dull, repetitious pattern of the week's history of pilfering, one episode, of the 23rd, stands out. A party of N.Z.s, in a room at the NE angle of the chiostro laterale destro, once used by the Abbot, had discovered and were making off with a group of articles which, it seems, represented a deposit from towns nearby CASSINO - a cache hitherto unsuspected by the custodians. Partly ecclesiastical in character and obviously of high value, they were at once asked to restore them. No success was had until one of the group, a sergeant, spoke to the men in a firm manner and secured the return of at least a greater part of the loot - apparently all the religious objects. These were then provisionally placed in boxes under the beds in the Engineers billets, where subsequently were removed the following (b later recovered when found abandoned on the ground outside the Abbey):

- a. 1 - Crocifisso piccolo avorio completo
- b. 2 - Grandi anfore bianche portafiori
- c. 2 - Bottiglie di cristallo

Of higher value appear to be the remaining articles of this group, now secreted in the ladder-protected, upper-story deposito, among them (full list in inv. mentioned at para. 6 g):

- (x) Croce astile argento SS. Apostoli - Parrocchia Cerro al Voltorno
(location as yet unfound)
- (y) Croce di bronzo grande - senza nome parrocchia.
- (z) Crocifisso grande avorio.

Photographs were taken of (x), (y) and another cross.

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9. From the dull, repetitious pattern of the week's history of pillaging, one episode, of the 23rd, stands out. A party of M.Z.s, in a room at the NE angle of the chiostro laterale destro, once used by the Abbot, had discovered and were making off with a group of articles which, it seems, represented a deposit from towns nearby CASSINO - a cache hitherto unsuspected by the custodians. Partly ecclesiastical in character and obviously of high value, they were at once asked to restore them. No success was had until one of the group, a sergeant, spoke to the men in a firm manner and secured the return of at least a greater part of the loot - apparently all the religious objects. These were then provisionally placed in boxes under the beds in the Engineers billets, where subsequently were removed the following (b) later recovered when found abandoned on the ground outside the Abbey):

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(location as yet unfound)
- (y) Croce di bronzo grande - senza nome parrocchia.
- (z) Crocifisso grande avorio.

Photographs were taken of (x), (y) and another cross.

10. The same day two Catholic members of the M.Z. party, upon leaving, took a letter from Padre De Palma addressed to the Catholic Chaplain of the regiment, asking his cooperation in the prevention of looting and in securing restitution to the Abbey of objects already removed.

11. Other objects reported by Allied personnel pilfered include:

- a. Large portions of the choir carvings - only one intact testim is said to remain, this actually lifted but abandoned in a temporary hiding place.
- b. Pieces of inlaid marble, chiefly from choir area; large pieces sometimes grashed to produce pocket-size souvenirs.
- c. Tesserae from Beuron mosaics, considerable area near N archway leading to crypt chapel.
- d. Candelieri di bronzo (Beuronese) removed from deposito.
- e. A gilded bronze dove emblem (Beuronese)
- f. Vestments etc.
- g. Varied silver and glass objects.

- h. Portions of ivory-inlaid table.
- i. Stuffed birds etc. from Natural History Museum.
- j. Plates. See 6 a above.
- k. 15 "Capodimonte" paintings in porcelain (empty frames remain - not established as Allied theft).

NEEDS

12. Tenente Molteni and Padre De Palma were in agreement that the following would be required to make effective the work in hand:

- a. Technical Assistance. From an ACC-NGAA officer, who would make occasional visits or remain for several days (quarters similar those now being put in readiness for the Abbot of Montecassino would be provided). It appears to the present custodians that definitive clearance or first-aid work would require the approval of ACC in consultation with the suitable Italian Monuments official.
- b. Allied guard personnel. One or two to back-up the Carabinieri, who feel perfectly capable to take care of Italian civilians but would undoubtedly confront awkward situations en face Allied personnel. (No trouble at all from civilians since occupation by Italian Engineers.)

13. Not expressly listed as bisogni but obviously required are an abundant and aptly located series of official OFF LIMIT signs - with teeth in them. The problem of feeding the occupying military is also crucial. The monks think that Benedictine personnel will soon be able to draw rations from a distribution point reputedly at a village S. MICHELE (probably 9022, Italy 1:100,000, Sheet 160). For the soldiers some AMG source might conceivably be tapped.

14. Visit of Abbot of Montecassino. Expected today (27 June 44), probably in company with Abbot of Cava. The former will indicate location, below rubble, of parts of "Biblioteca Paolina" and "B. Privata" (not removed to ROME) - only Library removed to ROME was "Biblioteca Monumentale" - and also of any portions of Archivio which may remain (Padre De Palma thinks it likely that, while the parchments were undoubtedly taken, many documents in paper remain).

15. German Looting. Like that effected by civilians, the looting carried out by the Germans, both before and after the bombing of the Abbey remains indeterminate in quantity and kind. See para. 11, K for a possible instance of German loot. One item (new to the reports on Montecassino) is possibly relevant here. - Rusconi, Montecassino (Italia Artistica), p. 118, shows, left of picture, an arched niche which, after the Neunese work of decoration, contained two large seated statues in ~~brass~~ of SS. Benedict and Scholastica (I.L.O., It Merid., III, 1928, p. 197). A view into this niche from the pile of rubble in the choir area shows these statues no longer in situ. A rumor heard by Padre De Palma connects one or both of these figures with "a costly altar statue" taken from Montecassino and presented 25 Apr. 44 to Reichsmarschall Goering. Whether or not this hypothesis is correct, the loss of this impressive Neunese work in bronze should be noted. A similar large bronze of S. Benedict, with attendant figures, in the Torre di S. Benedetto, is in situ. - Padre De Palma also spoke of an episode which occurred at APPINO the night prior to the German withdrawal there - admittedly another matter of rumor. The Abbot of Montecassino had, it appeared, deposited these vestments and other ecclesiastical articles. These, according to the tale, were used as costumes and "props" in a little opera buffa staged in celebration.

b. Allied guard personnel. One or two to back up the German sentries. They would undoubtedly feel perfectly capable to take care of Italian civilians but would undoubtedly confront awkward situations en face Allied personnel. (No trouble at all from civilians since occupation by Italian Engineers.)

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3856

ALBERT S. PERMYER
Captain, C.E.
HQ Staff, AFSA S/C.

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HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 594
Subcommission for Monuments Fine Arts and Archives

ASP/vr

20044/1/MFAA

27 June 1944

Subject: Montecassino - Looting; Protective Measures

To : Director, MFAA Subcommission, ACC.

1. The present report is based on visits to MONTECASSINO made by the undersigned on 25 (1600 to 1900 hrs.) and 26 June 44 (1700 to 2000 hrs.), on the second occasion accompanied by S/Sgt. Peebles.

2. Existing Controls Limiting Access to Abbey

a. A conspicuous notice at Bridge 70 over the RAPIDO does not expressly forbid approach to Abbey.

b. The same is true of less conspicuous notice at road-bend in town.

c. A firmer warning, possibly mentioning the Abbey, was observed on an earlier occasion. Its location, however, (at a point well beyond the town to the N.), seriously reduces its effect on foot-traffic, most of which approaches the Abbey from quite another quarter.

d. A small group of Carabinieri control civilian traffic at Bridge 70. No civilians carrying what resembled Abbey-loot had been observed but British officers had been seen carrying carved wooden heads believed to be from the Choir-stalls of the Abbey Church.

3. Italian Personnel in Charge at Top. Since 20 June 44 Italian personnel has been stationed in or near the Abbey, as follows:

a. R.P. Don Eugenio De Palma, secretary of the Abbot of Cava. Since 20 June 44.

b. Tenente Giovanni Molteni, 10th Engineer Regiment. (S. Maria Capua V.) and 16 enlisted members of the Regiment. Engaged in creating habitable quarters for the monks who will soon return and in serving as guards. Present since 20 June 44. A sergeant of the Engineer and six soldati, sent earlier to begin such work, had been turned back at control point, S. PIETRO IN FINE (G 9716), 14 June 44.

c. 21 Carabinieri headed by a Maresciallo. Gruppo di Caserta. Arrived 26 June 44.

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4. Accomplishments of Italian Custodians.

^{wreckage} a. Creation of inaccessible hiding places for valuables found in the ~~wreckage~~.

b. OUT OF BOUNDS sign placed 23 or 24 June 44, over entrance to Engineer billet, near NW corner of Abbey.

c. Barbed wire barricade blocking off ruins of choir and access to two crypt-chapels (intact)

d. Diary of events kept; also inventory of objects placed in store.

e. Repeated, if often ineffective, warning against looting.

5. Visiting Troops. None observed during three hours at top. Seven (5+1+1) encountered on road up were reasonably clearly in possession of no loot. All were New Zealanders, stationed (with possible exception of one) at ARGE (G 6532), on Highway 6, about 15 miles beyond CASSINO. The group of 5 stated they belonged to 7 Field Eng. Coy and had company permission to visit ruins. The other two were in Signals (Inf Sigs). All denied having seen in orders anything preventing such visits.

LOOTING BY ALLIED TROOPS

6. Evidence of Italians relates repeated acts of pillage, day by day and many times a day, sometimes by officers, and in spite of requests to desist. Personnel in question mainly New Zealanders. Questions asked by troops on arrival indicate that they come with souvenir-hunting as a conscious purpose. Troops have been known to bring-and^{use}-saws, picks, hatchets.

7. One instance stands out. On 23 June a party of N.Z.s, in a room at the NE angle of the chiostro laterale destro, once used by the Abbot, had discovered and were making off with a group of articles which, it seems, represented a deposit from towns nearby CASSINO - a cacis hitherto unsuspected by the custodians. Partly ecclesiastical in character and obviously of high value, they were at once asked to restore them. No success was had until one of the group, a sergeant, spoke to the men in a firm manner and secured the return of at least a greater part of the loot - apparently all the religious objects.

8. The following objects were recovered:

a. Small ivory crucifix

b. Two large white vases

c. Crystal bottle

d. Silver processional cross (Parish of Cerro al Volturno)

e. Large bronze cross

2854

f. Large ivory crucifix

Of these items a - c were again stolen, but the two large white vases were subsequently found abandoned on the ground outside the Abbey.

9. Other objects reported looted by Allied Military Personnel include:

- a. Large portions of the choir carving - only one intact testina is said to remain, this actually lifted but abandoned in a temporary hiding place.
- b. Pieces of inlaid marble, chiefly from choir area; large pieces sometimes smashed to produce pocket-size souvenirs.
- c. Tesserae from Beuron mosaics, considerable area near N archway leading to NE crypt chapel.
- d. Candelieri di bronzo (Beuronese) removed from deposito.
- e. A gilded bronze dove emblem (Beuronese).
- f. Vestments etc.
- g. Varied silver and glass objects.
- h. Portions of ivory-inlaid table.
- i. Stuffed birds etc. from Natural History Museum.

10. Needs. Besides technical Monuments & Fine Arts advice, an effective posting of signs, and an amelioration of a critical shortage of food at the Abbey, Padre De Palma and Tenente Molteni ask for one or two British or American MPS to support the Carabinieri.

out 11. Civilian and German looting. Like that effected by civilians prior to 20 June, the looting carried by the Germans both before and after the bombing of the Abbey is indeterminate in kind and quantity. To such, rather than to Allied pilfering, may be due the loss of 15 "Capodimonte" paintings on porcelain, whose frames, along with 7 or 8 complete with paintings, still remain and are in store.

Albert S. Pennoyer

ALBERT S. PENNOYER
Captain, C.E.
HQ. Staff, MEAA S/C.

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives

20044/1/MFAA

26 June 1944

SUBJECT: Visit to the Abbey of Montecassino.

TO : Director, MFAA Subcommission.

1. Montecassino Abbey examined from 1600 hrs to 1900, 25 June 44 by this officer and Major John V. Hinkel, Intelligence Officer.
2. Contacted Monaco Eugenio de Palma, Secretary to the Abbot-Bishop of Cava, formerly of Montecassino, and Italian officer in charge of 16 Italian Army Engineers quartered in large vaulted room (intact) at lower northwest corner level of Abbey.
3. Monk Eugenio de Palma detailed the pilfering by military personnel which they were unable to prevent because of visitors paying no attention to instructions or requests given by him or any of the Italian Engineers in many cases.
4. Monaco Eugenio de Palma and Italian Engineer both stated independently that New Zealand O.Rs principally and occasionally officers took possession of Abbey materials but that there had been very few American personal visitors. They were unable or made no attempt to identify any of the looters who on occasions entered the monk's and engineer's quarters and removed valuables held for security there.
5. Their charges included statements that the New Zealand groups brought saws to cut off sections of wood carvings from the wrecked choir stalls in the main church and picks to pry off mosaics in the same area some of which could be loosened by hand.
6. Reference was made to secret room where valuable property was being concealed daily. This was only accessible by a ladder which was removed and concealed during possible hours of visiting and erected during night hours for concealment uses.
7. Partial list of stolen materials given by Monaco Eugenio de Palma in the limited time as darkness descended (which signaled the moment to descend to the valley) as no inventory was available nor checking possible because of extensive destruction it was evident further losses would appear.

Crystal bottles
Crucifix, carved ivory
Processional crosses, copper
Contents from the Abbot's quarters

3952

of Cava, formerly of Montecassino, and Italian officer in the Italian Army Engineers quartered in large vaulted room (intact) at lower northwest corner level of Abbey.

3. Monk Eugenio de Palma detailed the pilfering by military personnel which they were unable to prevent because of visitors paying no attention to instructions or requests given by him or any of the Italian Engineers in many cases.

4. Monaco Eugenio de Palma and Italian Engineer both stated independently that New Zealand O.Rs principally and occasionally officers took possession of Abbey materials but that there had been very few American personal visitors. They were unable or made no attempt to identify any of the looters who on occasions entered the monk's and engineer's quarters and removed valuables held for security there.

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Crystal bottles

Crucifix, carved ivory

Processional crosses, copper

Objects from the Abbot's quarters

Service plates

Gilded bronze religious emblem, dove

Choir stall fragments, wood, etc., etc.

Mosaics and inlaid marble decorations

8. Monaco Eugenio de Palma urged that greater protection could be effected by the assignment of military police to the Abbey and in the absence of it neither he nor the Italian Engineers could be successful in enforcing protection for valuable property belonging to Montecassino.

Albert S. Pennoyer.

ALBERT S. PENNOYER

Capt., C.E.

HQ. Staff, MFAA S/C

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JRM/13

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED GENERAL COMMISSION
APO 394

Recommendation for Monument's Plans and Archives

20005/125A

22 June 1944

Subject: RECOMMENDATION - Archives

To : Director, WPA Administration, for the
attention of Capt. Brooks.

1. The five attached documents (listed hereunder) were found by S/Sgt Poolton during a hasty visit to the Abbey ruins 18 June 44.

2. It is suggested that they be handed to a responsible representative of the RECOMMENDED community present in Rome - preferably to Don Mauro Ingrosso, Director of the Abbey Archives.

3. Documents of an archival nature found at the same time but left in situ were a dozen or more copies of early newspapers - some as early as 1857 - scattered over the carriage-road, near the top.

4. The five documents sent herewith were found, some within the ruins (chiesa in basso, sinistra lato del deserto); some outside (under the 20005 and 125A). How they became scattered in this way is not clear. While they may have been dropped in transporting the main body of the archives (an hypothesis suggested by the presence along the roadside of the newspapers mentioned in para. 3), they may represent a dispersion of legends still present in or near the Archives at the time of the bombardment of the Abbey. Hypothesis, of course, counts for but little if, as is likely, German troops now in Rome are in position to render a true account of the facts.

5. Finally it may be mentioned that S/Sgt Poolton reports finding in the debris extant to the Observatory a small number of documents - printed and/or - obviously belonging to Observatory library and available.

6. The evidence presented, while (of necessity) slight, supports the obvious desirability of having a sharp lookout for archival material during any subsequent work of clearance and gives added cause for making effective protection of the ruins in the pre-clearance stage.

B. B. B. B.

1. The five attached documents (listed herewith) were found by Sgt Pooler during a hasty visit to the Abbey ruins 18 June 44.

2. It is suggested that they be handed to a responsible representative of the MONTENAPOLI community present in Rome - preferably to Don Mario Bagnoni, Director of the Abbey Archives.

3. Documents of an ordinal nature found at the same time but left in situ were a dozen or more copies of early newspapers - some as early as 1857 - scattered over the courtyard, near the top.

4. The five documents mentioned herewith were found, some within the ruins (chiesa in ruins, including lateral decho), some outside (under the large old stone). As they became scattered in this way is not clear. While they may have been dropped in transporting the main body of the archives (an hypothesis suggested by the presence along the roadside of the newspapers mentioned in para. 3), they may represent a dispersion of documents still present in or near the Archivio at the time of the bombardment of the Abbey. Hypothesis of chance, counts for but little if, as is likely, Cassinese monks now in Rome are in position to render a true account of the facts.

5. Finally it may be mentioned that Sgt Pooler reports finding in the debris contiguous to the Observatory a small number of documents - printed 1811/12. - obviously belonging to Observatory Library and archives.

6. The evidence presented, while (of necessity) slight, supports the obvious desirability of having a sharp lookout for ordinal material during any subsequent visit of discovery and gives added cause for being effective protection of the ruins in the pre-clearance stage.

B. B. B.

J. B. B. B. B.
Major, R. A.
Deputy Director.

- (1) Document, contents undetermined, bearing date 4 March 1624.
- (2) Statement of evidence concerning events of 10 March 1762.
- (3) Document of June 1762 (?) dealing with the Corte Ordinaria della Citta' di S. Cassino.
- (4) Authenticated copy of Papal (Pius VII) document of 22 July 1807. - Abbey of Montecassino named.
- (5) Document concerning a dispensa di matrimonio, Aug. - Sept. 1807. - R. P. Vicario Generale Cassinese mentioned in final indorsement.

All the above rain-soaked when recovered; item (1) in poor condition.

20044/1

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 39A
Subcommission for Monuments Fine Arts and Archives

JEMP/vr

31

20024/1/MFAA

19 June 1944

Subject: Abbey of Montecassino - Protection.

To : Director MFAA Subcomm., Advance HQ, AGC.

1. Yesterday Sgt. Peebles visited the Abbey of MONTICASSINO and reports that the protection to the Abbey promised by AMG, 8 Army in their OA/132 of 5 June 44 is inadequate in the light of the following facts:

a. Only OUT OF BOUNDS sign seen during his ascent (partly up-hill scramble, partly via the old carriage-road) and in the course of a fairly wide, town-level exploration for possible motor-roads leading up was one near the foot of a poor-grade ascending road (apparently not marked on maps) which opened off to the left, past the ruined Italian barracks and civilian cemetery, from the main road CASSINO - (MONTICASSINO) GAIRO.

b. NO such signs seen in the immediate vicinity of the Abbey=ruins nor within the ruins.

c. Soldiers encountered casually at foot of mountain - in town and on roads leading to and from - did, however, speak as if visits to the Abbey were unauthorized.

d. Same impression received from two British soldiers whom Sgt. Peebles met at the top. These stated that troops went up quite freely and that fifty had visited the ruins 17 June 44.

e. Personnel at CASSINO Petrol Pump stated that ascent via the steep approach behind their station was not uncommon.

f. NO patrols of C.M.P. were encountered during ascent and descent, though it should be added that the visit occurred just before and after dark.

2. It is considered that whatever action is required had best be taken at your end in conjunction with HQ. AMG, Reg. 4.

duplicate of the present letter and
3. The attached copy-letters (already on file here) may be treated like the other material for Reg. 4 which we pass to you when available (see D.O., Major Ward Perkins to Major De Wald, 16 June 1944). For like disposition are the attached copies of reports MONTICASSINO, ALATHI (2), VERBENTINO, ANAGHI, TIVOLI (2), GENZANO etc.

[JBPWP]
J.B. WARD PERKINS
Major, R. A.
Deputy Director.

3849

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 39,
Subcommission for Monumental Fine Arts and Archives

JHR/vr

15 June 1944

20044/1/MEAA

Subject: Abbey of Montecassino

To : R.C. & M.C. Section, attn. Major Reakes.

1. With reference to your 310/95/CA of 14 June 44.
2. Montecassino.

See attached letter 20044/1/MEAA of 14 June 44, subject as above.
This correspondence was routed direct to Region IV, as it is an application of arrangements made verbally between Col. Gievers and Major De Wald.

3. Library of Pontecorvo.

No action has been taken pending the clarification of the present situation and availability of transport. MEAA Officer Region 5 has been asked to report on condition and quantity.

JHR
J.B. WARD PERKINS
Major, R. A.
Director.

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HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
R.C. & M.G. Section
APO 394

78
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Ref/340/95/CA.

14 June 1944.

27
SUBJECT: Protection of the Abbey of Montecassino.

TO : Admin Section - For Monuments & Fine
Arts Sub-Commission.

1. With reference to letter from AMG Eighth
Army OA/132 of 5 June 1944 addressed to this HQ
copy to you, it is understood that you have the
matter in hand.

2. May we have your views on the letter and
a note of such action as has already been taken.

Norman E. Piske

NORMAN E. PISKE,
Colonel,
Deputy Executive
Commissioner.

JSR/RAC.

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HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

28
HEDM/vr

Subcommission for Monuments Fine Arts and Archives

20044/1/HMAA

14 June 1944

Subject: Abbey of Montecassino

To : Executive Officer, HQ. AMG, Region IV.

1. The following is submitted with regard to the protection and salvage of works of art etc. remaining at the Abbey of Montecassino.

2. The Abbey has been placed out of bounds to all troops by 8 Army AMG and a small group of soldiers as guards are posted there now.

3. The Abbot-Bishop of Cava, a former monk at Montecassino, has been consulting with this Subcommission with regard to the salvage and removal from the ruins to a safe shelter of objects of value which are lying around, particularly the panels, etc. of the choir-stalls before the wet weather of the fall returns. To this end he is arranging with Italian army heads to have a small group of Italian soldiers (engineers) to do the salvage work and to attempt to get at material presumably still in the cellars of the abbey to which access is now blocked by the debris. Former monks from the abbey will be on hand to supervise.

4. This program for work at the abbey which has the approval of this Subcommission, cannot begin, however, until the present restrictions on movement of civilians in the Cassino area are lifted, which should be in about ten days.

5. Since by that time this area will presumably no longer be under the control of 8 Army but under Region IV, it is requested that Region IV, through its Provincial Commissioner for Frosinone, see that the guards are kept on at the abbey at least until the Italian military engineers arrive for work. The period of greatest danger for looting would be at the moment when civilians are allowed to reenter this area; hence it is essential to keep guards on hand without interruption.

6. It is also requested that the Abbot of Cava and whatever monks he may deem necessary to assist in the work at the abbey be given every consideration to insure freedom of movement in the abbey area.

3848
E. T. D. W.
ERNEST T. DE WILD
Major, Spec. Res.
Director.

Subject: Protection of the Abbey of Montecassino.

Main H.Q., A.M.G.
Eighth Army.

GA/132

5 June 44

R.C. & M.G. Section,
Main H.Q., A.C.C.
A.P.O. 394.

1. Reference the above Sub-Commission letter 20900/MFAA dated 28th May, arrangements have been made for C.M.P. patrols to visit the Cassino Monastery. The Monastery has also been put out of bounds to all troops.
2. This H.Q. is not prepared to accept the responsibility of moving the remains of the choirstalls and it is suggested that the Italian Government be requested to do this work.
3. As regards the library in the Monastery at Pontecorvo, the books which were found have been removed and are in safe custody of the C.A.O. of Venafrò. The receipt is held by Capt. Ellis of your Sub-Commission. Venafrò is now in the area controlled by Region V. It is suggested that steps be taken at a convenient date to have the books despatched to Naples for examination and safe keeping.

C. J. ...
- Group Captain,
- Officer Commanding,
- H.Q., A.M.G. Eighth Army Main.

Copy to: Monuments & Fine Arts & Archives Sub-Commission. —
Prov Comm. Grosinone Province.
H.Q., A.M.G. Region IV.

Copy sub Region 4 file.
Done

3845

20044/1

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives

28 May 1944

Subject: Visit to the Abbey of MONTECASSINO, 27 May, 1944

To VP Adm Sec

1. Submitted herewith is the report of the trip of inspection to the Abbey of MONTECASSINO on May 27, 44. The inspecting group consisted of Major DeWald, director of the subcommission for MFAA, Capt. Ellis, archivist, and Capt. Tanner of the British Film Unit.

2. En route to the Abbey, official visits were made to the SCAG AMG 8 Army for instructions, to Major Steele at HQ Polish Army Rear, and to Lt Col. Michniewicz, G2 GSI Polish Army Corps, the latter of whom supplied the party with a guide to the Abbey. The way to the Abbey skirted the town of Cassino and followed a motor-road cleared by the Polish Engineers. It passed through the battlefields to the north of the Abbey and ended on a height two miles from the building. The rest of the journey was completed on foot.

3. With the help of the guide, as complete an inspection of the interior of the Abbey was made as is possible at this time, in fact all the accessible spaces inside were visited by the director and Capt. Ellis.

4. Passing along the western facade, the exterior walls of which are standing to the height of about three storeys, a gradual ascent over the rubble in front brought the party to about the roof-height over the original entrance at the south. From here a view was obtained of the three western cloisters. In the mass of the debris here are the remnants of many modern printed religious pamphlets.

5. It was possible to descend into the small court ^{to the} east of the old campanile which tower still stands to the height of three and one half stories. In one of the openings of the

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5. It was possible to descend into the small court ^{to the} east of the old campanile which tower still stands to the height of three and one half stories. In one of the openings of the tower some careful person had set aside two small capitals of the 11-12th centuries. Two large battered Roman capitals were set aside on the opposite side of this space. In one of the rooms off this court a mass of pamphlets and small printed pictures of a religious nature (all contemporary) were being picked over and taken as souvenirs by soldiers who were visiting the ruins.

6. The party then descended into the ruins of the three great cloisters which lie at the western end of the monastery. These have been practically pulverised. Of the cloister at the

south, the right cloister, about three arches and their attending vaults were standing on the south side. The central cloister is completely destroyed and has a tremendous gaping hole in the middle of it. Of the north or left cloister three of the piers leading into it from the central cloister are standing, as is also a portion of the covered passage on the east side of the cloister leading into the area of the former collegio.

7. At the foot of the grand stairway which led up to the cloister of the Benefactors and is now a mass of rubble only about three steps are visible. The headless and handless statue of S. Benedict still stands in its place at the left of the staircase. The accompanying statue of Sta. Scolastica at the right has disappeared. In the space between ^{on a slightly higher} and slightly higher level someone has recently set up an altar with a statue of the Virgin upon it.

8. In a heap of rubble at the foot of this stairway are a few MS books and leaves of recent date (one of 1932, one of 1868), all apparently domestic inventories and accounts. These should if possible be preserved.

9. The Cloister of the Benefactors is completely ruined having a giant hole in the centre of the rubble which rises to a height of about 15 feet above the normal level of the pavement. Fragments of the many statues which once adorned the niches of this cloister lie about in the debris. The head and shoulders of one of these statues still in situ against the east wall of the cloister projects from the jumbled masses of a stone.

10. The area of the nave of the Basilica which lies immediately to the east of the cloister of the Benefactors is heaped high with rubble to the height of about twenty feet. It is only at the sanctuary end that any visible evidence of structure remains. The two western piers of the crossing are standing to the height of the spring of the arches. The walls of the presbytery and a portion of its south wall are also standing. The floor of this area is not so deeply covered with debris and therefore its level lies many feet below the debris of the

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3

11. From the rubble in the presbytery access in possible into the crypt from a height of about five feet above the crypt-level. The decorations of mosaic and sculpture visible in the accessible portions such as the chapel of S. Benedict are practically unharmed. These were carried by artist-monks from Beuron after 1599.
12. The passages around the Prior's Cloister are completely filled with rubble. A few palm-trees lie scattered about the cloister.
13. The library and the pinacoteca to the east are completely covered.
14. Of the Archive of the Abbey nothing visible remains. Its three rooms were all on the south side of the Abbey against the outer wall, ~~together~~ and this wall, together with the rooms adjoining it, has been totally destroyed. The site of the Archive as far as it can be identified, is a heap of rubble and white dust. No documents are visible among the ruins.
15. The walls all along the south and east sides of the Abbey are so pulverised that the whole effect resembles a huge Mesopotamian tell.
16. In the north-east corner of the Abbey at the angle of the left cloister mentioned in para. 6 there are vaulted apartments in two stories, used formerly by the German soldiery and now occupied by Polish troops. The rooms in the upper story housed natural-historical collections. All the cases have been broken into and the specimens have been roughly handled. In one of the rooms vestments of various kinds are scattered about in great confusion. Interesting specimens of wall decorations by modern German soldiers also adorn some of the walls of the rooms on this floor. An amateur portrait of Frau Goering was also lying about.
17. During the period of the inspection by the members of this sub-commission, small groups of Polish, British and Indian troops (mostly Polish, however) were wandering through the ruins and picking up things as souvenirs. Most of them were helping themselves to the ruins.

3842

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3842

17. During the period of the inspection by the members of this sub-commission, small groups of Polish, British and Indian troops (mostly Polish, however) were wandering through the ruins and picking up things as souvenirs. Most of them were helping themselves to the many modern religious pamphlets and printed pictures scattered about in the places mentioned in paras. 4 and 5. In one case a well-intentioned attempt was made to appropriate a finely carved angel's head, a fragment of the choir-stalls. Capt. Ellis, however, intervened. There is no guarantee therefore that these valuable fragments will not be carried off subsequently unless immediate action is taken to prevent it. The director spoke to Lt. Col. Michniewicz about posting guards about the sanctuary. The Colonel, however, said that he was leaving the area shortly and could therefore probably do nothing about it.

18. As the result of this inspection, therefore, the following recommendations for immediate action are submitted:

- a) that either the abbey be declared OFF BOUNDS to all troops for the time being, or, that guards be placed at the sanctuary end of the basilica to prevent the looting of the choir-stall fragments

- b) that the fragments of the choir-stalls be collected at once and placed in some depot for safety
- c) that the small architectural fragments mentioned in para.5 be removed to safety
- d) that the inventories at the base of the main stairway be preserved if possible.

19. The above-mentioned recommendations, para;13 a and b, were sent to SCAO ANG 8 Army by courier the morning of May 28.

20. The 11th century bronze doors of the basilica, its mosaic floors, and the 16th century tombs in the presbytery may be recoverable under the mass of the debris, but this will entail much heavy labor and must obviously be reserved for some much later date.

May 28, 1944

Ernest T. DeWald,
Major, Spec. Res.
Director

Copies to:

Chief Commissioner
Executive Commission
SCAO ANG 8 Army
PRB

3841

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

E. W. ...
2.1
RHE/rjj

Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives.

20044/1/MFAA

28 May 1944.

Subject: Visit to the Abbey of MONTECASSINO 27 May 44.

To : Director MFA & A.

1. A report had been received by this Sub-commission from an Italian source that many books and papers were lying in confusion in the ruins of the Abbey. I therefore visited the Abbey on 27 May to examine the condition of the Archivio there.
2. It was found that the books and papers were actually the debris of a modern library, and consisted of recently printed devotional books and religious pictures.
3. Of the Archivio of the Abbey nothing visible remains. Its three rooms were all on the south side of the Abbey against the outer wall, and this wall, together with the rooms adjoining it, has been totally destroyed. The site of the Archivio, as far as it can be identified, is a heap of rubble and white dust. No documents are visible among the ruins.
4. In a heap of rubble at the foot of the main stairway were a few MS books and leaves of recent date (one of 1932, one of 1868), all apparently domestic inventories and accounts. These should if possible be preserved.

R.H. Ellis
R.H. ELLIS
Capt. RNF.

3840

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

25
ETDW/rjj

20044/1
Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives.

20900/MFAA

28 May 1944.

Subject: Protection of the Abbey of Montecassino.

To : Group Captain Benson, Officer Commanding,
HQ. A.M.G., Eight Army.

1. As the result of my visit to the Abbey of Montecassino on Saturday May 27, I submit the following:

2. There are many fine fragments of the 17th century carved wooden choir-stalls lying about in the sanctuary end of the basilica. There are also a number of troops beginning to wander all over the interior of the Abbey and helping themselves to what they find.

It is therefore recommended that the following immediate action be taken: Either the Abbey be put off limits to all troops for the time being, or that guards be posted in the sanctuary area to see that no pieces of these choir-stalls be removed.

4. It is further recommended that the remains of the choir-stalls be removed at once to places of safety.

5. Two very early fragments of stone capitals have also been set aside on a ledge of the ruined tower near the entrance to the Abbey. These should also be removed to a place of safety.

6. A fuller report will be submitted in short order.

ERNEST T. DE WALD
Major, Spec. Res.
Director.

2044/1
3839
cf 26

AMG.LO. 2nd Polish corps
Field .25th May 44

Subject. Pass to enter Cassino Area.

To. GSO.I. AMG. Eight Army Main.

1. Reference your signal M268 of 24 May. Permission is granted by 2nd Polish corps for one ACC officer and two civilian photographers to visit Cassino area on the Saturday 24th May.
2. However I am advised by GSI, 2nd Polish, Corps that previous to enter Cassino Area, this ACC officer and the two civilians should report to Lt. Col. MICHNIEWICZ. G2. GSI. at Main Polish corps who will supply a guide and the information to facilitate their visit to the Cassino Area.
3. I am also advised that the party should not travel in anything larger than a 1/4 ton Jeep.

P. Garigue. Lt.
AMG. ALO. 2nd Polish corps

ACTION

Capt. [illegible]

P. Garigue
Lt.

3838

Subject: Eighth Army area - Visit.

2360
Main H.Q., A.M.C.
Eighth Army.

QA/127/1.

24 May, 44.

Monuments & Fine Arts Sub-Commission,
Main H.Q., A.C.C.
A.P.O. 324.

19
Reference telephone message today's date.

1. It is confirmed that one Allied Officer, Major De Wald and two civilian photographers have permission to enter the Eighth Army area on Saturday, 27th May, 44.
2. They will report to S.C.A.C. H.Q., A.M.C. Eighth Army (Main) (Marked MAIN 35), and will travel on route 6.
3. This letter, will be used as the necessary authority for the journey.

J. H. S. Harris
Staff Capt.
for Group Captain,
Officer Commanding,
H.Q., A.M.C. Eighth Army Main.

202200
3837

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

ETDW/rjj

Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives

22 May 1944

20044/1/MFAA

Subject: Inspection of Abbey of Montecassino

To : V.P. Admin. Sect.

I am forwarding herewith a more detailed report of the inspection of Montecassino Abbey on May 18.

G. T. DeWald
ERNEST T. DE WALD
Major, Spec. Res.
Director.

3834

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394
Subcommission for Monuments Fine Arts and Archives

EDM/vz

22

20044/1/AFAA

22 May 1944

Subject: Inspection of Abbey of Montecassino
To : Regional Commissioner Reg. IV AMF

1. I am submitting herewith report on condition of Montecassino Abbey for your information.

2. Copies of reports of AFAAA Officers from places later to be under Region IV will be submitted to you when received at this Office.

E. T. DE WARD
ERNEST T. DE WARD
Major, Spec. Res.
Director.

21 MAG 1944

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

ETD/rjj U8372

Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives.

20044/1/MFAA

20 May 1944

Subject: Report on Montecassino Abbey.

To : V.P. Adm. Sect.

2 Pgs.
Submitted herewith report by Major Newton on first visit to Montecassino Abbey May 18, which was the day on which the Germans were driven out of it.

Ernest T. DeWald
ERNEST T. DE WALD
Major, Spec. Res.
Director.

Excellent - prompt
S

L. S. H.



COPY

174
HQ AMG Eighth Army
18 May 1944
21A
(204)

SUBJECT: MONTECASSINO ABBEY

TO : SCAG AMG Eighth Army

1. MONTECASSINO ABBEY examined from top of remaining walls at 1700 hrs 18 May 1944.
2. West End of Abbey remains standing to top floor. East and south sides, facing CASSINO, mostly levelled to ground floor. Interior form of three lower cloisters still visible but without cross colonnades. Great stairway pulverized. Statue of St Benedict is headless but otherwise intact. Cloister of the Benefactors ruined. In Basilica south wall of Apse and part of two large piers at crossing still stand. Basilica appears otherwise gone.
3. Floor at High Altar and floor of Sacristy may be intact under rubble. Saw NO visible evidence of important bronze doors. Sala Capitolare, Biblioteca, Pinacoteca and Archivio probably destroyed but possibly intact under rubble.
4. West end of Refectory still standing.
5. Reconstruction of entire Abbey is possible although much is now only heap of pulverized rubble and dust.
6. This report amplifies the summary prepared earlier today.

Copy to:
Chief Commissioner
V.P. Admin. Sect.
Executive Commissioner

/s/ Norman T. Newton 3834

/t/ NORMAN T. NEWTON
Major Air Corps
MPAA Officer
AMG Eighth Army

HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394

KEDM/r33

Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives.

2004/1/1/1/1/1

20 May 1944.

Subject: Report on Montecassino Abbey

To : V.P. Adm. Sect.

Submitted herewith report by Major Newton on first visit to Montecassino Abbey May 13, which was the day on which the Germans were driven out of it.

E. I. Dew
Lieutenant Colonel, US Army
Major, Spec. Res.
Director.

3833

COPY

HQ AMG Right Army
18 May 1944

SUBJECT: MONTMAGGIO ARMY

TO : SCAG AMG Right Army

1. MONTMAGGIO ARMY examined from top of remaining walls at 1700 hrs 18 May 1944.
2. West end of Abbey remains standing to top floor. East and south sides, facing CASSINO, mostly levelled to ground floor. Interior form of three lower cloisters still visible but without cross colonnades. Great stairway pulverized. Statue of St Benedict is headless but otherwise intact. Cloister of the Benefactors ruined. In Basilica south wall of Apse and part of two large piers at crossing still stand. Basilica appears otherwise gone.
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/s/ Norman T. Newton

/v/ NORMAN T. NEWTON
Major Air Corps
MPAA Officer
AMG Right Army

Copy to:

Chief Commissioner
V.P. Admin. Sect.
Executive Commissioner

3832

As of AMG Prov HQ Campobasso,
19 May 1944.

20044/1
MFAA/NTN/8

SUBJECT: Inspection of Abbey of Montecassino.

TO : SCAO, AMG 8 Army.

1. Submitted herein is a report of inspection of the Abbey of Montecassino on 18 May 1944, supplementing the brief reports made late yesterday.

ATTEMPTED APPROACH FROM CASSINO

2. The Abbey was reported to have been taken by Polish troops at about 1000 hours 18 May. Accompanying Cpt/Capt Benson, W/Cmdr Beer, Major Donald Smith, and Major Bullock, the MFAA Officer entered Cassino shortly before noon. Mortar fire from isolated groups of Germans blocked further approach to the Abbey from the Cassino side.

APPROACH FROM POLISH BASE

3. Major Bullock and the MFAA Officer accordingly proceeded to a Polish HQ, where they were joined by a group of war correspondents and were conducted by a Polish guide over back roads to a point at the foot of Colle Majola. From here the party hiked up mountain trails through the Polish lines to Masseria Albaneta and Hill 593, and reached the Abbey at 1700 hours.

4. The Polish CO asked that nobody enter the Abbey itself, as mines and booby traps were still being cleared. Survey was therefore made by climbing the rubble to the highest point atop the remaining walls of the southwest tower, overlooking the lower Right Cloister. Of the north side of the Abbey only a distant view from the heights opposite could be had.

5. At about 1740 hours the party started the return trip. Immediately afterward German mortars opened fire from beyond a ridge to the westward; intermittent small-arms fire interrupted the journey back across the high ridges to the point of departure at the foot of Colle Majola, which was reached at 1900 hours.

CONDITION OF THE ABBEY

6. Approaches. Road up mountain from Cassino has been cut and demolished at many points. Immediately at the Abbey all approaches are virtually destroyed; access is had only by climbing up the steep slopes of debris at the western end of the structure. The length of cyclopean wall, at the last turn of the former road, still stands in large part.

from the Cassino side.

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7. MASSERIA Old Tower. Doorway of Public Entrance into Southwest (Old) Tower is intact; upper floors of this structure are gone.

8. Right Cloister. Interior fairly intact, with east side, toward Refectory, standing to eave-line. Exterior wall of west side standing to top floor. Several German graves are in this cloister, with carefully lettered crosses.

9. Middle Cloister. Huge crater in center; both cross-colonnades gone. On west side, part of exterior wall of Loggia del Paradiso stands to point immediately above central arched doorway.

10. Left Cloister. Interior fairly intact. Exterior wall of west side remains almost to roof; north side more heavily hit; east side badly smashed, with remains of long room of Collegio open to sky.

MTAA/NTN/8 Montecassino 19 May 44

11. Grand Stairway. Virtually demolished. Statue of St Benedict, at bottom of steps, is headless and armless but still stands in place. No signs of statue of Santa Scolastica.

12. Cloister of the Refectory. Could not be fully seen but appeared demolished except for portion of exterior wall on north side. On south side, wall of Refectory remains in part; west end of Refectory, toward lower cloisters, is intact to eave-line.

13. Basilica. Almost entirely demolished. Part of south wall of apse remains to above spring-line of vaulting. Two large free-standing piers, formerly supporting dome, still stand to considerable height. Piece of exterior north wall (second chapel, right left aisle) and of exterior south wall (second chapel, right left aisle) appeared to be standing, but identification not certain. No visible evidence of the famous bronze doors; determination of their presence must await digging. Pavement under high altar may be preserved under rubble.

14. Sacristy. Not clearly visible; appeared destroyed but rubble over floor may be protecting inner end of mosaic pavement.

15. Biblioteca, Pinacoteca, Sala Capitolare. Appeared destroyed but may possibly remain standing under rubble.

16. Cloister of the Priors. Virtually demolished, with large crater in center. Piece of wall toward Basilica (see par 13) may be standing but could not be conclusively identified.

17. Southeast Cubicles. Long blocks of cubicles along east and south sides of Abbey mass, facing Cassino and main Allied batteries, are little more than a pile of dust on remaining foundations.

18. Archivio. As nearly as could be estimated, the interior (north) wall of these rooms seemed to be intact nearly to ceiling, while outer wall had disappeared. Void filled with rubble. It is possible, however, that much of this series of rooms may be in place under the mass of finely pulverized rubble.

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

3830

19. It is self-evident that, as soon as operational considerations permit, the Abbey should be placed Off Limits and under constant guard. As soon as practicable a further investigation should be made under supervision of the Director of the Subcommission for Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives, HQ ACC. Final determination of what, if any, treasures were left in the Abbey cannot be arrived at until careful systematic clearing is under-

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Copies to:

Subc MFAA, HQ ACC ✓

Copies of the above for information to:

Chief Commissioner

Executive Commissioner

VP Admin. Sect.

Norman T. Newton

NORMAN T. NEWTON,
Major, Air Corps,
MFAA Officer, AMG 8 Army.

ERNEST T. DEWALL
Major, Spec Res.
Director, MFAA s/c

To S/C MFAA from SCAO AMG 8 Army

COPY

20044/1

HQ AMG Eighth Army
18 May 1944

SUBJECT: MONTECASSINO ABBEY

TO : SCAO AMG Eighth Army

1. MONTECASSINO ABBEY examined from top of remaining walls at 1700 hrs 18 May 1944.
2. West End of Abbey remains standing to top floor. East and south sides, facing CASSINO, mostly levelled to ground floor. Interior form of three lower cloisters still visible but without cross colonnades. Great stairway pulverized. Statue of St Benedict is headless but ptherwise intact. Cloister of the Benefactors ruined. In Basilica south wall of Apse and part of two large piers at crossing still stand. Basilica appears otherwise gone.
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18A /s/ Norman T. Newton 38.9

/t/ NORMAN T. NEWTON
Major Air Corps
MFAA Officer
AMG Eighth Army

To S/C MFAA from SCAO AMG 8 Army

COPY

HQ AMG Eighth Army
18 May 1944

SUBJECT : MONTECASSINO ABBEY

TO : SCAO Eighth Army AMG

1. MONTECASSINO ABBEY inspected from top of remaining walls at 1700 hrs today. East end toward CASSINO levelled to ground floor. External walls of cloistered West End still standing to top floor. Basilica destroyed except south ~~east~~ wall of apse and two largest piers.

2. Floor at High Altar and in Sacristy possibly intact under rubble. No signs of Bronze Doors. Biblioteca, Pinacoteca and Archivio under too much rubble for present determination.

/s/ Norman T. Newton

/t/ NORMAN T. NEWTON
Major Air Corps
MFAA Officer
AMG Eighth Army

38.8

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