

AN EXHIBITION



Etna 1928

The destruction of Mascali

edited by

Stefano Branca¹, Emanuela De Beni¹, Oriana Goti², Leonardo Vaccaro³

1. Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia, Osservatorio Etneo-Sezione di Catania
2. Archivio Fotografico Toscano, Comune di Prato
3. Associazione culturale Mascali 1928

Exactly 90 years ago, on 6-7 November 1928, the small town of Mascali on the lower eastern flank of Mount Etna was buried by a lava flow and erased from the topographic maps.

The 1928 eruption represents the only eruptive event over the past nearly 350 years, which caused the destruction of a small town at Etna. On the evening of 4 November 1928, an eruptive fissure opened at 1200 m elevation and emitted a lava flow that rapidly descended following the narrow valley of the Pietrafucile-Vallonazzo torrent. On the morning of 6 November, the lava flow was only a few hundred meters away from the town of Mascali, which had about 3000 inhabitants, and which was nearly entirely destroyed on the next day, except for the neighborhood of Saint Antonino.

Emission of lava from the eruptive fissure ceased on 19 November; by this time the lava flow had reached a length of 9.4 km and its front halted at an elevation of 25 m, after having destroyed a few buildings of the little hamlet of Carrabba.

On occasion of the 90th anniversary of the destruction of Mascali, the Osservatorio Etneo of the INGV in Catania and the Archivio Fotografico Toscano (AFT) with the Association "Mascali 1928", will present an exhibition, which aims at revisiting the sites devastated by the eruption that in just a few days destroyed a part of the Etnean territory with a millennia-old history. The various phases of the eruption will be retraced in a photo-cartographic display, starting from data derived from scientific research and illustrating the main moments of the advance of the lava flow by means of maps and photographs taken from the ground and from the air, articles in Italian and foreign newspapers, and the most significant fragments of movie footage recorded by the cameramen of that time. This exhibition will narrate, and, most of all, recall, at a distance of 90 years from those events, the 1928 eruption as a unique event in the history of this volcano, not only from a volcanological viewpoint, but also for its social, economic and urbanistic consequences.



7 November 1928, the destruction of Mascali (Fondo Gaetano Ponte, AFT)

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