

SOLDIER

THE BRITISH ARMY MAGAZINE

NINEPENCE

OCTOBER 1954



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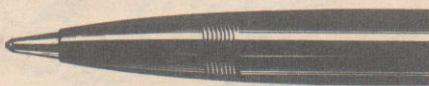
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Odette Churchill was awarded the George Cross for her achievements in enemy occupied territory during the last war.



Odette Churchill says

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WHAT'S YOUR LINE?

Whatever your job is—while there's Free Enterprise there's opportunity. So make the most of it yourself, and encourage the spirit of Free Enterprise in others all you can.

***Free Enterprise gives everyone
a chance and a choice***



The great trek to Moenchengladbach is beginning—and a new chapter opens for Rhine Army. Proudly the British soldier in Germany can look back on—

NINE STRENUOUS YEARS

THE first military lorries, crammed with files and stores, will soon lead the evacuation of Bad Oeynhausen, the Westphalian spa town which has served the British Army of the Rhine as headquarters for more than nine years. They will head westwards to the new headquarters of Northern Army Group and British Army of the Rhine at Moenchengladbach.

Because the new headquarters will not be completed until the end of the year the move from Bad Oeynhausen will be staggered over several months. First to move in will be the three British commanders-in-chief—Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force—who will occupy adjacent offices in the three-storey, 2000 - room main building. Families will begin to arrive in the middle of October.

So begins a new chapter in the story of Rhine Army. For some time it has ceased to be an army of occupation in the true sense of the word; now the move of the headquarters serves to underline its new role—that of an army stationed in Germany by agreement, to protect her and the rest of Western Europe.

Two years ago Rhine Army's main supply base was moved back to Belgium. The object of moving the operational headquarters of Northern Army Group and Rhine Army, together with those of the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force in Germany west of the Rhine, is so that more effective control can be exercised over the British, Canadian, Belgian and Netherlands Forces in Germany.

The story of Rhine Army in the past nine years is an inspiring one: a story which began with pacification and reconstruction in the face of formidable difficulties.

When Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery accepted the surrender of the German forces in North-West Europe in May 1945 the British Liberation Army (it was renamed British Army of the Rhine in August of that year) accepted the legacy of the most destructive war in history. Its first task was to restore law and order.

In the highly-industrialised British Zone all the cities and large

OVER →



The flags still fly at the headquarters in Bad Oeynhausen, soon to be an hotel again. German workmen are already smartening the building.



The horror-camp at Belsen goes up in smoke. Flame-throwers from Wasps of the 4th Wiltshires are seen setting fire to the last hut.

NINE STRENUOUS YEARS

continued

Remnants of the defeated German Army stream across the River Elbe.



towns had been heavily bombed. Road, rail and sea transport was paralysed, local government, where it existed at all, was chaotic and many of the police had "dissolved" themselves and gone into hiding. Food stocks were dangerously low and all normal trading had long since ceased, to be replaced by the Black Market. Tens of thousands of Germans lived in underground hovels or roamed the countryside in droves, among them many war criminals hoping to avoid arrest. The civilian medical services had broken down and there was fear of disease sweeping the country. Millions of German soldiers swamped the prisoner-of-war cages and scores of thousands of refugees had fled from the east into the British Zone. The population was bewildered, embittered and generally too apathetic to organise its own salvation.

The Army took over. Detachments of Military Government officers, with staffs of soldiers, set up local government again. As a first priority they organised food supplies, rushed medical stores into the civilian hospitals and began the clearing of bomb rubble and repair of shattered sewage systems. Soldiers moved into the docks and railway yards to unload and distribute food. Sappers began to repair some of the more important road and railway bridges. Military Police and armed patrols were out in force, day and night, fighting crime, vice and the Black Market. War Crimes teams scoured the countryside for dangerous Nazis.

The Army and the Control Commission, which took the place of Military Government, then went into action to enforce the decisions of the Potsdam Conference: to disarm Germany and destroy her military potential, eliminate the Nazi Party and

—so far as possible—its teachings, and to reconstruct German political and economic life.

Supervised by British soldiers, German prisoners cleared the minefields and collected the arms and ammunition of the defeated German army. These were built into dumps and blown up or taken out to sea and thrown overboard. Hidden caches of arms were discovered by Field Security and destroyed. Technicians visited every factory in the Zone capable of making military equipment and Sappers were given the job of destroying or dismantling them.

This work of destruction kept the Army busy for more than two years. The gigantic submarine pens in Hamburg were blown up by the Royal Engineers; in Berlin and Hamburg the massive air-raid bunkers were destroyed. Late in 1947 former German soldiers were still dismantling the Siegfried Line.

But as they destroyed so did the Army rebuild. Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers moved into the Volkswagen and Mercedes works and re-started production. The Royal Army Service Corps helped to rebuild the petrol and oil installation in Hamburg which kept the Army supplied with fuel. Three thousand soldiers went to work on operation "Woodpecker," felling trees to provide much-needed building timber for both victor and vanquished. Sappers spanned cratered roads with Bailey bridges which did their work so well that many are still in use. They built new bridges across the Rhine. In those days, for the British soldier, rail travel was a slow progression from one meal halt to another, with ablution halts thrown in (restaurant-car travel was still a long way off).

As Army teams tackled the

huge task of documenting and releasing prisoners-of-war, other teams of soldiers, working with the Control Commission, staffed the Displaced Persons camps. Refugees were found work in Germany or sent abroad to start life anew in the United States, Britain and the Dominions. One small military unit was given the job of linking up former German soldiers with their families—a task which took four years to complete.

In those early days of the occupation Rhine Army had to fend for itself and live off its own fat. Soldiers unloaded, distributed and guarded their own food stores, baked their own bread, made their own sausages and bottled their own beer. They ran their own printing presses, made vehicle spare parts and rebuilt their own tyres. For many years no new vehicles were issued to Rhine Army; there were thousands of wartime vehicles ranged in mile-long rows on the autobahns and these were used or "cannibalised" as required. Not the least difficulty was to keep specialist units operating when trained men were going out on release and untrained men were being drafted in.

Rhine Army was not slow in organising its amusements and amenities. Early in 1946 leave centres were set up all over the Zone and—at one time or another—soldiers were able to spend their leaves in Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Belgium, Austria and even Norway. Cricket, football and hockey fields were laid out and motorcycle dirt-tracks were opened. Boar, hare and fox hunts began to flourish. In the winter there was ski-ing in the Harz Mountains and in the summer a soldier could go yachting, gliding or cycling.

OVER →



In the shadow of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin the first NAAFI/EFI canteen to enter the German capital serves cups of tea to the Desert Rats.

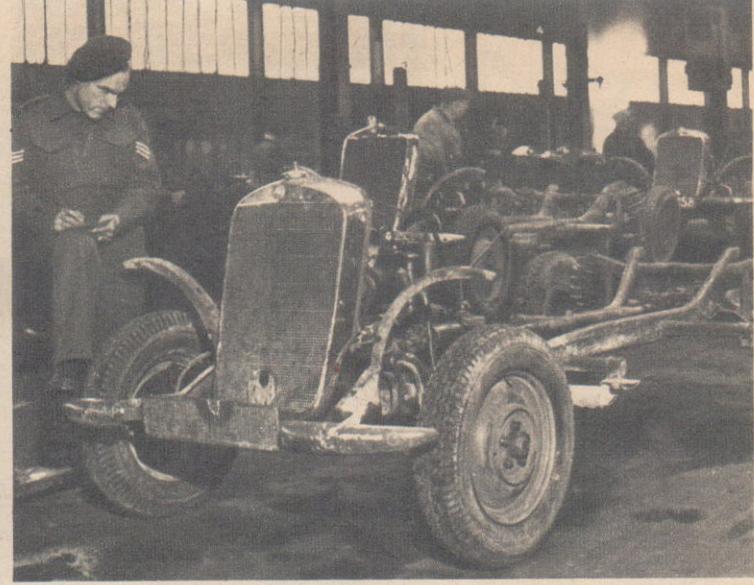
Right: One of the massive concrete air-raid bunkers which Sappers destroyed in Hamburg and Berlin.



Below (left): General Sir Richard L. McCreery, Rhine Army's commander, helped saw down a tree in operation "Woodpecker."



The destruction of the Siegfried Line was another job for Sappers.



REME technicians moved into the shattered Volkswagen and Mercedes Benz works in 1946 and set the production lines moving again.

NINE STRENUOUS YEARS

continued

The first wives and families arrived at the end of 1946 and lived in requisitioned houses or flats. Former German barracks became schools for British children and Rhine Army took over Gottingen University for its college. In Dortmund the first military tattoo was held in August, 1946.

At the end of 1946 most of the wartime soldiers had been demobilised and National Servicemen were taking their place. Gradually the Germans were assuming responsibility for running

their own lives. So Rhine Army turned to the problem of training. Paderborn, where von Rundstedt trained his army for the Ardennes offensive, became the main Infantry exercise ground and later the ranges at Vogelsang were re-opened. But it was not until the Russians blockaded Berlin in 1948 and the political climate deteriorated that Rhine Army began to build itself into the powerful, highly-trained, well-equipped fighting machine it is today.

Rhine Army played a useful

part in defeating the Berlin blockade. Troops were rushed to ports to help unload foodships and ferry cargoes to airfields where other soldiers loaded the aircraft which flew into Berlin. In Berlin, more teams of soldiers unloaded the aircraft and distributed the supplies.

After the Berlin blockade, training centres began to spring up all over the Zone and more and more time was spent on battalion and brigade exercises. At the end of 1949 Rhine Army held its first large-scale manoeuvres

and each year since then exercises have increased in size and scope. It was in the 1949 manoeuvres that ingenious new methods of battle simulation were used—ideas since adopted by the rest of the British Army.

Since 1949 it has been training all the way—with major exercises in the summer and autumn and toughening exercises in the winter. Rhine Army soldiers have rubbed shoulders in the field with Americans, Belgians, Canadians, Danes, Dutch and Norwegians.

In the towns, during the 'fifties,

The Centurion tank made its début at Rhine Army's 1949 manoeuvres.



the Army began to give up its requisitioned hotels and clubs, its shops and factories. The time had come for the Germans to run their own affairs. The Army pulled out by degrees from the built-up areas. Parents of young soldiers were glad to hear of it; in the 'forties there had been much head-shaking over the risks entailed in sending impressionable young men into cities of temptation. Today many parents would rather see their sons posted to Rhine Army than anywhere else.

The British soldiers' relations with the Germans have improved by un hurried but inevitable stages. First there was non-fraternisation; then fraternisation was allowed with German children; then soldiers were allowed to visit German families—and to marry German girls; then British and Germans began to meet on the field of sport; finally permission was given for Germans to be invited as guests to British messes and homes.

Today the British soldier is no longer viewed as a member of an occupying army, but as an ally. In both roles, as in the role of enemy, he has always commanded the respect of the Germans.

E. J. GROVE



The Royal Horse Guards was one of several regiments which went fox-hunting in Germany. The hounds and most of the horses were shipped across from England. The sport is now banned.

COMPLETE WITH CINEMASCOPE

THE new headquarters at Moenchengladbach—one of the largest building projects ever undertaken by the Army—cost £13,500,000.

When it is completed the headquarters will have a population of 9000, including some 2000 German civilian employees who will live on the site.

Bus services will operate over its 20 miles of roads. There will be three churches, four schools, a hospital, a pre-natal clinic, four clubs, a large cinema fitted with Cinemascope screen and stereophonic sound apparatus, a six-lane swimming pool with a sun-lounge and canteen, and 1126 married quarters.

A notable feature of the new

headquarters is the district heating system. From two boiler-houses super-heated water is forced through a network of underground pipes to every building on the site, providing hot water and central heating at the turn of

a tap. Hence there are no boilers in any of the buildings.

The married quarters have refinements which few other Army homes possess. Every house has a refrigerator and built-in kitchen cupboards and bedroom wardrobes. Wooden parquet covers all ground-floor rooms and floored attics can be used as children's playrooms. Every house has a cellar in which there is a storeroom and a washroom.

Labour-saving devices include windows pivoted so that both sides can be cleaned from the inside. Most houses are semi-detached. Each has a front and garden shut off from its neighbour by shrubs and hedges.

Off duty, the soldier stationed in Moenchengladbach will have plenty of opportunity to play almost any type of sport. There are five cricket pitches, nine soccer and rugby grounds, four hockey pitches, two running tracks, 24 tennis courts, five squash courts and two basket-ball courts.

The cinema at the new headquarters has stereophonic sound. Right: a model of the families' homes which will be the Army's best.



In his spare time a Sapper officer discovered an underground lake

THE COLONEL'S TWIG SAVED £14,000 A YEAR



Colonel Grattan demonstrates the mysterious art of dowsing. Below: Mr. C. E. Key, Deputy Under-Secretary for War, finds that he, too, can divine water. In its downward thrust the twig snapped.



A SAPPER colonel's ability to discover water by the ancient art of dowsing will save the Army, and the taxpayer, £14,000 a year.

Last year, Colonel Harry Grattan, Chief Engineer in charge of planning at the new headquarters at Moench-Gladbach, was assured by German geologists that the underground stratum of pure water beneath the site was too small for the headquarters' needs. All other sources of water in the area for miles around, they told him, had been developed and the Army would have to buy water from the local authorities.

Colonel Grattan was not convinced. As an amateur water diviner for more than 20 years he believed that the water-bearing stratum of gravel under the site was larger than the Germans thought and was probably isolated by layers of clay which had been revealed in boring tests.

In his spare time and at weekends, the Colonel reconnoitred the Rheindalener Forest to the west of the headquarters site, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback and sometimes in his car with his wife as chauffeur. He explored in detail an area of several square miles, stopping every now and then to cut a V-shaped twig from a tree. Holding one end in each hand he held it over the ground. The twig always twisted downwards, the V pointing to the ground, sure sign to the diviner that there was water underneath the spot.

At the end of two months Colonel Grattan was able to draw on the map the boundaries of the underground "lake." It covered an area of nearly eleven square miles. Bore holes were sunk and samples of water from the "lake" sent to the German and British Army medical services. When the reports came back each analysis was almost identical with that of the pure water directly under the headquarters site. More test borings showed that the "lake" was between 60 and 90 feet below the surface and was sealed at the top and bottom by layers of clay. It contained sufficient water of the highest quality to supply the headquarters for at least 40 years, not taking into account replenishment by natural rainfall which would keep it permanently full.

When all the tests had been completed four wells were sunk and linked to a newly-built water works on the site which will provide all the water the new headquarters requires for a sum of about £6000 a year. If the Army had bought water from the local authorities it would have cost £20,000 a year.

This is not the first time that Colonel Grattan's natural gift has been of use to the Army.

When he was a young officer in India in the 1930s he was called upon to settle a tribal dispute which looked like developing into a small war. Two tribes on the North-West Frontier shared the only water well on their common boundary. They quarrelled and prepared to fight for the well. Within a few days Colonel Grattan, armed with only a V-shaped twig, had found another underground water supply. A well was dug and handed over to one of the tribes. The dispute was settled.

In 1935 one of the Militia posts on the North-West Frontier was sometimes denied the use of its well by Afghan snipers. Colonel Grattan again cut a V-shaped twig from a tree and found another water source into which a well was dug out of sniper's range.

On another occasion in the Red Sea Hills of the Sudan he was asked by a political officer who wanted to encourage vegetable growing in the area if he could find water. For days Colonel Grattan tramped over the desert holding a V-shaped twig. There was no sign of water in the area and profitless well-boring was stopped.

Colonel Grattan cannot explain how he is able to divine water but believes it is a gift every third person possesses in some degree. Outside the officers' mess at the new headquarters he demonstrated for SOLDIER and for Mr. C. E. Key, Deputy Under-Secretary for War, who was visiting Moench-Gladbach.

From a beech tree ("any kind of twig will do; it does not have to be a hazel as most people believe," said the Colonel) he cut a V-shaped twig about 18 inches long and stripped off its leaves. With palms uppermost, he gripped each end of the twig which against all his pressure forced itself downwards until the V pointed directly at the ground below. When Lieut.-Colonel J. M. H. Lewis, Colonel Grattan's assistant, took the twig there was no reaction. SOLDIER tried too with no result, but when Mr. Key grasped the twig it forced itself downwards with such force that one of the ends snapped.

Colonel Grattan has two sons. One can divine water as easily as his father, but in the hands of the other son a V-shaped twig remains an inanimate piece of wood.

BEACH-HEAD AT ZEEBRUGGE

FROM the quartermasters' stores of Rhine Army, some supplies are now being issued by courtesy of the Territorial Army.

It started when 264 Scottish Beach Brigade was planning its summer camp. Setting up a beach-head and unloading tons of stores somewhere in Britain would have been extravagant, so it was decided to fit the Brigade into Rhine Army's supply line.

Six laden coasters and a Liberty boat set off from British ports with the stores; 5000 Territorials of the Brigade, with 150 men of the Army Emergency Reserve, travelled by Rhine Army's Harwich-Hook of Holland route. The men and the boats met, by arrangement with the Belgian authorities, at Zeebrugge.

There the ships were moored, and the Brigade began unloading them. In the fortnight the exercise lasted, 7000 tons of stores and 181 vehicles were landed. Infantrymen worked as hatch-gangs on the ships, made up DUKW crews and did other odd jobs that came along. The Royal Army Service Corps provided amphibious companies for the DUKWs and a launch company to control them. The Royal Navy operated landing craft and provided a naval beach control unit. A Royal Air Force beach squadron watched over Royal Air Force stores. All the other units necessary to the formation were working at full stretch.

Among the holiday-makers on the Belgian coast, 5000 Scottish Territorials landed stores for Rhine Army and went to see the sights



A blunt bow-wave precedes a DUKW on its run out to a moored coaster inside the Zeebrugge Mole.

It was a "non-tactical" exercise, in the sense that the Brigade, out of consideration for the local population and the Belgian coast's holiday-makers, could not disperse as they would in real war. So far as the work was concerned, however, there was realism enough. Cranes were held to

have been destroyed by enemy action, and winches took their place, which gave the exercise its name, "Winch."

In their fews hours off duty, the Territorials sampled the holiday attractions of such resorts as Blankenberge and Heyst, and went sight-seeing in Bruges. They

also carried out rescue work when an explosion in a Blankenberge hotel killed six people, as during their annual camp two years ago they went to work during the Lynmouth flood disaster.—From a report by Captain D. J. Crawford, Military Observer in Germany.



Left: From a Naval landing-craft, the first of a load of three-tonners runs ashore. Above: This DUKW went aground on the remains of HMS Thetis, a blockship sunk by the Royal Navy in its famous World War One raid on Zeebrugge. (Picture: Captain J. H. Aston, REME.)

THE ARMY BREAKS WITH BLANCO

FOR some time there have been rumours that Blanco was to be superseded. In July last year SOLDIER announced that the War Office was experimenting with a new equipment cleaner. Already the Royal Air Force is using a new-style renovator for webbing.

Now the Army is saying farewell to Blanco. By Christmas, troops in Britain will be wearing their web equipment with a new dressing on it. Troops overseas will have to wait up to another three or four months.

"Renovator Web Equipment," as Army Council Instructions call it, will replace the four khaki-green shades of Blanco. It looks



The Good Soldier, 1907—from a Blanco advertisement. The cleaner was also recommended for use on tennis balls and whip thongs.

rather like khaki-green boot-polish, and is put on with a brush, like boot-polish. It is waterproof, dries very quickly, does not run off, is easy to apply, is lasting, can be touched up, can be wiped over.

The new renovator comes in the same four approved khaki-green shades as Blanco—No. 3 (olive green), No. 61 (khaki), No. 97 (dark green) and No. 103 (light green). For some reason, it is not very satisfactory in white, and so the Guards and the Royal

There is bad news for comedians. Blanco, which ousted pipeclay more than half a century ago, will soon be a military memory

Military Police will use existing cleaners. Similarly, the Royal Tank Regiment will continue to use blacking on its webbing.

It was the Royal Tank Regiment's use of blacking which inspired the new renovator. Back in 1947, a suggestion was made to the War Office that this practice should be extended to all units. The authorities did not take kindly to the idea, but the War Office asked the Ministry of Supply to produce something like boot-polish, in the right colours, to take the place of Blanco.

The answer came in an experimental renovator with a wax content which made it not only waterproof but shiny. With camouflage in mind, the War Office sent it back with a request that the shine should be taken out. As it turned out, this was not entirely possible, and the Army has had to accept a certain amount of shine.

Soldiers tested the new renovator in the Ministry of Supply's Clothing and Stores Testing Establishment at Chatham, and it had world-wide troop-trials in 1951 and 1952. A number of proprietary cleaners were also tried out, but none was found as good as that produced by the Ministry of Supply.

NAAFI has now been asked to arrange for a manufacturer to produce the Army's renovator, and it will be sold exclusively by NAAFI.

It may cost the soldier slightly more to treat his equipment the first time with the new renovator

Military policemen (and the Guards) will continue to use traditional white cleaners.

than it did with Blanco. Afterwards, however, it should be cheaper to keep the equipment looking smart by retouching. The renovator must be used sparingly, to prevent caking.

The renovator can be used on the 1944 webbing. This was waterproofed, and it was forbidden to use Blanco on it. The new renovator, it is claimed, will improve the waterproof properties of the equipment.

The ousting of Blanco will mean the end of those little clouds of dust which rise from rifle slings when large parades are ordered to present arms. It will also mean the end of countless Blanco jokes. The one of these that Blanco's manufacturers liked best concerned a Guardsman who staggered into an outpost, after days lost in the desert, gasping, "Water, Water!" He was handed a water-bottle, and croaked, "At last—at last I can Blanco my webbing."

One unorthodox use of Blanco in days gone by was as a preventive and cure for saddle sores.

Blanco has had a long innings with the Army. It was born in 1875 when a Volunteer (predecessor of the Territorial) named John Needham Pickering thought his family firm of polish-makers could produce something better than the tradi-



tional pipeclay for whitening the buckskin equipment the Army then wore. For ten or 15 years, a Blanco - pipeclay controversy went on in barrack-rooms, and Blanco won.

When the Army went into khaki about 1900, khaki Blanco was first produced. In 1908 web equipment came in and five years later Blanco was officially approved as the Army's web cleaner. During World War Two some 30,000,000 blocks of Blanco were supplied to the Services; the manufacturers, Messrs. Joseph Pickering and Sons, Ltd., estimated this at between one and two blocks per man per year, which suggested that Servicemen spent less time than was popularly supposed cleaning their webbing. (This question of time spent on Blanco-ing has more than once been raised in Parliament.)

In air raids on Sheffield in 1940 Blanco production was held up for nine weeks—news which, if it had been known, was unlikely to have created any alarm or despondency.

FLYNN OF THE 27th

REMEMBER the man who recaptured Burma? Errol Flynn is now in British Army uniform. . ." ran a caption in last month's SOLDIER.

But it seems Errol Flynn was in British uniform long before this. He charged with the Light Brigade in 1936.

So that correspondent who wrote to SOLDIER in July complaining that the film industry had neglected the Charge of the Light Brigade was misinformed.

"The Charge of the Light Brigade" (the sixth film of Flynn's career) turned up in a London repertory cinema this summer and SOLDIER dutifully went to see it. It presents a very curious and fanciful version of the goings-on at Balaclava.

The story starts in India, where Captain Errol Flynn of the 27th Lancers saves the life of a Khan who is obviously destined to play a sinister part later on. Then Captain Flynn, accompanied among others by Lieutenant David Niven, is sent from Calcutta to cross India and march north to Batum on the Black Sea, buying horses on the way. At Batum he must ship the horses for some unknown destination connected with the imminent war with Russia, then return to Calcutta. By SOLDIER'S calculation, the round trip involves some 7500 miles on horseback.

It earns Captain Flynn his majority and also gives time for his fiancée, Olivia de Havilland (a colonel's daughter, of course) to discover that she prefers his young brother.

At Balaclava Major Flynn is a Staff officer. He is told to deliver an order which begins, "The Light Brigade will retire. . ." But the wicked Khan, who has massacred the 27th's families, is sitting with the Russian guns on the heights, and the Lancers are thirsting for vengeance. Major Flynn sits down and forges a new order. It begins, "The Light Brigade will advance. . ."

He hurries off and delivers the forgery to the Light Brigade's commander—not the Earl of Cardigan, as the history books have it, but a rather more amiable character. Now the Light Brigade, with Major Flynn leading the 27th Lancers in the front rank, sets off along the valley, to charge the guns on the heights. It is a notably well-filmed charge.

At the guns Major Flynn leaps his horse over a stone wall and comes on the Khan, who has been dismounted by a shell. The Khan, who has a pistol, is quick on the draw. Despite a mortal wound, Major Flynn flings his lance, pinning the Khan to the earth. Back in headquarters, the commander-in-chief throws Major Flynn's forgery into a fire, murmuring, "For valorous service."

From which it appears that there is still room for an intelligent film about the Charge of the Light Brigade.

Atomic weapons may come, but the Larkhill ranges will still echo to the thunder of field guns.

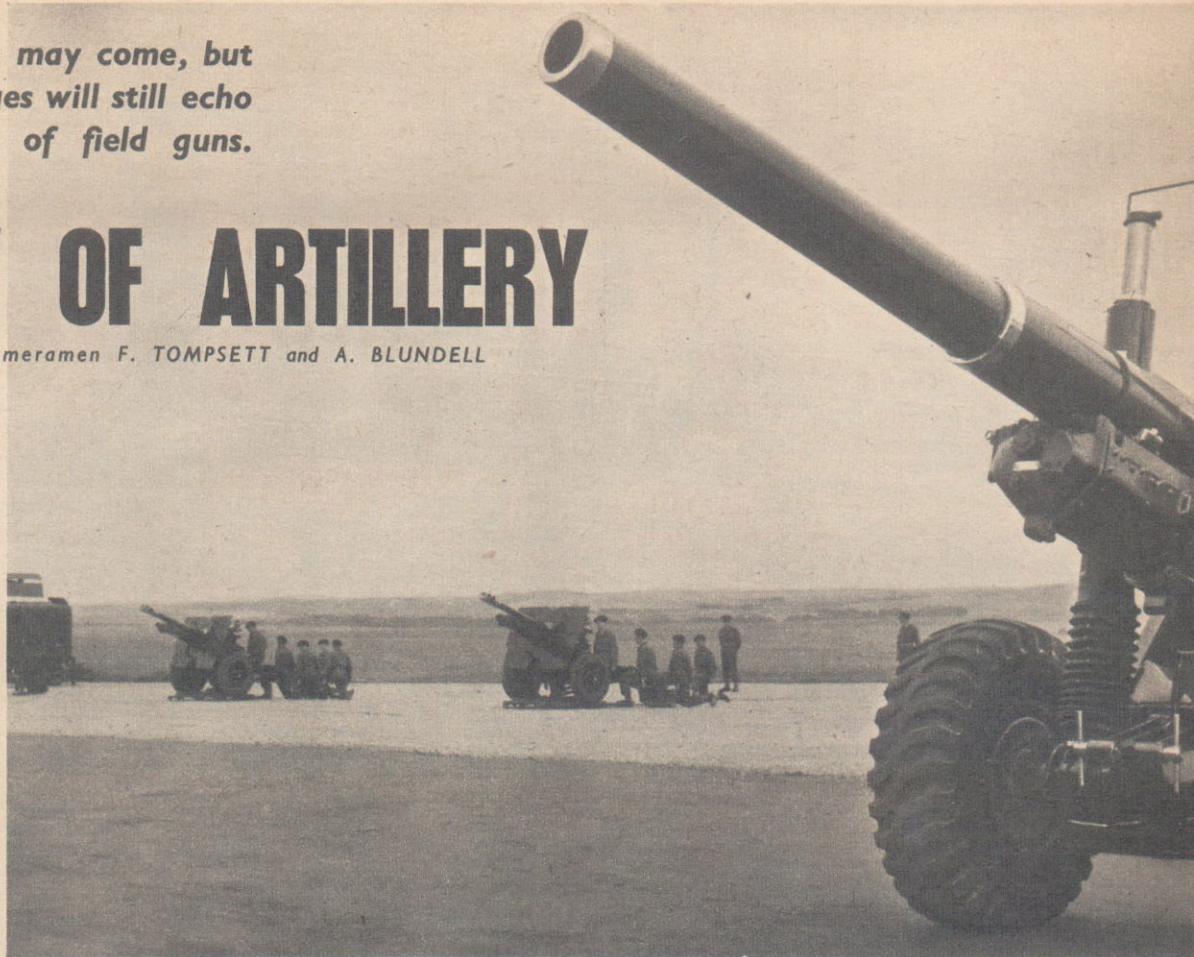
ACADEMY OF ARTILLERY

Pictures by SOLDIER Cameramen F. TOMPSETT and A. BLUNDELL

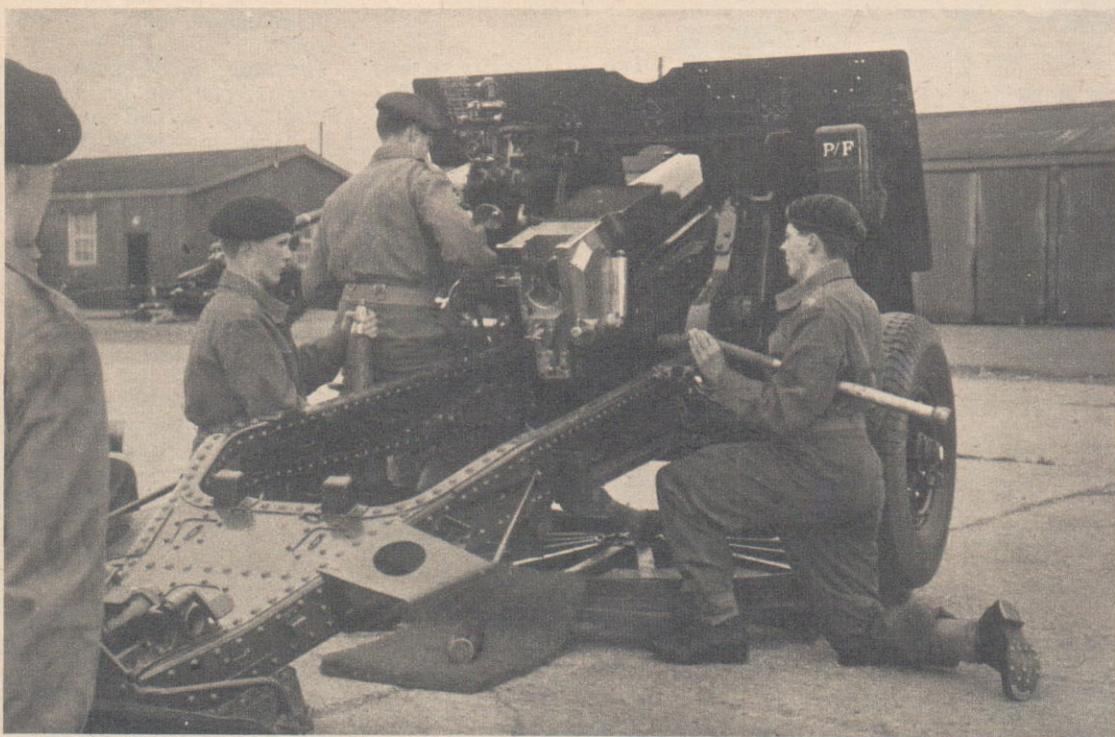
IT was a normal working day on a corner of the School of Artillery's ranges at Larkhill, on Salisbury Plain.

In front of a clump of trees, two vehicles pulled up. Out of the first jumped a lance-bombardier, who began to give orders to a group of fellow-students, including bombardiers and sergeants. In good time, the orders sited a battery of 25-pounders and started it firing.

Over to the left, a column of self-propelled guns, manned by Territorials, was winding along a track and disappearing over the crest of a hill. To the right, more guns, partly hidden by trees, were giving tongue. Overhead fizzed shells from batteries out of sight to the rear. At frequent intervals, a distant ridge sprouted plumes of black smoke.



On the gun-park, student crews rehearse 25-pounder gun-drill.



A subaltern gun-crew. Their drill must be better than anyone else's.

Subaltern on the sights. He came to Larkhill straight from Sandhurst.



The Larkhill ranges cover 60 square miles in the least peaceful tract of countryside, perhaps, in Britain. On occasions, 24 troops of field guns will be firing at once, as well as mortars, anti-tank guns, machine-guns and rockets. From the School of Artillery's magazines, nearly 86,000 rounds of 25-pounder ammunition alone go out each year to be fired on the ranges.

Sometimes the shells which are seen exploding in the target area arrive from outside the ranges. For long-range firing,

guns go to "island sites," other War Department property at a suitable distance, such as the School of Infantry's Imber ranges. Motorists passing between the two may, all unknowing, have shells passing over their heads.

The ranges are so busy that programmes are arranged two months ahead. An instructor who applied early in May to fire a single gun could not be accommodated until the end of July.

Fitting in all the shoots and

making the programme comply with strict safety regulations is a full-time job for the range liaison officer, Major C. E. Corke, and his staff. Also to be considered are the cattle which graze on the fringes of the target area, the owners accepting the risk of an occasional ricochet. Three or four days ahead, orders go out to the cattle-owners about where their animals may be penned. Everyone in charge of a shoot receives a detail, including the permitted arc of fire and other

OVER →



Brigadier E. D. Howard-Vyse, MC, Commandant of the School.

ACADEMY OF ARTILLERY

continued



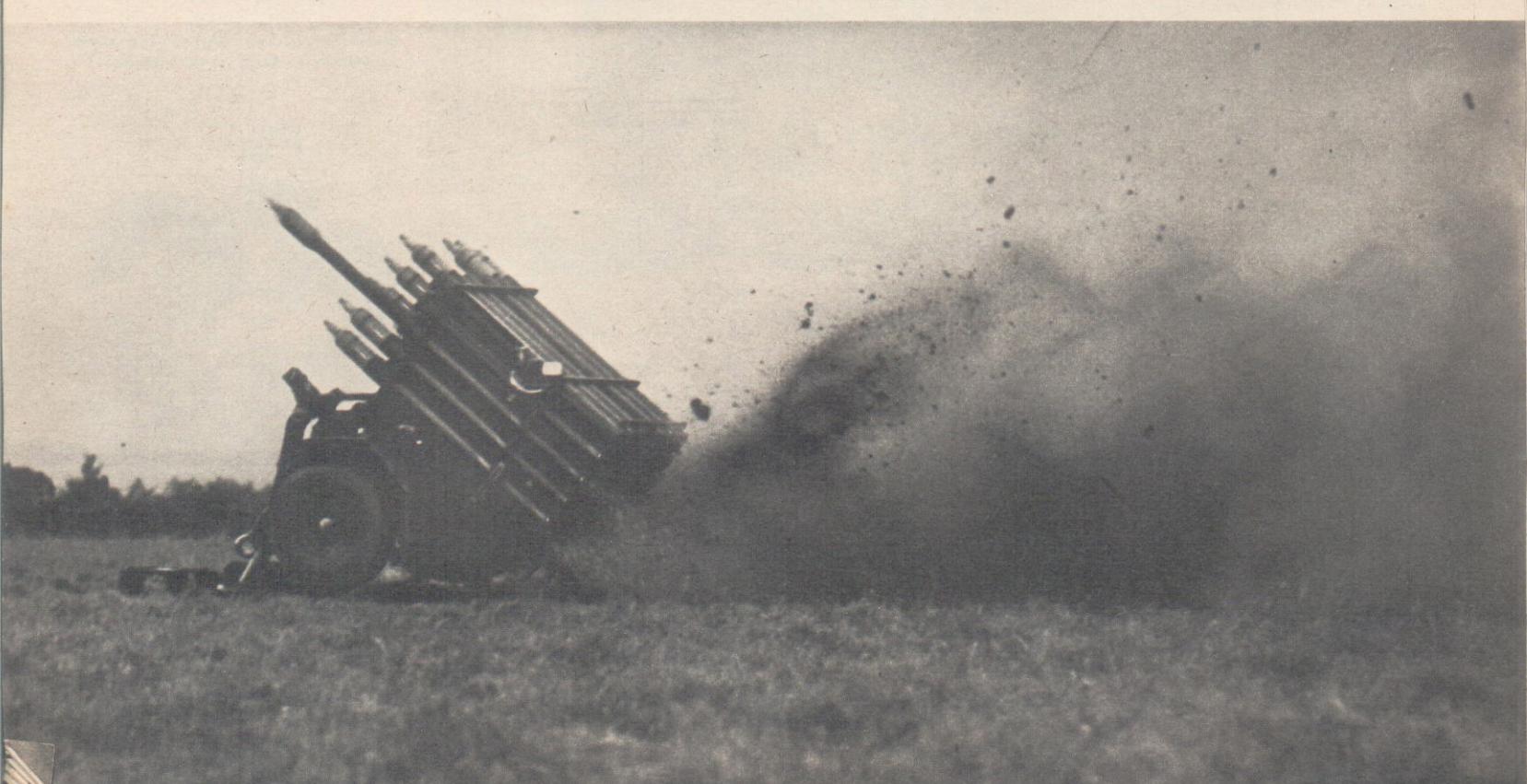
A camouflaged sound-ranging command post—inside a lecture room.

Left: at a vedette on the old Salisbury-Devizes road, a notice indicates that firing is taking place.

The camera catches a rocket leaving a projector at a demonstration.

special safety precautions which will apply to his shoot. (On the day of a shoot, the officer in charge also receives weather reports from an Air Ministry meteorological office in the School.)

The range facilities were, of course, responsible for making Larkhill the second home of field Gunners (second, because Woolwich is still the home of all Gunners). It was in 1899 that the first practice shoot was held on Salisbury Plain. The freedom of movement, compared with the cramped and boggy conditions of other practice camps, soon set Gunner officers thinking that here was the ideal site for the



School of Gunnery for Horse and Field Artillery, then at Shoeburyness. The School was slow to accept the idea, and it was not until 1917 that its headquarters moved permanently to Larkhill.

With the move came a change of name to School of Artillery. ("Artillery" embraces gunnery, the aiming and shooting of guns, and in addition tactics, communications, ballistics and kindred subjects.)

Nobody suspected, in those days, that a time would come when what sounded, to the inexperienced ear, like a gun firing might turn out to be an aeroplane from Boscombe Down cracking the sound barrier. Much else has changed, but in spite of the motor-tractors and self-propelled guns, wireless and radar, sound locators and air observation posts, field artillery is still basically the same. In spite, too, of atomic cannon, it is likely to go on being the same.

"There will continue to be a need for a direct supporting weapon like our present field artillery," says the commandant of the School of Artillery, Brigadier E. D. Howard-Vyse, MC. "At the stage that unconventional weapons have reached, they cannot provide that intimate support that field artillery gives on the battlefield. I still have great faith in the conventional field gun. The gun may improve, but Larkhill ranges will still suffice for field artillery practice."

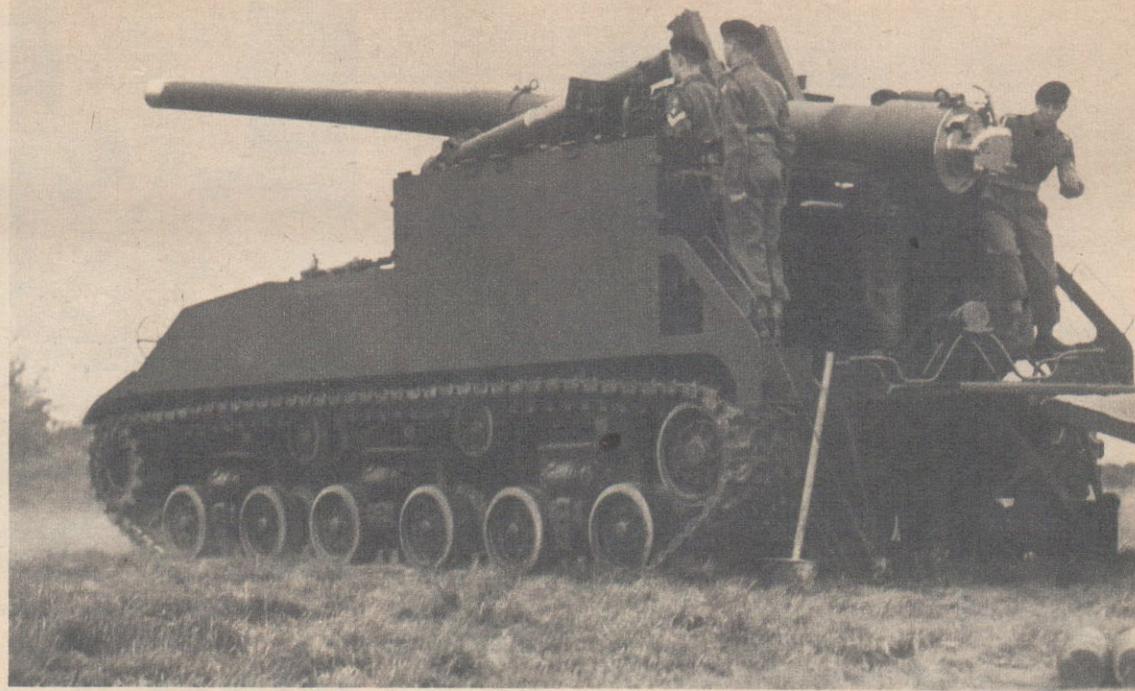
The War Office has confirmed Brigadier Howard-Vyse's belief in the future of Larkhill, by giving the go-ahead to the School's rebuilding plan, suspended when World War Two broke out.

One or two figures indicate how big an organisation the School is. The establishment includes 109 warrant officers, mostly assistant instructors in gunnery. The instrument repair shop maintains 1728 mechanical and optical instruments which are so hard-worked that about 100 of them are repaired each month. The Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers' workshops look after weapons varying in size from rifles to a 240 millimetre gun, and their stores are catalogued under 5000 different headings.

All day and every day in summer, 13 motor grass-cutters, ranging from domestic lawn-mowers to large farm-machines, are busy cutting grass in the camp area—the ranges are not cut by the School. The School expects to harvest 50 tons of hay this year, together with three fields of oats, to help feed the two chargers and four draught horses which are on establishment and the horses of the Larkhill branch of the Royal Artillery Saddle Club.

The School has the Larkhill point-to-point course, which Gunners claim is one of the best in England. (An airstrip at the School is called Sceptre's Gallop after a famous racehorse which trained there and won four classic

OVER



An American self-propelled 155 millimetre gun goes into action. It weighs 36 tons.

SOLDIER to Soldier

A GREAT deal of a soldier's time is spent contemplating the back of someone else's head—on parade, on the march, in the lecture-room, in queues.

If he is honest with himself, he will probably agree with the sergeant-major that shaggy ears and fuzzy napes look far from smart. When he goes on leave he will find himself looking with a sergeant-major's distaste at the backs of civilians' heads on buses.

This question of Army haircuts is now beginning to engender a certain amount of warmth in SOLDIER's correspondence. SOLDIER is accused of encouraging a lot of nonsense by its report on a military hair styles display. So it may be as well to state SOLDIER's private opinion on this question. This is simply that short hair looks better and is more hygienic, but that very short hair—especially on top—often looks terrible and is a needless and wanton disfigurement. There may be excellent reasons why a convict should be close-cropped, but the man who wears Her Majesty's other uniform deserves better. In their praiseworthy determination that soldiers shall not look like spivs, "Edwardians" or poets, cannot the unit hairdresser and the sergeant-major between them agree on a haircut rather more flattering than that dealt out at Dartmoor?

ONE of the unadvertised attractions of the Sudan Defence Force, from which British officers have now been withdrawn (see page 17), was that it had a vacancy for the man who was not averse to being cut off from his fellows for six months on end, among big game.

It was a force in which a man could indulge a sense of adventure and answer the call of the wild. For that reason at least it is a pity that this link with a great territory is broken. "Bimbashi" was a rank that amused those who are easily amused, but the Bimbashi did a good job. He has his honourable niche in Britain's imperial story. It is a pity that his passing went unsung in the national press.

For the man who still wants to get away from it all in a small, exclusive force there remain the Arab Legion and the Somaliland Scouts. On a larger scale there are still many more forces, in Africa and Asia, which require British officers

and NCOs—from the Royal West African Frontier Force and the King's African Rifles to the Malay Regiment and the Gurkhas.

THE drill for the new rifle on the parade-ground is unlikely to be a very elaborate one.

The prime purpose of having a parade-ground drill for a weapon is to prevent mishandling, accident and injury to the soldier and his comrades-in-arms. If it can be handled with swank and flourish, so much the better; but that is not the first requirement of the drill.

Weapon drill in action is something else again. It can be overdone too. Back in 1941, or thereby, SOLDIER went through what seemed—and still seems—one of the most bizarre examples of teaching drill for drill's sake. It was an operation by which marching soldiers were to be enabled to fire their rifles at a hostile aircraft, without breaking formation. As the left feet of the squad touched the ground the successive orders were given to load, raise rifles to the shoulder, aim and fire. It is highly unlikely that this drill was ever employed in action, but if it was SOLDIER would like to hear of it.

ACCORDING to entrants in the Army Certificate of Education examination the problems in Malaya include these:

Because the terriers are shooting the rubber plants the disease Malayaria is found in Malaya;

The difficulties in Malaya are sleeping quarters, diseases, proper water facilities and the Jungal but the most important is Toliotics.

Fightin in Malaya is awful because the jungle is thickly irritated;

The terrorists are a band of war-time gorillas and although they live in Malaya their hearts are in China.

Other interesting information elicited by the General Paper was that "The United Kingdom has to import her food because she is short of money"; "From Sweden we import fish and oil taken from Wales"; "Dr. Malan's party is known as the Apathy Party"; and "Troops are in Kenya because of Mama trouble."

One entrant said (was he right):

"The name of Northern Army Group was changed from NAG to NORTHAG because people began calling the C-in-C 'The NAG's head'?"



Larkhill can demonstrate a variety of ways of digging-in a 25-pounder.



Do you know this weapon? It is one of the School's grass-cutters.

ACADEMY OF ARTILLERY

continued



At the School's annual demonstration for Sandhurst cadets, a visitor from West Point joins the spectators round a 4.2 inch mortar. Below: The Bustard, near the ranges, is the Field Gunners' "local".



races in 1902.) There is also a nine-hole golf-course and the ranges provide enough rabbits, hares and partridges to keep two separate shoots happy.

Students at the School range from major-generals ("refreshing" their knowledge at discussion groups) to Gunners. Most of the courses are designed to produce instructors and the longest are the gunnery staff courses for instructors in gunnery, the majors and captains who wear red bands on their hats and are qualified to teach at, among other places, Larkhill. The gunnery staff courses last up to 15 months. During the winter, the classrooms are filled with students; in summer there are fewer classes, but this does not mean that there is a let-up for the instructors, who are away helping Territorials with their annual training.

Gunnery is the concern of only one of the five instructional wings of the School. The Equipment wing runs, among others, short courses for civilian designers, to teach them users' problems. It also has a trials branch, which produces ideas for new equipment (recently the School invented a new field artillery plotter) and then tests the finished product.

The Tactical Employment Wing is both a teaching organisation and a "brains trust" which considers the future tactical use of field artillery. One branch of the wing is devoted to signals, and a lieutenant-colonel of the Royal Signals presides over the activities of the Royal Artillery instructors. This branch produces signals instructors for Anti-Aircraft Command, as well as for field artillery.

Courses up to 14 months take students of the Counter-Bombardment Wing into the technical realms of radar, sound-locating, survey and flash-spotting. Shortly

the wing will receive its first recruits from a special survey course which was recently started at the Army Apprentices' School at Harrogate. "We are the battle-smellers of the Royal Artillery," says Colonel R. Anderson, who commands the wing.

The fifth wing trains young Regular officers who have just been commissioned from Sandhurst. (National Service officers receive their Gunner training as cadets at Mons Officer Cadet School.) Each year the School receives 120 second-lieutenants for five months training, but as Regular Gunner officers must spend part of their subaltern careers in anti-aircraft artillery and part in field, some of their training is carried out at Manor-bier, the anti-aircraft school. The young officers are enthusiasts about strenuous pastimes, including pot-holing and mountaineering, and it is one of the wing's boasts that it always contains at least one young officer who represents the Army at some sport.

Of all the features of Larkhill, the one which is a memory common to most field Gunners, whether they took long courses or merely visited the ranges to shoot with a Territorial unit, is the Bustard. This old coaching inn stands just outside the perimeter of the ranges, on what used to be the main Salisbury-Devizes road (it can still be used when the red flags are down). Far from closing its doors when the road became, for most of the time, a cul-de-sac, the Bustard became a Gunners' pub, if ever there was one. Gunners of all ranks mingle in its bars and Larkhill students hold their course parties there. And, in later years, old field Gunners, feeling a nostalgia for Salisbury Plain, return to the Bustard for their reunions.

RICHARD ELLEY

ON the parade-ground at Omdurman — name famous in Britain's military history — no British bimbashi perspires in his smart topee, watching the lean, silent men from Kordofan and Equatoria drill in the gathering heat of six a.m.

The Sudan Defence Force has been fully Sudanised. British troops remain in Khartoum, hard by Omdurman, but the British officers with the Turkish ranks of bimbashi, kaimakam and miralai have been withdrawn from the Force to which they were seconded. The last British Kaid has inspected a guard of honour from the tribesmen he commanded, and has left. For the first time in 57 years, no serving British officer is directly employed by the Sudan Government.

Officered by Sudanese, many of whom will continue to fly to Britain for courses at Camberley, Warminster, Chatham or Manorbier, the Sudan Defence Force is now on its own. It will continue to act as a steady influence in a land of a million square miles, stretching from desert sand to equatorial swamp. It is a proud little force, with as smart a turn-out as can be found in Africa—or Asia. In recent years it has learned many technical skills, notably in the fields of signalling and engineering.

Though the Sudan Defence Force itself was not formed until 1925, British officers have commanded Sudanese troops since the days of General Gordon. The Camel Corps—one of the four components of the Force—took part in the Gordon relief expedition.

For eleven years after the murder of Gordon, the dervishes held sway over the Sudan and menaced the Egyptian frontier. Then the British Government

Since Gordon's day British officers have commanded Sudanese troops. That link is broken.

NOW THEY ARE ON THEIR OWN

decided on strong action. The Egyptian Army under Lord Kitchener, its Sirdar (commander-in-chief), advanced up the Nile, laying a railway as it went. In 1898 the force was strengthened by a British brigade, and in September the Battle of Omdurman (in which Sir Winston Churchill charged) was fought. Two days later, British and Egyptian flags flew over Gordon's ruined palace.

Lord Kitchener now combined the offices of Sirdar of the Egyptian Army and Governor-General of the Sudan. He governed the Sudan in the names of both Britain and Egypt, and to run the Government he depended on his British Army officers. They headed the Customs, the Posts and Telegraphs and other Government departments, and they were appointed Governors of Provinces.

It was as well that they were soldiers as well as administrators. For 14 months after Omdurman, there was still fighting against the dervishes, and for many years risings occurred among the turbulent Sudanese. More than one of the provincial governors had to fight for his life.



It was a difficult country to govern in other ways, too. Its area was more than ten times that of the United Kingdom. Its communications were few. The population was estimated to have been 8,500,000 in 1892, of whom 3,500,000 had been killed by famine and disease and 3,250,000 in battle and tribal warfare by 1898. With this tremendous problem the graduates of Sandhurst and the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich coped successfully.

In 1899, when Kitchener went off to the Boer War, he was succeeded by General Sir Reginald Wingate (who died last year, aged 91, and who was a cousin of Major-General Orde Wingate of Chindit fame). He organised many expeditions to pacify the Sudan, and ended slavery.

General Wingate realised that the Army officers, owing to the nature of their profession, could not give the continuity necessary for the government of the Sudan. In 1901, the first civilian adminis-

trators arrived to join what was to become the Sudan Political Service. Some officers left the Army to serve as civilians.

The head of the Government remained a soldier, however. General Wingate left in 1916 (he was later High Commissioner in Egypt), and was succeeded by Major-General Sir Lee Stack, who was assassinated in 1924 in Cairo. One result of this crime was that Britain demanded the withdrawal of all Egyptian officers and units in the Sudan.

This left in the Sudan a British garrison, and battalions of Sudanese which had belonged to the Egyptian Army and had been officered by British, Egyptian and Sudanese. On these the modern Sudan Defence Force was built.

The condominium (joint government) by Britain and Egypt continued, but now for the first time a civilian Governor-General was appointed. At this time, too, the post was separated from that of Sirdar of the Egyptian Army.

Under the new arrangement, the first Kaid was appointed. He was Major-General Sir Hubert Huddleston, who had joined the Army as a private during the South African War. Commissioned and posted to the Egyptian Army, he went to the Sudan in 1910 and, except for a break in World War One, served in Egypt and the Sudan until 1930. After two years of retirement from the Army, he returned to the Sudan in 1940 as Governor-General. He held this post until 1947.

Among later Kaids, probably the best-known was General Sir William Platt, who held the appointment from 1938 to 1941. It was he who, with greatly outnumbered forces, bluffed and prodded the Italians and, when reinforced, advanced into Italian East Africa.



Typical soldiers of the Sudan Defence Force. From desert wells to jungle swamps they keep the peace. Now all their officers are Sudanese.



THEY FIRE MUSEUM PIECES

On an Army range near Birmingham enthusiasts fire flint-lock muskets and breech-loading rifles—using home made ammunition



Priming an eleven-bore flint-lock musket (1797): weapons like this were used by British soldiers of the East India Company.

MOST gun collectors are content to hang their old-fashioned firearms on a wall and bask in the reflected glory of their possessions.

Not so the members of the Society of Gun Collectors at Sutton Coldfield near Birmingham, who have one of the best and most varied collections of old firearms in the country. Once a month they gather up their ancient muskets, rifles, pistols and fowling-pieces and fire them on the Army's rifle ranges at Kingsbury.

In their homes they make their own ammunition from odd pieces of lead piping. Some fabricate their own percussion caps, which are difficult to buy these days. One enthusiast at least makes his own cartridge cases and bullets for a 100-years-old pistol.

The Society was formed four years ago. Today many of its members are Territorials who belong to units in the Birmingham

area. Each member keeps his own weapons under lock and key (generally in his bedroom) for they are classified as "lethal" and must be licensed by the police.

In four years the Society has collected more than 100 old British, American and German firearms. Some were picked up for as little as twenty-five shillings in second-hand shops.

Left: From lead piping Bombardier David Perkins "brews up" a batch of eleven-bore musket balls over a gas fire. Below: Weapons being fired here include (left) an 1863 Mont Storm breech-loading carbine, and a 1797 eleven-bore flint-lock musket (second from left).





Others were bought from public houses where they decorated bar parlours and some were found by friends among the rubbish stored in their attics. Almost all the American weapons were obtained from gun collectors in the United States in exchange for old British firearms.

The collection shows the development of firearms through a period of nearly 200 years. The oldest—and the pride of them all—is a British Watkin eleven-bore flint-lock musket made in 1720, and the most recent a German Luger pistol of 1915 fitted with a detachable butt stock, one of the earliest machine-carbines. In between are a 1797 flint-lock musket used by soldiers of the East India Company, a Brunswick rifle of 1820 which fires a .703 belted ball and bears the royal crest of Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia, an 1850 Enfield eleven-bore musket converted from the flint-lock musket, a Mont Storm breech-loading carbine of 1863, and an 1892 Winchester .44 which still fires 40 rounds a minute. There are also an 1860 Enfield .577 muzzle-loader with bayonet and an 1871 Snider "serjeant's rifle" with five rifled grooves instead of the usual three.

The oldest pistol is an 1850 Witney Colt ball-and-cup weapon which belongs to ex-Corporal John Redmond, who lost an arm fighting with 6th Airborne Division in France but is

still able to fire weapons with considerable accuracy. The Society also has a large selection of powder horns and bullet moulds which are in constant use, as most of the weapons fired are muzzle-loaders.

SOLDIER saw how accurate and reliable are many of the old weapons when some of the members gave a demonstration at Kingsbury Ranges.

At 30 yards six of them fired six shots at 12-inch targets, using pistols at least 90 years old. Three scored hits with all shots; the other three missed only twice. First-class shots would have been pleased with the same performance using modern revolvers.

On the rifle range at 100 yards the Society's Secretary, Bombardier David Perkins, formerly of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and now a Territorial in 80 Anti-Aircraft Fire Control Troop, scored a bull with his first shot with the 1820 Brunswick rifle and hit an "inner" with the 1797 flint-lock musket. There were very few misfires with either pistol or musket.

During practice the members experimented with charges of different strength and compared performances. The information all went into the record book against the day when the members would meet the only other similar club in Britain, the Muzzle-Loaders Club of Cheltenham, in competition.



Left: John Redmond, who lost an arm as a parachutist, loads an 1850 ball-and-cap Witney Colt pistol. He makes his own ammunition. Above: From a modern car, an old-time armory is unloaded.

Bombardier Perkins and his brother Brian, who are among the Society's keenest members, are the great-great-grandsons of William Greener, who in 1841 invented the expanding bullet to fit rifled muskets and was rewarded with £1000 by the British Government. They learned much of their knowledge of firearms from Greener's famous book on the history of weapons, "Gunnery in 1858."

What do the members learn from their hobby? "Most of us have acquired a good knowledge of the theory and practical use

of firearms from the days of the flint-lock muskets to the present-day rifles," says Bombardier David Perkins. "Firing them has made us better shots and has taught us much about ballistics. We feel we are better soldiers because of our heightened interest in weapons."

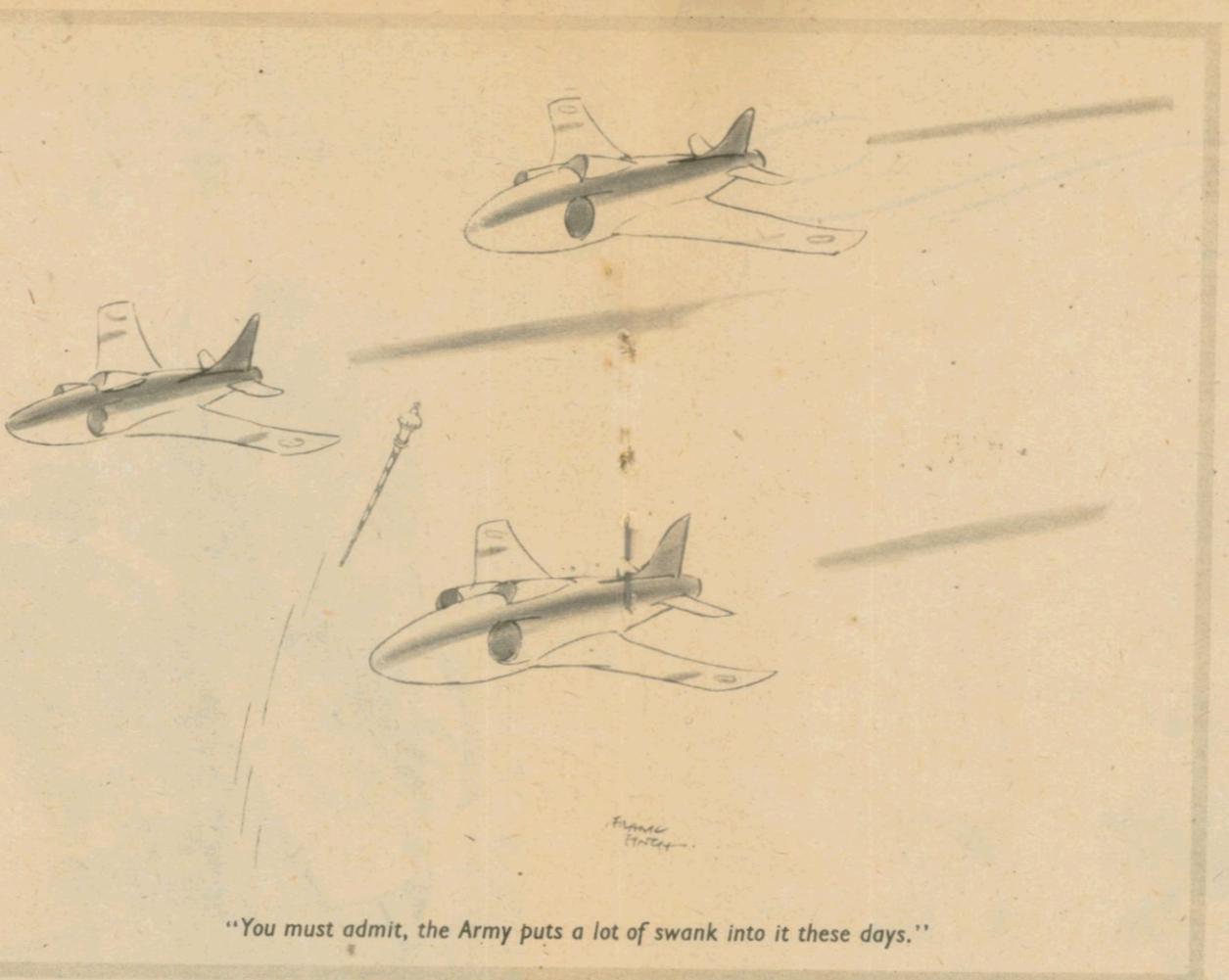
The Society hopes soon to arrange pistol matches with Territorial and Regular Army units in the Birmingham area. "The result," says Bombardier Perkins, "should be an eye-opener for those who think we are a lot of cranks."

All set for a siege! The bedroom of an ancient weapons enthusiast.

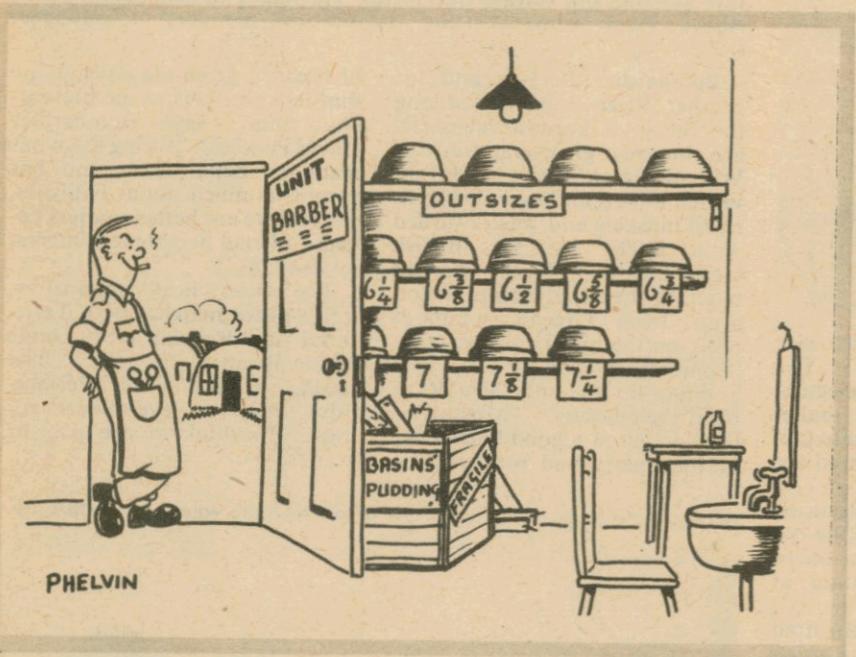




"Come on now, quickly, what are four sixes?"



"You must admit, the Army puts a lot of swank into it these days."



PHELVIN

Soldier HUMOUR



"According to my corn, we're in for a spot of rain."



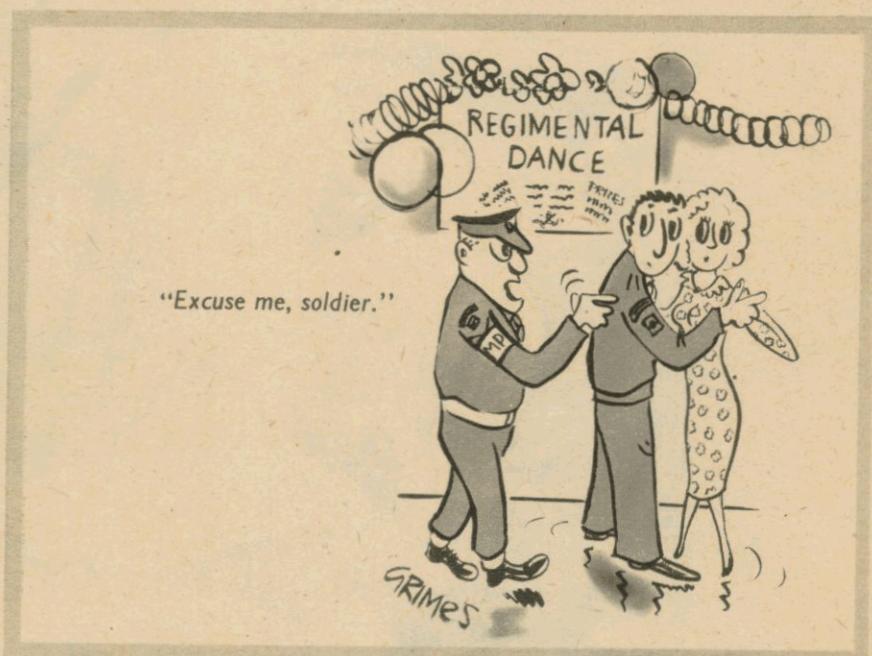
"Flattery will get you nowhere."



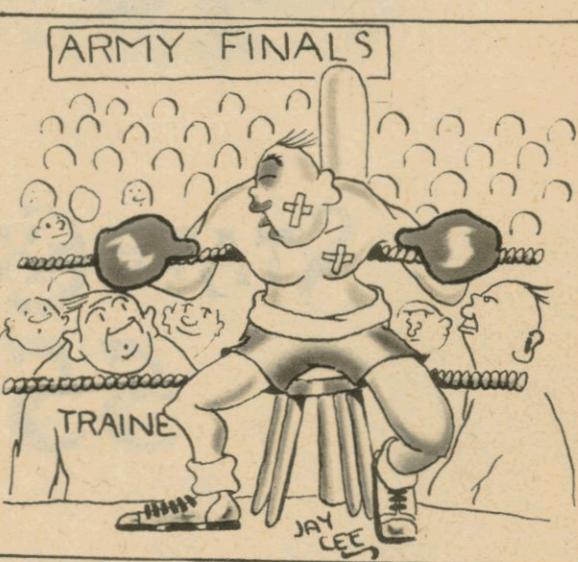
"And so we thought the little black line on the map was a bridge, did we, Simpkins?"



DAUBERANT.



"Excuse me, soldier."



"Every time that Signals bloke hits me he wants to know what strength I'm receiving him."



At Home - or Overseas . . .



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THIS IS THE CORPORAL

THE British Army is to try out the American Corporal guided missile. This was revealed by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Field-Marshal Sir John Harding.

The Corporal is a ground-to-ground rocket weapon with a range of approximately 50 miles. It travels at many times the speed of sound and is radio-controlled throughout its flight. The weapon is carried to its launching site on its own transporter-erector.

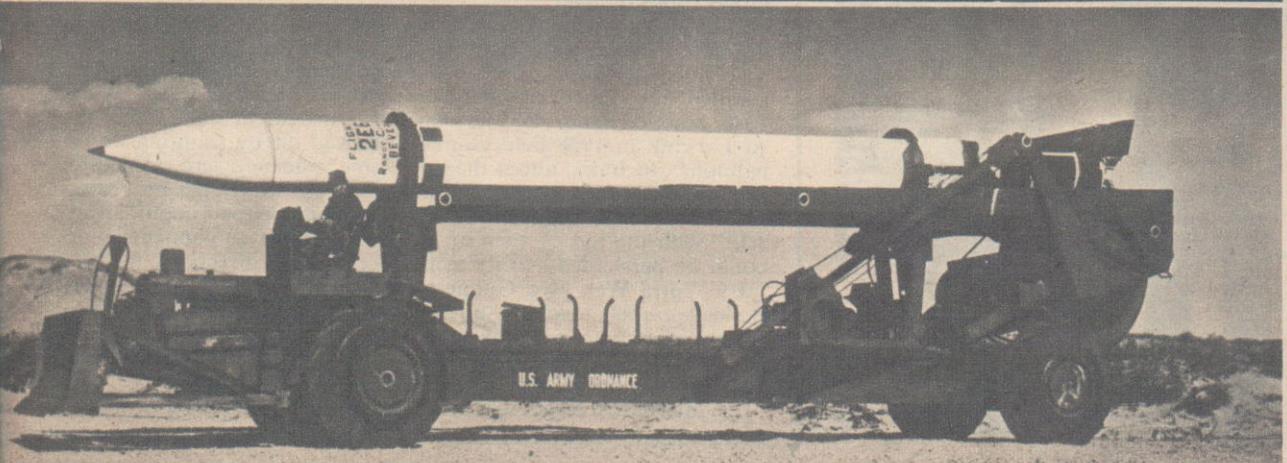
No indication has been given as to where the British Army will carry out its experiments with Corporal. Clearly it is a job for the wide-open spaces.

Anti-aircraft guided missiles have been taken over by the Royal Air Force. Since Corporal is a form of long-range ground artillery, it would seem a suitable weapon to be operated by field Gunners.

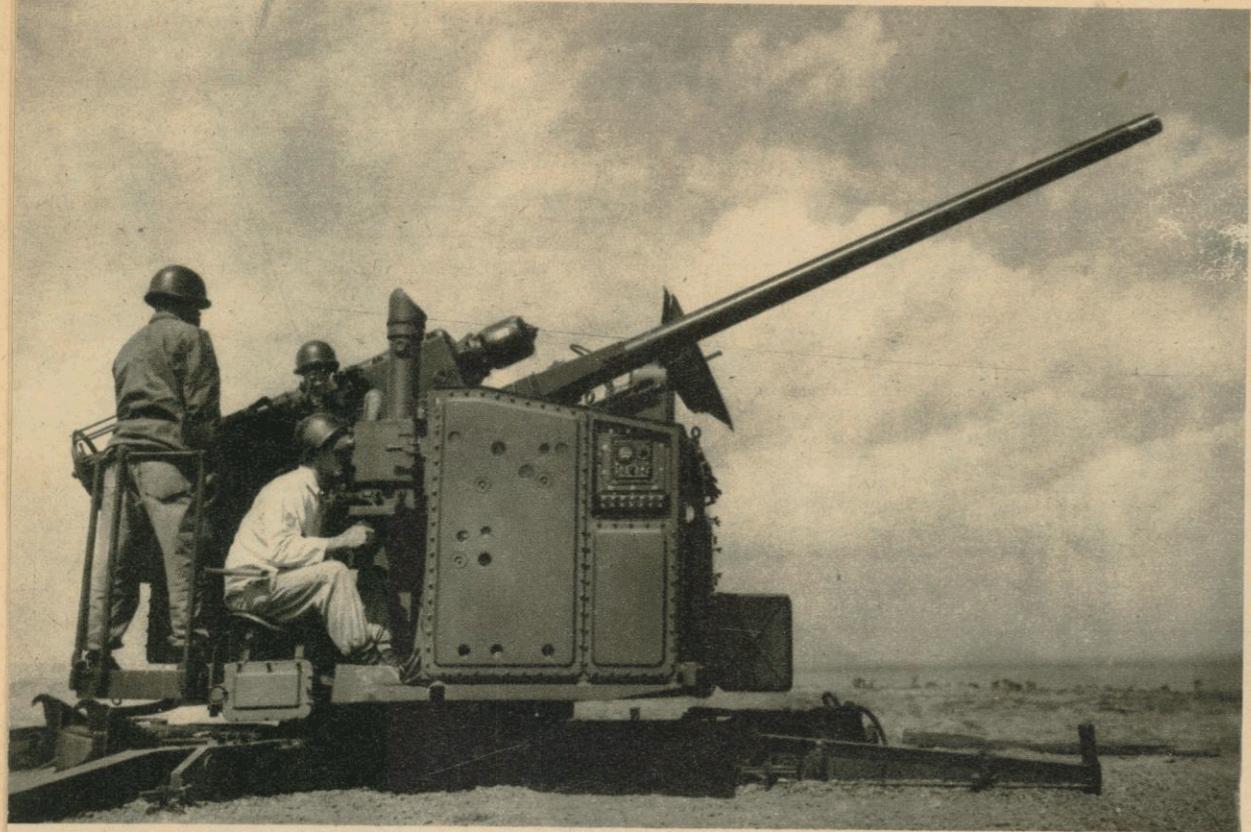


As the Corporal rests vertically on the launcher a member of the crew inspects it from a mobile cage. Below: the weapon on its tactical transporter-erector, ready for moving. Right: in flight over the White Sands Proving Ground, New Mexico.

Photographs: US Information Services



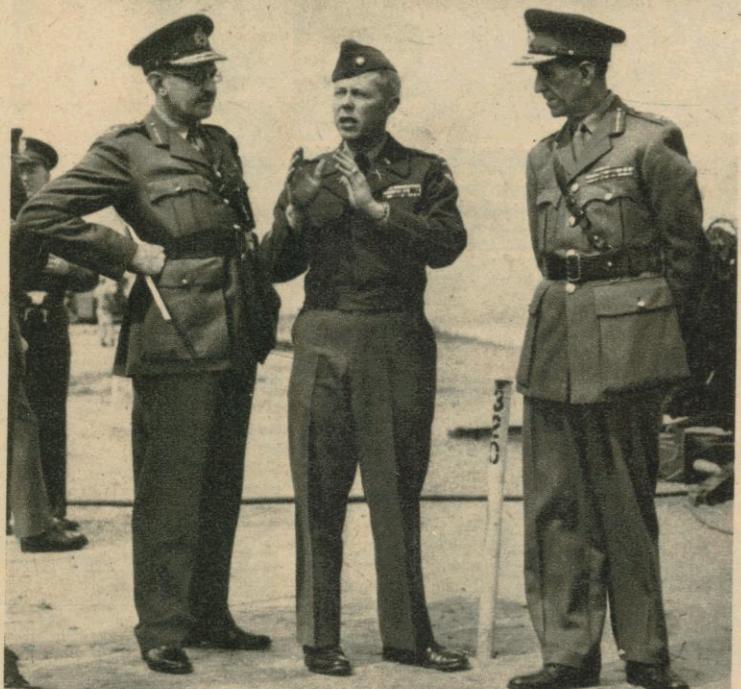
U.S. ARMY ORDNANCE



The gun with inbuilt radar and predictor: it finds its target at 15 miles—and clings on to it.

The latest in heavy automatics shows its paces at an English ack-ack practice camp

Colonel Charles C. Blumenfeld, US Army, talks technicalities with Lieut-General Sir Maurice Chilton, Commander-in-Chief Anti-Aircraft Command (right) and Major-General G. D. Fanshawe.



THE SKYSWEEPER COMES

THE first American battalion in Europe to be equipped with the "Skysweeper" 75-mm anti-aircraft gun has demonstrated this sagacious weapon to British Gunners at Weybourne Practice Camp, Norfolk.

The "Skysweeper" combines gun, predictor and radar in one unit (in a British anti-aircraft shoot these components are separate). It is designed to engage targets flying at supersonic speeds.

At 15 miles the gun's radar picks up the target and tracks it until it is within firing range. Automatically the gun lays on the future position of the target

as computed by the predictor. At the appropriate range the gun commander presses the firing button and the gun, which is magazine-fed, automatically fires as many bursts as are deemed necessary. The rate of fire is 45 rounds a minute, but short bursts are normally fired in order not to exhaust magazines too rapidly. The rounds have proximity fuses, exploding within some 60 feet of the target.

Then they turned back to the old 3.7. . . .

SOMETHING

"GIVE us something to shoot at!" is the perpetual cry of the anti-aircraft Gunner.

He wants a realistic, fast-flying target which can be peppered with high explosive—without hurting anybody. As the speed of military aircraft increases, the task of providing such a target grows more difficult.

It has been a problem for nearly half a century. The first aerial practice targets were balloons, or model airships or aircraft suspended on wires. Recent correspondence in *The Gunner* has recalled how mock airships were "flown" across a valley at an Irish practice camp 45 years ago—for benefit of field Gunners. At Larkhill in 1908 field Gunners showed off by shooting down balloons. In India, about the same time, riflemen were trained to fire on miniature aeroplanes hauled across the range by ropes.

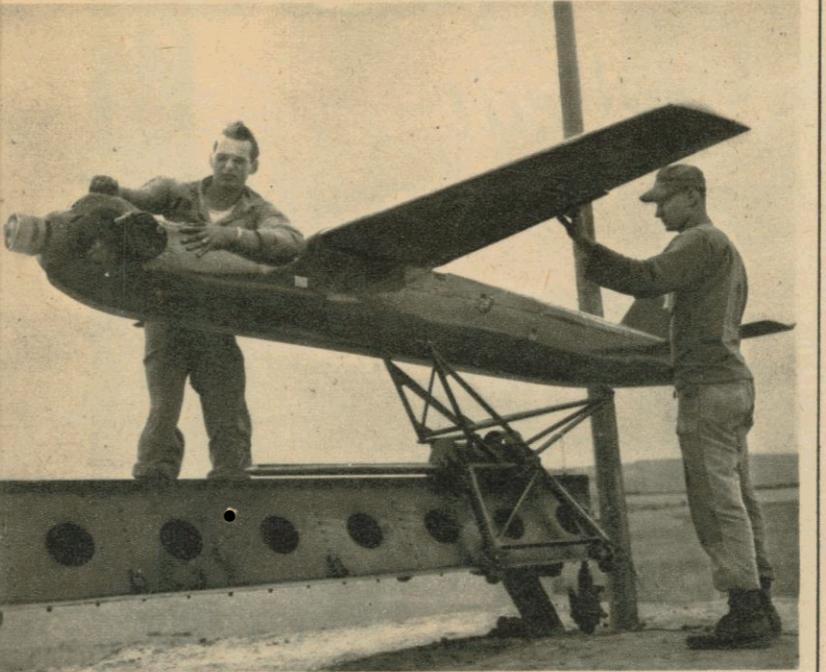
In World War One anti-aircraft Gunners went through "silent drill" with the aid of such of our own aircraft as happened—or could be persuaded—to fly in the appropriate direction.

By World War Two Gunners at practice camps were shooting at sleeve targets towed by aircraft—the best type of target so far. When radar came in, it was necessary to fit the sleeve with a device which would enable the receivers to pick it up clearly, without risk of confusing sleeve with aircraft.

An alternative target was produced in the "Queen Bee," a radio-



Controlling the pilotless target with a miniature "joystick": Captain Myron Fox, US Army.



This American rocket-assisted target aircraft can fly for an hour at more than 225 miles an hour and simulate most aircraft manoeuvres.

TO WEYBOURNE

The target plane is hit. A parachute has opened to break the shock of its landing. The craft will be repaired and sent up again.



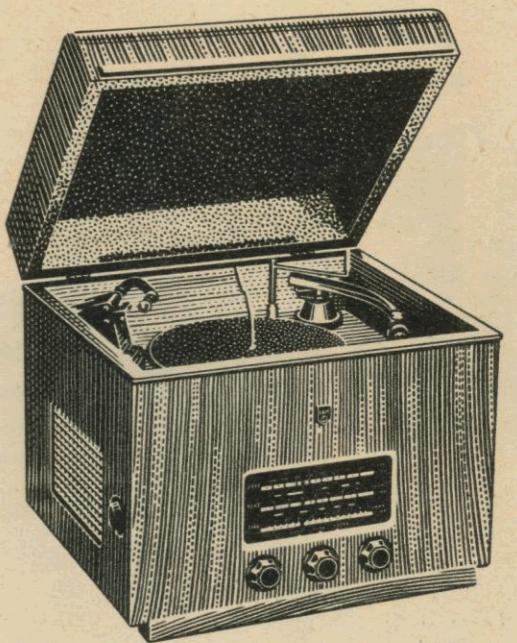
TO SHOOT AT

controlled midget aircraft which could be made to jink by the operator on the ground. But the "Queen Bee" proved temperamental, and if the craft was shot up and destroyed the cost was considerable. A more recent variation of the "Queen Bee"—the pilotless target aircraft—has been fitted with a parachute so that when winged it will fall to the ground—or the sea—without wrecking itself. The Americans have a rocket-assisted target aircraft (see this page). Although the speed of these targets is slow by modern fighter standards, an illusion of greater speed can be given by flying them close to the guns.

One of the latest target ideas to be developed in Britain is a small wooden glider which is towed by high-speed jet aircraft. The glider, built of pine cased with plywood, is sprayed with a metal finish and has metal reflectors mounted on its wings. In appearance it resembles a twin-boomed aircraft with three tail fins. This target has been proved to be capable of flight at speeds up to 450-500 miles an hour. For take-off a run of 1500 yards is necessary; for landing a parachute brake has been fitted to limit the run.

The Americans have a high-altitude towed target similar in appearance to a jet plane without a wing. It is 19 feet long, constructed of a tough plastic specially developed for the purpose. When hit it does not shatter and is easily repaired.

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**Guinness with
your meals**
-how good it is!



THE TV BATTLEFIELD

THE Royal Signals had a show-stealing exhibit at this year's Radio Exhibition in London. They presented a glimpse of the day when a commander may turn his back on his maps and chinagraph pencils and watch the battle on television screens.

The main exhibit on the Corps stand was a large relief map, prepared by 5 Corps Signal Regiment, showing the lay-out of an Army Signal Support Unit, the unit which calls up air support for ground troops.

From loudspeakers came a recorded conversation between an air liaison officer and the commander of a formation of aircraft. At the air liaison officer's direction, the aircraft attacked four enemy tanks. On the map, coloured lights indicated bombs dropping and simulated the brewing-up of two tanks.

Trained on to the battlefield was a new Marconi industrial television camera, traversing on the top of a tall rod whence it had a helicopter-eye view of the battle. On television screens around the map, the picture was clear and detailed—the lay-out of the country, the tanks, the flashes and the brew-ups.

The television camera looks down on the battlefield, which is reproduced in the set seen on left.

This new loud-hailer has no valves to be damaged, no batteries to run down, no wires to tangle. You just turn the handle and speak into the microphone. But RSMs don't need it.

Pictures: SOLDIER Cameraman A. Blundell.

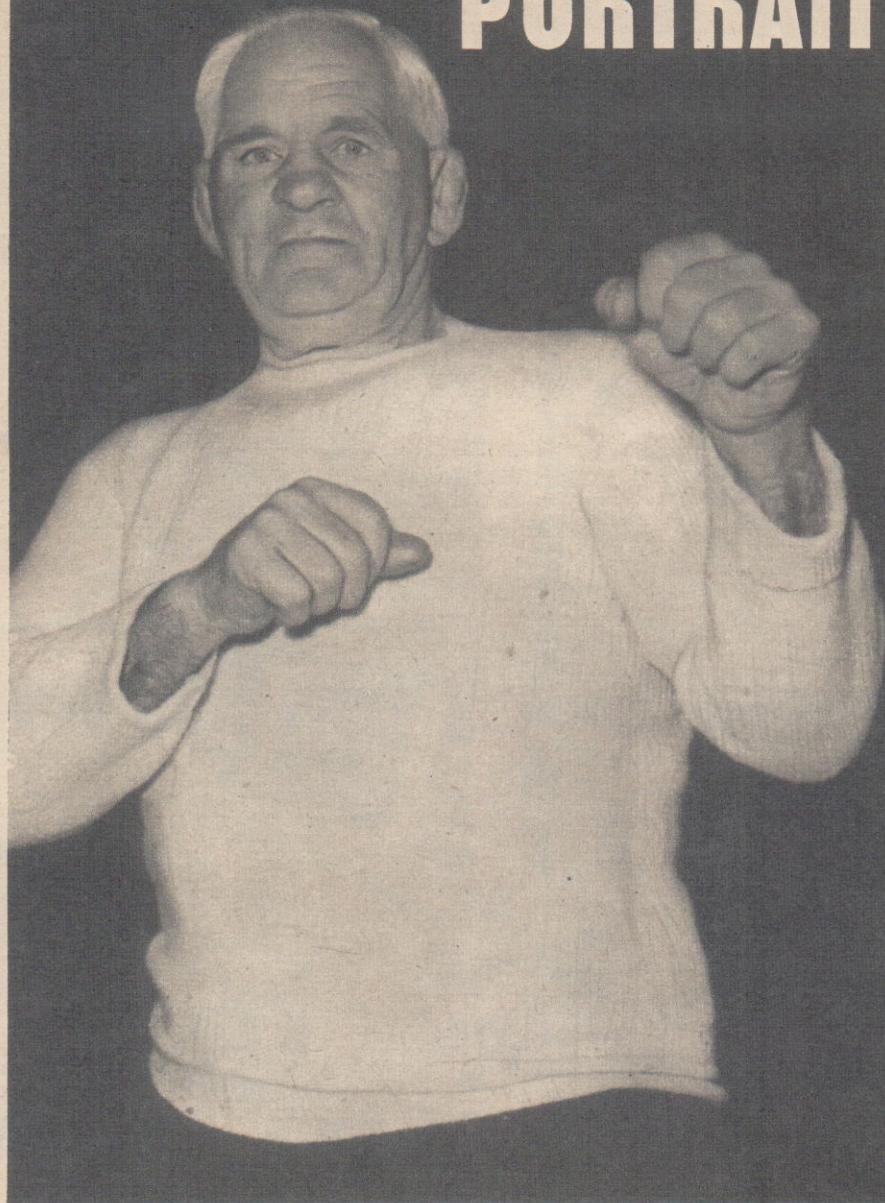


"BUILD a desert island radio set, with as few factory-made components as possible," they said to Corporal Ken Capps an instructor in 3 Training Battalion, REME.

So Corporal Capps assembled a wooden box, scraps of silver paper, a metal corset-stay, a length of barbed wire, a cap-badge, two keys, a teaspoon, an old car gasket, cigarette packets, cardboard cylinders which had contained a kitchen scourer, and grate polish (which is useful for resistances). He added wire, two valves, a loudspeaker and batteries — and tuned in Gilbert Harding.

Corporal Capps, a National Serviceman, is a power engineer in civil life.

PORTRAIT



Dusty Miller all set for his famous left hook which won many fights. In 15 years he was unbeaten by any Serviceman. Below: In Sandhurst's gymnasium the former champion discusses team prospects with SSI J. Smith, APTC. Right: Darning socks is part of Dusty Miller's job as Sandhurst's sports storeman.

of a FIGHTER

A barrack-room fracas started Dusty Miller on a remarkable boxing career. At 65 he is often in the ring — teaching Sandhurst cadets how to use their fists

Pictures: SOLDIER cameraman FRANK TOMPSETT.

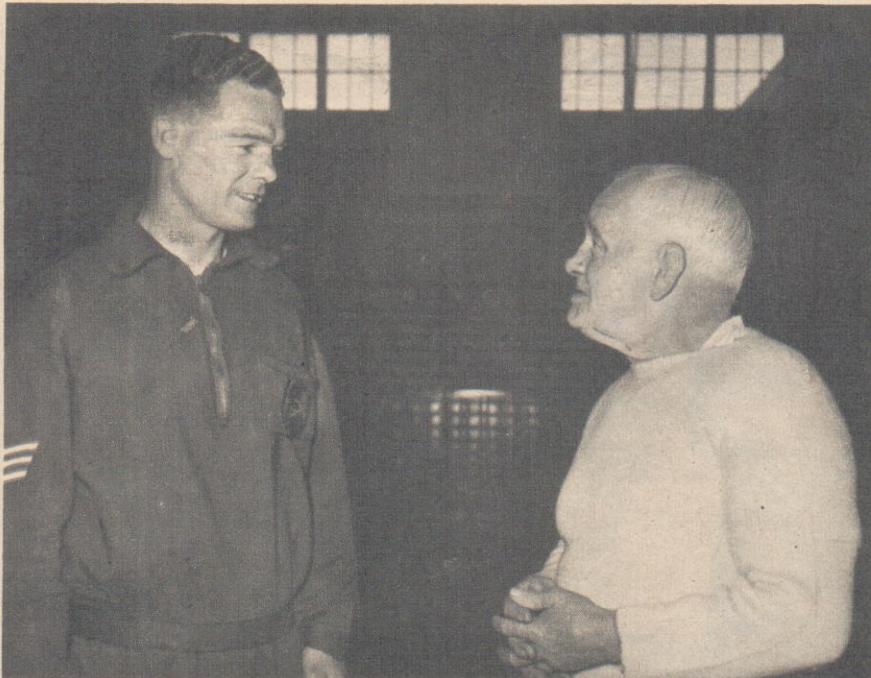
FORTY-SIX years ago in a barracks in Ireland a lance-corporal stole a recruit's breakfast. The recruit leaped from his seat and knocked him out with a vicious left hook.

When he appeared before the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Hugh Coleridge, the recruit expected a stiff sentence for striking an NCO, especially as the lance-corporal was a regimental boxer. To his astonishment the Colonel ordered him to report to a company quartermaster-serjeant for boxing training and appointed him his personal servant.

Neither the Colonel nor the recruit regretted the decision. It was the start of the remarkable boxing career of Dusty Miller—otherwise ex-Company Serjeant-Major Jack Miller who became one of the Army's most redoubtable lightweight champions and who never lost a fight to a serving soldier, sailor or airman between 1910 and 1925. In 1918, after having been wounded three times in Flanders and losing a kidney, he beat the American world lightweight champion.

Today, at the age of 65, with two cauliflower ears, Dusty Miller is still boxing for the Army—teaching cadets at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, where he doubles his job as sports storeman with that of boxing instructor.

Dusty Miller has always been a fighter. One of eleven children in a London family, he never went to school and could not read or write until he was 21. He ran away from home at the age of eleven and joined a travelling circus as a clown and tumbler. Then unemployment cut attendances at the circus and Dusty was out of a job. He joined the Buffs, but left after seven months because he could not knuckle down to Army discipline. For a time he earned his living



Continued on page 30 ➤

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And, it isn't only sergeant who'll respond to this technique! Get some today and see what it does off-parade—say at a Saturday-night dance on leave. Whew... steady, Casanova!



Vaseline * HAIR TONIC

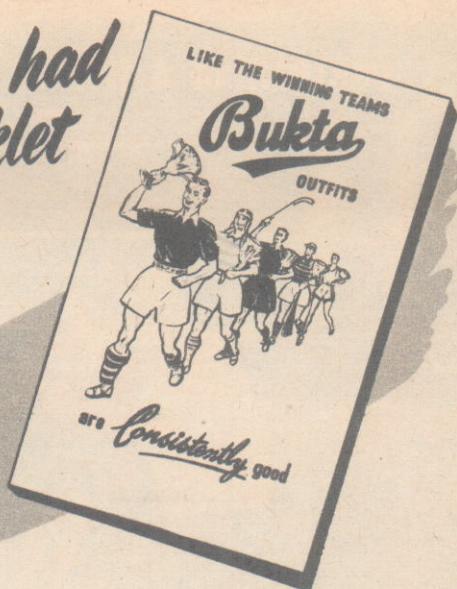
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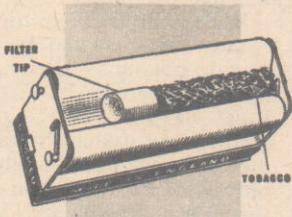
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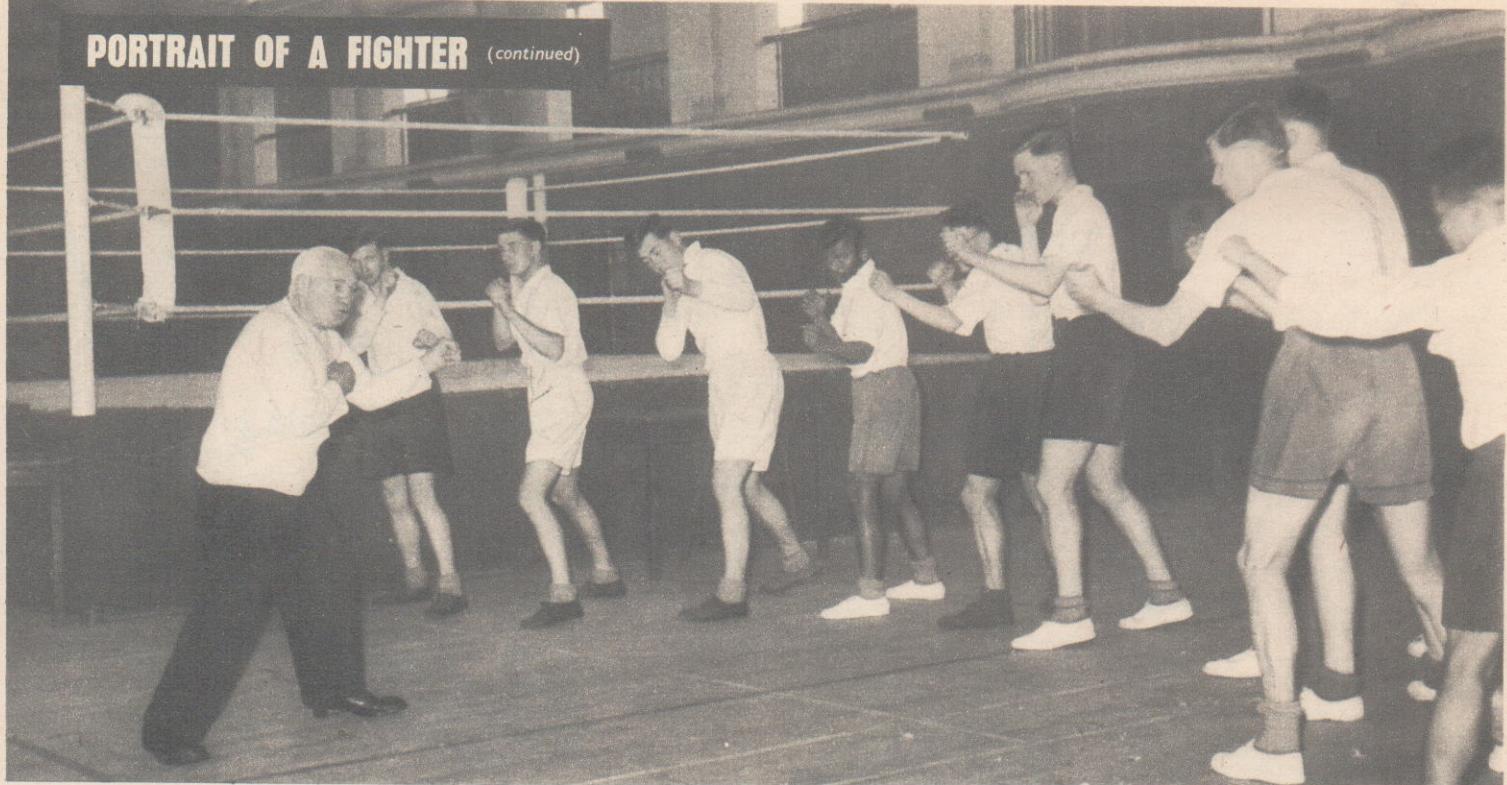
Place the Filter Tip one third distance from the end of the machine, fill remainder with tobacco as shown. When cigarette has been removed from machine, nip off the surplus cigarette paper.

Try splitting the tip and putting only the filling into your machine. The tip will adjust itself to any size cigarette, major or minor, and the result will astonish you. (Don't muss up the filling—it is horizontally drawn specially for the job).

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PORTRAIT OF A FIGHTER

(continued)



selling newspapers, doing odd jobs in circuses and cleaning out boilers in Dover Harbour.

Then, in 1908, he enlisted in the Loyal Regiment and was sent to Ireland. Within a few weeks he became regimental light-weight champion. At the same time he was learning how to read and write under the tutorship of the Colonel's wife.

In 1909 Dusty turned professional boxer and was entered for the Army feather-weight championship (professionals were not banned from Army boxing until 1925). He reached the final but was beaten on points. The next year he switched to the light-weight division and won the Army and Royal Navy championships. In 1913 he became Army Open light-weight champion and in 1914 won the feather-weight title.

Apart from his Army fights Dusty Miller fought many professional bouts with civilians and in 1912 met "Seaman" Hayes for the lightweight championship of Great Britain. He was narrowly beaten on points over 15 rounds and had eleven teeth knocked out and four ribs broken.

Three months later Dusty had his revenge in a non-title fight with the British champion and this time won on points.

When World War One opened Dusty, now a corporal, went with his battalion to France and in October of 1914 was seriously wounded. After losing a kidney Dusty feared his boxing days were over. In 1915 he was shot through the right leg and once more at Ypres in 1917 collected a "Blighty one" in the foot.

It was not until 1918, when he was in Cologne with the British Army of Occupation, that Sergeant Miller had the chance to see whether his wounds had affected his boxing skill. They had not.

That year in the Allied Services' tournament at the Albert Hall he beat Ritchie Mitchell, the American world light-weight champion, but could not claim the title as the championship was not at stake. In the same year he also won the Rhine Army light-weight championship and beat the American Army champion, Kid Murray.

In 1920 he became Inter-Services light-weight champion, a title which he again won two years later at the age of 33.

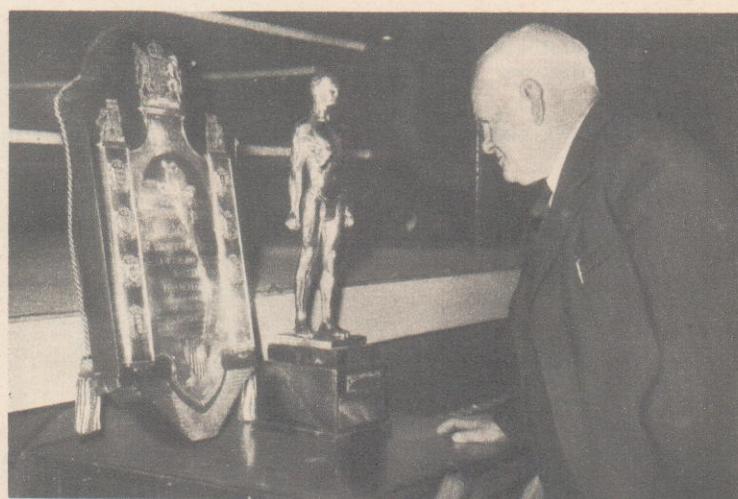
When Sergeant Miller returned to Britain in 1922 he was transferred to the Army Physical Training Staff and promoted company sergeant-major. For six years he was boxing instructor to cadets at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. There are many Regular officers of high rank in all parts of the world today who had their first boxing lessons from Dusty Miller.

In 1928 he became boxing instructor to the British Army, a job he held until he retired from the Army in 1938. All the Army champions of those years passed through his hands.

With some £4000 in his pocket — most of it earned by professional boxing — Dusty Miller opened a sports shop at Aldershot. It failed. To pay his creditors he sold all his cups and medals (some were bought by his old regiment and are on show at the Loyal Regiment's Museum at Preston).

But Dusty was always a fighter. Soon he was appointed to the physical training staff of the Duke of York's Royal Military School at Dover. After the war he worked in several civilian schools as caretaker and part-time physical training instructor before rejoining Sandhurst as boxing instructor and sports storeman.

"You must get all your weight behind the punch." Dusty Miller shows Sandhurst cadets how to do it. Below: Once Dusty Miller helped the Loyal Regiment to win these two Army team boxing trophies.



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PRIVATE'S NEED PLENTY OF SLEEP

said Lord Roberts

Clean, simple, valiant, well-beloved,

Flawless in faith and fame,
Whom neither ease nor honours moved
An hair's breadth from his aim.

THE poet was Rudyard Kipling, the subject Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, who had just died visiting Indian troops in France in 1914.

There were many other tributes to the little man who had seen round-shot fired at the siege of Delhi, yet lived to inspect the first German aeroplane to be shot down. "Bobs Bahadur" (Bobs the Gallant) was one of Britain's best-beloved soldiers.

Had he been of military age today, Roberts would not have been able to enter the Army at all. In a welcome and well-authenticated biography, "The Life of Lord Roberts" (Hollis and Carter, 30s) David James says the infant Frederick Sleigh Roberts, who was born in India, nearly died of brain fever. The doctors gave him up. His father, an officer of the Honourable East India Company's Army, resorted to the practice of the hill-women who left their babies by a stream and induced sleep by arranging for a gentle and continuous flow of water over their heads. The child's life was saved—but the illness left one eye blind.

Young Roberts trained as a cadet first at Sandhurst then in the East India Company's school at Addiscombe. Here it was the practice for cadets passing out at the top of the list to be gazetted to the Engineers, and the next group to the Artillery. The rest went to the Infantry (except those who elected to join the more expensive Cavalry). Roberts qualified for Artillery.

It was during the Indian Mutiny that he won his Victoria Cross for capturing a standard and for gallantry throughout the campaign. He was at the relief of Lucknow, where he climbed a tower and hoisted a regimental colour, to show the defenders how near relief was.

For 18 years he served on the Staff, except for a single day when he commanded troops in the field during the Lushai expedition of 1871-2. Whist, croquet and the flute were among his recreations, and he once amused himself by taking a course in telegraphy.

Then came the second Afghan War, in 1878. Roberts was given command of a column and won a brilliant victory at Peiwar Kotal, against an enemy strongly encamped in a depression at the top of a steep mountain face. Next, with 7000 men, he marched through hostile country to Kabul, the Afghan capital, defeating a large body of Afghans on the

way. While he was at Kabul, the Afghans rose again. It has been estimated that there were more than 100,000 of them against Roberts' 7000 men (from one heliograph station came a subaltern's message: "The crowds remind me of Epsom Downs on Derby Day"). The Afghans were out-generaled and out-fought.

Now came the famous march to Kandahar (which Roberts himself considered less difficult than the original march to Kabul). In Kandahar, troops of the Bombay Army, who had been defeated at Maiwand, were surrounded. For more than three weeks, Roberts' force, now increased to 10,000, disappeared from the knowledge of the world. They were marching, averaging at times 17 miles a day, through hostile, difficult country, with no base on which to fall back. Then they appeared at Kandahar, linked with the garrison and trounced the Afghan hordes.

Roberts, already a hero to his troops, returned home to be a hero among his countrymen. From now on, his career was to be always as commander-in-chief—first of Madras, then of India,

Ireland, in South Africa, and finally of the British Army.

He was a great reformer. In India his innovations included dairies, cooking prizes, soldiers' clubs and the Army Temperance Association ("I consider that temperance rests on a far higher platform than total abstinence," he wrote.) His aims included raising the status of the soldier, and raising the status of the non-commissioned officer above the rank and file. He found that ordinary private soldiers became prematurely aged, in comparison with serjeants, servants and orderly room staffs. He blamed it on the excessive night duty which fell on the private and wrote: "I am quite sure that soldiers should be spared 'sentry-go' as much as possible, and that that army will be the healthiest in which men have the greatest number of nights in bed." He believed the soldier should have all his pay without deductions. He condemned the seven-year enlistment period and believed the Army should comprise three-years men, who would form the bulk of the Reserve, and long-service men, most of whom



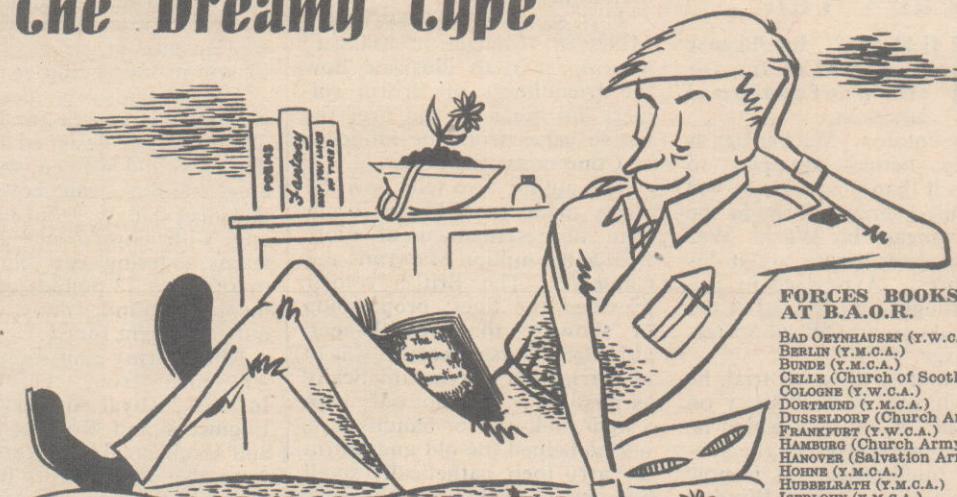
Lord Roberts: the only man to hold the Garter, the Victoria Cross and the Order of Merit.

would make the Army their career. This system would obviate sending soldiers into civil life without pension or training for a career. He believed that minor crimes should be effaced from a soldier's conduct sheet after a period of good conduct.

Lord Roberts was Commander-In-Chief, Ireland (where, in his sixties, he learned to ride a bicycle and pedalled around Dublin) when the South African War broke out. The day he was appointed Commander-in-Chief, South Africa, was also the day on

Continued on page 34

The Dreamy Type



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which he heard that his only son had been dangerously wounded at Colenso while trying to save the guns. Lieutenant Roberts died shortly afterwards; he received the Victoria Cross posthumously. One of the gun-carriages he attempted to save later bore his father's coffin.

Swallowing his grief, Lord Roberts sailed for Cape Town. Bold decisions were needed. His transport ran into trouble at a time he could ill spare the battalions to extricate it. For his sake, men marched on half rations to Bloemfontein.

The decisive phase over in South Africa, Roberts returned to Britain, to receive further honours and £100,000. Now he became the last Commander-in-Chief of the British Army. But the office had deteriorated; he was disgusted by a request to keep an account of postage stamps issued to him. Yet he continued with his reforms. The Staff system which he advocated—and which has since stood up to two world wars—came into being, and with it the Army Council.

Lord Roberts' earldom was granted with a special remainder to his daughters, in honour of the son who would have inherited the title. A great-grandson, who would have succeeded, after his aunt and mother, was killed during the Norway campaign of World War Two.

Sir Compton's "Fairy Tale"

MILITARY Intelligence is a fount of fun for the professional humorist.

Sir Compton Mackenzie is probably better equipped to draw on it than most. He served as an Intelligence Officer in the Mediterranean in World War One and later wrote about his experiences. A passage in one book brought him to trial at the Old Bailey on an Official Secrets Act charge.

Immediately after his trial, he sat down and wrote "Water on the Brain," a novel in which he let his fancy run free on the subject of Intelligence. It is now republished (*Chatto and Windus, 10s 6d*). In a new preface the author insists that it is "only a grotesque fairy tale" yet claims that "Secret Intelligence do, in very fact, as often as not behave like characters created by the Marx Brothers" and that it has "become impossible for me to devise any ludicrous situation the absurdity of which will not soon be surpassed by officialdom."

That preface may be taken hard in the secret haunts of MI 5, but most of its members should be thick-skinned by now.

Just about everything happens to Major Blenkinsop, the new head of the Mendacious section of MQ 99(E). He is spied on by

another section of Intelligence; he is suspected of fomenting a revolution of Scottish Nationalists; and he is suspected by Scottish Nationalists of trying to sabotage their movement. His wife believes his secret comings and goings are connected with the blonde wife of a banana-importer whose business Blenkinsop uses as "cover." The crowning injury comes when the banana-importer, who writes thrillers in his spare time, unknowingly sets the scene for a Secret Service novel in the very place which is the secret headquarters of MQ 99(E).

First White Men They Saw: Jocks

UNTIL a patrol of the Seaforth Highlanders penetrated to their jungle hide-out in Malaya, the Semelai tribe had never seen a white man.

But, with the British soldier's flair for making friends with any race under the sun, the Seaforths were soon on back-slapping terms with the aborigines. Within a few minutes after their arrival the Jocks were handing round cigarettes and biscuits and soon the tribal chief was organising a feast in their honour. The younger men and women, bare to the waist and wearing their best sarongs and bamboo jewellery, waited on the soldiers and plied them with a brew of bananas and sugar cane from earthenware jars which had been half-buried in scrub for more than a month.

This story is told by Harry Miller in "Menace in Malaya" (*Harrap, 15s*) to illustrate how the friendliness of British soldiers did much to win over the native tribes from the influence of Communist gangs.

The author also tells how the Army made possible the Briggs Plan of resettlement of more than half a million Malayans and Chinese. "The British soldier provided the finest propaganda in showing that resettlement, although a harsh measure, was to be carried out as sympathetically as possible . . . he not only kept a tight look-out for bandits . . . but he helped the old and infirm to carry their pathetically small bundles. The soldiers took fowls, baskets of clothes or babies from old women, mothers and grandfathers, trudged behind them along the footpath and then hoisted them all into the trucks.

"All through the country the friendly attitude of British troops was praised, and many an old Chinese man or woman grinned toothlessly and brought a hand up to the forehead and down to the chest repeatedly in the ancient Chinese form of thanks."

"Menace in Malaya" tells the full story of the six years' war which is still being waged against Communist terrorism in Malaya. It contains interesting chapters on the achievements of General Briggs and General Templer.



With Union Jacks on their rifles: the Ordnance team from Bicester.

ARMY RIVALRY IN FOUR-DAYS MARCH

Nine hundred British soldiers helped to "liberate" Nijmegen all over again

HOLLAND'S famous International Four-Days March—in which Rhine Army soldiers have competed in previous years—this summer drew its first competing Army team from Britain.

The Base Ordnance Depot at Bicester decided to show what the Royal Army Ordnance Corps could do in the way of sustained long-distance marching. The success of their team, and the stimulating reception it received, may well inspire other entries from Britain in succeeding years.

The march is organised by the Netherlands League for Physical Culture. It is designed to show that men and women, with suitable training, can cover long distances daily without fatigue—and with enjoyment. Military teams entering can choose to march with 22 pounds of equipment for 25 miles daily, or without equipment for 31.

Rhine Army contributed some 900 men from the Guards, Infantry, Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers and Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. There were also detachments from the Dutch, Belgian, Luxembourg and Swiss armies, from the Royal Air Force at Hendon, and the London police force. One section of Belgian paratroopers jumped from their aircraft on to Dutch soil the night before the march began. Most of the marchers—there were 11,000 in all, a record for the event—were Dutch civilians, the youngest of whom was 14 and the oldest 86.

Those Army competitors who had read last October's *SOLDIER* knew what to expect in the closing stages—pretty girls spraying them with *eau de cologne* as they marched, heaping flowers into their arms. Nor were they disappointed. At Nijmegen it was like Liberation

Day all over again. In fact, it was ten years since the British Army entered Nijmegen, and the cheering and waving was an echo of that splendid day. But it wasn't perfume and roses all the way—there were rain squalls aplenty.

As new competitors, the team from Bicester had got down to serious training last June. Fifty volunteers answered the original call, and began a programme of off-duty marches, stepping up the distances until they could cover 25 to 28 miles daily in less than seven hours. From the 20 survivors was picked a team of 17, led by Major C. W. Green.

Although 11 hours are allowed for the completion of a day's march, there is an unofficial competition among the military teams to complete the day's course in a reasonably fast time, and at the same time to keep the team intact. The Ordnance team completed the first day's march in seven hours—and kept up the rate for the next three days, finishing ahead of all other military units on the fourth day. Their early training enabled them to march the first three to three and a half hours of each day without a halt. They marched at attention through the main villages and paid compliments to officers of Allied countries.

Some of the unit teams were refreshed on the march from unit vehicles. The Bicester team slogged it out on water and sandwiches.

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LETTERS



NOT ESSENTIAL

In his letter (SOLDIER, August) "Serjeant-Major" says, "It is essential that a professional footballer keeps his playing fitness and football prowess up to the mark ready for his return to civil life." That he should do so is certainly desirable but it is not essential. The professional footballer has no more claim to special consideration in following his trade during his National Service than have, say, the actor, the musician or the prestidigitator, all of whom, like the professional footballer, are entertainers.

On the other hand, if the Blankshire Regiment numbers among its ranks half of Leeds United—or of the Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra—how fortunate for the Blankshires!—Major G. A. Loftouse, 9 Westbourne Grove, Scarborough.

Professional soccer players in Army teams do not necessarily make winning teams. During the last war I had the honour to play for two years for a Survey (Royal Engineers) team in the Middle East, and although we never played a single professional during that time we could count our defeats on the fingers of one hand. Professionals against whom we played had no effect on the keen amateurs we fielded.

The reason for this success can be directly traced to the lively interest shown by the company serjeant-major and one of the officers, and the "will to win" spirit of the players. Come hell or high water that serjeant-major backed us up in everything.

Is there a lesson in this for serjeant-majors today? The tendency to choose professionals merely because they are professionals should be curbed. Sound team building is based on playing men who play as a team, as distinct from playing one or two professionals and filling the blanks with anybody.—"Former Sapper" (name and address supplied).

"RED FEVER"

In turning out an old chest my grandfather gave me I came across this interesting piece about recruiting in Dublin which appeared in the *Derbyshire Courier*—quoted from the *Leinster Express*—in 1863. Popular enthusiasm was being whipped up by the threat of Russian aggression.

"Nothing can exceed the enthusiasm with which the recruiting parties are met in Dublin, wherever they go, and the alacrity with which the initiatory shilling is taken exhibits something more than the ordinary "red fever" amongst the people. Those who are enlisting in Ireland just now have amongst them not only those who may have nothing else to do, but actually men of substance in their own class of life, who are urged by a sort of humble chivalry in taking arms. A few days ago, a number of car drivers, men whose worldly means are certainly superior to a common soldier, threw down their whips with one accord and followed the ribbons. It will give some idea of the animus which moves the new recruits when we relate the follow-

● **SOLDIER** welcomes letters. There is not space, however, to print every letter of interest received; all correspondents must, therefore, give their full names and addresses to ensure a reply. Answers cannot be sent to collective addresses.

Anonymous or insufficiently addressed letters are not published.

● Please do not ask for information which you can get in your orderly room or from your own officer.

● **SOLDIER** cannot admit correspondence on matters involving discipline or promotion in an individual unit.

ing short anecdote which we were told by an eye-witness. A serjeant was, after his custom, importuning some people to "list," when one, who appeared to be spokesman for the whole, advanced to ask something about their prospects in the Army. He did not inquire whether the eating or the drinking might be good, or if they would have fair pay, or anything of that kind, but simply, "Musha, Sir, d'ye think we'd ever get a prod at the Imperor o' Rooshie?" Of course the serjeant said they would not fail to come face to face with the redoubtable Nicholas; and in five minutes Her Majesty had some twenty additional soldiers; and, we sincerely believe, good and true ones to the backbone.—G. S. Hearn, 189 Luck Lane, Pad-dock, Huddersfield.

ROGUE'S MARCH

What is the Rogue's March?—
"Acanthus" (name and address supplied).

★ The Rogue's March was played by the trumpeters or fifers of a unit at a drumming-out ceremony. According to a 19th century military encyclopaedia, thieves and strumpets were marched before and behind the ranks of the



"... a kick by the youngest drummer boy..."

regiment, then led to the gate of the barracks or garrison where they were given a kick on the posterior by the youngest drummer boy and warned not to return, under pain of a severe punishment.

BISLEY RIBBON

To settle an argument: Does the winner of the Queen's Medal at Bisley wear a ribbon to denote the fact?—
"Gong-happy" (name and address supplied).

★ Yes. The ribbon is one of the Army's rarest, since only one Queen's Medal is won each year. It is worn after all campaign medals and immediately after the Territorial Efficiency Medal ribbon. It is crimson in the centre, edged with black, white and blue stripes.

WRONG COLOUR

Your picture of the Trooping the Colour ceremony on Horse Guards parade (SOLDIER, August) bears the caption, "On Horse Guards Parade men of the 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards trooped their Regimental Colour before the Queen." The picture shows quite clearly that it is the Queen's Colour which is being trooped, and you should be aware that the Regimental Colour is never trooped at the birthday parade when the Sovereign is present.—Major H. W. Smith, RE, 2, Crichton Avenue, Walthamstow, Surrey.

LEFT-BREAST WINGS

I notice in your July issue a letter on the wearing of parachute wings on the left breast. This is a matter which is of considerable interest to this regiment, as it is the unit to which you refer.

The wearing of Special Air Service Wings on the left breast was a custom started by Colonel David Stirling in the Western Desert and one which was approved by the late Field-Marshal Lord Wavell. It was a distinction awarded to officers and men for outstanding service on operations and was always regarded in the Regiment as being in the same category as a decoration.

The number of serving officers and men entitled to this privilege is small and a record of their names is held at this headquarters.—Major C. L. D. Newell, Commanding RHQ, SAS Regiment.

RAILCARS

Whenever the Army has a trouble spot to look after, it has to improvise some way of guarding railways and trains. Off-hand, I can think of Palestine, Malaya and Kenya since World War Two, and still, as you report (SOLDIER, July) it has to take some vehicle intended for a completely different purpose and laboriously adapt it as an armoured rail-car.

Surely it is time the Army provided itself with a pool of properly-designed railway guard-vehicles which could be rushed to wherever they were needed?—“Railway Enthusiast” (name and address supplied).

★The variations in railway gauges in different parts of the world might complicate production of a standard vehicle for world-wide use.

BEARDS

The other day I was asked by a foreigner to explain the reason for the beard worn by the pioneer sergeant of this regiment (and of other Infantry regiments). I could not answer all his questions. What is (a) the origin of the beard; (b) the authority for wearing it; (c) the origin of the axe carried by the pioneer sergeant; (d) the authority for carrying it.—Sergeant A. G. Croucher, Royal Army Pay Corps, 1st Battalion The East Surrey Regiment, MELF 26.

★The British Army has been all but beardless for 250 years, but during the Crimean War the Commander-in-Chief in that theatre was given discretionary powers to allow beards. As, however, many men returned to this country still bearded, an order was issued in 1857 that the chin would be shaven. This order did not include the pioneers of the Infantry regiments who, by an order of November 1856, were ordered to wear beards. It is believed that this order has never been repealed, although in the twentieth century its observance has dwindled. From time to time, however, a pioneer sergeant elects (at the discretion of his commanding officer) to wear a beard. This traditional custom is followed also, from time to time, by pipe-majors of Highland regiments.

Since 1857 the only relaxation of the rules against beards (apart from the instances mentioned) has been for benefit of troops campaigning in conditions where extremes of heat or cold made shaving a discomfort. The rule was also disregarded by one or two senior officers

at the turn of the century (for example, Lord Roberts), who wore a small tuft of hair immediately below the lower lip.

Old prints show pioneers of Infantry regiments with saws and pick-axes strapped to their persons. It was logical that the men with constructional or demolition tools should march at the head of the unit, but only two regiments now maintain this tradition, the Royal Welch Fusiliers and the Lancashire Fusiliers.

THOSE HAIRCUTS

I observed, with considerable distaste, a great deal of good space taken up by an article on hair styles (SOLDIER, August). That an Army magazine should encourage such nonsense is bad enough, but that a regimental sergeant-major, and I have no doubt there were other warrant officers and commissioned ranks present, should indulge in such trivia is worse. This confirms my opinion, and I am not alone, that today's soldiering is Bubble and Froth soldiering.—James Blair Brown, 17 Firbank Road, Perth, Scotland.

★The display of military haircuts was reported purely because it was of Army interest. See “SOLDIER to Soldier,” page 15.

Not only do soldiers dread their first Army haircut, but every succeeding one, for the simple reason that they cannot pick and choose what style they are going to have.

If you have a regimental haircut your hair is ruined for months to come. The majority of troops go out of barracks to get a decent haircut, even though they have to pay more. They think what their girl friends are going to say to them if they have it cut badly, so they willingly pay the extra money. To have a Corps of Hairdressers would be a very good idea.—“Aldershot” (name and address supplied).

I read with some amusement the article in which Mr. Leonard Pountney was quoted as advocating a Corps of Hairdressers. Surely nobody could be serious in suggesting such nonsense!

Naturally, everybody with a progressive mind has welcomed the improved standards of living which have become standard in some Army stations, but to pander to the (usually) adolescent mind in advocating seven-shilling haircuts is rubbish. I doubt whether any soldiers would be prepared to pay weekly such a charge. No doubt the worthy president of the Artistic Creators Committee of the National Hairdressers Federation has usually had to deal with a quite different type of person in his business in Hounslow than one meets in the Army today.

Maybe the soldier of the future will be too gorgeous to want to fight, and we will have achieved lasting peace.—Lieutenant J. W. Bradford, RE, 27 Plant (Trg) Troop, RE, BAOR 10.

DOWN UNDER

I recently read that the Australian Army Educational Corps was teaching Papuans in New Guinea. Can you give me any information about this sister Corps?—WOII R. Fry, Royal Army Educational Corps, Berlin.

★The Australian Army Educational Corps is now a firmly established part of the Australian Army. It became a Corps in 1949. Each of its functions has its counterpart in the Royal Army Educational Corps. The establishment is small—18 officers and 47 warrant and non-commissioned officers to some 25,000 regulars and a fluctuating number of National Servicemen, usually around 9000. SOLDIER is assured that the chief qualification required for the Corps is enthusiasm—an enthusiasm that will outlast frustration and overcome apathy, for the day has not dawned when soldiers hunger and thirst after education.” Its aim is “to assist in developing efficient soldiers and to promote a well-informed and intelligent attitude on the part of soldiers towards the wider national community.”

Things You Wouldn't Know Unless We Told You

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LETTERS CONTINUED OVERLEAF



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The Commanding Officer Is Not a Debt-Collector

NOT so many years ago, when a body of troops was concentrated in a new place, it was the custom of the General Officer Commanding to publish an advertisement in the local newspaper warning traders against giving credit to troops.

This practice of "crying down credit" put the soldier in the same happy category as an idiot. If a trader gave him credit and was stung, that was the trader's hard luck.

Nevertheless, there were traders who went out of their way to talk soldiers into rash hire-purchase agreements, relying on the threat of an approach to the soldier's commanding officer to recover their money. Some traders did, in fact, go to the commanding officer who, to preserve the unit's good name, would advance the money out of regimental funds.

Interesting light on these practices is to be found in the monumental final report of the Select Committee on the Army Act (*Her Majesty's Stationery Office, £1 1s.*) For two years the Committee have been engaged in redrafting the Act for Parliament to consider.

The Committee agree that a commanding officer has an obligation to advise his men how to meet financial difficulties and to urge them to honour their obligations, but they feel most strongly that "the military authorities generally and commanding officers in particular should not allow themselves to be used as debt-collecting agencies. If it were clear that the Army would not act in this manner tradesmen would come to realise that young officers and men should not be encouraged to purchase goods on credit possibly beyond their means."

The Committee dislike the existing law under which a creditor for a sum less than £30 may obtain execution against a soldier's personal property, but under which a soldier may not be compelled to attend a court. "It would be wrong," they say, "for soldiers to retain, in respect of debts, a protection that is not available to other members of the community." So they urge that the law be replaced by one which merely says that no judgment against an officer or soldier may be enforced by levying execution on his arms or equipment.

If a soldier is in the same category as an idiot, he is also

The latest report on the Army Act deals with hire-purchase, houses for soldiers, payment for damage

(as one member pointed out) in the same category as a convict—in that when he comes out of uniform he can rarely get his name on the local authority's housing list. Also an officer or soldier abroad who wants to send his children to school in Britain will have great difficulty in finding a local authority to make a grant. "A soldier," said Mr. George Wigg, "may have an able child that he wants to go on to the university, but if he cannot find a local education authority to take him on he finds himself in a very difficult position indeed." The Committee were convinced that "in far too many cases either the will or the power to help on the part of the local authorities is lacking." They considered drafting legislation which would give Regulars ratepayers' rights, but regretfully concluded that it was not a matter for the Army Act; major housing and education legislation would be needed, and it ought to be introduced "at the earliest possible date."

The Committee raked over many legal problems ranging from the support of soldiers' illegitimate children to the imposition of barrack-room damages (officers are also to be liable). They faced the fact that whereas in the old days it was reasonable to make a soldier pay for a broken bayonet, today in a mechanised Army a commanding officer may say to a soldier: "You have caused £50,000 worth of damage and I think you ought to pay towards it." It is recommended that the individual faced with a levy for neglect should have a right of complaint.

They considered simplifying the law on the unauthorised wearing of medals, but as the ex-Servicemen's bodies held strong views on abuses of this type they decided to make no changes. One member said it was once the custom in the theatre to make deliberate mistakes in respect of medals and uniforms, to avoid possible prosecution.

IRISH REGIMENTS

I was most moved by the article on "The Five Lost Regiments" (SOLDIER August). I suppose I must be one of the few remaining serving soldiers who had the privilege of serving with at least four of these five regiments in Upper Silesia in 1921-22, before their disbandment. I was a "Dichard" (3rd Battalion, Middlesex) and had to move on in 1922 as a result of the Geddes "Axe." With us in Beuthen, Upper Silesia, lay the Connaught Rangers, in Tarnovitz were the 18th Royal Irish and the Munster Fusiliers, and at Oppeln were the Leinsters. I do not think the "Dubs" were with us.

Thirty-two years is a long time in any man's life, but not so long that one can forget the dismay felt by many of those splendid soldiers on finding their regiments disbanded. *Esprit de corps* was very high among them. True, many of their long-serving men were absorbed by other regiments, to the detriment of regimental promotion, but it was a great loss to the Army.

No serving regiment today has a better fighting reputation than those disbanded Irish regiments. Let the Army honour them. The exhibition at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, is a move in the right direction. —WO1 A. Oakman, MSM, RAEC, 55 Army Education Centre, MELF 11.

I believe the Leinsters wore a badge with the letters "RC" (for Royal Canadians) on their arms. The joke went that they carried the badge of their religion with them.—P. P. Daniels, late 3rd Royal Dublin Fusiliers and Royal Field Artillery, Wilcox Camp, Shrewsbury.

PLUGS

Your cartoon of the enterprising spiv offering bath-plugs and electric bulbs for sale at barrack gates (SOLDIER, September) makes me wonder where do Army bulbs and plugs go. Some plugs are kept in the "Q" department ready for checks and inspections. Why cannot we have electric bulbs enclosed in glass or wire containers to prevent theft, or Army fittings which are different from civilian fittings? Perhaps in time to come Army wash-bowls and baths will have a built-in plug device.—"Army Enthusiast" (name and address supplied).

★ Sometimes the plug shortage has been aggravated by misguided soldiers removing existing plugs and adding them to their personal kit—in order not to be caught at a disadvantage.

BEDS AND BISCUITS

Your article "Stand By Your Beds" (SOLDIER, September) says that biscuits were invented in World War One. They were in use when I enlisted in June 1908. I was born and bred in the

Army and I remember them in use in Llanion Barracks, Pembroke Dock, in 1905.

The article says sheets were withdrawn from the Army in the middle of the 19th century, for economy reasons. Sheets were in issue when I enlisted. They were of the rough type, more like canvas. You were issued with two sheets and one was changed for a clean one every week. In India a soldier on arrival was issued with three sheets (twill) as his personal property and then received two more free every two years. In India in my day, 1910, the Army had iron bedsteads and not charpoys. A man was issued with two palliasses and coir; a palliasse was washed every fortnight and restuffed with the coir, which had been picked by a native boy.—A. L. Hobson, ex-Royal Horse Artillery, c/o Hospital Office, Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley.

The article "Stand By Your Beds" implies, to the uninitiated, that the three-piece board bed was introduced in World War Two. My first bed in the Army in 1912 was the three-trestle. —W. J. Harrison, 7 Byron Road, Aylesbury.

JUMPER

In your August issue you printed a photograph of three Territorials who represented Britain in this year's Empire Games. I would like to point out that we are very proud to have in our unit, 565 (M) LAA/SL Regiment, Royal Artillery (Surrey), Territorial Army, of Kingston-on-Thames, Lieutenant Ken Wilmshurst, who was the first person in these Games to win two gold medals. They were for the hop, step and jump and the long jump. He holds the native record for the former and has set up a Games record for the latter.—Sergeant S. G. Vickerage, WRAC (TA).

APPLICATION

Will you please inform me of the official form of application when a soldier wishes an interview with his Commanding Officer?—"Lance-jack" (name and address supplied).

★ There is no official form of application. Different units have different methods. Your Orderly Room should show you how to make out an application which meets with their approval.

ARMY TIE

I noticed in a recent issue of SOLDIER an article about the new Army tie. Can this be worn by members of the Australian Army?—Captain W. T. Watson (RL), Mirboo North, Victoria, Australia.

★ SOLDIER understands that the new tie can be worn only by regular and ex-regular members of the British Army.

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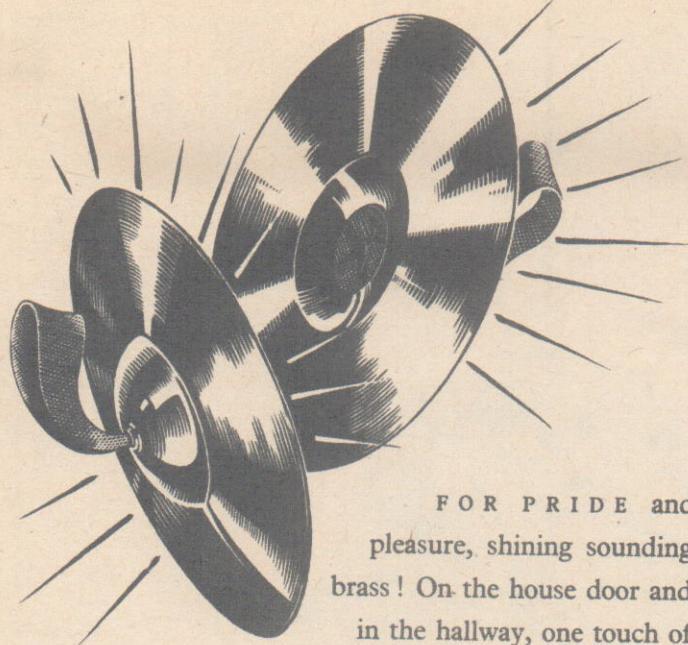
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