

# SOLDIER

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March 1950

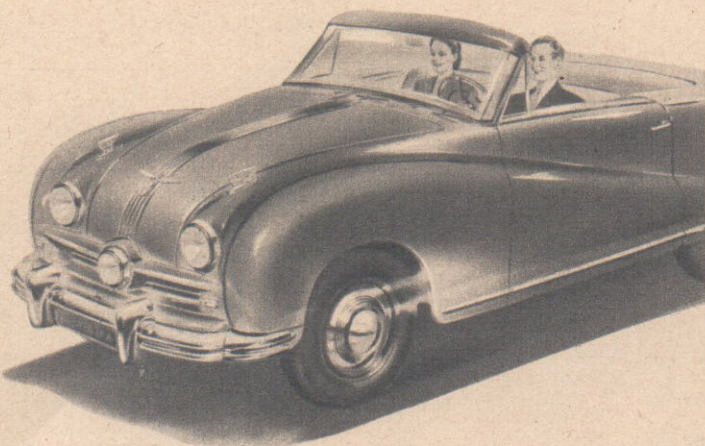
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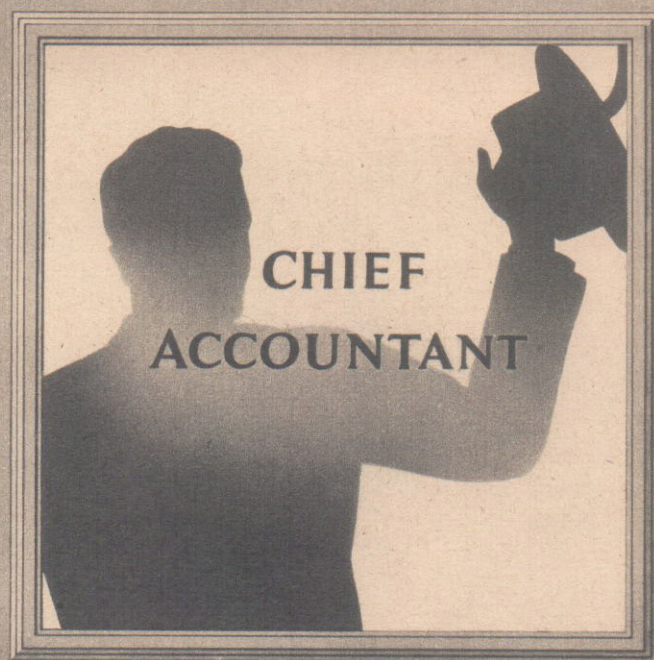
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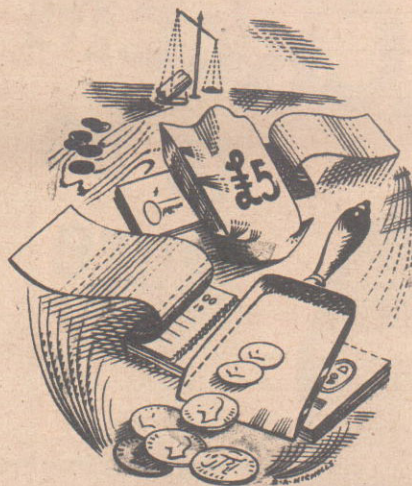
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MARCH

**SOLDIER**

1950

THE BRITISH



ARMY MAGAZINE

The first magazine by the Army, about the Army, for the Army celebrates an anniversary

# SOLDIER is five years old

**I**T was five years ago this month that **SOLDIER** first rolled from the presses of a Brussels printing works, and was rushed over war-shaken roads to the men of the British Liberation Army, then preparing to assault the Rhine.

Today the sons of many of the men who welcomed the magazine in 1945 are reading it. In the brief space of five years **SOLDIER** has spanned the generations.

It seems odd now that there had never been a **SOLDIER** until 1945. During the war there were Army-sponsored newspapers and magazines in plenty, especially overseas, but there had never been a magazine — in peace or war — produced officially for the Army as a whole.

Two years before **SOLDIER** saw the light, dummy specimens were prepared, and many were the conclaves held over them. Was it necessary? Would the troops want it? Could it be made to pay? To which the answers were, briefly: It was, and they did, and it could. Today one measure of **SOLDIER**'s success is the number of persons who claim to have helped to found it.

Although **SOLDIER** was launched for the British Liberation Army it was fully intended that it should be a magazine circulating in all commands. If necessary, it was to be printed in different countries simultaneously, like the American **YANK**. That was why the early issues of **SOLDIER** bore a tag reading "BLA Edition."

As it turned out, there was never more than one edition of **SOLDIER**. With the end of the war and the rapid run-down, there was no need. Instead, the "BLA" tag disappeared, and gradually **SOLDIER**'s sale was extended to other overseas commands. By that time the magazine was being printed (as it is now) in Hamburg — and in full colour. It has been edited throughout from London.

**SOLDIER**'s aim, originally, was not only to tell the Army about the Army but about civilian prospects as well, for the supply of newspapers and magazines from home at that time was not always steady. Also it sought to explain clearly

OVER



The picture which was easy to take five years ago: a British soldier and a Russian soldier look at one of the early issues of **SOLDIER**.



Continuing

# SOLDIER is five years old

the plans for leave and release, which were notoriously garbled in some of the newspapers.

History was being written very fast those days. When Number One came out there was a firm ban on fraternisation. But in Number Nine (SOLDIER appeared fortnightly then) came an announcement that fraternisation with children was in order; and in Number Eleven it was recorded that troops might "engage in conversation with adult Germans in the streets and in public places" — but not in their homes.

The more cynical among the troops were pretty sure that SOLDIER would prove to be no more than a mouthpiece for official propaganda. They expected drill-book prose, with the paragraphs numbered 1, 2, 3. . . SOLDIER was official, certainly, in the sense that it was controlled by the War Office; it gave, and where necessary expounded, official announcements which were of direct interest to the troops; but it was never a mouthpiece for any and every branch with an axe to grind. It did not carry slogans urging readers to brush up their saluting. After all, the soldier had to pay for his copy (that was the Treasury's idea) and it would not have been fair to sell him exhortation and propaganda. The cynics soon realised their error, and the magazine sold at a gratifying rate (one meal halt on the BAOR leave route disposed of as many as 30,000 copies of an issue).

Several "scoops" helped to lift its prestige. One of them was the first feature ever published on the frogmen. Another was a long description of Hitler's plan to invade England, published nearly a year before the Prime Minister outlined the plan to the House of Commons.

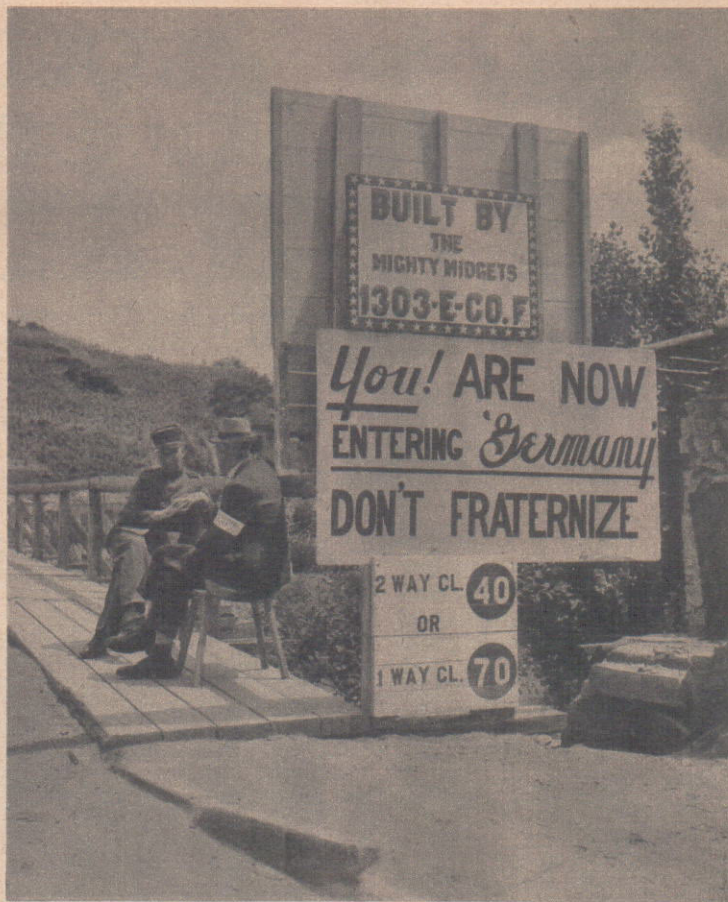
At first each number of SOLDIER was the subject of a high-level "post-mortem," at which Welfare

asked Education whether they thought such-and-such a joke in the best of taste — "Or what do you think, Padre?" But after a short while SOLDIER was given a very free rein. No one sits at the Editor's elbow; in fact, the Editor receives probably less "interference" than a Fleet Street editor from his proprietor.

In all departments of the Army SOLDIER enjoys a valued goodwill. This is particularly fortunate when it comes to answering readers' queries, for these often raise such complex issues that SOLDIER's staff cannot be expected to know the answers offhand. Only a few letters can be published each month; the rest — hundreds of them — are answered privately. Many a soldier would be surprised at the fatness of the file which finally brings back the answer to his problem. Some day the story of how the letters are answered will have to be told more fully.

If there is an answer to a problem, SOLDIER sets out to find it, for a full knowledge of the facts often clears up a misunderstanding. SOLDIER's job is not to do the work of the Orderly Room, or to repair the errors of the Orderly Room; though the Query Department is proud of those occasional letters which begin: "Many thanks for your efforts on my behalf. My arrears of pay have now been received..."

The mail comes, not only from soldiers, but from soldiers' wives and soldiers' parents; it comes also from American soldiers, Dutch and Belgian civilians, Cypriot girls and West African riflemen; it comes from veterans



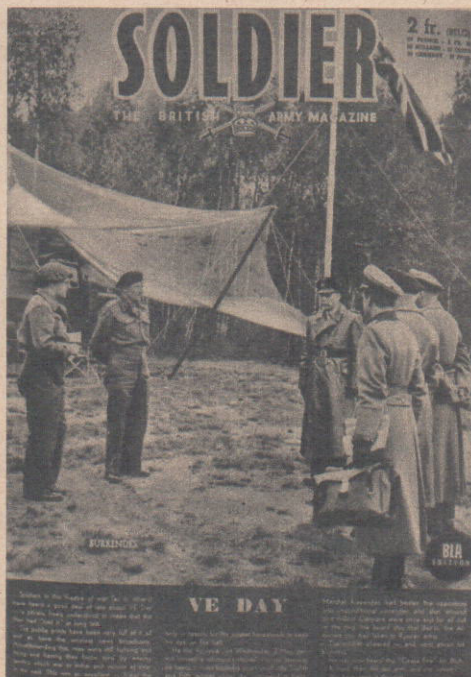
This was the kind of notice which met the troops when SOLDIER was first published.

of World War One and even of the South African War, still hankering after the comradeship of arms.

Today the Army sprawls across the civilised, and uncivilised, world. To show the man in Ireland what the man in Hong-Kong is doing is not always the easiest task, for SOLDIER cannot afford

the luxury of retaining correspondents everywhere. Readers who think they know of a good story going abegging should write to let us know (as, in fact, many do). There should be no "forgotten men"; *esprit de corps* cannot exist if one half of the Army does not know how the other half lives. SOLDIER's view, both officially and unofficially, is that the British Army is an incomparably fine institution, and that those who serve in it — even for brief, compulsory periods — will be the prouder of it the more they know about it.

Three early covers: Left — Number One, bearing best wishes from Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery; Number Five, showing the surrender at Luneburg; Number Thirteen, recording the defeat of Japan.





# SOLDIER VISITS THE BEST TROOPSHIP YET



## EMPIRE ORWELL

**E**VERY time a troopship is fitted out or refitted, there is a rise in the standard of comfort for troops at sea.

That is why just now the luckiest soldiers afloat are those in the *Empire Orwell* which, as this edition of *SOLDIER* is published, should be on her way to the Far East on her second trooping voyage.

The *Empire Orwell* started life in the Blohm and Voss yards in Hamburg and was launched in 1936. As the *Pretoria*, she was the pride of the German African lines from 1937 to 1939 and carried 150 first-class and 350 tourist-class passengers on the Germany-South Africa run. The war turned her into a German transport and she became a British prize in 1945.

Hurriedly the *Pretoria* was converted into a British trooper and re-named the *Empire Doon*. But she had engine trouble on her first voyage: the Germans had put in some experimental boilers which had never been very satisfactory. The *Empire Doon* was taken out of service.

In 1947 the ship went to Southampton for a £2,000,000 refit. Those experimental German boilers were taken out and new ones installed, and the turbines were modified. The improvised trooping accommodation of the *Empire Doon* was turned into the peacetime ideal, as nearly as the basic design of the ship would allow. One alteration, the extension of a deck, made a big

change — and improvement — in the ship's appearance.

The *Empire Orwell* went in to refit with a gross tonnage of 17,361 and came out with a gross tonnage of 18,035. She can now carry 171 first-class, 84 second-class, 98 third-class passengers and four Royal Army Medical Corps staff men in cabins; 30 boys in a separate dormitory, 96 serjeants in a separate dormitory and 1008 troops on troop-decks; a total of 1491 passengers. On her trials she covered the measured mile at 17.65 knots at her designed power of 11,000 shaft horsepower, and when she was fully opened up she made about 18½ knots.

The passengers who benefit most from the *Empire Orwell's* up-to-dateness are the married privates and NCO's travelling with their families. Says Colonel W. H. V. Jones, the Army's Inspector of Trooping:

"We have broken down the old idea that serjeants and men should be segregated from their womenfolk on board ship. We have

OVER

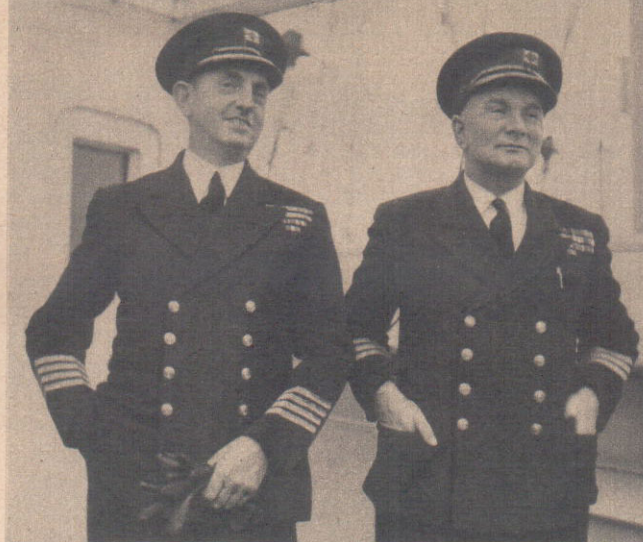


A troopship with lockers for small kit: one of the popular new features on the *Empire Orwell*.



# SOLDIER Visits the EMPIRE ORWELL

(Continued)



Captain A. C. G. Hawker (left) commands the *Empire Orwell*; his staff-commander is Commander R. B. Stannard, VC.



Above: Not just a water-point, but an iced-water-point: quite a change from the days of "conditioned" sea water.

## "In our day we bathed overboard ..."

**E**IGHTY-five-year old Serjeant J. J. Jones, formerly of the 19th Hussars and later Head Messenger at the War Office, (the right-hand Pensioner in the picture above) travelled to Egypt in 1882 in the *Tamar*, a narrow sail-and-steam ship.

"It was December," he told SOLDIER. "Every day, after we had swabbed the decks, they slung canvas over the side into the sea, to make a bath for us without stopping the ship. We had to undress and jump in, and if we didn't they turned the hose on us. I had the hose on me once, and my side was sore for months. The first day when we climbed back on deck we had nothing to dry ourselves on — our towels were down below."

Serjeant W. Young, ten years younger than his comrade, joined the Royal Garrison Artillery in 1893. On troopships, he recalled: "We had preserved meat and vegetables; no bread, only biscuits; and every day a mess tin full of beer so thick we had to strain it before drinking it."

Mr. E. Stratford, of Brentwood, Essex (who wrote of his early life in the Army in SOLDIER, August 1949) also recalls his first voyage to Bombay on the old *Dilwara* in 1894. He says:

"When we boarded ship our kit-bags were stowed away below decks and we were left with our sea kit — a suit of khaki drill (issued without regard to size), a helmet, a flannel cholera belt, several bars of salt water soap and two or three quarter-pound sticks of tobacco; and a hammock.

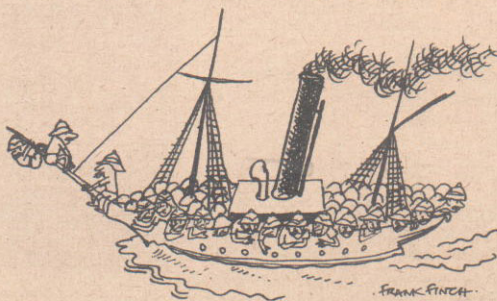
"The soap, which was supposed to lather in salt water, just did not. Some of the men saved

a little of their tea to shave in. The only "fresh" water (produced from sea water) was for drinking; there were several barrels of the brackish stuff below, guarded day and night by a sentry. Attached to each cask was a tin mug and we had to take our drink there. None could be taken away. But later on in the voyage sherbert sellers hawked their wares on the decks, with black market water from somewhere.

"We had bread twice a week; on the other days, biscuits. Fresh meat came once or twice a week; for the rest we had salt pork or salt beef — and corned mutton, most of which went through the portholes.

"There was sitting room for only a few on the deck. In the throng were the housey-housey schools and the crown-and-anchor sharks with their scouts out to watch for officers.

"As we sailed down the Suez Canal I spent my time scrubbing coal dust from the decks... and blessing the brutal mate who kicked me off his ship and sent me home when, as a small boy, I tried to run away to sea."



tried to bring their privileges into line with those of all the other passengers on the ship."

And so, between Reveille and Lights Out, all the families on board can be together, except when father is on duty.

Married NCO's and men sleep in standee sections with the single men, but they eat with their families and members of the women's corps of similar rank in the third-class dining saloon. For recreation, the serjeants can take their families to the second-class public rooms and open deck, where serjeants and warrant officers can spend their time together, as they do in a normal serjeants' mess.

Corporals and privates can take their families on deck, or into the third-class quiet room and the third-class general room, which has a canteen serving port and sherry as well as beer. Only from the "men only" room are families excluded. Since so many more men than women travel on troopships, the planners thought it only fair that single men should have somewhere free from feminine chatter in which to drink their beer.

The *Empire Orwell's* standees are fitted to the peacetime standard — not more than three tiers. Near each standee, and numbered correspondingly, is a rack for the occupant to stow his kit-bag and a metal locker for his valuables. And there is seating

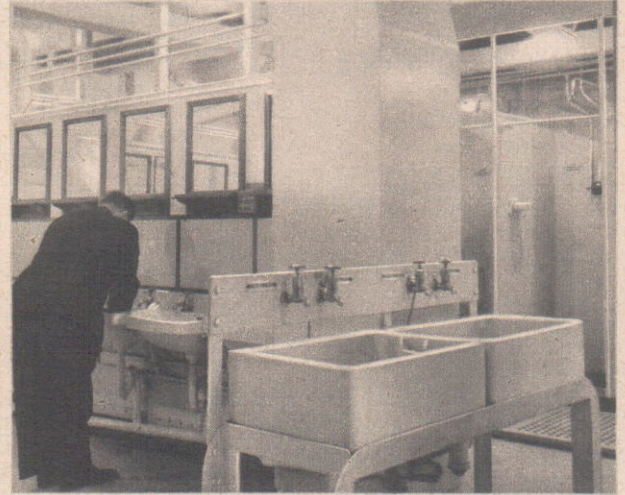




Above, left: For the first time, a trooper has nurseries. This one is in the second-class accommodation. Above: The sergeants' mess. Many of the public rooms have double port-holes, to give more light.



Left: You could (though, of course, you wouldn't) stub a cigarette on a recreation-room table without making a permanent mark. Right: The *Empire Orwell* has more wash-basins and showers than any other trooper. The big sinks (foreground) are for washing "smalls."



on each troop-deck as well as in the public rooms.

There are more ablution facilities than other troopers have had: for a troop-deck of 240 standees SOLDIER counted 20 wash-basins, each with running hot and cold running water and a mirror, 14 hot-and-cold salt-water showers and one hot-and-cold fresh-water shower to wash the salt off.

There is a fully-equipped laundry which caters for all classes of passengers. But besides this, each troops' wash-place has deep sinks for washing "smalls" and there is a troops' ironing-room. Cabin passengers have washing and ironing-rooms, too, and so that babies can be fed in the style to which they are accustomed, there is a food-preparation room for mothers.

All the cabin passengers eat in normal dining saloons. The sergeants have their mess. For the troops there is the latest in cafeterias with everything provided — tray, knife, fork, spoon and mug; as the troops leave, they take their utensils to a dish-washing machine which cleans and dries them and they are then stowed away until the next meal.

Recreation rooms are well furnished with games, chairs and

tables which have unburnable plastic tops, so that when a careless soldier lets his cigarette burn out on them they will not mark. An innovation is a nursery for children, complete with toys and games, in each class. The open decks are marked for deck-tennis and deck-quoits and veterans of trooping on older ships will be surprised to hear that some genius has provided the tops of the life-jacket lockers with shaped wooden seats and backs, so that they can be sat on with comfort.

In the ship's hospital (well removed from the medical inspection room so that patients will not be disturbed) there is a new type of metal locker for patients' small kit fitted under each cot. Each cot also has a metal bed-table with a plastic top which will not scratch. And under the cot are rails to take the bed-table when the patient does not want to use it. Cots are cellulosed, instead of painted as in other troopers, and the hospital wards have brighter colours generally.

Another novelty: besides the normal drinking-water points scattered through the ship there are several at which iced water is available. **OVER**



They "pinked" the recreation-room dart-boards before the *Empire Orwell* began her first trip: the troops were bound for the Middle East.





Colonel W. H. V. Jones, Inspector of Trooping, was one of the men responsible for the *Empire Orwell's* "mod. cons." On the next trooper, he says, they will try to eliminate queueing.

## EMPIRE ORWELL

(Continued)

The captain of the *Empire Orwell*, Captain A. C. G. Hawker, has seen a good deal of trooping. From 1940 to 1945 he was captain of the *Otranto* and took part in the Sicily and Salerno landings.

His staff-commander is Commander R. B. Stannard, who won the Victoria Cross while he was commanding an armed trawler in the 1940 Norway campaign, and the Distinguished Service Order for actions against submarines three years later.

The permanent Army staff on the ship is a well-trying team: Lieut-Colonel J. Armstrong, Royal Fusiliers, Regimental Sergeant-Major C. Clapson, Royal West Kent Regiment, Regimental Quartermaster-Sergeant W. Wainwright, Parachute Regiment (who has also served in the Royal Irish Fusiliers and the Royal Sussex Regiment) and Orderly Room Quartermaster-Sergeant H. Walker, Royal Army Service Corps. They have been together on troopers as a team for two-and-a-half years.

Not for long will they be able to boast that theirs is the most modern trooper afloat. The *Empire Fowey*, the *Dilwara*, the *Dunera* and the *Devonshire* will probably all have been refitted or will be refitting to the same standard by the end of this year and others will follow as the opportunity occurs.

Each vessel will have something newer than the last. One of the aims of the planners now is to cut out the need for queueing. And so, where possible, the troops' canteen of the future will have a single long counter, at any point on which a man can be served without waiting. When that improvement goes to sea, then the *Empire Orwell* will begin to look old-fashioned.

HOW to make battle training realistic is one of the big headaches of peacetime or for that matter of wartime.

There were many sad little stories told during World War Two, like — "Bang! Bang! You're dead." "No, I'm not!" "Why aren't you?" "Choo-choo, I'm a tank!"

The raw recruit always finds it difficult to pretend that a sandbag is a human belly; the prize for ferocity is apt to go to the best actor. And what is harder than lying on a wet, empty hillside trying to imagine that the rain is a rain of death? Or what discourages a soldier more quickly than crawling through a swamp only to be told, off-handedly, that he has been dead for the last half-hour? Imagination needs a good deal of stimulus, via the eye and ear, if not the nose.

That is why any device which helps to create a satisfactory illusion of battle is to be welcomed; and in this class is the Hohne Box, which is described on pages 27-29 of this issue. It is important, of course, that the battle shall seem realistic to the participants as well as to the onlookers; the one does not necessarily follow on the other. Police horses get used to rattles and fireworks; so do soldiers. Therefore the job of the battle simulation teams calls for constant ingenuity and audacity. All this is chiefly an Infantryman's problem. For Airborne soldiers the thrill of jumping is almost as great in practice as in the assault; and Gunners can always bang away with live rounds from time to time. It is the footslogger who has to summon up his imaginat-

ion as well as his blood; and a "fourpenny one" suddenly gushing earth in front of him, or a bullet singing intimately overhead, is a powerful help.

Simulating the effects of battle is one thing; simulating the spirit of battle is another. The problem is not only to put fire on the ground, but to put "fire in the belly." That "hate" training during World War Two might have been more successful if the trainees had been born without a sense of humour.

Perhaps as good a way as any of ensuring realism is to take a regiment which believes that it alone won the war and set it against another regiment cherishing the same illusion.

A list of the fates which overtook Germany's generals of World War Two would be a startling catalogue of violence. Some were killed in action, some killed themselves, others (like Rommel) killed themselves to order, some were hanged, some were shot, some were imprisoned, a few died naturally.

Those who remain have plenty of time for professional reflections — and for writing their reminiscences. So far there is no sign of a German biography praising the virtues of Field-Marshal Montgomery, to balance the controversial book by Brigadier Desmond Young on Rommel; nor, one feels, is there likely to be.

Many of the surviving German generals have been given an op-

portunity to describe their battles, as they fought them, in the IRISH DEFENCE JOURNAL (*An Cosantoir*). These have included Colonel-General Kurt Student, Commander-in-Chief of Germany's paratroop forces; Colonel-General Heinz Guderian and General Baron Geyr von Schweppenburg, both leading panzer generals; General Kurt von Tippelskirch, who wrote on the war of movement on the Eastern Front; General Gunther Blumentritt, who dealt with "Operation Sealion" (the proposed invasion of England) and the fighting in Holland just before the capitulation; and Generalleutnant Kurt Dittmar, who described the Finnish campaign.

From at least one of these articles it appears that the German General Staff did not take the Hitler plan for invading Britain seriously; they looked on it as an academic exercise.

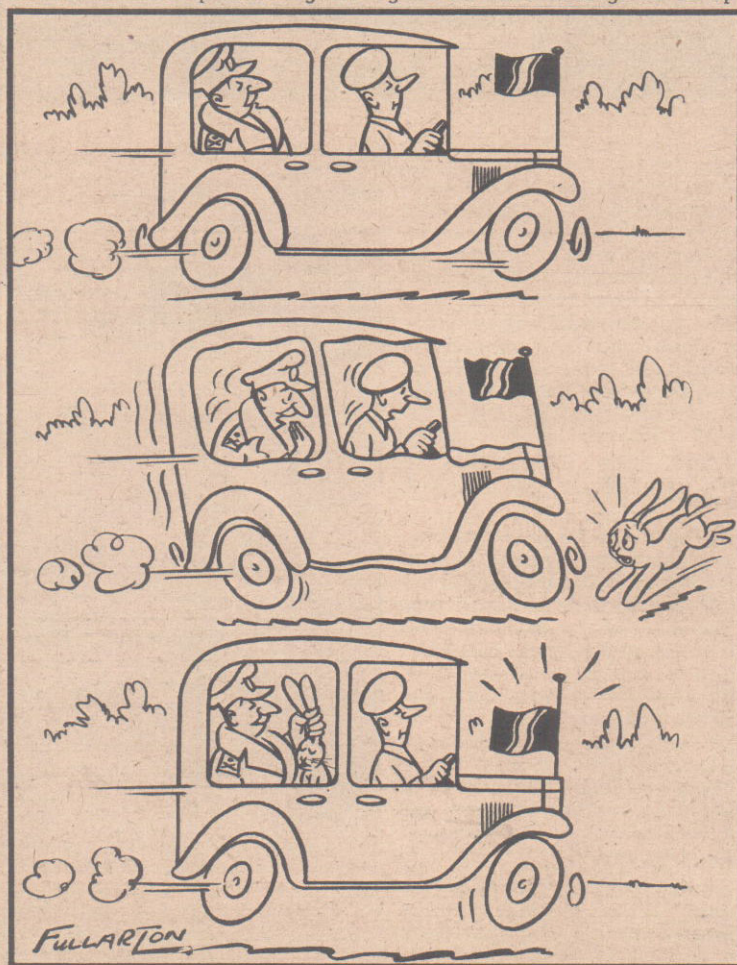
General Geyr claims to have received "no little assistance" in deducing Allied airborne tactics from an article in an illustrated British magazine in the summer of 1943, and also to have found an important clue to the date of the Normandy D-Day landing in a paragraph in a leading London newspaper. These leakages, if leakages they were, will no doubt have been noted by Military Intelligence. But the German press had its incautious moments. In his book *Blue-Pencil Admiral*, Rear-Admiral Thompson, wartime censor, tells how a photograph in a German magazine disclosing a portion of a Tiger tank "bound for North Africa" enabled British experts to work out the tank's probable dimensions and to rush into production a 17-pounder gun to counter it.

## HAS the single man a grievance in the Army?

The writer of a letter in last month's *SOLDIER* thinks so. He says that married soldiers, who live with their families, tend to neglect the life of the barracks for their own homes, to the detriment of that spirit of comradeship which should pervade a camp.

When Service families were first sent out to Germany and other countries where false standards of life prevailed, their arrival was hailed as a good thing. The presence of wives, it was argued, would have a steadying influence, on married and unmarried men alike; which has turned out to be largely true. But if marriage draws away the older, more responsible men from camp life, it is a great pity. If it is true that "the regiment is the family," then the converse ought to be true: the family ought to be the regiment. In many regiments wives undoubtedly do a great deal, not only to adorn, but to foster the corporate life of a station.

A peacetime Army must be a compromise of *esprit de corps* and of domesticity; the last must never be allowed to impair the first.





# IT WAS NOT A "KHAKI ELECTION"

**A**S this issue of **SOLDIER** went to press, the nation was due to go to the poll.

It was not an election in which the Services' vote was expected to be a critical factor, the reason being the large number of young men in the Forces under voting age.

With the General Election of 1950 went the last of the wartime concessions to politically-minded soldiers. One of these was that members of the Forces might sit in Parliament; a provision which had been made mainly so that Members of Parliament could join the Forces.

Peacetime policy is to keep politics out of the Forces. As it happened, before the change-back of policy was announced, some members of the Forces had committed themselves to becoming prospective Parliamentary candidates, so a compromise was reached for the occasion: they were allowed to stand on the understanding that if they were beaten at the polls, they might return to the Forces. If they were successful and wanted to take their seats, they had to retire, resign or be discharged. If the suc-

cessful candidates were National Servicemen, they might have to complete their service in the Forces later on, when they were no longer Members of Parliament.

Now, no whole-time Serviceman will be allowed to start his campaign as a candidate before he has left the Forces.

In other respects, peacetime rules had already come back into force before the Election. The Minister of Defence summed it up: "Servicemen who are not candidates will not be able to make speeches or in any way associate actively in party affairs, but they can, of course, freely attend political meetings when off duty, whether in uniform or not, and ask questions at such meetings."

Peacetime regulations governing polling for Servicemen were also in force. In 1945, when there

**The voting strength of the Army was low — but here and there the soldiers' vote may have decided a close contest**

were 2,877,836 Service voters on the register, many of them overseas, there was postal voting for men abroad. The consequence was a three-weeks wait between polling day and the final announcement of the result.

This time there were only 139,501 Service voters on the register. If they were overseas they were able to vote only by proxy. So were Service wives overseas. Soldiers at home were able to vote either by proxy, by post or in person.

Every soldier (peers and lunatics, as always, excepted) who was over 21 on 10 June 1949 (30 April if his home was in Northern Ireland), should have been able to vote. Those were the qualifying dates for the autumn electoral register.

By Army Council Instructions, notice-board leaflets and other

methods, the soldier is reminded in good time about getting his name on the electoral register. The procedure is to fill in an Armed Forces declaration card which is attested by a commissioned officer and sent to the electoral registration officer of the man's constituency.

On the same card the soldier can appoint his proxy, or he can appoint the proxy later, perhaps just before going overseas, if he pleases.

From now on, the electoral register is to be revised only once a year and it will be published not later than 15 March (1st April in Northern Ireland). Soldiers who are over 21 should see they are on it. Once on, they will be automatically included in later registers. The same registration qualifies them for a vote in local government elections and the same proxy can vote.

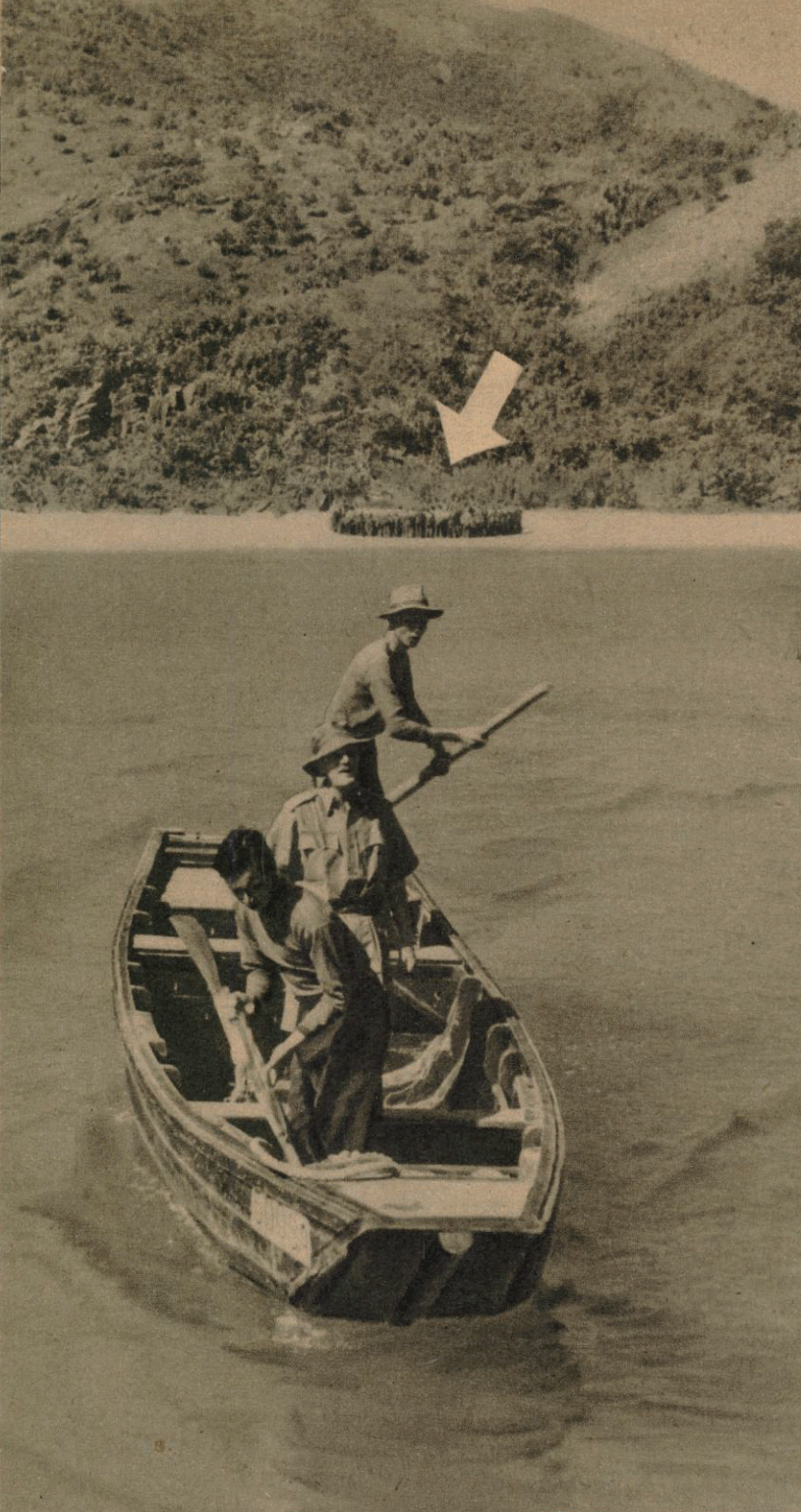
Neither registration nor voting is compulsory. The soldier must decide for himself whether to exercise his right as a citizen or not. \*The original "Khaki election" was in 1900. It was so called because the prosecution of the Boer War was a crucial election issue.

## BUT THIS ONE WAS: .....

These pictures were taken in Egypt just before the General Election of 1945. The one on the left might just as well have been taken last month: the choice was the same. In 1945 the country had to wait three weeks for the Services' vote to roll in.







What goes on in the magic circle on the beach, while the company commander is ferried out by a fisherman to meet his brigadier? The answer is a sand-table session.

## HONG-KONG

## ROUND-UP

# A week on a PIRATE ISLE

**I**F life in the confines of Hong-Kong Colony is a bit crowded these days, there are at least opportunities to get away from it all from time to time.

The rifle and support companies of the 1st Battalion, The Middlesex Regiment recently had a chance to keep themselves to themselves for a while. One by one, they were marooned on a sparsely-inhabited island, for field training.

The island is Lamma, one of the 150 or so that lie near the mouth of the Canton river and it is an hour's trip from Kowloon. It was once notorious as a haunt of Chinese pirates and later as a base for Japanese suicide-craft. It has sandy beaches and rocky, scrub-covered hills, which make fine training grounds.

Here, for a week at a time, soldiers have lived under active service conditions, free of routine daily company orders, kit checks and pay queries. They were taken to Lamma Island by Royal Army Service Corps landing craft and in Picnic Bay, where there is a natural supply of fresh water, they built themselves little bivouacs of groundsheet and bamboo.

Last company to go was the support company, which had with it three officers and 23 men of 69 Battery, 23 Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, who were cast in the role of bandits. For the occasion, the support company had left its specialist weapons behind and worked as a rifle company.

For their first two days, the men had to cope with the tail end

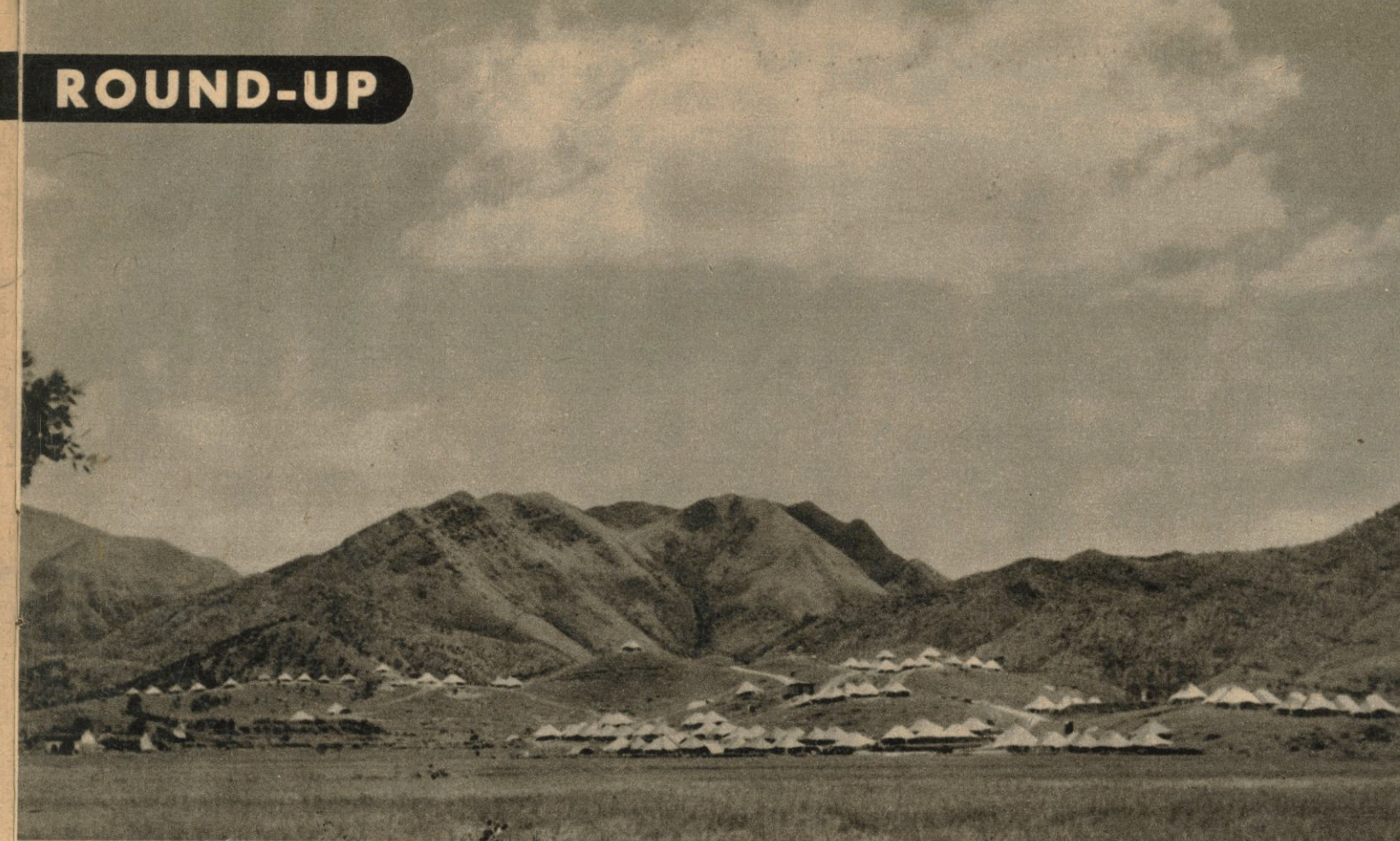
of a typhoon and learned a great deal about preventing bivouacs from taking off. On the third day the exercise started, with the officers acting as umpires and both the Middlesex and the "bandits" commanded by non-commissioned officers.

A Royal Navy gun-boat turned up that evening, on a routine visit to the island, and its captain was persuaded to stop and take part in the exercise with his crew. This added to the fun, though it caused some confusion as the "bandits" did not know for which side the sailors were fighting.

Both sides claimed the victory, and on the day before they left they fought it all over again on a sand-table (a real one, on the sandy beach) and the lessons were rubbed home. The same busy day, Gunner officers of an Air Observation Post Flight flew over in their Austers and dropped mail and newspapers; the brigade commander dropped in to see the company; and the gun-boat crew joined the soldiers in some potted sports. — *From a report by Captain A.G.R. Cross, Military Observer, Far East Land Forces.*



Home as it was on Lamma Island (left) was not very typhoon-resistant. Home as it will be when they have motored from Kowloon docks (above) is more solid, but less exciting.



A scene recalling the old days on the North-West Frontier: This camp near the China border of Hong-Kong's New Territories was built and occupied by Gurkha Riflemen. Most of the men of 40th Division are under canvas. (Photographs by Captain Colin D. Edwards, Military Observer, Far East Land Forces).

# THE ARMY'S

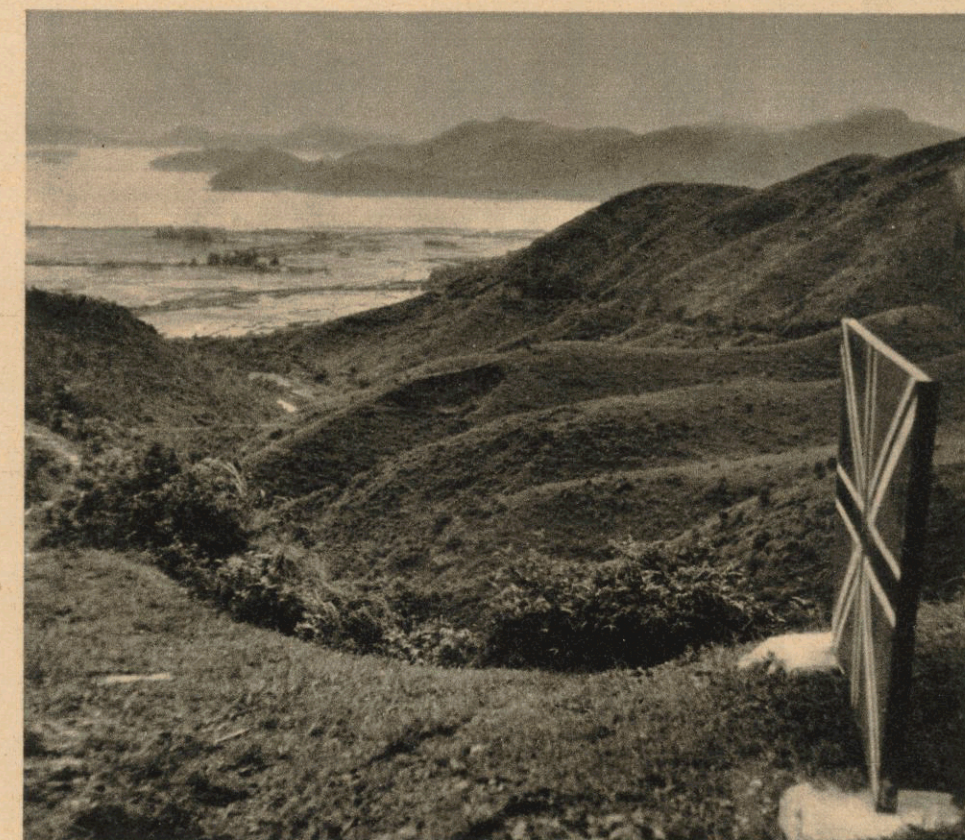
# FARTHEST WATCH

**B**ELOW, the river curled dragon-wise to the west, a dull silver in the moon. The land beyond it looked bosky, as if the ground were knobbled jungle, but that was only an illusion of the night: the darkness hid marshlands and paddy fields.

From the bright-windowed police station, a searchlight ranged over the quiet border between China and the British New Territories of Hong-Kong. Around the bend of the river, out of sight of the questing beam, a pin-point of light began to flash from a ferry point and was answered from the opposite stage. The smugglers — the everlasting smugglers — had evidently shifted their operations up river.

In the dark British soldiers were crouching. Their helmets were camouflaged, but their bronzed faces needed no disguising. From post to post climbed the Commanding Officer with his escort of two riflemen; they went directly at the slope, for the Army here has a theory that it is less exhausting to go straight up the mountainside than to work out an easy, gradual ascent. Strictly, the border watch was none of the soldiers' business, but on training exercises the men of 40th Division (who are encamped through the New Territories, but not on the actual border) help the Hong-Kong Police to keep an eye on Britain's toehold in Asia.

It was an impressive thought, if anyone cared to think about it — over there in the slumbering dark a vast and ancient civilisation had lately come under an incalculable "new management." But the soldiers were thinking not of Peking and Nanking, but of Faversham, Finchley, Exmouth and Blackburn, of the letters from home which ought to be waiting in the billets. They were also thinking they would like a smoke. But there was a certain pride in knowing that this watch on the Sham Chun was probably the farthest-from-home watch to be kept by the British soldier.



Looking towards Mirs Bay, from a boundary stone above the Sham Chun valley, which divides the New Territories from China.



In the long-drawn jungle operations in Malaya, soldiers and policemen do almost the same jobs, wear almost the same uniform

MALAYAN

ROUND-UP



Unseen eyes peer from an aperture in the canvas of the police truck. If the man paraded for scrutiny is identified as a bandit or helper of bandits, he is detained for further inquiries. The persons inside are concealed for their own protection. Left: Suspect through a slot. Above: The check in operation.

## Peephole Parade

**T**HE squatters watch keenly, curiously, as the covered trucks crunch to a stop in front of them. No one will descend from the vehicles; no one will go into them. But there are men inside — men who can see without being seen.

One by one, the squatters will file in front of the trucks, to be scrutinised by unseen eyes. Only to those with bad consciences is this likely to prove an ordeal.

This scene is the climax to a screening operation in Malaya, a "snap" operation in which British troops and Malayan police are now well rehearsed. Its purpose is to discourage bandits from seeking the shelter of the cultivated areas as a change from life on the run. For in Malaya yesterday's bandit may be tomorrow's squatter; and today's squatter may be tomorrow's bandit. Those unseen men may themselves be ex-bandits—hence the precautions against reprisals. The soldiers and policemen

were out long before dawn, cordoning off a district perhaps 40 miles square. From early light the inhabitants began moving towards the screening areas — some, indeed, rode there in the Government's trucks. For this is no harshly conducted round-up; the area for screening is chosen to give shade from the sun and shelter from the rain.

Screening itself is primarily a police task. The soldiers are there to keep the cordon tight, to prevent suspects diving for safety into the thick undergrowth.

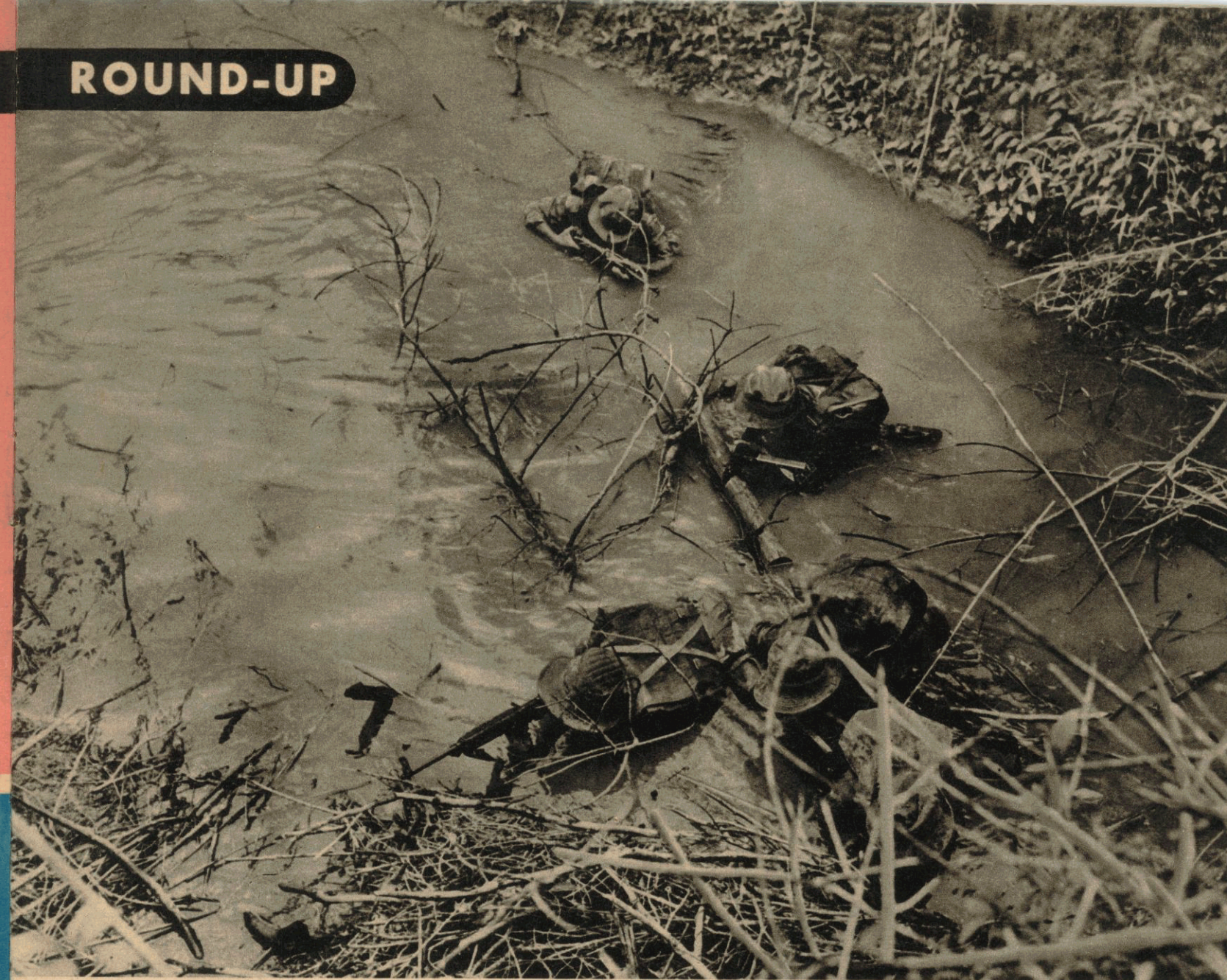
First the women pass in front of the trucks. A "no" from the interior of the vehicle and they pass on to be checked for identity cards and searched for hidden arms by female searchers. Then they are free to leave, but most remain to see their menfolk cleared.

Perhaps only four or five people will be picked out of more than two thousand. Often they are not real bandits, but suppliers of food, messengers, propagandists, or plain extortioners. These, after police questioning, may lead the security patrols to their associates in the jungle.

The screening may seem hard on innocent squatters, but it would be a great deal worse for them if the bandits were left in undisputed occupation. — From a report by J. D. Matthewson.



Above: In case rounded-up squatters need assistance, nurses from the social welfare department take over schoolrooms as first-aid posts. Left: Squatters waiting to be called forward.



They might be British Infantrymen, Guards or Gurkhas: in fact they are men of the Malaya Police Federation's special Frontier Force, who operate on the Thailand border.

## "It's a Man's Job"

**I**T is not only the British soldier who wades neck-high down tropical rivers and hacks through virgin jungle: up there in the loneliest reaches of Malaya are policemen on the same quest, wearing the same jungle uniform and carrying the same Infantry weapons.

In none of the world's trouble-spots where soldiers work in co-operation with police — Hong-Kong, Tripoli, Eritrea and so on — is there closer co-operation than in Malaya.

"It's a man's job," said the posters which sought recruits to the Palestine Police, now only a memory. It is equally a man's job to serve in the Federation of Malaya Police — a shrewd, hard-hitting and multi-lingual force, wise to all the ways of terrorists.

A picked police force of 500 men now operates along the 320-mile border between Malaya and Thailand (Siam). This is one of the most difficult "beats" in the world, as many patrols of British soldiers know to their cost. The task of the recently created force is to prevent the entry into, or departure from, Malaya of Communist terrorists, and to check smuggling and trafficking in arms, ammunition and drugs. In the jungle the

OVER





# "It's a Man's Job"

(Continued)

police patrols carry light machine-guns, grenades, rifles and radio; and on the border roads they use armoured cars.

All the members of the force have undergone a tough course of training at their own jungle school established at Sik, in Kedah. Many of them, besides speaking Malay, know either Thai or Chinese dialects.

This advanced force is administered by six European assistant superintendents of police, six Malay inspectors and one Chinese inspector, and it keeps close liaison with the other security forces along the border. Frontier police inspect all trains linking Malaya and Thailand. They examine all vehicles crossing the border and check all identity cards. The Governments of Malaya and Thailand are now co-operating to make it as difficult as possible for the bandits to escape the security forces of one country by crossing into the other.



Above: Malay recruits for the Frontier Force must be young and aggressively fit. PT at the training school keeps them in good shape. Right: Setting out on a long-distance patrol along the Thailand border.

## THE GUARDS IN MALAYA

*These verses were written by a Guards officer serving on anti-bandit operations in the Malaya jungle.*

They marched in pomp and splendour through the morning;  
The daily pageant of the historic years  
They made their own. Then came the urgent warning.  
The jungle now is theirs.

In greens as varied as the forest ceiling,  
By thorn and swamp, on rock or ochre clay,  
Through clearings high, range upon range revealing,  
They hack the sliding way.

The tree across the path, the bushes shaking,  
The mountain river's thicket-clad defiles  
May hide an alien trigger-finger quaking,  
Or mark the empty miles.

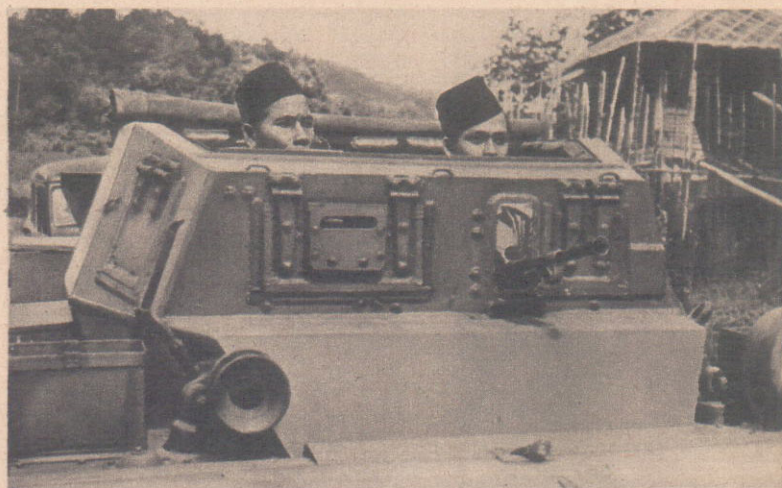
The hidden lair where the lost torrent gushes,  
The squatters' plots which yield the foe's supplies  
Stir in alarm as dawn begins, and rushes  
To meet their questing eyes.

A year or more, by Fate's unlooked-for chances,  
They sailed in summer on a quest unsought;  
A winter that they will not see advances  
And guides their homeward thought.

The falling leaves; the scented bonfire burning;  
The practice square; the gloom of Friary Court;  
The greatcoats creased against the wind's returning  
When daylight hours grow short.

But where night follows day in even paces,  
Stripped to the heat and careless of the rain,  
Alert, they follow their appointed places  
And breast the slope again.

And in strange beauty and wild tropic weather,  
Amid the strife of Man and Earth and Sky,  
They stand, as they have always stood, together,  
And know their name held high.



Below: A member of Malaya's Frontier Police (left) interests a Thailand police patrol in his walkie-talkie set. Border liaison is now closer than ever.







This harbour scene—inspired by the Cornish fishing ports—adorns the mess of the warrant officers and sergeants at the Army School of Education, Bodmin.

## SERGEANT GENTLEMAN: HIS MURALS

A soldier who can design and execute mess murals is not likely to have much leisure time, once the Army discovers his secret.

Usually it takes a world war to pull in the kind of man who can turn a Nissen hut into a Tyrolean inn. In the late war the Guards had the services of the artist Rex Whistler, who decorated his Brighton billet with such distinction that the town was only too glad to preserve his handiwork. Other towns were not at all keen to preserve relics of the Army's occupation...

In Germany, in 1945, there was no need to depend on unit talent for murals; it was just too easy to get local artists to decorate acres of bare wall for a trivial reward. But the best murals, the murals in which a unit takes most pride, are those of which it can say "All Our Own Work."

The decorations reproduced on this page are from the sergeants' mess of the Army School of Education at Bodmin, Cornwall. They are the work of a National Serviceman, Serjeant David William Gentleman, who is not quite 20 and comes from Hertford. For a year before his call-up he was studying for an art teacher's intermediate diploma, and hopes to go back to his studies when he is released.

"But I don't intend to go in for teaching," he told SOLDIER. "The experience is useful. I hope to become a commercial artist, probably in a studio at first and then on my own. And I hope to do other work—murals, perhaps, included—as well."

He describes his main interest as "design in general and imaginative composition."

At Bodmin, Serjeant Gentleman is an instructor in the School's art department, but that does not take up all his time. He has done stage-design, covers for booklets, illustrations for a camp magazine and posters. "All good experience," he says.

Nautical inspiration for the murals at Bodmin came from the little fishing-ports of Cornwall, especially Mevagissey. He thought they would be a refreshing change in an inland place—"a little more holiday-like."



Life on the ocean floor: only the iron bedstead and the old zinc bath are missing.



More life on the ocean floor: Neptune seems weighed down by the cares of his kingdom.





While Captain A. L. King-Harman takes his theodolite reading on the stars, Captain C. S. Wallis-King checks the reading times with a stop watch.

## NORTH AFRICA REPORT

**SOLDIER** flew to Tripolitania and Cyrenaica to see how the heirs to the Eighth Army are faring. This feature — by Staff Writer **PETER LAWRENCE** and Cameraman **DESMOND O'NEILL**—tells of a unit of the Coldstream Guards which makes long-range sorties "into the blue"

# RESCUE PATROL:

## THEY STEER BY SUN-COMPASS



Guardsman Joseph Harris mounts the petrol lorry. Doors and unnecessary fittings are stripped.



Bogged down at Ain Sidi Mohammed: one of the rescue group's three-tonners in difficulties. (This picture was taken by the unit.)

**Y**OU are in an aircraft flying over the Libyan Desert. The earth is as featureless as the sky: the only difference is that one is brown and the other is blue.

Suddenly the engines pack up. The sand dunes come nearer. There is a thud and the plane ends up with its nose in one dune and a wing in another. You and your fellow-travellers crawl out and wonder what happens next.

Nothing happens. You are just stranded there. No radio. Probably no food. No one knows where you are, least of all you yourself.

After a few hours a speck appears in the sky. It turns out to be a plane which circles, drops you food and water and disappears. You wait all night and the next day, and all night again, depending upon how far you are from civilisation.

Then you see a cloud of sand rising in the distance. As it gets nearer you can make out vehicles — four jeeps and two three-ton lorries. The men in them are wearing a curious assortment of hats and coloured scarves, and they have beards as long as your own. You stagger forward to meet them and find yourself face to face with the Coldstream Guards.

This does not happen every day — in fact, it has not happened yet. But just in case an aircraft crashes in the Libyan Desert, the Army in Tripoli has its air-desert rescue group of four officers and ten men. With the exception of one officer — a Gunner — the group come from the 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards. They are permanently at six hours' notice to move.

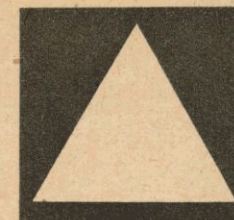
Because the call has never come, it does not mean that the rescue patrol has never ventured out. To gain experience of desert navigation it has undertaken a 14-day journey into the Libyan wasteland, covering some 1700 miles, over as difficult terrain as can be found. It penetrated towards those regions where the "private armies" of World War Two, based on remote oases, conducted lightning raids on enemy outposts.

Every patrol is a military exercise. The men who go on them are not volunteers; they are chosen because they are good drivers, good fitters, good cooks and good map-readers, and because they are fit enough to dig and push a laden three-tonner out of a sand drift.

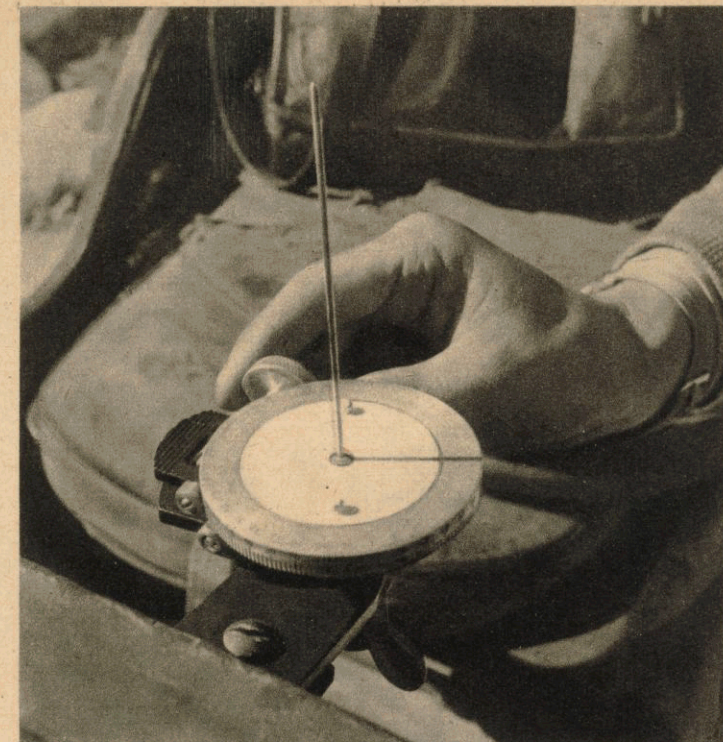
Only one man in the group has had experience of desert warfare. He is the Gunner officer, who

OVER

## IN THE BLUE



The flash of First Division.



Above: The instrument which guided the patrol for hundreds of miles in the wilderness: the sun-compass. Right: Three of the patrol: L/Cpl. Thomas Kirkwood, of Renfrew, Scotland (top) who travelled with the petrol truck; Sgt. James Hildick, versatile cook; and Captain C. S. Wallis-King, commanding the expedition.



Members of the patrol inspect a relic of World War Two at Nofilia. Not all wrecks are safe to approach. (Unit picture.)



## RESCUE PATROL (Cont'd)

was in General Auchinleck's Army. Some of the others served in North-West Europe and Palestine, and the rest are mostly young Regulars — this battalion of the Coldstream Guards has only a handful of National Servicemen.

Their leader is Captain C. S. Wallis-King, who in the advance rides in the second jeep with the battalion Intelligence Officer, Lieutenant A. R. S. Tower. They are responsible for navigation by day. Their driver is 20-year-old Guardsman John Chilcott of Crediton, Devonshire, who has been three years with the regiment.

Ahead of them is the reconnaissance party — Captain A. L. King-Harman of 6th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, who at night pinpoints their position by taking theodolite readings from the stars, and Lieutenant R. R. Cooper, the Motor Transport Officer, who drives. Their job is to scout ahead and keep the convoy off treacherous ground.

Behind the navigators comes an additional reconnaissance party under Serjeant B. Goddard, a fitters' jeep under Serjeant Arthur McNeill REME, and two three-tonners loaded with food, water, stores and petrol. The vehicles have been stripped of doors and all unnecessary fittings to make them easier to manhandle.

So that the group's vehicles may have full tanks directly they leave the main road, another three-tonner and a jeep stocked with petrol accompany them until they branch off into the desert, meeting them again on the return journey. Although the Guards

did not need all the petrol they took with them they used 1650 gallons during their 14 days' operation.

To the Coldstream Guards this journey was an exercise like any other, with the additional object of teaching desert navigation. But there was one important difference. On a normal scheme if a truck breaks down it can be towed back to base. If a man is ill he can be taken to hospital. If a

vehicle runs short of petrol more can usually be obtained. The Guards could not risk any mishap which could not be remedied on the spot. When petrol consumption was estimated by Lieutenant Cooper, the figure was doubled and then half as much again was added as a margin against any unforeseen emergency.

"The vehicles are the backbone of this operation," said Captain Wallis-King. "If the one carrying petrol or water had broken down beyond repair we should have been in a fix."

Stores carried included vehicle spares, ropes for lowering buckets down wells, bottles of distilled water for batteries, sand mats for "bogged" vehicles, 100 water cans, a medical chest and even a spray gun for use against flies.

The first part of the journey was by coast road to Agheila on

the Gulf of Sirte. Here the supporting petrol party saw the tanks filled and then watched the patrol set off "into the blue." For the 14 men the country ahead was unknown terrain. Their maps gave little indication of what they would find, for the ground has never been completely surveyed and the information available is not always entirely accurate. Here and there on the maps an oasis was marked and the large spaces were filled in with the words "undulating gravel; very good going."

The patrol went down the track to Marada and then turned east towards the lone water-point of Ain Sidi Mohammed, traversing salt pans, deep wadis, 200-foot slopes as steep as the roof of a house, rock-strewn ground and desert tracks obliterated by the movement of sand. Sometimes the



The evening meal was the big meal of the day. Serjeant Hildick prepared it on a petrol-burning stove. (Unit picture.)



Showing the route taken by the patrol: right to the shores of the Sand Sea.



At Ain Sidi Mohammed the patrol passed the time of day with men who cross the desert, not by dead reckoning, but by instinct. (Unit picture.)





Mid-day halt in the desert: the news in the *Daily Mirror* is history by now, but Jane is timeless. (Unit picture.)

ground was so soft that vehicles had to make lengthy detours. At other times it was firm and covered with thousands of fossilised shells.

Wadis, like rivers, could only be crossed at certain places, and once across the patrol had to work its way back on to its original axis. Every hour or so tyre pressures had to be altered — increased for rocky ground and decreased for sand. During the whole journey there was only one puncture.

Each night the convoy halted before dark and Captain King-Harman set up his "mumbo-jumbo" — as the men called his theodolite — on a dune. Once night had fallen he took readings on one or two of the main stars and worked out the sidereal time (time by the stars). The Greenwich Time of each reading was record-

ed with the aid of a stop-watch and by a series of computations from a nautical almanac Captain King-Harman was able to estimate latitude and longitude. Within a short space of time he was thus able to pinpoint the patrol's position to within 500 yards.

Besides Greenwich Time (checked from BBC signals over a radio run from jeep batteries) the patrol also had watches set to local and sun time. Once the position was pinpointed, Lieutenant Tower was able to plot the next day's routes and compass bearings. By day the sun compass was used except in overcast weather, when the navigators resorted to oil compasses.

A miscalculation of even a degree could throw the patrol many miles off the right course in a day's run — and errors could lead to disaster in the Western

Desert where wells with water fit to drink are few and widely spaced. The Coldstream Guards did not run out of water — shaving was banned and supplies were used only for drinking, cooking and cooling vehicles — but at one time they had only a few gallons to spare when they reached a well.

At night there was little fear of being disturbed, for there was no living person for miles around. The vehicles were drawn up in a circle to make a wind break, and the main meal of the day was cooked on a petrol burner. Usually the menu included steak and kidney pudding and plum duff or peaches. Lieutenant Tower then wrote up his log book and the men settled down for the night. Each man had his greatcoat and three blankets and on very cold nights whisky was issued. There

was a ration of six cigarettes a day.

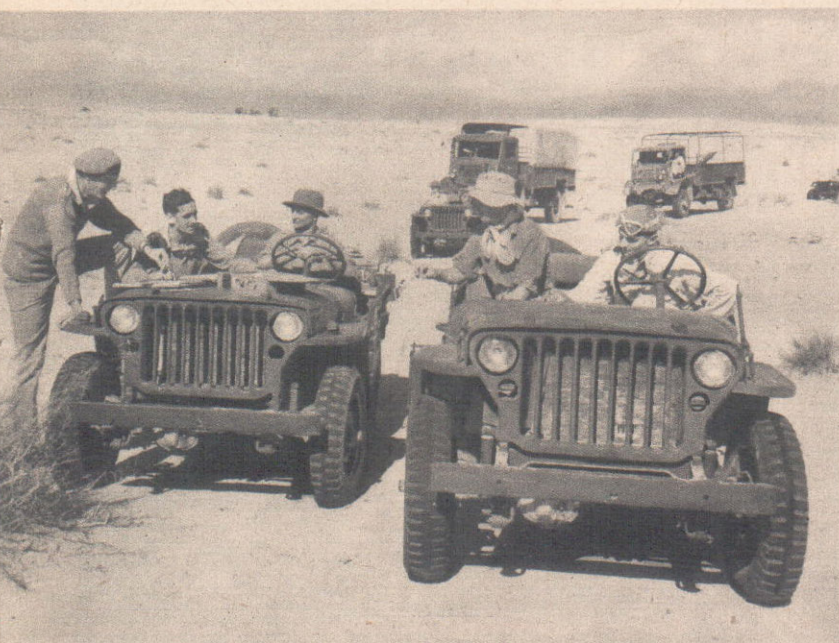
It was at night that the fitters overhauled the vehicles. Once there was a gear breakdown in a jeep and Serjeant Arthur McNeill and Guardsman Joseph Harris worked until three in the morning repairing it. What they needed was a new clutch-fork but their spares did not include one. Eventually they hammered an Italian two-lire piece into shape and soldered it into the fulcrum of the broken fork. It held and the "two-lire" jeep has given no trouble since. Said Serjeant McNeill: "We certainly got our money's worth from that coin."

The route of the patrol went by Gialo Oasis, scene of a dashing exploit in the late war when Major-General Dennis Reid, commanding the Indian Brigade Group from Girabub, walked alone into the

**OVER**



The jeep is turned on to its side for repairs. The two men at the vehicle once mended a clutch-fork with the aid of a two-lire coin.

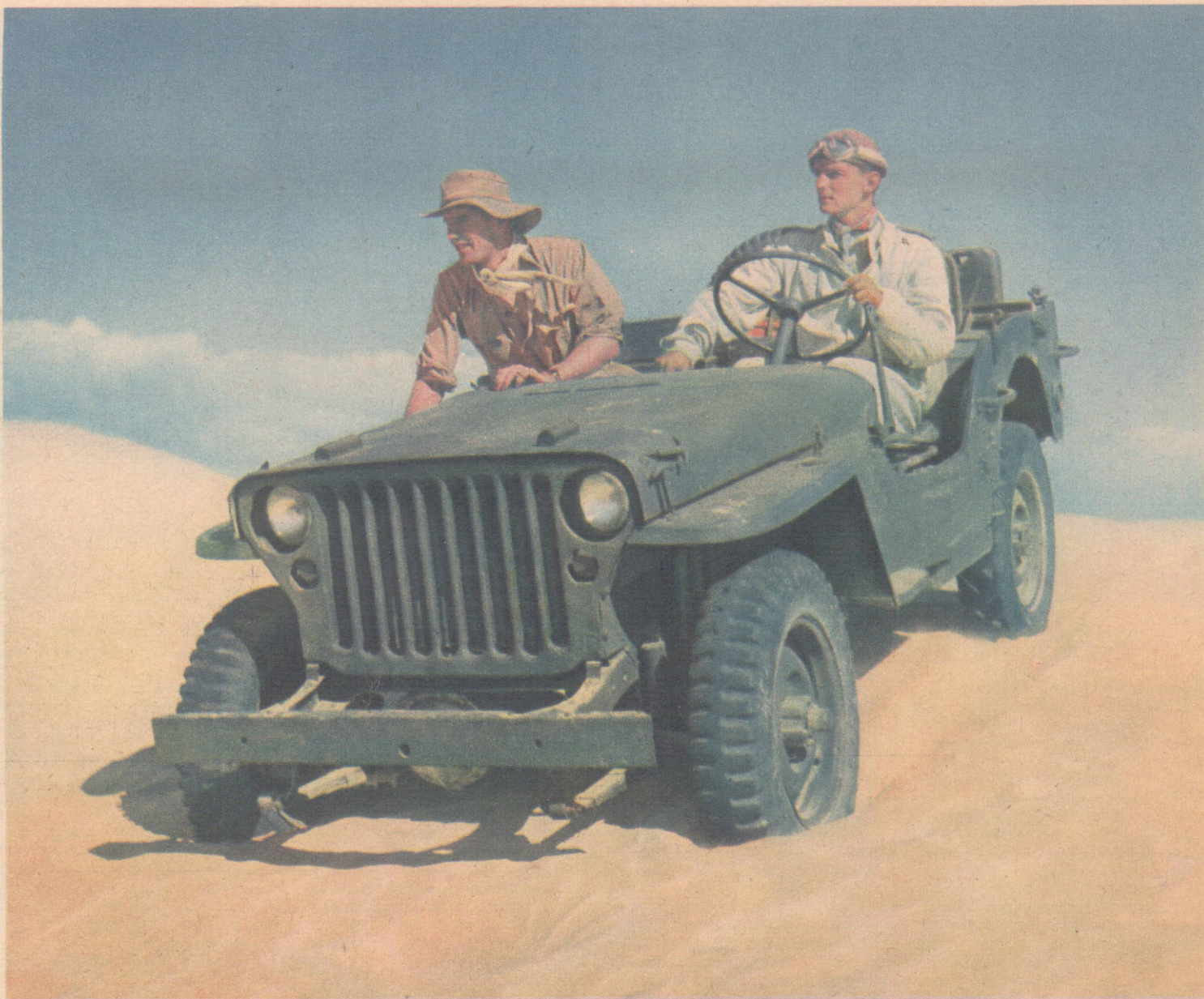


The column halts to check the route. Left to right: Lieut. A. Tower, Capt. Wallis-King, Gdsm. J. Chilcott, Capt. King-Harman and Lieut. R. Cooper.



When the jeep wheels sink, the sand must be dug away and a tarpaulin "fed" underneath so that the treads can grip.





## RESCUE PATROL (Concluded)

fort and held up with his pistol 60 Italian officers seated at dinner. Sometimes the patrol met Arab tribes moving to new territory, and once a caravan of camels bringing dates from Kufra to Benghazi. (Since the dates in the south ripen first the Arabs hurry north with them before the coastal dates are ready.) The desert Arab often has valuable information about the state of wells. On one occasion the reconnaissance party was treated to tea in an Arab encampment.

At midday the patrol had a very light meal because of the heat — usually lemonade and cheese and biscuits. Once they spent a whole day at a well, taking the opportunity to bathe in a hole of salty water and to give the vehicles an extra overhaul. Eventually the desert gave way to scrub, and the main road south of Benghazi was sighted. There the supporting petrol party was waiting patiently. Then came the long pull back along the coast road to Tripoli.

Said Captain Wallis-King: "If we had a real call-out we should have an RAF wireless van with us to make contact with civilisation. We might have to bring back casualties already treated

by a doctor parachuted from the rescue plane, and parts of the crashed aircraft. Therefore it is probable that a second party consisting of heavier vehicles carrying extra medical supplies and other stores would be formed after we had already started out and would meet us on the way back. We are the core of the rescue group, the people who have to move off quickly and penetrate into the desert whatever the country is like. The organisation must be flexible so that it can be adapted to any emergency. On our recent trip we found out many things that can be learned in no other way."

He turned the pages of the log-book which contained such entries as: "Gioffer well situated on the edge of the salt flats is slightly farther south than the map indicates," and "The water at Bettafal is extremely good, cool and sweet." Another entry records: "Today Lieutenant Cooper shot one bustard and one fox."

The men have been able to relieve their trip, for Captain King-Harman shot much of it in colour on a ciné film. A scene which goes down well is the one of bearded Captain Wallis-King taking a bath in a water hole.

In the blue: the leading reconnaissance jeep halts on the crest of a "wave." Note desert neckwear.



Bath, officers for the use of. This salt water hole was found at a half-way halt. Shaving was not allowed. (Unit picture.)



## NORTH AFRICA REPORT

(Continued)

The regiment of Dragoon Guards which calls itself (unofficially) "The First and the Last" is stationed beside the ruins of an ancient Roman city in Tripolitania: Sabratha

# TANKS...

**L**IFE in the Tripolitanian Desert — or on the edge of it — is very much what you make it.

When, like the men of the 4/7th Royal Dragoon Guards, you are nearly 50 miles from Tripoli and your neighbours are only a few Arab and Italian families, the unit becomes your whole existence.

The Dragoon Guards are at Sabratha, which was one of the three great Roman cities in this part of North Africa (the others being Leptis Magna and Tripoli). To recapture the past the visitor can walk down to the sea through the ruined streets of Sabratha, past the temples, the fine amphitheatre and the public baths where the maidens sported 1000 years ago. This city was a staging-post for the Phoenician traders bringing gold, ivory, wild beasts and slaves from the interior; a city spared by the Romans when they destroyed Carthage, but not spared by a power stronger than the Romans — the encroaching sand.

But the visitor's thoughts will quickly be brought back to 1950 by the roar of the tanks and the shouts of drill instructors. In the barracks soldiers in black berets test out their engines, and on the large square the new arrivals from Catterick or Barnard Castle undergo a six weeks' course.

In contrast to the ruins of a far-off age, the neat white walls of the barrack blocks look as if they have just sprung up overnight and the roadways and square have the air of being permanently ready for a Royal inspection. This is due to the good work put in by the regiment, aided by the Public Works Department of the British Administration. The Italians built the barracks and the Arabs did much towards un-building them. The married quarters in particular lost all their windows and doors (wood being as valuable as gold to the Arabs) and they were inhabited mostly by goats and sheep.

Since arriving from Palestine in 1948 the Dragoon Guards have cleaned up the barracks, laid out the square and transformed the desert scrubland enclosed by the buildings into formal gardens. They have painted their barrack-rooms and in some cases they have built dummy fireplaces "to give a home-like atmosphere." (There are no chimneys.)

Once a month every man goes out into the desert for three days with the tanks, and once a year the regiment takes part in divisional exercises. Vehicle maintenance is a big job: the roads are bad enough to rattle the most robust truck and the sand takes off the paint as effectively as sandpaper. The paint spray is always in use.

The regiment has produced — but not yet patented — a Sten gun drill for ceremonial occasions. It was first employed publicly for the visit last summer of Field-Marshal Sir William Slim. Some day, the regiment hopes, it will be adopted by the rest of the Army. The drill was worked out by RSM W. J. Emerton, who prefers to give the credit to his drill instructors. **OVER**

From the tower the muezzin calls the faithful to prayer... and from the barracks the trumpeter calls the faithful to parade.



## ... WHERE THE ROMANS TROD

The city of Sabratha died of sand — and tanks will die the same way without constant cleaning.







Above: The Lone Palm, or "Where do we go from here?" A scene from a desert exercise. Left: operating the next-most-important gun — the grease gun.

## TANKS... WHERE THE ROMANS TROD (Cont'd)

The Dragoon Guards, who can trace their history back to 1685, have an unofficial slogan, "The First and the Last" — the inspiration of a writer in a London newspaper. In 1914 a corporal of the regiment is said to have fired the first shot for the British Army, and in a mounted charge an officer was the first to draw blood with his sword. In 1918 the first horses over the Hohenzollern Bridge into Germany were from the regiment. In 1939 it provided the first mechanised cavalry to land in France. On the Normandy D-Day its tanks were the first ashore. And on 4 May 1945 it was fighting with the 51st Highland Division, the last British troops in action against the Germans.

As they clean their tanks in the vehicle park, those men who served in the British Expeditionary Force in 1940 recall the five-ton light tanks with which they

were then equipped — tanks with armour thick enough only to keep out small arms fire. RSM Emerton, who was taken prisoner in the Dunkirk rearguard battle, remembers the day in August 1938 when the Dragoon Guards gave up their horses. As one of the regiment's outstanding horsemen (he rode at Olympia with the regimental team) he is still able to get in plenty of practice with the small stable maintained at Sabratha.

Perhaps the man with the longest memory is Serjeant Leonard Shipley, of the band, son of a Dragoon Guardsman. He served two years in the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards, which were merged in 1922 with the 7th (Princess Royal's) Dragoon Guards to become the 4/7th. "I am the only 4th Royal Irish man left," he says. "I remember the last mounted parade in 1938 when the whole







The men of Eighth Army posed by these pillars; so did the Afrika Korps. Now it is the turn of the men of First Division. Right: Like English boys, young Arabs cannot resist the lure of a tank.

regiment, including the band, was on horseback in a field near Edinburgh. Afterwards we said farewell to our horses and went to Aldershot to take over tanks and carriers."

Another serjeant whose father was in the regiment is Reginald Cox. His father served for 36 years. Young Reginald came in as a bandboy in 1935 and boxed for Northern Command. He has been to Palestine twice (1938 and 1947) and to France twice (first with the BEF and again on the Normandy D-Day).

Serjeant Cox likes to recall the days of training for the Normandy landing. "We had a terrific spirit throughout the Army just then," he says. But D-Day itself was a sad one for the Serjeant. A few hours after the waterproofed tanks had reached the shore, his brother Ronald, a corporal in the same squadron, was killed. The Serjeant carried on right through — the breakout from the Vernon bridgehead, the rescue dash with

the Dorsets to Arnhem, the first link-up with the Americans at Geldern in February. In April, when supporting the Royal Norfolks, he was wounded. He was awarded a Military Medal.

Most of the regiment are too young to have seen war service; many are National Servicemen who still seem surprised to find themselves in a lonely station in Tripolitania. But they are cheerful. Trooper Arthur Shaw, aged 19, of Royston, said: "They are all good muckers-in in this regiment. We work on the tanks in the morning and in the summer we spend our afternoons on the beach where we have tents and a unit raft. In the winter we play football or go roller-skating and there is also the cinema. Yes, we have sheets and spring beds and now they have issued pyjamas."

In the cookhouse Serjeant W. Fox, ACC, uses diesel oil for cooking. "In the summer we always give the cooked meal in the

OVER





## TANKS... WHERE THE ROMANS TROD (Cont'd)

evening and make the midday one as cool as possible," he said. "We use some local dishes — pumpkin boiled and served with cheese, and eggplant fried in batter. Fats are always tinned and meat is frozen. The men like water melons, dates and oranges."

To the regiment's satisfaction, families have settled in happily. Said Mrs. C. Babb, wife of a serjeant, who arrived from Chelmsford last March: "The houses are quite good. We have two bedrooms, a living room, kitchen, bathroom and hall. There is a school for the children and we go to Zavia, seven miles away, for our groceries. Food is more expensive than at home." Butter costs 3s ½d a lb. (1s 6d in Britain), milk is 1s 2½d a 16-ounce tin (there is no fresh); bacon 3s 2d (against 2s 3d), sugar 6d (5d) tea 5s 7d (3s 4d) and carcass meat 2s 11d (1s 5d).

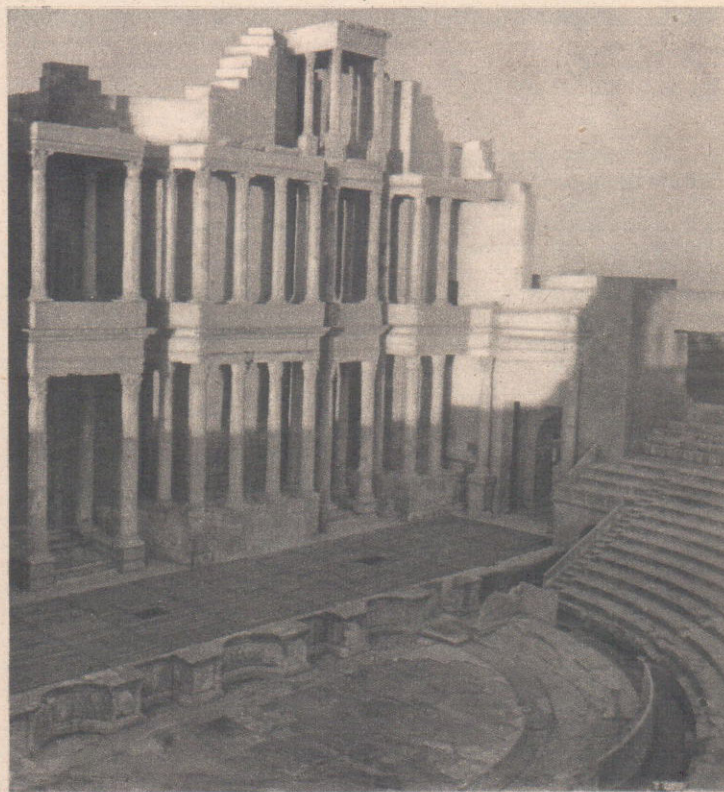
To meet these increases there is a local allowance. For a serjeant in quarters it is 7s 3d a day, or 11s 3d if he is living out; for a private 6s 9d or 10s 9d. Ration allowance is just under 7s. Each home has an ice box and ice is delivered daily free. Water for the barracks is pumped from a well two miles away. Coal is never seen by the Army in this part of the world and families cook by wood, bath water being heated by a wood-burning geyser. "And very good geysers they are, too," says Mrs. Babb.

Said Major J. A. d'Avigdor-Goldsmid MC, the Second-in-Command: "We may be out in the blue but we rarely get any complaints from the men. Sometimes they go into Tripoli but most of them prefer to make their own amusement here because of the long journey."

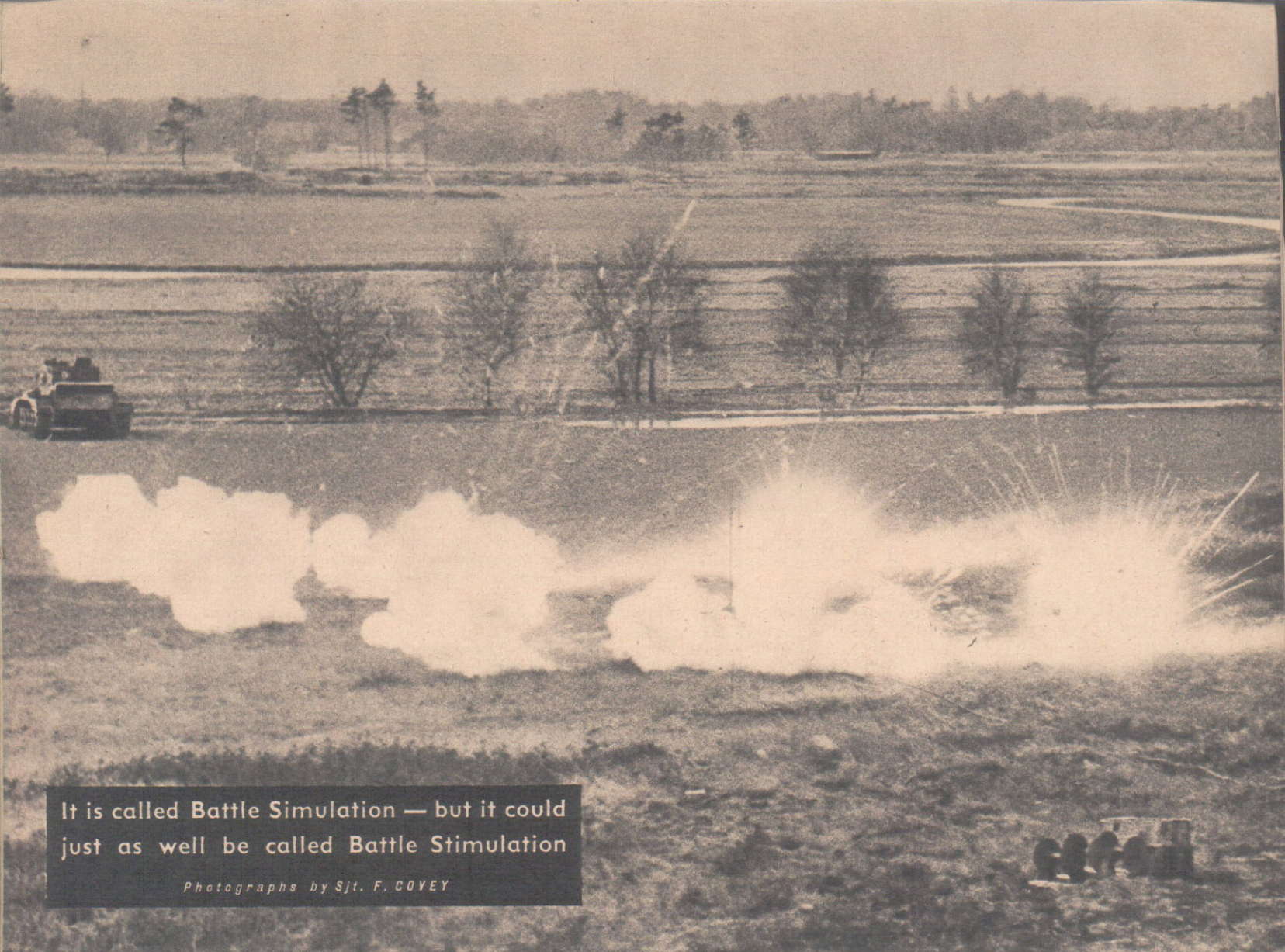
★ North Africa Report will be continued in next month's *SOLDIER*.



The warning about cleaning coins should not be missed by anyone who collects queer notices. Below, left: the men in the black berets demonstrate the Sten gun drill which they performed before Field-Marshal Sir William Slim. Right: in the ancient amphitheatre ENSA comedians once cracked ancient jokes.







It is called Battle Simulation — but it could just as well be called Battle Stimulation

*Photographs by Sjt. F. COVEY*

# BATTLE

**A** little black box no larger than a medium-sized attaché case has transformed the system of "bleeding" soldiers on exercises.

It has introduced such impressive realism into field exercises that even seasoned campaigners of World War Two were surprised when they saw it in action for the first time in the Rhine Army manoeuvres last Autumn.

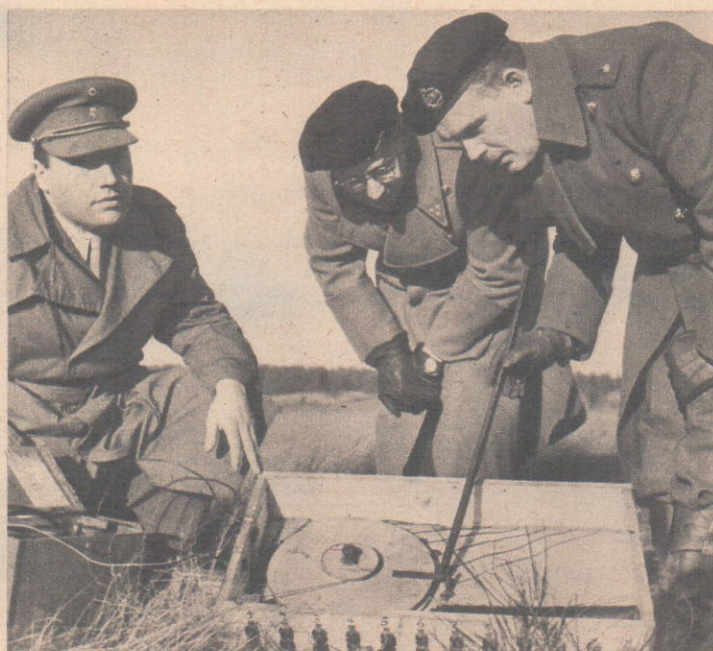
The part the box played then in producing most of the noises and effects of modern war — from heavy artillery barrages to small-arms fire — drew a message of congratulation from the Commander-in-Chief; and, from Mr. Emanuel Shinwell, the verdict that the exercise was "as near reality as anything can be without being dangerous to troops taking part." The fireworks also noticeably impressed military observers and press correspondents, and — not least — high-ranking officers of the Danish, Belgian and Norwegian armies.

The device — called the Hohne Simulator Box — is the brain-child of Major George Witheridge, DSO, Commandant of the Royal Armoured Corps Ranges at Hohne in Germany and leader of Rhine Army's Battle Simulation Team.

It all began when the inventor was sitting up to his haunches in a muddy puddle on the Hohne ranges trying with frozen fingers to repair a broken electric cable. At that time battle noises were produced by a system of electrically operated detonators which meant relying on miles of

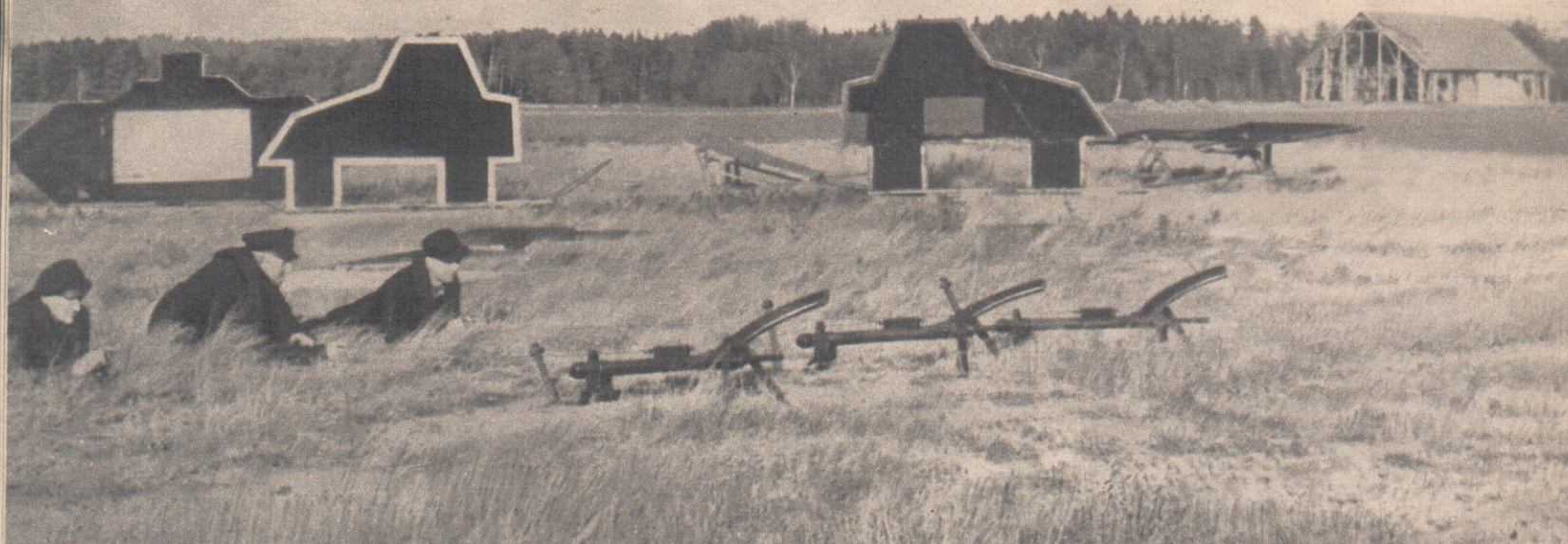
OVER

Twenty flash simulators in series of four produced this convincing looking artillery barrage in the path of an advancing tank. The Hohne Box in foreground was operated under cover from 50 yards away. Below: Major George Witheridge, DSO, explains the working of his box to two Belgian officers.



# OUT OF A BOX





## BATTLE OUT OF A BOX (Continued)

In the background: moving tank targets. In the foreground: machine-guns (operated by remote control) which fire wooden "disappearing" bullets.

wire cable. Sometimes, one cable would stretch as far as 3000 yards from the battery to the charge. After every exercise many of the wires would be severed by tanks and carriers, or cut by shells and bullets; others would lose their protective covering and "short" at the most awkward moments. Often, too, the batteries would not be strong enough to set off the charges farthest away.

To Major Witheridge, squatting in that cold puddle, it was clear that too much time and energy was being wasted on repairs and routine inspection for faults. What was needed was something simple in design and operation which would set off explosive charges more quickly and with greater certainty. That night he got out drawing board and pencil and designed the first Hohne Box. The rough idea was to incorporate into a box, which could be carried by several men, a series of contacts connected to a battery in

such a way that charges could be set off singly or a number at a time, with the aid of a steel pull-wire. In exercises where live ammunition was used by troops taking part the pull-wire would be operated from a blockhouse some 3000 yards away from the target area; in "dry" exercises when no live ammunition was fired the pull-wire could be as short as 20 yards.

A few days later the device was ready for test and, although it required four strong men to carry it, the box worked perfectly. But it was cumbersome and much too heavy. Today the latest Hohne Box weighs only 30 lbs, including the cable and drums, and can easily be carried by one man. It has 25 contact points each connected to four leads so that almost any number of flash simulators can be exploded at short notice to represent small-arms fire, spasmodic shelling, heavy artillery concentrations

and even aerial bombs or demolitions.

The special flash simulator is the No. 88 which was first used as far back as 1942 in North Africa, in an attempt to mislead the Germans into believing that we had more 25-pounder guns than we had. They were never completely successful and when the real 25-pounders arrived the simulators were withdrawn. Now they have come out of cold storage to help in battle inoculation. Their danger area is only 20 yards but the explosion and effect they produce are as realistic as could be wished.

Simulation of almost any type of fire can be arranged at any spot within a matter of minutes. When live ammunition is used the Hohne Box can be dug into the ground, operated by a steel pull-wire from safe cover and used to represent an enemy firing back at attacking troops.

In the Autumn Rhine Army exercises Gunners using blank ammunition elevated their guns to the correct range for the target and after firing could see their "shells" landing. The artillery fire plans had previously been given to the Battle Simulation Team

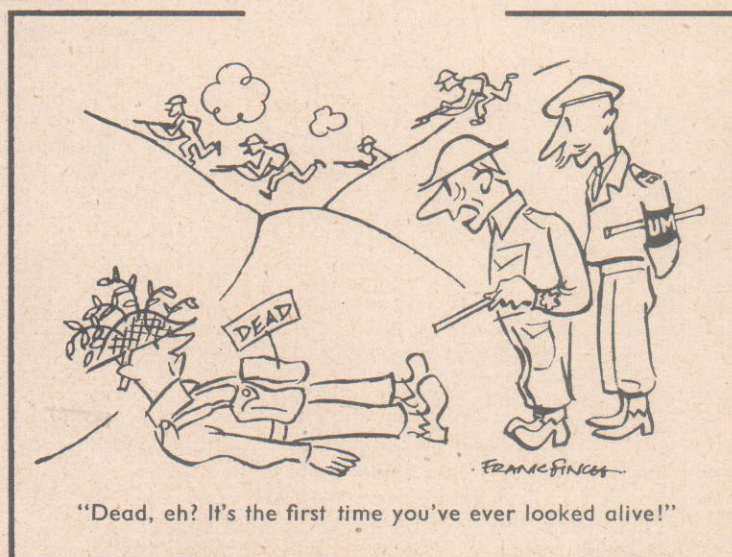
who arranged barrages, concentrations and smoke in the target area. Similarly, small-arms fire, anti-tank gun flash, demolitions and aerial bombs were engineered to explode at the right time and place. Even creeping barrages — perhaps the most spectacular of all the noises the Hohne Boxes can produce — were laid on by using as many as 36 boxes. Infantrymen following behind saw and could almost feel what it was like to follow a line of shells.

Rhine Army's Battle Simulation Team now has three platoons, each of which carries 12 Hohne Boxes, 8000 No. 88 simulators, 1000 smoke canisters and 18 special machine-guns firing wooden bullets which disintegrate at the muzzle and are safe at five yards. In charge of each platoon is an officer who is assisted by two sergeants, four troopers and a crew of Germans. With their 12 boxes one platoon can cover a front of between 1200 and 1500 yards. Three platoons are needed for a moving barrage of six lifts over a frontage of 800 yards.

On an extensive exercise a liaison officer receives the attacker's fire plan and passes it



Troopers H. Shearing and H. Banks link up the detonators. No explosion can occur until the batteries are connected and the switch is pulled.





to the Simulation Team commander, who is in close touch with the Senior Umpire at the defender's headquarters. Once the requirements of both attackers and defenders are known platoons or sections of the simulation team are told where and when to lay out fire. Each section is in constant touch by radio with the team commander and can produce the appropriate battle noises within a few minutes of receiving the orders.

Speed in getting into action is essential in a big exercise and it is precisely this quality which gives this "battle out of a box" its superiority over any other type of mock war. In 12 minutes a platoon can lay down 12 Hohne Boxes each with 25 charges, and in 40 minutes a representative artillery barrage of brigade strength. Platoons and sections are fully mobile and can quickly be switched from one part of the front to another.

Safety precautions are amply met by the use of the special simulator with its small danger area. Red flags are placed 20 yards from the explosive charges to

keep off unwary soldiers and the man who operates the pull-wire is able to see whether troops cross the safety limit. Batteries are not connected until the last few seconds.

Major Witheridge told SOLDIER: "Very little can go wrong with the Hohne Box. The leads from the box to the charges are only 50 yards long, so there is little danger of them being damaged.

"In days gone by all exercises suffered from a sense of unreality, especially for the soldier who, suddenly turning a corner, was told by an officer wearing a white armband that he had just been shot dead. Of course, the chap was absolutely bewildered and naturally fed up with the whole business. Even if live ammunition was used the safety precautions had to be so stringent that they destroyed any realism. But the Hohne Box gives targets on which the soldier can fire without having to be told where the target is; it keeps him keyed up and completely in touch with the 'battle' as if the exercise were the real thing."

Major Witheridge has been in the battle simulation business for some time. In 1942, before he was wounded while winning the DSO in North Africa, he invented the Field Miniature Range on which tank gunners and commanders were trained in the use of the then new 75 mm gun on the General Grant tank. Later, he was posted to the Middle East School at Abassia as Senior Instructor of Gunnery. There he ran a crew commanders' course designed to give tank crews the atmosphere and some of the realism of battle.

Early in 1943 he went to America as special liaison officer with the American Army, helping to re-organise the gunnery course of the Armored Force School at Fort Knox. While there he helped to produce training manuals which are still in use in the American Army. For this work he was awarded the American Legion of Honor. From 1943

until he came to Germany four years later he worked at the experimental wing, Lulworth and at the Armament Research Wing, Fighting Vehicle Proving Establishment.

As Commandant of the Hohne Ranges he now provides baptism of mock fire for RAC and anti-tank regiments and Infantry battalions of Rhine Army, as well as units from the Danish, Belgian and Norwegian forces in Germany. They always go away intrigued and full of new ideas, for the Hohne Range team has turned 150 square miles of countryside into an illusionist's paradise. There are cunningly concealed trip wires which pull wooden soldiers out of a hollow in the ground in range of attacking Infantrymen or tanks; hidden apparatus which when touched sets off anti-tank gun flash 3000 yards away; dummy tanks which appear to drive over a hill and shoot up an attacking force; and rapid-fire machine-guns firing wooden bullets, operated in complete safety by a man pulling a steel wire from a dug-out or by the passage of a vehicle over a trip device.

But the most fascinating novelty remains the Hohne Box. When SOLDIER watched a de-

monstration recently two Belgian officers spent several hours examining it and making drawings so that they could take back the idea for their own soldiers.

Right-hand men to Major Witheridge are SSM William McHardy, DCM, formerly with 11th Hussars, and Staff-Serjeant Peter Crawford, RTR. The serjeant-major helps to organise battle-runs and often acts as safety officer while Staff-Serjeant Crawford runs a carpenter's shop which repairs targets and observation towers, and turns out thousands of model vehicles for use by Rhine Army units on sand-tables.

Just now Major Witheridge is encouraging MQMS W. Cole to work out a new type of simulator box which will weigh less than a pound and will fit into a small pouch slung at the hip. Its chief feature is an electro-magnet mounted on a circular copper disc.

"I see no reason why the simulation we lay on now should not in the near future be operated by a pocket-size apparatus," says Major Witheridge. "Perhaps MQMS Cole's idea is the answer."

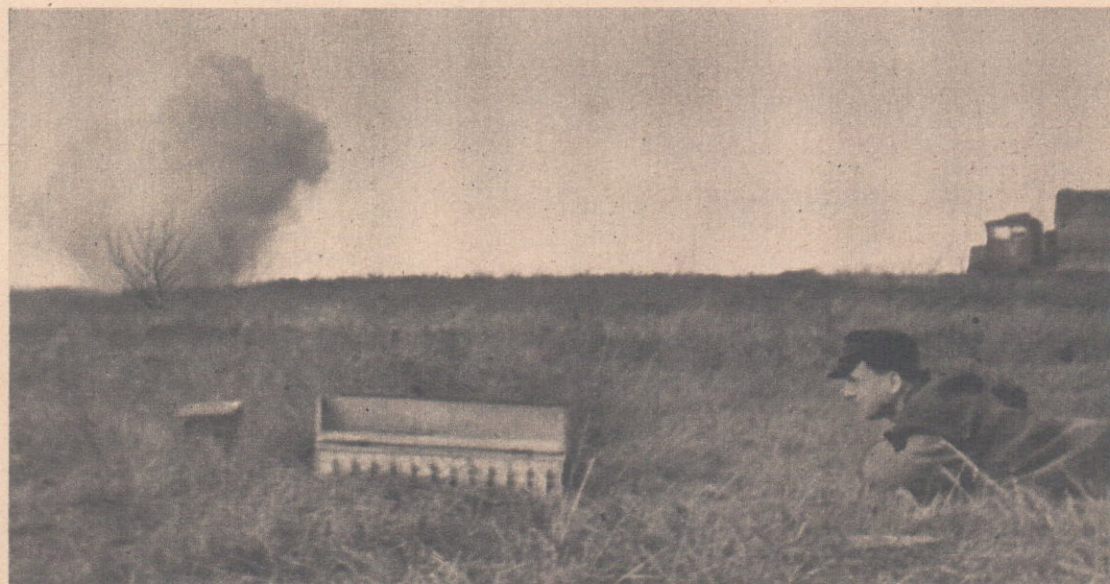
E. J. GROVE



Staff-Serjeant P. Crawford adjusts one of the dummy Infantrymen which mysteriously rise and fall on Hohne Ranges.



Above: Corporal W. Melville, stationed on Hohne Ranges, shows how the Hohne Box, weighing 30 pounds, can be carried on a man's back. Right: By pulling a wire (which can be as long as desired) the magic box can be made to set off distant explosions.





# TWINS:

## THEY CAN BE A PROBLEM FOR THE ARMY

LITERATURE is teeming with identical twins who cannot be distinguished from one another. The plots of innumerable stories and plays have hinged on one twin being mistaken for the other.

In real life there have been many instances of identical twins who seem to have some psychic link between them. When one is ill, the other feels ill too; if one breaks his right leg the other gets a pain in his right leg, even before he hears the news of his brother's accident. Separation unsettles them.

Recognising this psychic link between twins, the Army makes every effort to avoid separating them — even at risk of driving the orderly serjeant crazy.

**Sir I. Fraser:** Can the Minister give an assurance that twins will be promoted to corporal and sergeant at the same time?

**Mr. Keeling:** Can the Secretary of State say whether his answer applies, as would appear, to all twins, or only to identical twins?

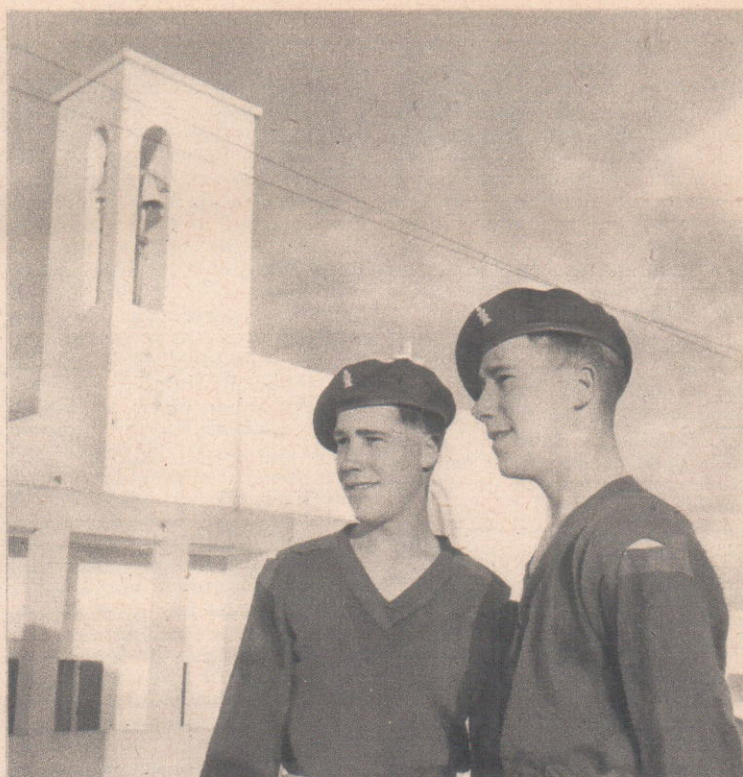
**Mr. Shinwell:** I understand that identical twins provide the largest number of twins born in this country.

**Hon. Members:** No.

**Mr. Emrys Hughes:** Will similar regulations be made applying to triplets?

Mr. E. Shinwell stressed this point in the last Parliament. He was asked whether he would instruct that identical twins should be allowed to serve together, as far as possible, during National Service.

These instructions were already in existence, said Mr. Shinwell. Twins who wished to serve together as National Servicemen were sent to the same



The Warner twins — Albert and Robert — of the 13/18 Royal Hussars were posted together to Cyrenaica. They are National Servicemen from Islington.

corps, joined the same unit on the same day and, subject to the usual exigencies, did all their whole-time Army service together.

"Can the Minister give an assurance that twins will be promoted to corporal and serjeant at the same time?" asked Sir Ian Fraser (Lonsdale), and "Will similar regulations be made applying to triplets?" asked Mr. Emrys Hughes (Ayrshire South).

Sir Ian, of course, was being sarcastic (though twins have been commissioned together) and Mr. Hughes's suggestion somewhat loses force from the fact that no record can be found of triplets having served in the Army, during the last nine years at least. But the problem of twins directed into National Service can be quite a headache.

Men of military age are called forward by the Ministry of Labour according to their date of birth, which means that twins are automatically called forward together. As they normally report to the labour office together they receive consecutive registration numbers and fill up consecutive forms. These forms are then pinned together and forwarded to War Office, where a note is made of the fact that they are twins and they are posted to the same corps. This ensures at least that they do their basic training together, and the corps, also having noted that they are twins, will post them to the same unit afterwards.

Problems arise when one of the twins has his call-up deferred in order to finish an apprenticeship, or to see a medical specialist. Even then they register together and when one twin is called up the Military Interviewing Officer will note that he has a twin

brother. Arrangements are made to post the other twin to the same corps later on.

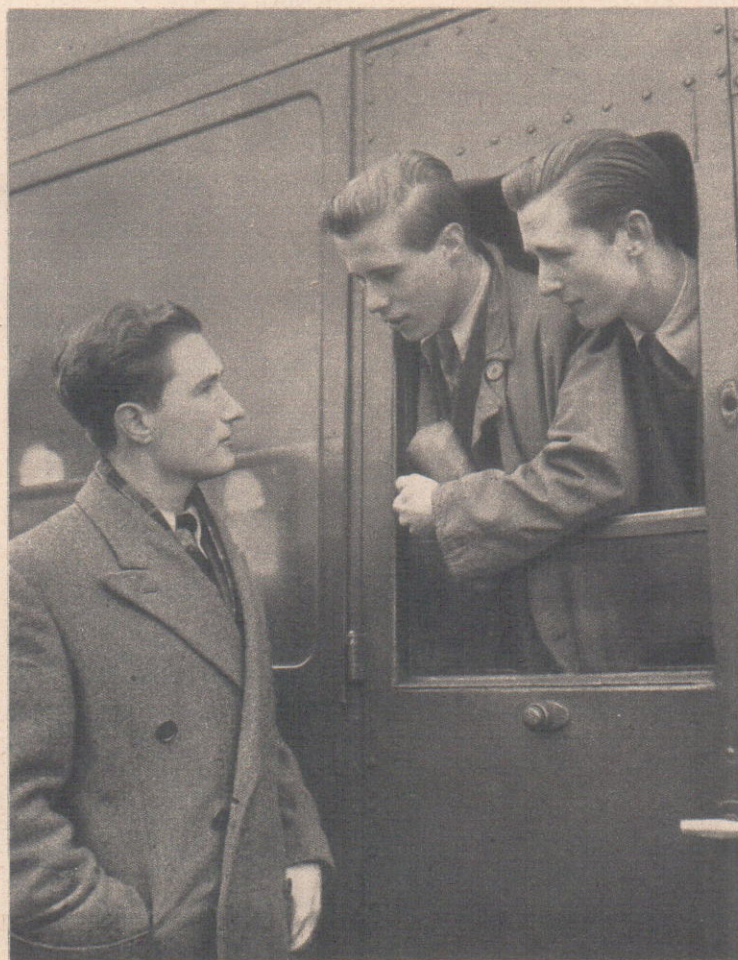
Slips do occur. Perhaps the Ministry of Labour official forgets to pin the forms together, or by mistake the twins are posted to different corps. If they apply to be brought together again this will be done by transferring one of them to the other's unit — even if the twins are in different medical categories. In one case recently twins were accidentally separated and, being in different medical categories, were allocated to different corps, one to the Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and the other to the Army Catering Corps. The error was spotted; and as the soldier who had been sent to the Army Catering Corps was not medically fit to go to REME, his brother was transferred to the Catering Corps.

Regular soldier twins are in rather a different position. It is felt that as they have volunteered for the Army, it is up to them to accept service conditions. If they were very keen on living always together they would probably not have joined the Army. Even so, every effort is made to see that they are kept together, but the authorities do not go to the length of promoting them both at the same time.

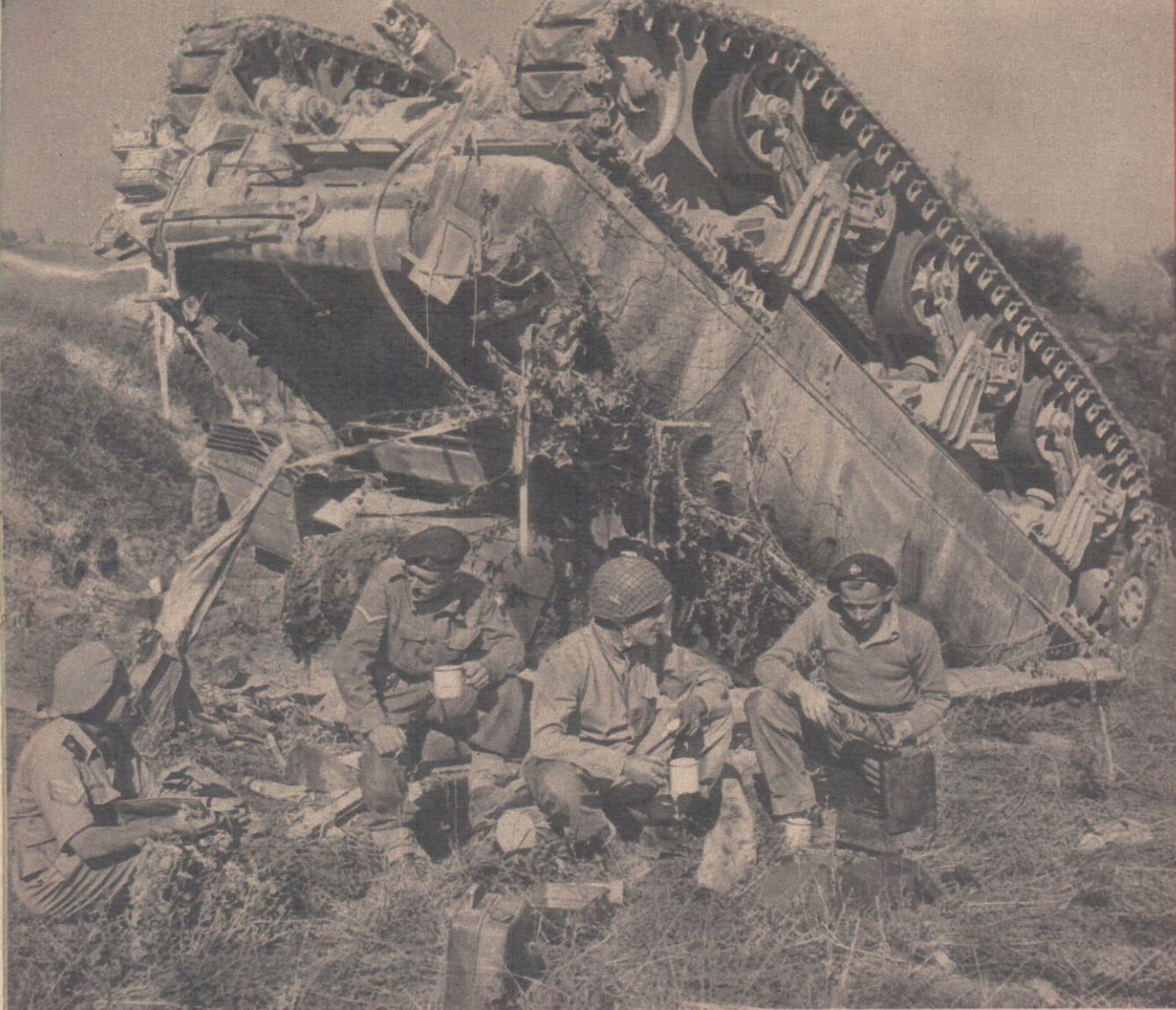
Have there been any famous instances of fighting twins, outside the realm of literature? SOLDIER has been unable to find any — but would be glad to hear of examples.

**Footnote:** The RAF has high-ranking twins: Air Vice-Marshal D. F. W. Atcherley, of Fighter Command, and Air Vice-Marshal R. L. R. Atcherley, AOC Pakistan Air Force.

The subject of twins and triplets in the Army amused Members of Parliament — see *Hansard* extract above. It does not always amuse the War Office. Below: Two more twins set off to join the Army. They are Ron and Don O'Brien, here saying goodbye to their older brother (who came out of the Army as a serjeant) at Waterloo Station.

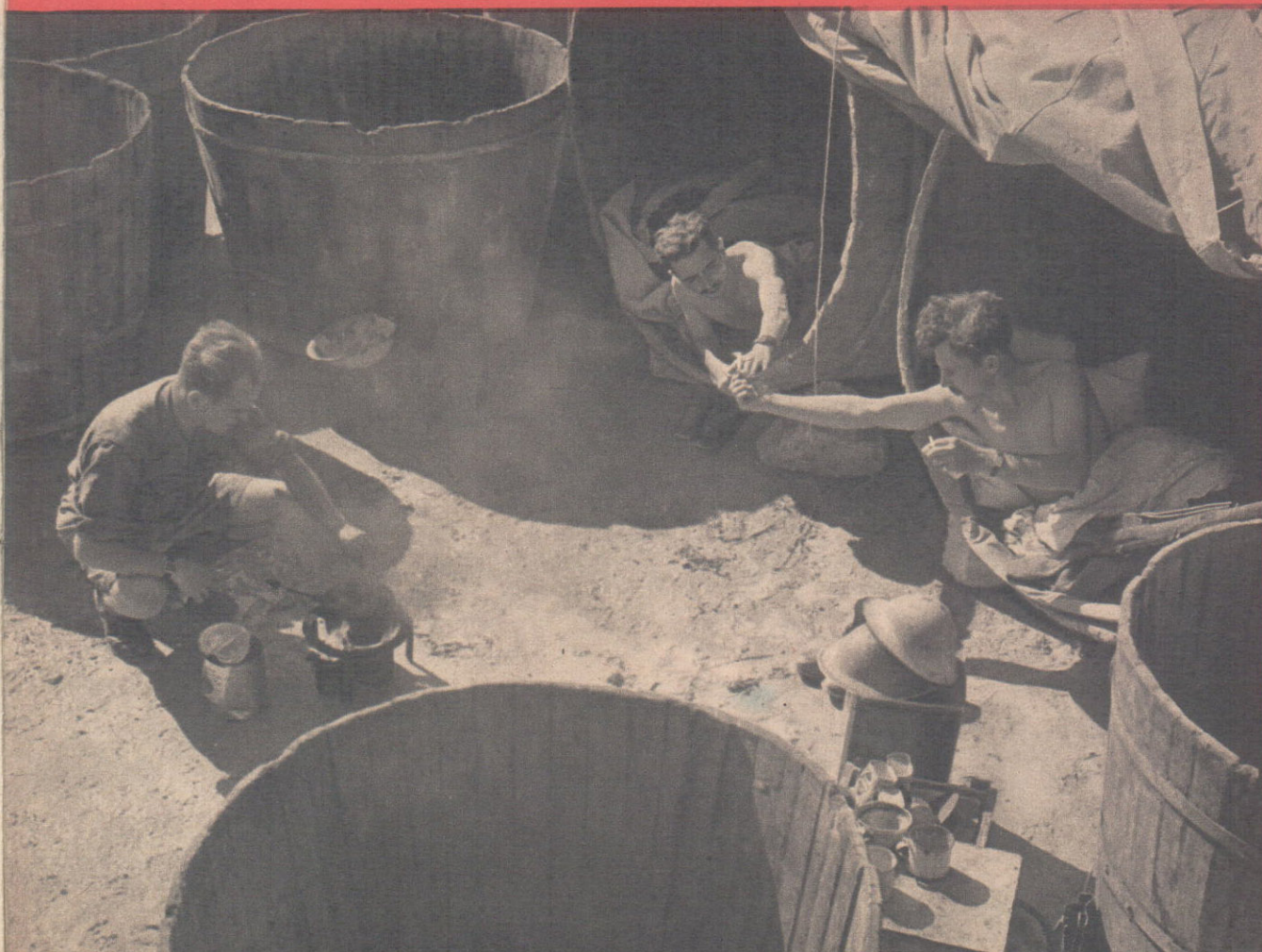






**BREW-UP IN HOLLAND:** The tank has turned turtle. It's just one of those things. There's nothing to do about it except wait for REME — and have a nice cup of char in the meantime.

## SOLDIER SCRAPBOOK OF WORLD WAR TWO



**BREW-UP IN ITALY:** Morning tea and a cigarette for three Eighth Army soldiers who have spent the night sleeping in gigantic wine barrels. (Photographs from Imperial War Museum)



Many people have the wrong idea about the Army barber. One thing he does not do is pay a rake-off to the serjeant-major

It wasn't always an Army barber in Italy, as the pictures on left and right show.

## "The hair of

**W**HO is the most misunderstood man in the Army? Soldiers find a gloomy relish in the thought that nobody loves them. But if there is one Army tradesman who can be relied upon to expound the theme of man's ingratitude to man, one man convinced that he is Dogsbody, it is the barber.

Did we say "tradesman"? The Army barber is not recognised as a tradesman, in fact he is hardly recognised at all.

"The hair of the head will be kept short," state the compilers of King's Regulations tersely, and that is as far as they are interested. It can be hacked off with a bayonet or run over with the garden mower for all they care.

An ex-Service barber poured his troubles alternately into SOLDIER's left and right ears, as he snipped his way around on a "short back and sides" job.

"Biggest mistake I ever made," he said. "Telling 'em I was a

barber when they called me up."

"There's no establishment for barbers in the Army," they said. "You'll have to do it in your spare time — provide your own tools too."

"Now look here, Guv," I said (I hadn't been in the Army long then) 'What do I get out of this lark?'

"Oh, the men will make a voluntary payment," they told me.

"Voluntary payment, my foot! Imagine a rookie who's got his golden curls just how his girl friend likes them. Then some brass-voiced serjeant-major roars out 'Get them 'airs cut, laddie. We don't want no poets in this mob.' So this rookie comes to me to have his crowning glory off, with the serjeant-major watching to see I do it proper."

"Off with it," he says. "I want that hair cut right to the bone. When you've cut all you can, start digging the roots out."

"And they expected the rookie to pay for it! What a hope! 'Look, chum,' they used to say, 'you get tradesman's pay' (which was a lie) 'and run a racket with the serjeant-major, too' (which was another lie) — 'You must be filthy with lucre,' they said. And some of them even ticked because I smoked a fag — 'I don't want a singe, thanks,' they said, very funny. Or they moaned because I blew the 'airs away. What'd they expect, a perishing feather duster?'

"It was better afterwards, when the serjeant-major eased off. Those that paid got their hair cut like they wanted it. Those that didn't pay got a real pudding-basin crop — something you'd hate to step on with your bare feet. The money started coming

## the head will be kept short"

in when I began that dodge, but I got fed up with it, what with fatigues and guards and all, so I sent my barber's kit home and transferred to the Catering Corps."

"You didn't know how to work it, mate," interrupted his grey-haired colleague from the other chair. "I was a barber in the '14-'18 show. Twopence a head for every man in the company they paid me, whether I cut their hair or not. So I always had a bob or two spare to pay a bloke to do my guards and fatigues. I did all right till a shell-burst buried my kit. I didn't stop to dig it out and the Government never replaced it for me, neither. So that was the end of my barbering in the Army."

Well, perhaps those two were unlucky. There is such a thing as a contented Army barber. But the dignity and status of the job

have certainly slipped since the seventeenth century. In those days a barber was not only a hairdresser, but a surgeon as well. He would amputate your hair or your leg with equal gusto. Men who went for a hair-cut had to be very careful in the instructions they gave. None of that careless "a couple of inches off the top." A couple of inches off the top of what? A barber might well have asked a customer "Shave or blood-letting, sir?" although in this he had nothing on some Army barbers of today, who often manage to do both at once.

In 1634 the Secretary at War sent a personal letter about barbers to all regiments. "The Captain," he wrote, "is of necessity to have a barber in his company and, if it be possible, of good skill in his art, for being a very necessary instrument in war, for when a soldier is hurt the greatest comfort he can have is a good barber that shall cure him well and with speed."

The term barber-surgeon, or "chirurgeon" was the one most often used. In civilian life barbers and surgeons were welded together into the already old and powerful Guild of Barber-Chirurgeons, in which the barber was the dominant partner. His standing in the Army is shown in another letter, written in 1659: "... He is free from duties and in some places is allowed to be an officer, which I conceive it ought so to be."

Only in 1689 were the first hospitals created, and barbers and surgeons began to be separated, but as this coincided with the beginning of the age of

wigs, perukes and fancy hair-do's, the barber was still a man of first importance in the Army. He had plenty of chances to torment his fellow men, too. Read the memoirs of John Shipp, who joined the Army in 1795.

All the hair was cut off, except at the back of the head, says Shipp. Candle grease was rubbed into the tress that remained, then plenty of evil-smelling soap. Next, a large pad filled with sand was placed behind the head and the hairs were drawn tight over it and tied with a leather thong. For parade, the skin was drawn back so fiercely that the soldier was unable to shut his eyes. At meal times the jaws could hardly work and with every movement the sand-filled pad hit the back of his head like a sledge-hammer.

Army barbers have certainly had a good run for their money, but how are the mighty fallen!

TED JONES

Below: The barber's salon on the Tobruk perimeter had the usual supply of out-of-date magazines.



Left: He grins, but will he grin when he looks in the mirror? Above: The white cloth catches the cigarette ash too.



Left: This plucky nurse in Normandy allowed the RAMC serjeant to trim her locks. Right: A stylist at work in the Western Desert.



# 1. A Recovery Truck Named Rosie

AT least two of today's best-selling novelists served in the Guards — and in the ranks. They are Gerald Kersh, author of "They Die With Their Boots Clean," and Richard Llewellyn, author of "How Green Was My Valley."

Llewellyn signed on when he was 19, "feeling the need of discipline," and served at home and abroad. In 1931 he came home jobless and found a niche in the film world; then he began to write books and plays.

His latest novel is "A Few Flowers For Shiner" (Michael Joseph 10s 6d). This has a World War Two setting in Italy, where Llewellyn served as a captain in the Welsh Guards.

The central character is not a Guardsman, but a REME craftsman, Snowy Weeks — probably the first REME craftsman to emerge as a hero of fiction. But some will feel that the real hero of the book is Rosie, otherwise Snowy's recovery truck:

"She was at Alamein, Tobruk, Derna, Tripoli and Sfax, and she even got as far as Algiers. She came right through the lot. She'll boil you up a lovely hot bath, turn on a fan to cool you down, fry your grub for you, rev you up a light to read with, lift anything out of anywhere, push anything, pull anything. Top of all that, she's a lady. Never gives me a minute's trouble. No lip, and no back answers."

Snowy Weeks is a Cockney, tough but even-tempered. He is also a sentimentalist. As the story opens he is setting out in the truck (a heavy vehicle for such an errand) to put a few flowers and a cross on the grave of his mate Shiner, killed when Rosie struck a mine. That was Rosie's only lapse.



Richard Llewellyn: ex-Guardsman, ex-film director, novelist.

Snowy had hoped to be allowed to make the trip to Shiner's grave by himself, but the unsentimental Army said another man must sit in Shiner's seat. The unwanted passenger, Bill Dodds, is First Army, and Snowy of course is Eighth. At the first brew-up Snowy alleges that First Army weren't in the brew-up business long enough to get their tins blacked over; Bill retorts that the Eighth did the chasing, but the First did the fighting. Snowy counters by saying that First Army took too

much mepacrine — "It knotted all your guts up, and perished your brains, them as had some to start with. Now you're all getting jaundice, or walking about spare."

"I thought it was the Eighth started all that damned mepacrine stuff," Bill said. "Keep their nasty passions down."

"The only passions we ever had was Jerries or Wops," said Snowy. "And the bloke who invented V-cigarettes. One of them and a cup of that compo tea in the morning and you'd got a home-made flame-thrower."

Rations, luckily, formed one topic on which the two could agree. Luckily, too, Rosie was soon involved in such bizarre happenings, and picking up such bizarre passengers, that Snowy forgot to be raw and sensitive.

Even those who knew the corruption which reigned behind the lines in Italy will be startled at the background of this novel. There is, for instance, "Dincott's Private Army," a group of deserters of many nationalities banded together under "Nipper" Dincott, a very vile Cockney whose motto is "When in Rome, do the Romans," and whose hobby is marrying sixteen-year-olds. The band steals trucks and stores, and levies extortion on the Italian villagers. Dincott has his own corps of "Redcaps," who salute punctiliously (foreigners, of course). He can even wangle his more deserving lieutenants a spell home on leave — and this from wartime Italy.

Inevitably, Dincott's men steal Rosie, and inevitably Dincott

comes to a singularly sticky end. For good measure, there is a whiff of cannibalism (did the hungry Italians eat their young?) and a volcanic eruption. Snowy reports back to his unit (a few days late) with Rosie, and his passionate interlude with an American-born Italian princess (who hitch-hikes with a falcon on her shoulder) has not lessened his devotion to Liz and the kids back home.

What a time they had in the old Eighth Army, to be sure!

And what a time the film-makers will have with this book!

## Was He A Serjeant?

SHAKESPEARE knew a good deal about soldiers. How did he get that knowledge?

Sir Duff Cooper, in "Serjeant Shakespeare" (Rupert Hart-Davis, 8s 6d) amuses himself by investigating the possibility that Shakespeare was a soldier at some time. The train of thought started on a Flanders battlefield in World War One, when Sir Duff, then a Guards subaltern, asked whether there had been any casualties in a gas shell attack, and got the answer: "Only Serjeant Shakespeare."

There is a gap in the known history of Shakespeare's life after he was 21 and in trouble for poaching. Only 13 miles from Stratford-on-Avon was the Earl of Leicester, forming an army to fight in the Low Countries. Shakespeare may well have walked those 13 miles to dodge the consequences of poaching and become

... a soldier, Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard, Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel, Seeking the bubble reputation Even in the cannon's mouth.

Why a serjeant? Shakespeare had neither high enough birth nor long enough service to be an officer; Sir Duff Cooper finds that his military attitude seems to be that of a non-commissioned officer and that even Shakespeare's generals sometimes talk like NCO's.

Certainly, Shakespeare knew the ageless grumbles of the soldiers, like: Preferment goes by letter and affection, And not by old gradation, where each second Stood heir to the first — which is still paraphrased by people who have been passed over for promotion.

Shakespeare may have been posted to the ENSA of his day, for Sir Philip Sidney wrote of "Will, my Lord of Leicester's jesting player." If so, perhaps it was as well. Serjeant Shakespeare might have found it hard to order, "About turn!" in less than three lines of blank verse.



Alexander Baron: ex-Corporal, novelist.

Serjeant Craddock forms for Graziella, a tragic little spitfire with a young baby. He is distracted from his amours by such incidents as the belated explosion of a German booby-trap and the search for a member of his platoon who in serious trouble, has fled to the "Casbah," that part of the town which is permanently cordoned off by Redcaps.

Finally, when all but the strongest-minded men of the company have "gone native," to a greater or lesser degree, comes the order to move up to the battle-line. And in the Street of the Martyrs "There was no sound in the blinding white sunlight; no sound but the weeping of women."

A good book — but not a "nice" book.

# Too Much Rommel?

THE biography of Field-Marshal Rommel by Brigadier Desmond Young (reviewed in last month's SOLDIER) has created much controversy.

Under the title: "Rommel: A Flattering and Unconvincing Portrait," Malcolm Muggeridge in the *Daily Telegraph* said: "It is safe to say that if the Rommel family had decided to commission a memoir, the job, from their point of view, could not have been more satisfactorily done."

Mr. Muggeridge (who served in Africa, Italy and France in the Intelligence Corps) pointed out that Rommel's revulsion against Nazism found expression late in the day.

If Rommel and the other generals had begun to sicken of their Führer in the days of his triumphs, how much more impressive their anti-Nazi credentials would be!

A number of other reviewers took the same attitude. Of Rommel's generalship, Mr. Muggeridge says:

Against Wavell and Auchinleck he was continuously successful, and against Montgomery a complete failure. Brigadier Young hints that this was a largely adventitious circumstance; other, perhaps more competent, judges have attributed it to Montgomery's superior generalship.

Of Rommel's part in the plot against Hitler, Mr. Muggeridge said:

A British general who, at the time of Dunkirk, when Britain's situation was certainly no better than Germany's on D-Day, had formed the opinion that Mr. Churchill's determination to go on fighting was indefensible, and had entered into relations with other generals with a view to deposing the Prime Minister and making peace with Germany would, quite rightly, have been regarded as the most contemptible of traitors. If Hitler's good fortune had continued to hold, nothing, we may be sure, would ever have been heard of Rommel entertaining even "vague suspicions" of his Führer. Indeed, he would have been a most likely choice for the London command... putting into effect with zest and efficiency Hitler's policy of "pastoralising" this country—a process which was to reduce the present population to something like twelve million.

Mr. Muggeridge summed up: The pity of it is that a book like Brigadier Young's "Rommel" can only serve to revive the now faded prestige of the generals who, on Hitler's behalf, carried the swastika through much of Europe, and, by their eager and punctual fulfilment of Nazi orders, made Himmler's vile work possible.

Mr. Muggeridge's readers responded with alacrity and their letters, as published in the *Daily Telegraph*, were mainly in support of his views. Complained R. McM. of Ingatstone: "At this rate we shall soon be glorifying Hitler himself." H. C. Owen recalled that just before Alamein Rommel said, "The only way to treat Englishmen is to kick them in the teeth," while Axel Heyst remembered the Marshal in pre-war Berlin as "a ruthless, arrogant brute with a typical Nazi mentality."

In *The People* Cyril Kersh described the book as one "which can do a tremendous amount of damage to our re-educational work in Germany. It is a dangerous book, for it will warm the heart of anyone wishing to revive Germany's glorious military tradition."

In the *Spectator* Sir James Grigg, wartime War Minister, said Rommel was one of

The authorities banned this thrilling book in 1945

but now

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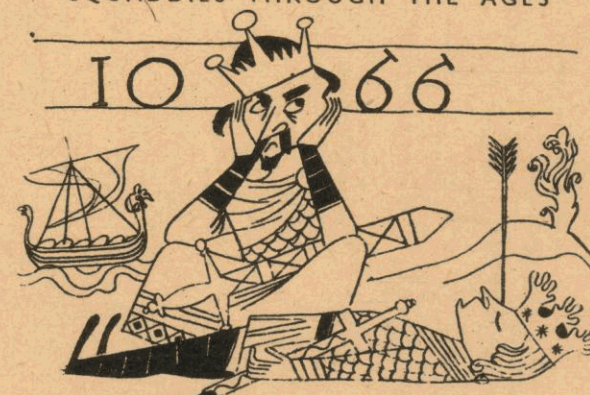
ILL MET BY MOONLIGHT

W. STANLEY MOSS

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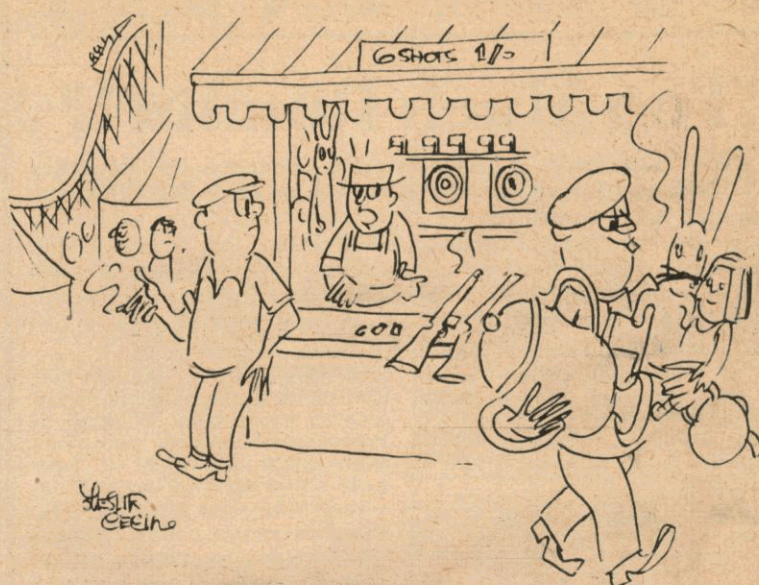
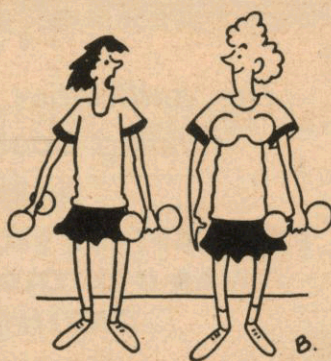
HAMBURG (Church Army)  
DUSSELDORF (Church Army)  
NEUMÜNSTER (Church Army)  
BAD OYENHAUSEN (Y.W.C.A.)  
FRANKFURT (Y.W.C.A.)  
FRANKFURT (Church of Scotland)  
CELLE (Church of Scotland)  
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that's cheating!"

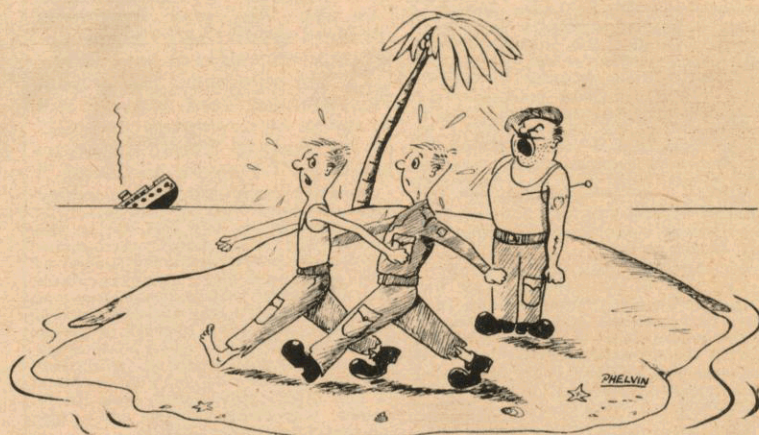


"Like to hear what I think of conscription?"

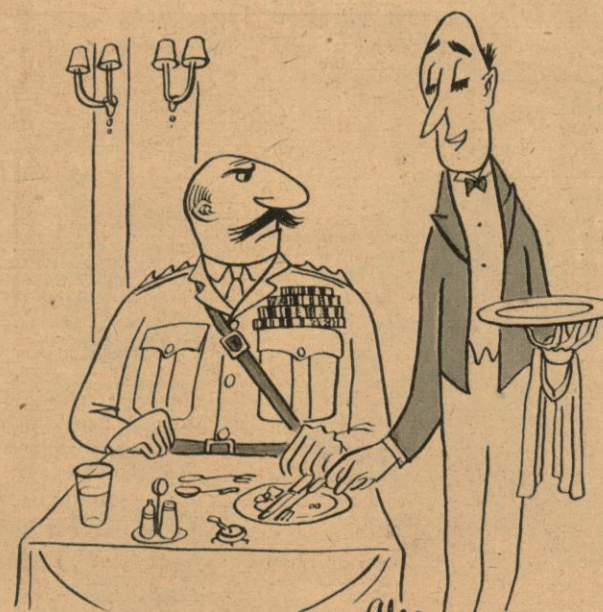
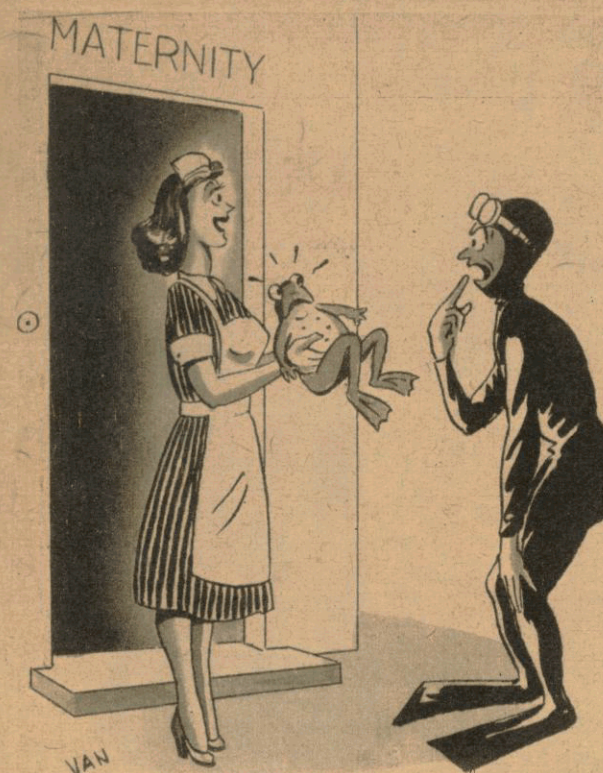
## SOLDIER HUMOUR



"... and on receipt of a telegram of 17th ult., reading 'Oh mother, sell the pig and buy me out,' you did, in contravention of Food Regulation 1777 of 1946, wilfully slaughter, or cause to be slaughtered, one pig..."



"Only three survivors — and one of them had to be the RSM!"



"Fruit salad, sir?"



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a disease



On the back



On the side



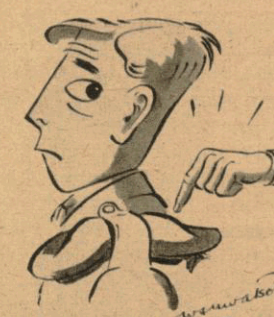
On the nose



On the ears



On the crown



On the shoulder



## JEAN KENT

*likes*

CHESS, PIG-BREEDING  
AND GOOD  
CHOCOLATES



WOULD you have guessed that glamorous Jean Kent is an able chess player? Would you have dreamed that among her private 'likes' are marionettes and writing comic verse? Jean is a 'pig-fancier' too: she not only breeds them on her Sussex farm but has a collection of china ones!



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"Ride her, cowboy!" This competitor, a sergeant, scored the second highest total of points.

## MUDLARKS at OBLOGO

**M**C CARTHY Hill, Oblogo, is bleak and unlovely. It rises sheer from the flat, brick-hard brownness of the coastal plain which surrounds the Gold Coast town of Accra.

Nobody had ever found much use for McCarthy Hill. True, "old coasters" blamed it, and its ugly sisters which ring the horizon, for the low rainfall in the area; and a builder once tried to erect cheap bungalows on its slopes, but gave the area back to the quick-growing bush before the foundations were half built.

Then the Army came along. The Royal West African Frontier Force decided to hold their first annual motor-cycle trials there. A six-foot wide lane was hacked out for two miles round the

Ten feet high, anthills like these dotted the course on McCarthy Hill. Though hollow, they will support a man's weight.



West African soldiers practised the white man's sport on McCarthy Hill

**SPORT**



summit of the hill, scaring away the snakes and lizards. Car parks and starting pits were levelled off. Natural hazards of sheer, 40-degree rock were measured up. A rock bed was turned into a mud-patch two feet deep. And through all this work, the millions of ants marched on, unheeding.

The course, when it was finished, was no easy one. The narrow track was floored with boulders and was treacherous even to walk upon. Stunted trees and bushes gave the minimum of shade. Fang-like anthills of red earth contrasted with their green foliage. The sun beat down mercilessly.

But there was an audience. Naked African "piccans," with great eyes and distended stomachs, stood side by side with high-ranking officers; scarred women of the tribes huddled giggling together.

From the four colonies (Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Gambia) came the pick of the Royal West African Frontier Force's motor-cyclists — white and black — in seven teams. To get them all to Accra at the same time, was quite a feat of shipping.

The course was a great success. The hairpin bends and boulders and slopes were testing; there were mishaps to make the event interesting. For the spectators, the mud-patch was the best spot — after the first motor-cyclist had smothered them and they had got out of the way. Then they saw machine after machine bog down and, as a sort of climax, one rider sail through the air and land on his face in the oozing mud.

The two teams from Sierra Leone, one of the 1st Battalion, Sierra Leone Regiment and the other of West African Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, took all the honours.

Three hours after it was all over, McCarthy Hill was abandoned. The bush was already growing back over the course.

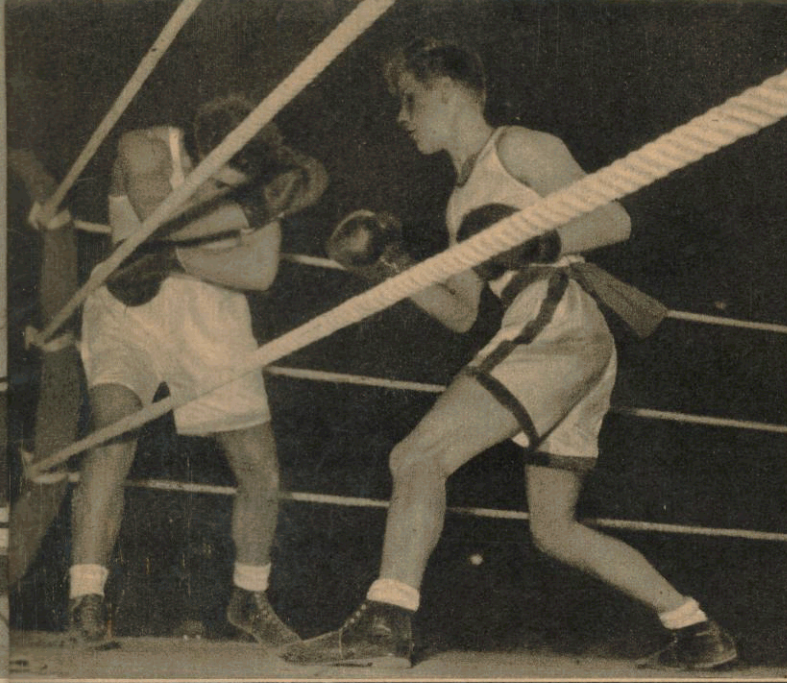
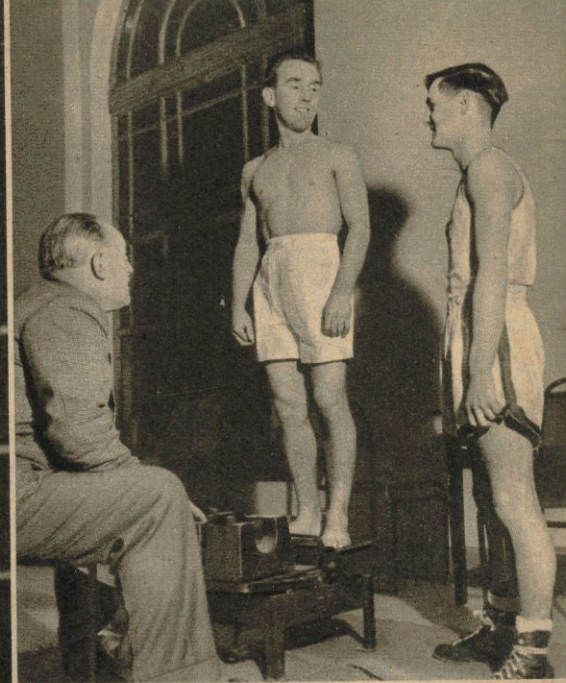
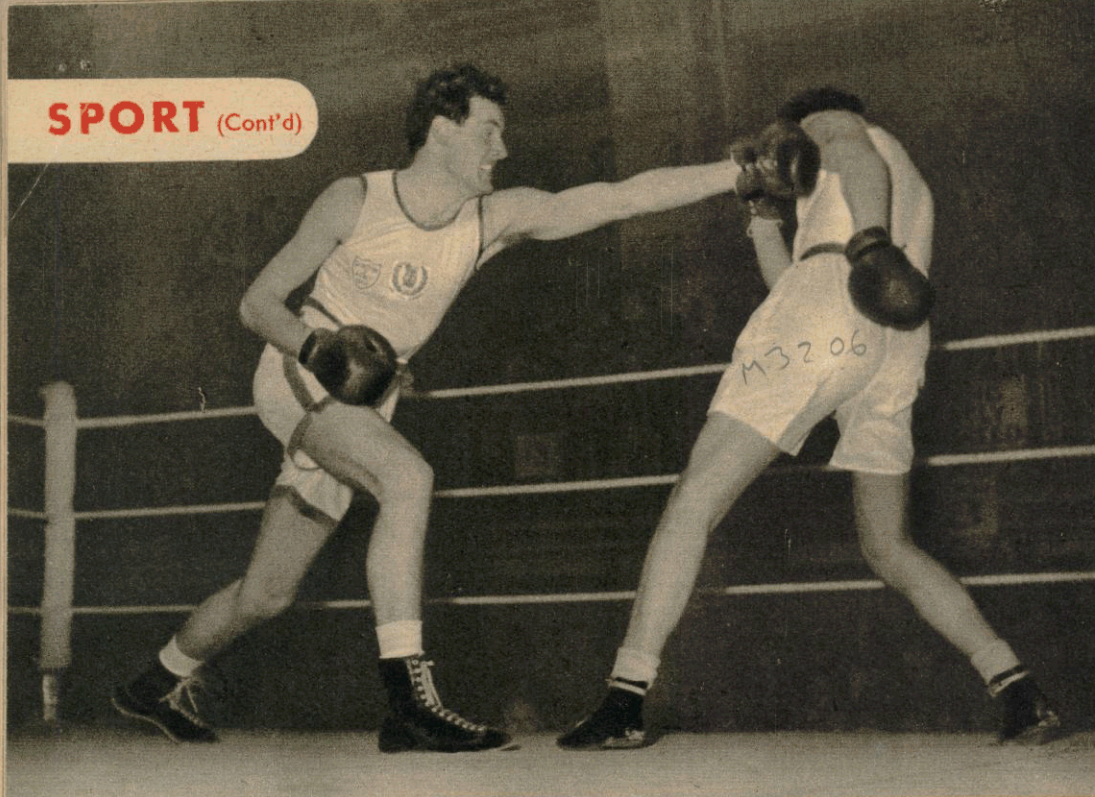
(From a report by Captain J. E. Stewart,  
Military Observer, West Africa)

A private from Gold Coast Records Office receives a helping hand. Below: Staff-Sergeant Ransom is awarded the individual medal from Lieut-General C. G. G. Nicholson.



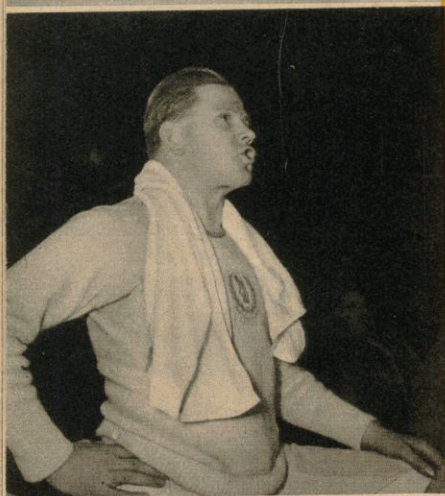
More Sport Overleaf





Left: Heavy-weights. Cpl. T. Worrall lands a straight left on A. Darvill. Above: Fly-weights. N. Watts (on the scale) talks to Spr. Clem A'Court.

Light-weights. Lance-Corporal Donald Hurley, RAOC (right) looks on top — but he lost narrowly to F. King, who exercises his muscles at Billingsgate.



CSMI F. Verlander, Army coach, looked as though he felt each blow.

## THE ARMY KO's LONDON

WITH their comfortable record of wins, including those over Wales, Sweden and Sparta (Copenhagen), the Army boxing team find that international fighters hold no terrors for them.

In fact, when SOLDIER went to see the Army beat London at Seymour Hall, no fewer than three England fighters were beaten by Army men, who won by eight bouts to five.

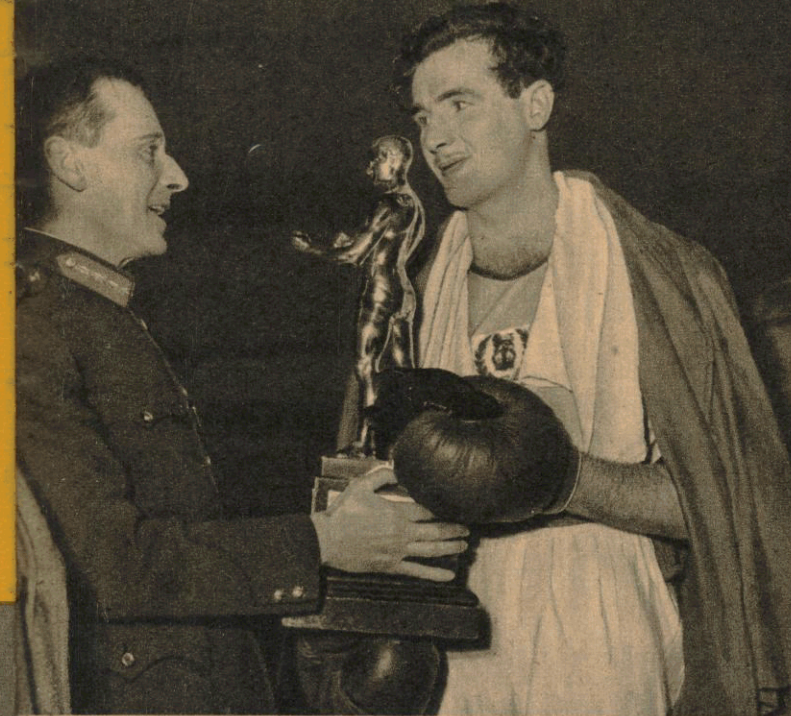
A notable match was the one between Sapper A'Court and Norman Watts of the Fitzroy Lodge club. A'Court, who had been a soldier for only a few days, had been replaced by Watts in the Amateur Boxing Association international team to meet Belgium. A'Court out-pointed Watts, who is the London fly-weight champion, and gave the selectors something to think about.

Another keenly-awaited match was that between

southpaw Corporal Tony Worrall of the Royal Horse Guards, and Albert Darvill, a Billingsgate ice-porter and member of the Robert Browning Club. Darvill had won all his previous nine fights of the season, one of them against Gerald O'Colmain, the Irish champion, who had out-pointed Worrall. But Worrall, ABA, Imperial Services and Army heavy-weight champion beat Darvill on points.

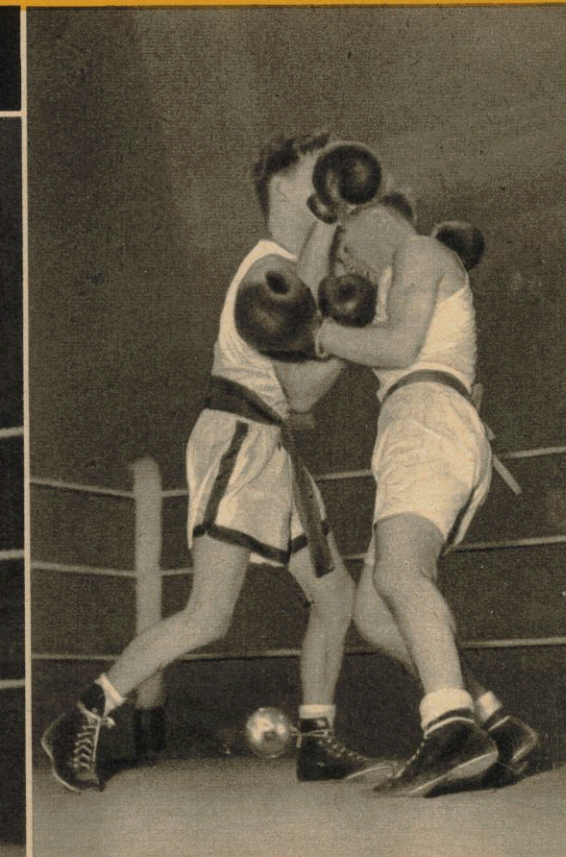
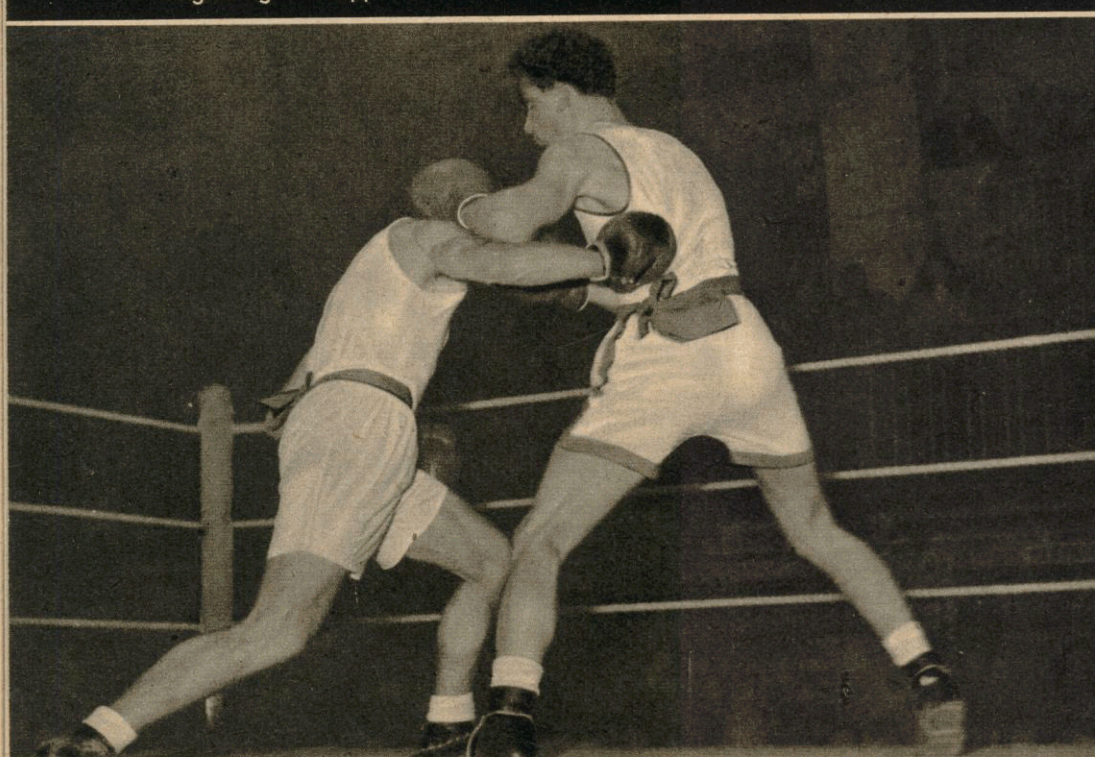
The third international in the London team to be beaten was Dick Tarrier, of Polytechnic, who was out-pointed by Corporal A. McLaughlin, Royal Tank Regiment, in the light-weight class. Tarrier is one of the few men to beat Randolph Turpin.

W. Beckett, an international from Epsom beat Private G. Roe, Sherwood Foresters, one of four Rhine Army men in the Army team, in the middle-weight class. But the Army had the consolation that Beckett was due to put on battle-dress a few days later.



Corporal Worrall received the team trophy from Major-General N.C.D. Brownjohn.

Below: Welter-weights. Private K. Bebbington, REME (right), one of the "Battling Bebbington" family, was beaten by R. Wood of Repton. Right: Fly-weights again. Sapper A'Court and N. Watts make close acquaintance.



The team, the coach and the trophy — and a smile for the photographers. (Pictures by SOLDIER Cameramen Desmond O'Neill and Leslie A. Lee)

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Smooth chocolate



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CHOCOLATE SANDWICH WAFER





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**SUPPRESSION WON'T BEAT COLDS  
BUT ASPRO WILL!**  
Cold Dispelled Overnight

Gentlemen, Hackney, E.9.  
It is with the greatest pleasure that I write this letter to prove the genuine effect of your 'ASPRO' tablets. I sometimes have a headache which is unbearable, but a little while after I have taken two 'ASPRO' tablets it has gone. When I have felt a "flu" cold coming over me, I have gone to bed with 2 'ASPRO' tablets and a hot drink and the next morning I am as "fit as a fiddle."  
I am, yours gratefully, B. C. R.

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Dear Sir, Balham, S.W.12.  
For the first time I bought a packet of 'ASPRO' last week. I had such a bad cold—I took 2 at night with hot milk—2 in morning with hot tea—they made a different woman of me. I did not have to take to my bed. Many thanks to 'ASPRO'.—Yours faithfully,  
MISS STEVENS.

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## A Grouse from Egypt

The Editor of *SOLDIER* has received the following letter:

**I**N Egypt the programmes shown in the AKC cinemas usually consist of a second-rate feature (shown at least twice during the same month) supported either by documentary or "educational" films.

The building itself is usually a typical example of native architecture, not far removed from the Neolithic period and the best (and only reasonable) seats cost 11 piastres which, at 1s 10½d, is about twice as much as the seat is worth as an article of furniture.

In view of these things, the recent increase in the price of admission to AKC cinemas is viewed with consternation. The AKC should bear in mind that it caters for members of the Armed Forces, whose finances are not inexhaustible. — "Picturegoer" (name and address supplied.)

\* \* \*

The following comments have been received from the Army Kinema Corporation:

**F**OR Middle East as for other areas, we book 104 new first-rate feature films a year to give a twice-weekly change of programme. As we are always asked to give three and even four changes of programme a week we have to replay some of these films, although we do book extra films as well; there is normally a gap of from six to nine months before a film is replayed at the same cinema.

Among features recently showing in the Middle East were: "White Heat," "The Third Man," "Chiltern Hundreds," "The Gay Lady" (Trotter True) and "The Hasty Heart." If these are second-rate films "Picturegoer" might like to suggest some first-rate ones. During 1949, incidentally,

we booked and played eleven of the 14 top-ranking box-office winners of the year listed by the film trade press.

Short supporting films are a problem. Dollar restrictions prevent our playing additional American shorts and the supply of suitable British comedy and musical shorts is limited. We are therefore sometimes obliged to play the "documentary"-type shorts your correspondent dislikes, though his opinion is by no means shared by many AKC patrons.

We do not own the buildings used as cinemas in Army camps but rent them from the War Office; this rent includes an element for repair, upkeep and maintenance, which are carried out under the control of the local military authority, according to current policy. Thus we cannot make any major change, though we are doing all we can to improve internal fittings, acoustics and so on.

Since 1946 we have spent £14,000 on seating in Middle East cinemas. Unfortunately, in this climate upholstered seating easily gets bug-ridden, and wooden or cane chairs are the only practicable alternatives. We know wooden seats are hard but cane seats are fragile and large numbers have been damaged by patrons. However, in our new re-seating programme in Middle East we plan to spend a further £2000, mostly on cane chairs.

The AKC knows very well that the finances of its patrons are not inexhaustible; it was with the greatest reluctance that the small increases in seat prices were introduced. Unfortunately the rising costs of obtaining and screening films made such an increase unavoidable.

## Coming Your Way

The following films will shortly be shown at Army Kinema Corporation cinemas:

### UNDER CAPRICORN

The scene is Australia, 1831. The stars are Ingrid Bergman (Swedish), Joseph Cotten (American) and Michael Wilding (English): they all play Irish characters. The film was made in Britain by a British director (Alfred Hitchcock) to be released by an American firm (Warner Brothers). Sounds of wild life were recorded in Australia as background. The story is about a convict-turned-businessman whose wife seeks a way out of her troubles through the neck of a bottle.

### THE GREAT LOVER

Bob Hope, as the leader of a party of bicycling boys, gets entangled with a card-sharp and some penniless European nobility on an Atlantic liner. Claims the publicity department: "It's the funniest thing since Eve threw all that applesauce at Adam." Lady in the case is Rhonda Fleming. Roland Young is there, too.

### PRINCE OF FOXES

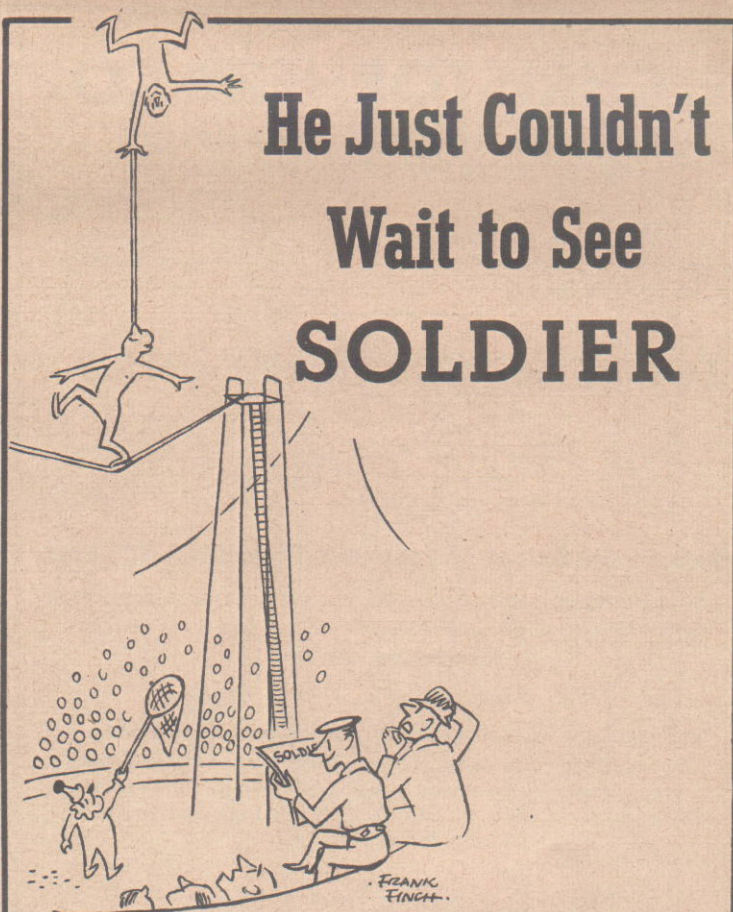
The intrigues and adventures of the Borgia family have made them fair game for writers for centuries, but surprisingly few films have been made about them. This one offers Orson Welles as Cesare Borgia, up to all sorts of nasty tricks, with Tyrone Power first as his henchman and then as his enemy and Wanda Hendrix as one of the causes of the trouble.

### CHICAGO DEADLINE

A reporter tries to produce a story from the death of an inconspicuous girl in a cheap hotel and unravels as complicated a tangle of personal relations as ever filled 87 minutes of screen time. Alan Ladd, Donna Reed and June Haver.

### LOOK FOR THE SILVER LINING

There's still, it seems, no business like show business. Marilyn Miller was a Broadway star of the 1920's and she died at the height of her popularity. This film is based on her career, with scenes from her shows and scenes with the men in her life. June Haver dances in short skirts and there is plenty of music.



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# LETTERS



● **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. Ans-  
wers cannot be sent to col-  
lective addresses.

Anonymous or insufficiently  
addressed letters are not pub-  
lished.

● Please do not ask for in-  
formation which you can get  
in your own orderly room or  
from your own officer, thus  
saving time and postage.

## ARMY POSTERS

I wish I had seen the recent  
exhibition of recruiting posters  
because I was most interested to  
read your article on them in the  
January **SOLDIER**. You have  
chosen the pick of the bunch to  
put on your cover — there is no  
doubt about that.

I may be old-fashioned, but I  
cannot understand why all regi-  
ments cannot have their own  
recruiting posters as they used  
to do up to 1938. Recently I tried  
to obtain posters of various Scot-  
tish regiments for exhibition in  
some of the huts used by the  
cadet companies of my battalion.  
I was quite unable to obtain these  
— except for the regiments of the  
Household Brigade. These are  
striking and appear to me to  
make the right sort of appeal to  
boys and young men. The other  
posters simply glorify the Army  
as a whole. They appeal to future  
prospects and other rather vague  
advantages.

Whatever the reformers in the  
Army may think, the appeal to  
regimental tradition is still the  
strongest thing if you want to  
encourage voluntary enlistment.

I hope very much that future  
policy will tend towards the  
encouragement of this spirit, and  
that we shall see more colourful  
pictures of the various regiments  
of the British Army. — **Lieut.-  
Colonel G. I. Malcolm of Poltal-  
loch, Commanding 2nd (North  
Argyll) Cadet Battalion.**

## POSTAL BOUQUET

Under the heading "Slow Mails" a  
letter appeared in the *Daily Express*  
recently from a lady who claimed to  
have a relative serving in the Far  
East Forces. She quoted him as say-  
ing that the Army mail service was  
erratic and that the amount of mail  
getting through to the troops seemed  
to be mysteriously less than the  
amount arriving at the station. I  
would like to point out that this type  
of letter is not appreciated, at least  
in our unit. We do not consider it  
fair criticism of a hard-working  
postal unit.

Most men out here in the New  
Territories receive air-mail five, six  
or seven days after it has been post-  
ed in Britain. The men of the postal  
unit work all-out from the time they  
receive the mail bags until the last  
letter has been sorted and despatched  
to units. Most delays are caused by  
letters being incorrectly addressed  
(I know, because I had the job of  
tracing hundreds of my own Corps).

It is the easiest thing in the world  
to start a rumour, but we think that

if the odd letter does go astray it  
should not be used as an occasion to  
scream abuse at the Army Postal  
Unit. They deserve all credit for their  
efforts under very difficult conditions.  
— **QMS T. Bickerstaff, 24 Field  
Engineer Regt., c/o BAPO No. 1.**

★ *Blaming the Army Postal Service  
is also a good cover-up for soldiers  
who do not write home as often as  
they might.* QMS Bickerstaff's letter  
was dated 19 January. It arrived on  
24 January.

## UNDER THE KILT

I hardly expected it would fall to  
me, a former member of the ATS, to  
enlighten your readers with regard  
to what a Scotsman does, or does  
not, wear beneath his kilt, but the  
search for Truth and Knowledge must  
go on and who am I to refrain from  
contributing my mite?

It was at a party in Athens shortly  
after the war, and one of the guests  
was a very Scots major. During the  
evening the inevitable argument  
arose. As the major hemmed and  
hawed, declining to state definitely  
whether his compatriots did, or did  
not wear anything under their kilts,  
two of the heftier male guests decid-  
ed to put it to the test. They grabbed  
an ankle each and dangled the un-  
fortunate major upside down by his  
feet. Being a lady I, of course, looked  
hastily away, but as there was a  
large mirror hanging on the opposite  
wall I am able to state definitely  
that this particular Scotsman at least,  
did not. — **Ima Blushing (name and  
address supplied).**

In a recent issue you quote an  
official list of articles to be worn  
with the kilt, but point out that there  
is no mention of anything to be worn  
under it. This prompts me to write  
to tell you that while serving in  
France during the 1914—18 war, we  
of the RAOC had to provide, store  
and issue a new article then intro-  
duced into the Services the official  
name of which was "Drawers for  
Highlanders." Until then nothing in  
the nature of special "undies" for  
Highlanders was known (I joined the  
RAOC in 1898).

Whether these are still issued I  
cannot say but there would appear  
to be no grounds, such as security,  
for the Sassenachs not being told  
these facts. — **Major (ret.) A. H.  
Graham, Saul, Gloucestershire.**

★ **SOLDIER** is informed that no  
special drawers are issued to High-  
land troops now.

## ONE OF THE FEW

In your December issue you men-  
tion that only two or three men now  
serving in the British Army are  
holders of the badge and diploma of  
the Greek Sacred Battalion. I am one  
of them. — **Pte. (ex-Sapper) P. H.  
Spong, 3 Det. RAPC, Victoria Bks.,  
Belfast.**



## INTO THE PART-TIME ARMY

THOSE National Servicemen who are due to enter the Territorial Army after 1 July will in all probability learn the identity of the units to which they will be posted six weeks before they are due to transfer from the Regular to the Territorial Army.

The National Serviceman will normally be posted to a Territorial unit within reasonable distance of his home. As far as possible he will serve in the same Corps as he has served in hitherto. Where this cannot be arranged he will, if possible, serve in a trade or employment in which he has already had Army experience.

Since Territorial commanding officers and their small permanent staffs cannot always be on duty night and day to receive National Servicemen, and since National Servicemen cannot be held for long periods awaiting draft to their Territorial units, it has been decided that men shall pass from full-time to part-time service once a fortnight on Thursdays.

Men will be posted to arrive at the headquarters of their Territorial unit in the early afternoon, having stayed the night, if necessary, in one of the depots. After formalities have been completed each man will be interviewed individually by an officer of the unit who will probably arrange for him to report back later when he has got his civilian job, to see the life of the unit on a drill night and how he can best be fitted in. This interview over, the man will be allowed to return home.

**SOLDIER** will publish further information about the fitting of National Servicemen into the Territorial Army as it becomes available.

## REGULAR FUTURE

My local paper has recently printed a number of letters from men of 40 years of age and over who find it very difficult to get jobs. Such letters are very disturbing for Regulars serving 22 years with the Colours.

The present scale of pension is not a good one and has not increased in proportion to the increase in the cost of living. The average warrant officer qualifies on discharge for a pension of about 30s a week. I know it is remotely possible to qualify for £5 a week, but in fact it is rare for a pension to be over £3.

This being the case, the ex-Regular relies on civilian employment in order to live. Yet resettlement schemes get comparatively little publicity. If Army resettlement is proving successful, publication of its achievements would be a great incentive to recruiting. I feel that at present the pension and resettlement aspect forms the greatest obstacle to the recruiting campaign and I would like to see a scheme in existence whereby the Regular soldier, after 22 years service, not only qualifies for a pension but is guaranteed civilian employment. If Regulars were given a nine months' vocational training course at the end of their service, with a view to employment in the Civil Service, the Post Office, the Police, or British Railways, I am sure these organisations could comfortably absorb the whole outflow of time-expired Regulars.

If the cost of such a scheme could not wholly be borne by the Government, no reasonable Regular would hesitate to pay a modest fee towards his future security. — **Armr. QMS S. Stone, HQ. 7 Armd. Bde., BAOR.**

## FAMILY HOSTELS

I am shortly returning to Britain with my family and have no home to go to. Can you please give me any information about family hostels in Britain and the charges made? We want to bring our German maid back with us. Will she be able to stay at a hostel too? — **WO II C. W. Leaver, 854 Ammunition Depot RAOC, BAOR6.**

★ Families camps (or hostels) provide temporary accommodation for homeless families of Regulars returning from overseas. The type of accommodation varies. Some hostels are in leased hotels, but most are in hatted camps. Cooking is done by the

camp staff; dining rooms, sitting rooms and recreation rooms are communal. The charge for a wife and two children is 55s. a week. The husband can stay at the camp while on leave. He is charged the amount of his ration allowance.

Camps for soldiers' families are: — No. 3 Warmwell Airfield, near Dorchester; No. 7 Kidderminster; No. 8 Maghull, near Liverpool; No. 12 Hull; No. 14 Strathpeffer, Ross-shire; No. 15 Droithwich; No. 16 Berwick; No. 17 Hiltingbury, near Southampton; No. 21 Kilroot, Northern Ireland; No. 22 Folkestone.

These hostels are much in demand. Requests for accommodation should be made to units. If a family later wishes to move to another camp, this can be arranged, providing a vacancy exists.

Owing to shortage of accommodation, no nurses or domestic servants can be accepted into a hostel.

## A CLASS HIGHER

Since your article "Bungalows in the Bush" (**SOLDIER**, December) was written, the Royal Army Educational Corps has made progress with children's education at Mackinnon Road.

The temporary school under canvas was opened on 20 July, 1949 within a few days of the first married quarters being occupied. The present semi-permanent school, near the married quarters, opened on 27 September and is generally considered to be one of the finer buildings in the garrison. The roll fluctuates between 25 and 30 pupils of all ages. There is accommodation ultimately for 60. The school is staffed by one Queen's Army Schoolmistress and one Assistant Queen's Army Schoolmistress; normal general subjects are taught, with the addition of French. There is another Army children's school in the area, at Nyali transit camp, near Mombasa.

Lastly, you were mistaken in the name of the young lady in the photograph. She is Ann Lord, whose father, a warrant officer at the Military Hospital at Mackinnon Road is one of the many Regular soldiers taking local release with a view to settling in this part of the world. — **Major E. K. Morrison, Royal Army Educational Corps, Mombasa.**

(More Letters on Page 46)



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# MORE LETTERS

## TO TERRITORIALS

On completing my Colour service on a Regular engagement I have to do seven years on the Reserve. Am I allowed to join a Territorial unit during my Reserve service? — L/C J. Mason, Block Trng. Centre, RAOC, BAOR 32.

★ A Class "B" Reservist is permitted to join the Territorial Army only if he is (a) taking up full-time Territorial employment, (b) filling a vacancy of sergeant or upwards on the establishment of the Territorial unit and no suitable non-reservist is available. On enlistment he will be discharged from the Reserve and his Reserve pay will cease.

## 28 MILES AWAY

Before being called up for National Service I was doing agricultural work and I intend to return to the same job when released. I have to do four years Territorial service, but the nearest Territorial unit is 28 miles away and the only means of transport is a bus on Tuesdays and Saturdays. In these circumstances shall I still be called upon for Territorial service? — Pte. J. Roddam, REME, Egginton, nr. Derby.

★ A National Serviceman cannot be excused Territorial service either because he is engaged on work of national importance or because the nearest unit is a long way from his home. He must complete 60 days training during his Territorial service — normally 15 days annual camp and five days "out of camp" training each year for the first three years. The "out of camp" training may be done in the evenings or at weekends; 20 evening periods are held to equal five days training.

If no suitable public transport runs from the man's home to his Territorial unit, the unit may use their own transport to collect him and take him home after training.

## HE GETS GRATUITY

I joined the Army on a 12-years engagement, six years to be served with the Colours and six on the Reserve. After completing my Colour service I spent a year on the Reserve but then returned to the Colours to complete my engagement. I see by Army Order 18 of 1949 that in order to be eligible for Service gratuity a man must have done ten years unbroken Colour service immediately prior to discharge. Does this mean that I am not eligible for Service gratuity? — Bdr. C. F. Harris, 75 Heavy AA Regt. RA, Gravesend, Kent.

★ This case is an exception. If, after going on to the Reserve, a man is allowed to return to the Colours on his original engagement, he may count his previous Colour service on that engagement towards qualifying for a Service gratuity.

## TWO PENSIONS

I am in hospital awaiting discharge on medical grounds after completing 16 years of my 22 years engagement. Can I be awarded a Service pension irrespective of any disability pension that may also be awarded me, and do I receive a Service gratuity for service exceeding ten years? — "Puzzled" (name and address supplied).

★ A man who is invalided out of the Army is eligible for a Service pension providing he has completed 12 years reckonable service of an engagement that would have given him a normal Service pension. He may also receive a disability pension; one type of pension does not cancel out the other. He will not, however,

get any Service gratuity, this being payable only to men who do not qualify for Service pensions.

## FREE RIBBONS

Glancing through the correspondence columns of SOLDIER I was interested, but hardly surprised, to see a letter complaining of the high cost of replacing worn-out medal ribbons. As I find out only too often in my official work, very few Quartermasters are yet aware of Amendment 2 to War Clothing Regulations 1943 (page 10 para 24) which authorises the free replacement of medal ribbons where necessary. The initial issue, of course, has always been free. — "Audit" (name and address supplied).

## LOST MEDALS

During a voyage abroad I have lost a suitcase containing my medals. Can you tell me the name of any private firm that makes medals so



that I can replace them at my own expense? — Asst. Bandmaster G. King, Salisbury, S. Rhodesia.

★ A soldier should not buy privately medals which he proposes to wear. A man who has lost his medals must report the fact to his Commanding Officer who will hold a court of inquiry on the loss. Afterwards, application may be made by the unit to War Office for the medals to be replaced.

## THE NAVY COUNTS

I understand that former service in the Royal Navy counts towards star grading and increments of pay in the Army. If this is so I should be a three-star soldier because I served four years in the Navy during the recent war. I have a friend, too, who served over three years with the Royal Marines, yet we are both only one-star soldiers. Can you explain this, please? — Pte. E. Hills, A. Coy., 1 Bn. The Suffolk Regt., Kuala Lumpur, Malaya.

★ Providing former service in the Navy or the Marines is mentioned on enlistment into the Army and is officially confirmed, it can count for increments of pay and as qualifying service towards a star grading. It does not, however, give a soldier a right to any grading above one star; it merely enables him to be considered for up-grading. Whether or not he actually qualifies for more than one star depends on his degree of military efficiency, which is assessed by his Commanding Officer.

Former service in the Navy or the Royal Marines may be added to Army service in order to qualify for the sixpence a day increment after five and ten years service.

## ACCUMULATED LEAVE

ACI 1123/48 para 10 states that men serving overseas outside Europe can accumulate up to 25 percent of each year's leave in order to add it to their disembarkation leave when they return to Britain. However, it appears that the authorities at the disembarkation ports lay down that only 25 percent of the "unexpired portion" of the year's leave may be taken in Britain. Thus, if a man is due for 42 days leave in the year and takes 30 of them, instead of having the remaining 12 in Britain he can take only 25 percent of the remaining 12 there. Many men who are busily accumulating leave in Middle East are worried about this. Can you clarify our position please?

— "Accumulator, Gibraltar" (name and address supplied).

★ The correct interpretation is that 25 percent of the total admissible leave for each year may be accumulated for addition to disembarkation leave. A check is being made to see that this interpretation is followed at disembarkation ports.

## PASSAGE PAID

I am serving on a three-years short-service engagement. As I have no home in Britain I should like to settle down in Australia or Canada when my engagement ends. Shall I be able to get any help with my fare from my station here in Hong-Kong? — Gnr. J. Williams, "B" Tp. 49 Bty., 23rd. Fd. Regt. RA, Hong-Kong.

★ A man who enlisted in Britain and is serving overseas can be discharged locally and make his own way to the country of his choice. He is eligible for a travelling grant up to the cost of a military passage from his overseas station to Britain, or a commercial passage from his overseas station to the country of his choice, whichever is the less.

No grant is payable, under new regulations shortly to be published, if a man has not completed one year's service in the Command or station where he is serving at the time of his discharge.

## SHOE-SHINE BOY?

Would any reader be good enough to give me the recipe for the Army method of boot cleaning? Civilians never seem able to get that "gleam" which the Army is so successful in acquiring. — Reader (name and address supplied).

★ There is no fixed recipe; different men have different methods. 'Way back, SOLDIER was taught to use a very little polish with a very little spit and rub gently in small circles, doing about a square inch of boot at a time. This meant that boots took about an hour a day to polish at first. Few civilians are prepared to spend that long cleaning their footwear. Some barrack-room wiseacres used first to remove the natural oil in the leather by a liberal application of metal polish, caustic soap or a red-hot poker. All these methods were guaranteed to ruin the leather, but nobody in those days seemed to mind — the shine was the thing.

## IT'S THE YMCA

A correspondent in your January issue refers to the YMCA Bookshop, Trieste as "Smith's Bookshop." This shop is not the property of W. H. Smith & Sons but of the YMCA. We draw our supply from the Services' Central Book Depot, now a branch of W. H. Smith & Sons who, incidentally, give excellent service, but the connection ends there.

I can confirm your correspondent's statement about the number of troops who regularly purchase and read children's comics. We have many standing orders for this type of literature. — Miss M. I. Millward, i/c YMCA Bookshop, Trieste.

## RELEASE LATEST

The following group release dates have been announced:

Group 139 from 1 April to 10 April; 140 and 141 from 11 April to 21 April; 142 from 22 April to 30 April; 143 from 1 May to 7 May; 144 from 8 May to 14 May; 145 from 15 May to 22 May; 146 from 23 May to 31 May; 147 and 148 from 1 June to 7 June.

In the delayed release groups, 087 goes out between 1 April and 31 May and 088 from 1 June onwards.

## QUEEN ANNE AGAIN

Having been a reader of SOLDIER for a long time, I would like to contribute my two cents worth to the various arguments now raging within its pages.

The only place I know where "Queen Anne's Drill" (which is a complete drill, not merely a salute) is taught, is at the "Sea School," San Diego Naval Base, California, where the American Navy trains its Fleet Marine Units. It is a silent drill of some 50 counts, starting with the man erect with his rifle in the position of "order arms" and ending with him kneeling on his right knee with his rifle in the position of "salute." The drill is performed in open order, in contrast to the normal close order drill.

On the subject of medals, British troops here in Berlin have a habit of referring to Americans as walking rainbows. We are an uninhibited race and, while we do not wear our hearts on our sleeves, we do wear our achievements on our chests. — Cpl. Don McGreevey, Headquarters and Service Troop, 16th. Constabulary Squadron, US Army.

You have probably heard the expression "Queen Anne's dead," which people use when they are told a piece of "news" that everyone knows already. This is the origin of the name "Queen Anne's Salute" because it was the salute of five rounds fired over the grave at military funerals. After the coffin was laid on the gun carriage, drawn by six black horses, the bearers and the firing party who were "fell in two deep" behind the gun carriage, filed forward on either side of the carriage. When ready to move off, the order "Reverse Arms" was given and then "Slow March." Giving "Queen Anne's Salute" was the popular term for being in the firing party. — Mr. V. Medus, 48 Church Rd., Swanscombe, Kent.

## BLOOD OR SAND?

Surely the regimental "Blood and Sand" flash of the Cheshire Regiment is worn incorrectly on the uniform of the lieutenant-colonel in the photograph on page 31 of the December SOLDIER? I have always known the flash to be worn "sand" to the front, not to the rear as shown in the picture. — "Wha Wadna Focht for Charlie" (name and address supplied).

★ The flash, officially known as "cerise and buff," not "blood and sand," originated in 1916 when regimental flashes were painted on the then new-fangled steel helmets. Between the two wars it was worn on both steel helmet and topee and was sewn on the battledress when that was introduced in 1939. Up to 1939 it was usually worn with the cerise half to the front, but from 1940 the buff half has been worn to the front. The colonel in the picture was wearing it the old way.



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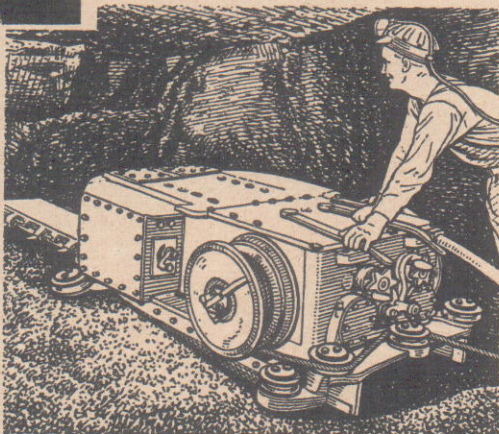


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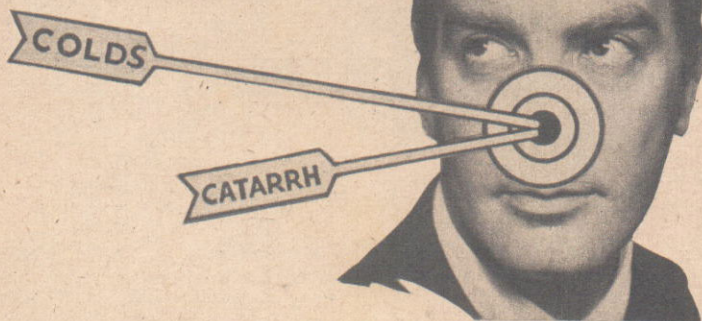
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## LANA MORRIS

— J. Arthur Rank

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Of the Senior Commander.