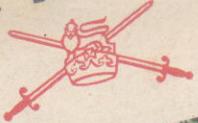


SOLDIER

THE BRITISH ARMY MAGAZINE

NINEPENCE

NOVEMBER 1954



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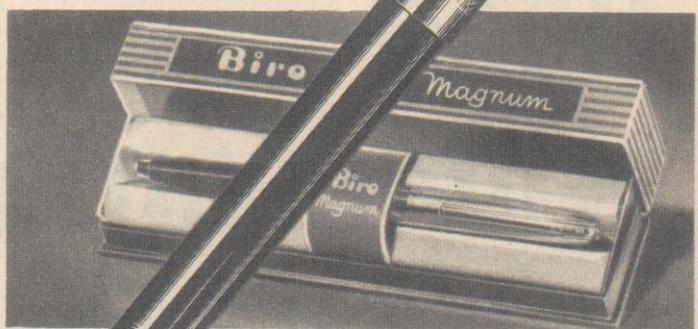
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Delve and perspire for it

There's a Local desire for it

**Good
wholesome
beer**

Let's have one at The Local

Stanley Matthews, star of Blackpool's forward line, and holder of 38 full International Caps for England.



**Stan
Matthews**
says,
Seize your chances

Judging by my mail 90% of the boys in Britain aim to make football their job in life! Well you know, that just won't work! But our country offers a wonderful choice to a boy or girl. Hundreds of different trades and thousands of different firms to work for. And once you've chosen your job just the same qualities that would make you a First Division footballer will get you high up in your job. Initiative, enterprise, using your napper. Seeing an opening and going for it. Taking a chance. Always, always working towards your goal. And of course not being afraid of a few hard knocks! Personal enterprise! That's what gets you to the top whether your job is in field, factory or office.

WHAT'S YOUR LINE?

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

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

Today's Army offers at least twenty forms of sport. The aim is that every soldier, no matter where he is stationed, shall be able to play the game of his choice. This article also deals with the topical controversy over professionalism in Army football

Let's Talk SPORT

IMPORTANT decisions affecting the two most popular sports in the Army—rugby and association football—have recently been made by the Army Sport Control Board.

First, the maximum number of professionals allowed in unit soccer teams competing for the Army Football Cup has been reduced from five to three.

Second, only four professional Rugby League players will be allowed in any unit side in the Army Rugby Cup.

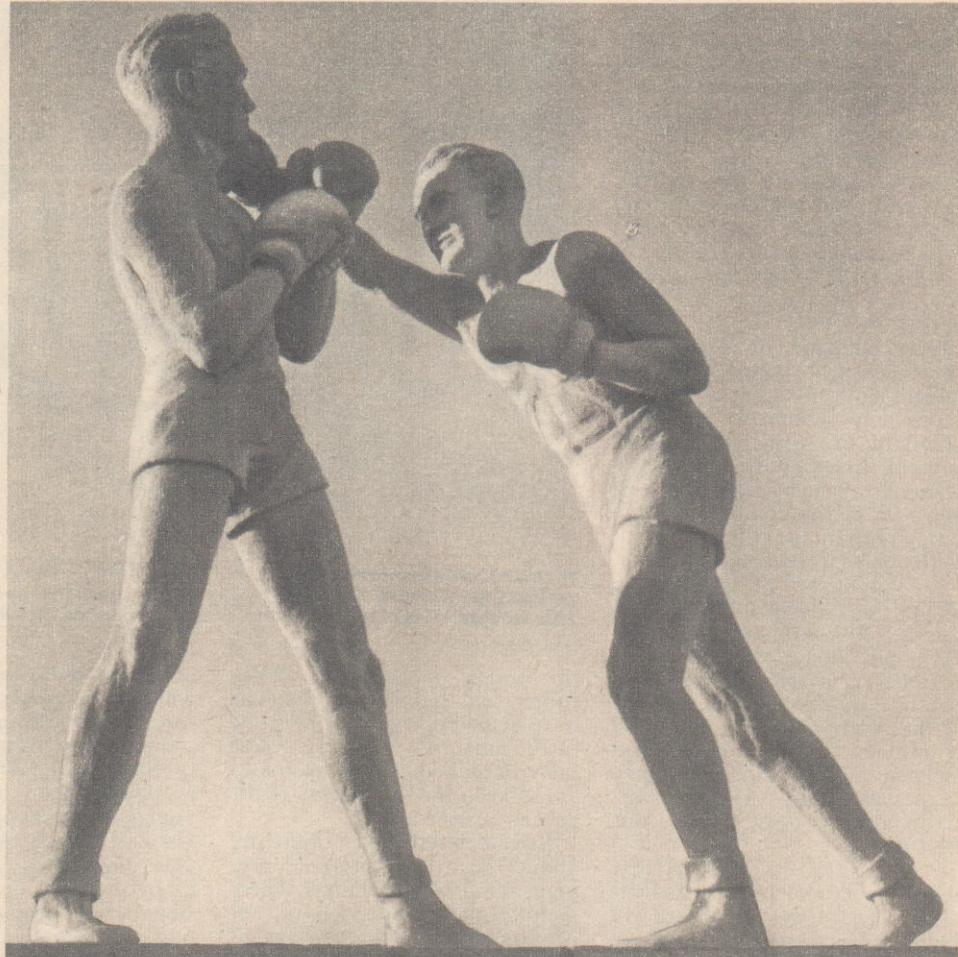
Third, the ban on more than eight officers playing for their unit rugby team has been lifted. Now any number of officers may play.

The decision to reduce the number of professionals in unit soccer teams was taken as a result of a referendum sent to each of the 265 units which entered teams for the Army Football Cup last year. Opinions were fairly equally divided. About one third wanted to ban professionals entirely, another third were in favour of limiting the number to five or three and the rest saw no reason why any limit should be imposed.

The new rules will not affect the Army's representative soccer and rugby teams, which will continue to be selected from the best players available, whether they are professionals or amateurs.

As SOLDIER'S correspondence columns show, the subject of professionalism in Army sport has been causing much controversy. Since the World War Two call-up, when professionals were first allowed to turn out for their unit teams and to play for the Army, critics have complained that talented amateurs were being elbowed out by men whose civilian job it is to kick a ball. As a result, they say, the character of Army sport has become spoiled and cups and medals are being won by the teams which can field the best professionals. Some have even suggested that units "persuade" profes-

OVER



The Stone Idols of Fayid overlook the sports ground at Fayid, Canal Zone, like the statues circling a Roman amphitheatre. Will they, too, be evacuated when the last British troops leave Egypt?



sionals into their ranks solely for the sake of achieving sporting honours.

Those in favour of fielding professionals point out that a National Serviceman who is a professional sportsman is first of all a soldier and as such must be entitled, without discrimination, to represent his unit or the Army. Since professionals were allowed to take part in Army soccer not one unit has been outstandingly successful. No fewer than ten different units have reached the finals of the Army Football Cup since the 1946-47 season. Only one team has ever won the Cup three times running and that was the 1st Battalion The Sherwood Foresters, in the years 1930-32. Some units undoubtedly attract more professionals than others; it is clear that professionals tend to opt for those units or corps with a good sporting record.

SOLDIER sought the views of the man at the top of Army sport: Brigadier A. R. Aslett, DSO, Director of the Army Sport Control Board. "Professionals both in soccer and rugby have done much to raise the standard of Army sport to its present very high level," he says. "The Army rugby team is one of the best in the country and the soccer eleven could hold its own with most professional sides.

"As a matter of prestige the Army must always play the best teams. With so many good professionals doing their National Service it is natural that they should often be the best players. If the Army is to put up a good show against the French and Belgian Armies (which field professionals and even internationals) we must include our best men.

"The critics often forget that when the Army team plays a first-class professional side there are increased gate receipts which are ploughed back into the Army for



Scotland, as the world knows, is "fitba' daft." What better way of attracting recruits to a Scots regiment than the sporting appeal? This poster is typical of many which appeared between the wars.

the benefit of all sports. They forget, too, that the professionals have helped to improve the game of the amateurs who play beside them in unit teams. Professionals are as keen for the success of the unit as anyone else."

Brigadier Aslett says there are about 200 professional soccer players in the Army today. These include many who sign on for professional clubs at the age of 17 before they join the Army and

of whom only about one in 20 will ever be good enough to play for the first eleven of a professional league team.

"Some of the Army's amateurs are better than many of these young professionals," he says. "In last year's Army Football Cup final the Army Catering Corps, playing only one professional, was beaten only by the odd goal scored in the last five minutes by a team which had five professionals."

On the other hand, there was no doubt that the best professionals were better than the best amateurs, so that the Army representative teams were made up almost exclusively of professionals.

But amateurs *do* represent the Army in some matches. Last year the Army Football Association formed an all-amateur team from units in Southern Command to play well-known civilian amateur teams. This year they intend to choose more all-amateur teams from other commands. From these will be built a representative team to play some of the Army's more important matches.

So much for rugby and soccer. In today's Army there are 18 other sports to be practised, all of which—with the exception of motor-cycling—come under the Army Sport Control Board. When the Board was set up in 1918 it took over, in addition to soccer and rugby, the running of

athletics, boxing, basket-ball, cricket, fencing, hockey, lawn tennis, racquets, squash, swimming and golf. In 1929 the Board assumed control of the Modern Pentathlon—a combination of five sports (see page 27). Since 1946 cycling, gliding, skiing, sailing and saddle clubs have been added to the Board's list. The Army Motor-cycling Association is controlled by the Directorate of Military Training.

It will be noted that marksmanship does not appear on this list. The Army's view is that rifle-shooting is not a sport—it is serious training.

There are, of course, many other "unofficial" sports and pastimes to be practised in the Army, ranging from polo to underwater swimming (which is increasingly popular in Middle East garrisons). Recently a Forces Motoring Club has been founded in Britain.

In Brigadier Aslett's opinion the vital need in Army sport today is the provision of more playing fields so that every soldier, no matter where he is stationed, can play the game of his choice.

He recalls that before World War One only a few fortunate units had grounds of their own and only the best players had the chance of playing on them. The less proficient player had to make do with improvised games on makeshift grounds, even playing with a rag-stuffed ball. In Aldershot, which today boasts some of the best playing fields in the Army, there were no sports grounds at all until 1908, when Captain (later Brigadier-General) R. J. Kentish, of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, hit on the idea of sending parties of soldiers out with picks and shovels to level off waste ground to make football pitches as part of their winter training. After the war Brigadier-General Kentish, as he then was, became president of the Army Recreation Grounds sub-committee, which, working under the Army Sport Control Board, built scores of playing fields, many of which are still in use.

"Between the world wars the small Regular Army was fairly well off for grounds and equipment," says Brigadier Aslett. "Today we have the largest-ever peacetime Army and there are just not enough grounds, particularly in some places in Britain where large numbers of soldiers are stationed."

The problem in Britain is complicated by the lack of space in which to build playing fields. Abroad, in stations like Germany and East Africa, where there is plenty of open space and the climate is good, most units have all the grounds they need. No soldiers, perhaps, are more fortunate than those in Berlin, who can take part in almost every Army game at Hitler's Olympic Sports Stadium. Equally well off will be troops at Rhine Army's new headquarters at Moenchengladbach. They will have five cricket pitches, nine soccer and



No one has been capped more times in Army representative rugger than Brigadier A. R. Aslett DSO, late King's Own Royal Regiment, now Director of the Army Sport Control Board. An outstanding centre three-quarter, between 1921 and 1929 he played 20 times against the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force and the French Army, and six times for England between 1926 and 1929. He has turned out for four different counties—Lancashire, Cumberland, Hampshire and Surrey.

rugby grounds, four hockey pitches, two running tracks, 24 tennis courts, five squash and two basket-ball courts.

The Army in Malaya has several well-equipped sports fields, the best in Kuala Lumpur. In West Africa more grounds are under construction. Here one of the problems is teaching Africans how to operate mowing machines and to keep the grounds in good order.

When the Army pulls out of Egypt it will leave behind playing fields that were constructed laboriously from virgin desert, also a string of fine swimming pools. Thousands of man-hours and much ingenuity went into the building of the sports grounds at Moascar and Fayid. From the Nile came huge quantities of mud to form a coating of soil. In this, tuft by tuft, Egyptians planted grass which had to be watered three times a week to prevent it dying from thirst. Special pipe-lines had to be built to carry water to the fields.

Brigadier Aslett recently completed a 9000-mile tour by air and road of the Army's sports grounds in the Middle East. He visited Cyprus where work has begun on new playing fields to supplement the few already in existence, in time for the arrival of the new garrison. It will be a big task, for Cyprus is an eroded island. Here, too, sub-soil will have to be carted to the sites, spread and sown with grass and irrigation systems installed.

"In spite of all the problems, not the least of which is money, we are gradually giving the soldier both at home and abroad more playing-fields," says the Brigadier. "Every time a new barracks goes up it has to have its quota of sports grounds. Our ultimate aim is to provide four sports grounds for every 1000 men, so that every soldier, and not only the best players, may take part in competitive sport."

Footnote: As SOLDIER went to press the Army sports world received a piece of surprising news. The 1st Training Regiment, Royal Signals, announced that they would not compete for the Army Rugby Cup this season in order to give other units a chance of winning the trophy. In the last six years this regiment, whose Cup-winning team last year included four Rugby League professionals and one Rugby Union international forward, have won the Army Rugby Cup five times. (See also SOLDIER to Soldier—this page.)

Things You Wouldn't Know Unless We Told You

In 1827 the Duke of Wellington advised against a proposal that British Cavalry regiments should be equipped with lariats.

ALREADY the Army has a considerable reputation for teaching people to read. Now if it could only earn a reputation for teaching them to speak!

Elsewhere in this issue is an article on speech-training in the Army. The object of the lessons described is merely to reduce the risk of error in transmission of oral messages. But that is always a start.

The speech of many soldiers is corrupted long before they enter the Army. It is well known that school teachers have disheartening experiences trying to cure their charges of slipshod speech. A boy is successfully taught to say "butter," instead of "bu'er," but when he says "butter" at home he may be clipped on the ear and told, "None of that fancy talk here." Sometimes, of course, the teacher is not far ahead of the pupil; there is the tale of the master who, after prevailing on the pupil to say "butter," commented "Tha's be'er."

Not all parents are reactionaries. The best of them strive to combat the "tough" accents which their children delight in picking up. Many a school child, in fact, learns two modes of speech—one for use among boon companions, and one for home. Similarly, Army telephonists have been known to cultivate a duty voice and an off-duty voice—see the story on page 28.

In a barrack-room there is a tendency for a man to let his speech slide if he finds himself among slovenly speakers. Fear of being thought affected is one of the commonest causes of bad speech (lack of confidence and mere laziness are others). Somehow the idea must be spread that it is unnecessary to communicate in short ape-like grunts in order to seem tough, and that to pronounce words properly is not a sign of degeneracy.

This is not a complaint against regional accents, except where vowels are wantonly murdered; it is largely a complaint against mumbling, omission of consonants, and for that matter omission of half the words necessary for a sentence to make sense.

THE British Army has not earned its reputation for sport (see pages 5-6) without sailing into criticism.

It has been argued, for instance, that officers stifle their capacity for leadership and initiative by concentrating unduly on "team spirit" games.

It has been complained that the British wage war as if it were a sport. Defeats are accepted with too-ready good humour as "part of the game," when they should inspire indignation and determination. Communiques are full of words like "bag."

These complaints were made in World War Two, and they were also made after the Boer War, before the organisation of Army sport had really got into

SOLDIER to Soldier

its stride. In that rumbustious book *The Army In My Time* (1935), Major-General J. F. C. Fuller says that it was shortly before World War One that games in the Army "developed into a pestilence." Not that he considers games unnecessary; "they are most necessary—but all good things can be overdone." Hunting and cricket and football, he says, do not help to sharpen our animal instincts. They are mere "matters of routine—sports and games based on rules. What is there more conventional than fox-hunting and cricket?—they are but pleasant forms of drill which restrict the cunning in man."

It's a point, certainly; though it should be remembered that the best games are useful in revealing the tough and the quick-witted.

The General quotes an earnest anonymous writer who argued that "a retrospect into history will show that the most efficient armies were those in which the sporting instinct was non-existent." That, however, was written in 1910, and there have been one or two tests of military efficiency since then.

Most soldiers, while agreeing that sport can be overdone, will feel that it is the sporting training which gives the British Army its resilience in adversity (even if the sporting attitude occasionally contributes to that adversity!).

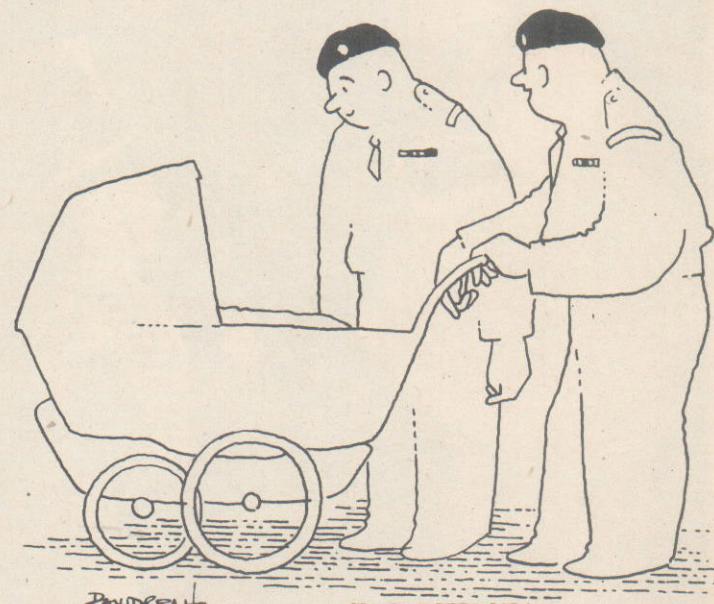
THE Territorial Army often undertakes useful tasks of road-making and bridge-building as training exercises during summer camps (and is sometimes criticised, instead of thanked, for doing so).

During this last summer a regiment of Sappers of the Regular Army had the opportunity to make themselves useful in a foreign land. They joined with a Pontonier Battalion of the Netherlands Army to throw a 1360-feet single-span Bailey Bridge across the River Maas in Holland. The Queens' Bridge—named after Queen Elizabeth and Queen Juliana—is now carrying traffic.

Bailey bridges are not in the same demand on the Continent as they were ten years ago; this, therefore, was a most welcome training opportunity. The entire 37 Corps Engineer Regiment was engaged on the project for more than two months. For once, the builders had the satisfaction that a bridge they had toiled mightily to build would not have to be dismantled immediately afterwards.

An enterprise like this is not only good training; it is the best form of public relations. This year the Dutch remembered with gratitude the men of Arnhem; a Bailey bridge is a token of the British soldier's usefulness in peace.

OVER



"We've given him four initials so that he'll be sure of a commission."

SOLDIER to Soldier

(continued)

WITH pride and pleasure, visitors to the Indian sub-continent have noted how the traditions of the old Indian Army are still preserved in the armies of India and Pakistan.

Colours and customs, music and drill orders are retained. Such names as Skinner's Horse, Hodgson's Horse, Probys Horse, the Frontier Force Rifles and Sam Browne's Cavalry are still very much alive. At Cherat, on the North-West Frontier, the badges of British regiments carved on the rock stand as an inspiration to the Boys Company of the Pakistan Armoured Corps.

In Quetta recently a parade was called in honour of a British field-marshall who joined the old Indian Army in 1892 and who for 20 years was Colonel of the 2nd Battalion The Baluch Regiment: the late Field-Marshall Sir Claude Jacob. At the express wish of his widow and son, Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Jacob, Director-General of the BBC, his medals and decorations were presented to the Baluch Regiment. The Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army, General Mohammad Ayub Khan, was there to hand over the glass case to the Commandant of the Baluch Regimental Centre, Colonel J. H. Souter.

Field-Marshall Jacob's association with the Baluch Regiment began in 1904 when he raised the Hazara Pioneers in Quetta from among Hazaras of the Baluch Regiment. Two Hazara recruits carried his medals on parade.

This ceremony could easily have been performed privately. The fact that it was performed

publicly, in the presence of the Regimental Colours, is an agreeable piece of news to put on record.

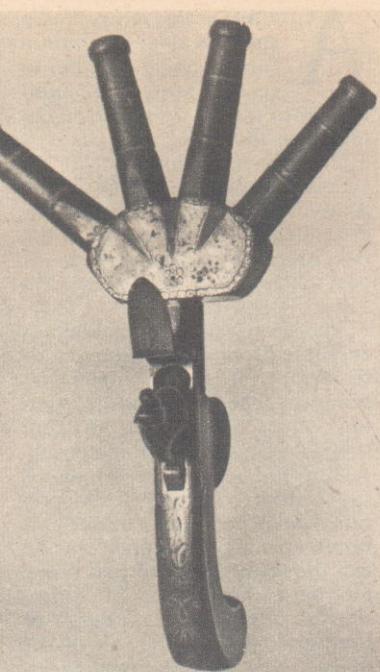
THE idea of women holding ranks like major and colonel is still considered madly amusing in certain offices in Fleet Street.

Thus, when a senior officer of the women's services finds herself in the news, she must expect to be referred to in the ever-jaunty headlines as MAJOR GLADYS or COLONEL JULIE: a poor way, it may be thought, of designating a hard-working, conscientious lady with many years of Service to her credit.

IF SOLDIER, of late, has received fewer queries from Rhine Army soldiers about conditions of service, the reason may well be that an Individual Inquiry Bureau has been doing good work at Rhine Army Headquarters.

This Bureau is an admirable idea. A soldier wishing information about terms of service, pay, pension or bounties need not bother his orderly room. He can write personally to this Individual Inquiry Bureau—which, in fact, is a panel of Staff officers—and within a few days he receives the correct answer, written in easy-to-understand language.

The Bureau is possibly the only one of its kind in the Army. What led to the founding of it was the suspicion that some potential recruits to the Regular Army were not signing on because they were unable to find



No, this is not a new infantry weapon. It is a "mob pistol" or "duck foot" used by tough sea captains 150 years ago. Engraved on the side is a picture of a snarling crew held at bay by the four mouths of the pistol. This weapon, in the possession of Messrs. Wallis and Wallis, of Lewes, was less formidable than it looked; the priming pan was three inches from the barrels.

the right answers to their problems. Many orderly room staffs were too busy with other work to spare time for a soldier's personal problems.

The Bureau was publicised over the British Forces Network and in divisional news-sheets. It was not long before the idea caught on. If a query is a difficult one, perhaps requiring reference to the soldier's Record Office, the writer receives a letter of acknowledgment. There is no attempt to push the Army

down his throat. The advantages are pointed out, then it is for the man to make up his own mind.

It may well be that the scheme has been influential in persuading many soldiers in Rhine Army to extend their service.

Rhine Army units now have recruiting officers whose task it is to see that all soldiers understand the advantages the Army has to offer them.

IT'S a strange unit in which no soldier is constructing something in his spare time—whether a toy engine for his son, or a Spanish galleon for the sideboard back home, or even the Taj Mahal in match-sticks.

This year the Army entered for the first time the International Handicrafts, Homecrafts and Hobbies Exhibition at Olympia—and won three silver plaques as first prizes. The entries on the Army's stand were not only the fruit of leisure hours; some came from the regular classes organised by the Royal Army Educational Corps, others were the work of men on resettlement courses. Boys from Buller Barracks, Aldershot, showed the crafts which the Army teaches the young generation.

In recent years Rhine Army, in particular, has gone out of the way to encourage hobbies. There is no reason why, after this year's promising start, the Army should not make a big name for itself in the handicrafts world.

EVERYBODY knows that more and more jobs in the Army are being filled by women. Possibly that is why the Editor of *SOLDIER* is beginning to receive letters beginning—

DEAR SIR OR MADAM.

EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

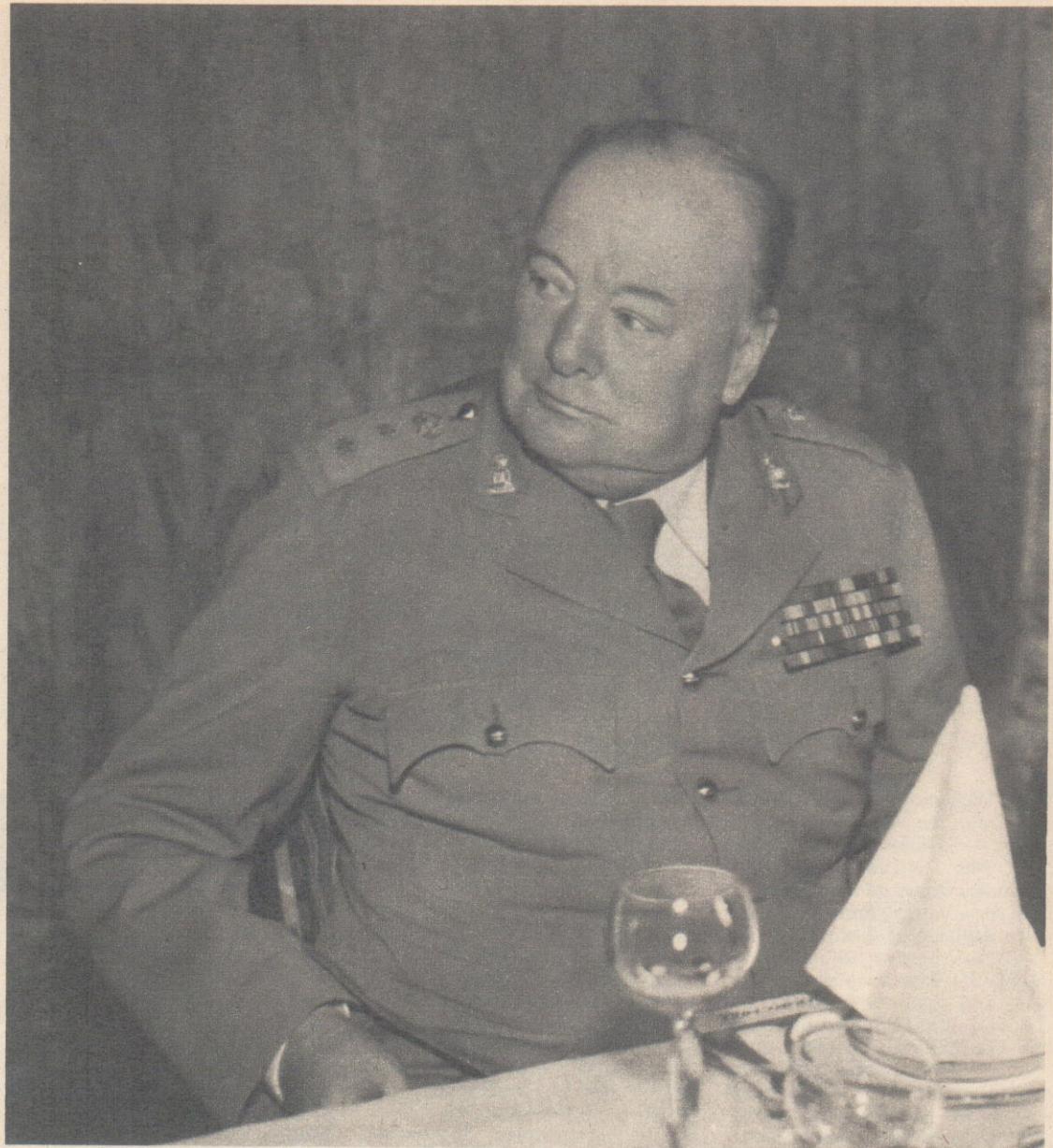
"You, too, can make a din like mine." But Bandboy Robert Johnson, Royal Artillery, has his doubts. He and Serjeant Ray Gordon, 32 United States Army Band, were fellow performers in this year's Searchlight Tattoo at Woolwich.

Using the standard rifles of their armies, British and American soldiers held a rifle contest near Aylesbury. Out of a possible 3200 points, the team from Bicester's Base Ordnance Depot scored 2220, the team from 4th AAA Battalion, United States Army 1920. Here Pfc John A. Williams, America's crack shot in Britain, coaches Serjeant E. Garney, RAOC, on the American rifle, the .300 Garand M-1.



THREE SCORE AND TWENTY

His eightieth birthday falls on 30 November: Sir Winston Churchill. He is seen wearing the insignia of Colonel of the 4th Queen's Own Hussars, the regiment in which he was commissioned almost 60 years ago.



Congratulations to...

- ... a soldier who has dodged bullets in four continents;
- ... the only man in Britain who (after twice failing the entrance examination to Sandhurst) went on to serve in, or with, Hussars, Lancers, Indian Cavalry and Infantry, African Light Horse, Foot Guards, Infantry of the Line, Artillery and Yeomanry;
- ... the subaltern who could not afford to spend a long leave riding horses, so went off to serve in a foreign war instead;
- ... the subaltern who succeeded in "doubling" the roles of serving officer and war correspondent, and, after the campaigns, wrote books telling the generals where they had gone wrong;
- ... the best-known survivor of the famous cavalry charge against the dervishes at Omdurman;
- ... the man who, at the outset of World War One, mobilised a fleet, and at the end demobilised an army and an air force;
- ... the man who was refused command of a brigade in World War One but who accepted leadership of the nation in World War Two;
- ... the man who ordered "land ships" (tanks) in the first war and floating harbours in the second; who conceived a machine (not used) for carving a trench across no-man's land at four miles an hour and a method (not used) of hoisting a fleet through shallow waters into the Baltic;
- ... the man who found time, while directing the grand strategy, to worry about the supply of VC ribbons—and beer;
- ... the man who made the "V" sign respectable;
- ... the man who refused to pronounce the enemy's words the enemy's way;
- ... the man who wrote magnificent multi-volume books about war but kept his advisers down to one sheet of paper;
- ... the man who demanded ACTION THIS DAY—and got it.



"The Lion cannot face the crowing of the Cock"—an American comment last century on the opposition by British military leaders to a Channel tunnel.

A Channel tunnel would make invasion of Britain child's play, said Service chiefs last century. The debate continues—in the age of atomic warfare

THE plan to link Britain and France by a tunnel under the sea was recently in the news again.

A Member of Parliament suggested that this year, the 50th anniversary of the signing of the *Entente Cordiale*, would be an appropriate occasion for going ahead with the Channel Tunnel scheme.

The Minister of Transport told him that there were more important projects requiring attention and that he "could not conceive that the old objections had been removed."

On the many occasions in the past 70 years when the plan for a Channel tunnel has been considered by Parliamentary Committees the objections of military experts have always prevailed. As recently as 1949 a joint committee of both Houses of Parliament recommended that for military reasons the Channel Tunnel should not be built.

The idea of boring under the Straits of Dover was first suggested in 1800 by a French engineer to Napoleon Bonaparte, who dismissed it as fantasy. Sixty-seven years later a British engineer, William Low, drew up plans for a cross-Channel tunnel which were accepted in principle by the British Government. The idea was supported by a strong body of business men and by cultural organisations.

In 1875 the French sank a shaft on the coast at Sangatte near Calais and drove it for one-and-a-half miles under the sea. On the English coast experimental work was carried out and in 1881 the Submarine Continental Railway Company sank a shaft at Shakespeare Cliff, Dover, and bored under the sea for one-and-a-quarter miles.

Then from Britain's military leaders came the storm of criticism which for many years was to divide opinion in the country. The Army chiefs persuaded the Government to stop excavations

THE GENERALS

at Dover and appoint a joint select committee of both Houses of Parliament to consider the advisability of constructing the tunnel. The daily press took up the controversy. Popular magazines published articles foretelling the invasion of England, the sack of London and the fall of the British Empire. Supporters and opponents of the scheme organised mass meetings. Few subjects were more warmly discussed at the Staff College at Camberley.

The most powerful opponent of a tunnel was Lord Wolseley, fresh from his victories in Egypt, and now Adjutant-General. He regarded a Channel tunnel as one of the greatest dangers Britain could ever have to face. As well might a jeweller hang the Koh-i-noor unguarded outside his front door! "It will be a constant inducement to the unscrupulous foreigner to make war upon us and hold out hopes of a conquest the likes of which the world has never known," he told the committee.

Lord Wolseley thought that a small enemy force could capture the English end of the tunnel, either by landing on the coast near Dover or by being sent secretly through the tunnel. In a few hours they could destroy the guns which might cover the tunnel mouth and begin to pass through thousands of reinforcements who would capture Dover and drive towards London. He had no faith in the Army's ability to destroy or block the tunnel in time to prevent an invasion. "The apparatus might go wrong,

the gunpowder might be damp and the dynamite weak," he said.

If the tunnel was built, said Lord Wolseley, it would mean that Britain would be obliged to introduce for the first time in her history a form of universal service so as to keep in being a large standing army. Huge sums of money would have to be spent on fortifications guarding the tunnel mouth. The country could not afford such luxuries. Britain, he said, had always enjoyed immunity from invasion because of the "silver streak" between Dover and Calais. As far as he could see the only advantage a Channel tunnel could offer to Englishmen was "an immunity from seasickness during the two-and-a-half hours' Channel crossing."

The Duke of Cambridge, then Commander-in-Chief of the Army, urged the Government to pause "before they accepted for the nation a new element of danger which would threaten our national existence." Most of the senior generals and admirals were of the same opinion.

In a letter to *The Morning Post* in 1882 Admiral Sir Algernon De Horsey said he doubted whether the Royal Engineers could make the English end of the tunnel absolutely proof against surprise and treachery, or against the inventiveness of the future. No Minister, he thought, would be bold enough to authorise the destruction of the tunnel in sufficient time to prevent the enemy capturing it.

The First Lord of the Admiralty, Admiral Sir Cooper

Key, weighed in with the contention that "four hours' possession of the tunnel would enable 100,000 enemy to assemble at Dover and be joined in as many hours by as many more." Nothing could prevent such a force marching on London while the Royal Navy looked on helpless.

But there was strong support, even from some of the generals, for a Channel tunnel. They ridiculed the idea that Dover could be captured. A *coup-de-main* party would have to be sent to England with arms and uniforms. Invasion would be preceded by a concentration of men and equipment on the other side of the Channel which could not fail to be noticed in time for the tunnel to be flooded or blown up. In any event, the enemy could emerge from the tunnel only in

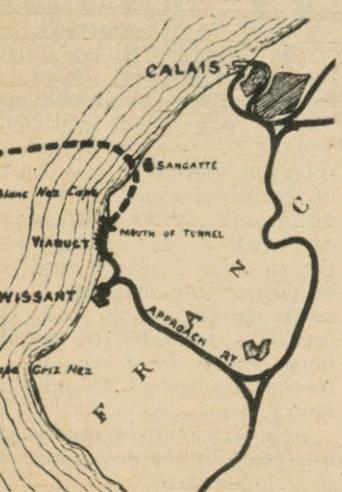
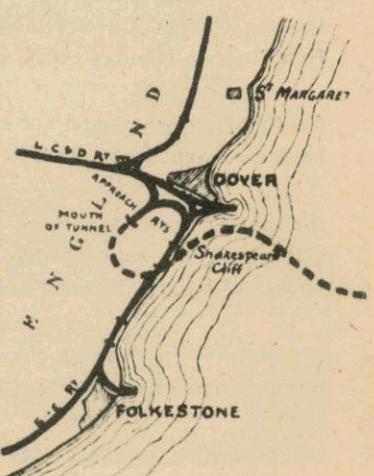
1907 the promoters of the Bill to authorise the Channel Tunnel went some way to meeting criticism by suggesting that both ends of the tunnel should be left open for half a mile so that warships could demolish it in the event of war. By this time, with France now a firm ally, many of the original objections no longer applied. But, on the advice of the Imperial Defence Committee, the Government set

small parties which could be bombarded as they emerged.

The joint committee, after much argument, turned down the plan—in 1883. Eleven times in the succeeding 12 years the project was brought up for reconsideration by the Government, but each time it was rejected because of military opposition.

In 1907 the promoters of the Bill to authorise the Channel Tunnel went some way to meeting criticism by suggesting that both ends of the tunnel should be left open for half a mile so that warships could demolish it in the event of war. By this time, with France now a firm ally, many of the original objections no longer applied. But, on the advice of the Imperial Defence Committee, the Government set

... and the Calais approaches.



Government do carry out the scheme it might prove to be a national investment equal or superior to the Suez Canal."

World War One broke out before this renewed wave of support for the tunnel could become effective, but before the war was over Sir Arthur Fell MP, an ardent supporter for the scheme, was worrying the Government again. He said the tunnel would make London the centre of the world for express train travel. It would open England to wealthy foreigners who feared to journey to England because of the unpleasant Channel crossing by boat and would improve trade with the Continent and understanding between nations. Yet another Parliamentary Committee was set up in 1919 to re-examine the problem, but once more the view of the Imperial Defence Committee was that "it was not advisable nor expedient" to build the tunnel.

In 1924 Channel Tunnellers were petitioning Parliament for authority to join the two shafts which had been sunk on both sides of the Channel years before. This time the Imperial Defence Committee called on commercial, financial and transport experts for their views and came to the conclusion that "the advantages were not commensurate with the disadvantages from the defence point of view."

In 1929 the Channel Tunnel Company, which had been formed in 1887, asked Parliament for permission to drive a pilot tunnel between Dover and Sangatte 100 feet below the sea

bed. If this was satisfactory the tunnel could be widened to take passenger and goods trains from England to France and another similar tunnel to run parallel with the first could be constructed to take traffic in the opposite direction. This led to the most thorough examination of the scheme yet made. The Parliamentary Committee consulted industry, shipping companies and trade unions, and came to the conclusion that the tunnel would be of general economic advantage to Britain. But the Imperial Defence Committee refused to abandon its hostile attitude. The motion in favour of the tunnel was defeated in the House of Commons by only seven votes.

Apart from the occasional question in the House of Commons, nothing else happened until 1949, when yet another joint committee of both Houses was set up to give its verdict. To this body the Channel Tunnel Company proposed that the tunnel should extend from a point three miles on the London side of Dover to Sangatte in France, where it would join the main Calais-Paris railway. It was to be 44 miles long and would cost about £60,000,000. The Company estimated that more than 2,000,000 passengers would pass through the tunnel each year.

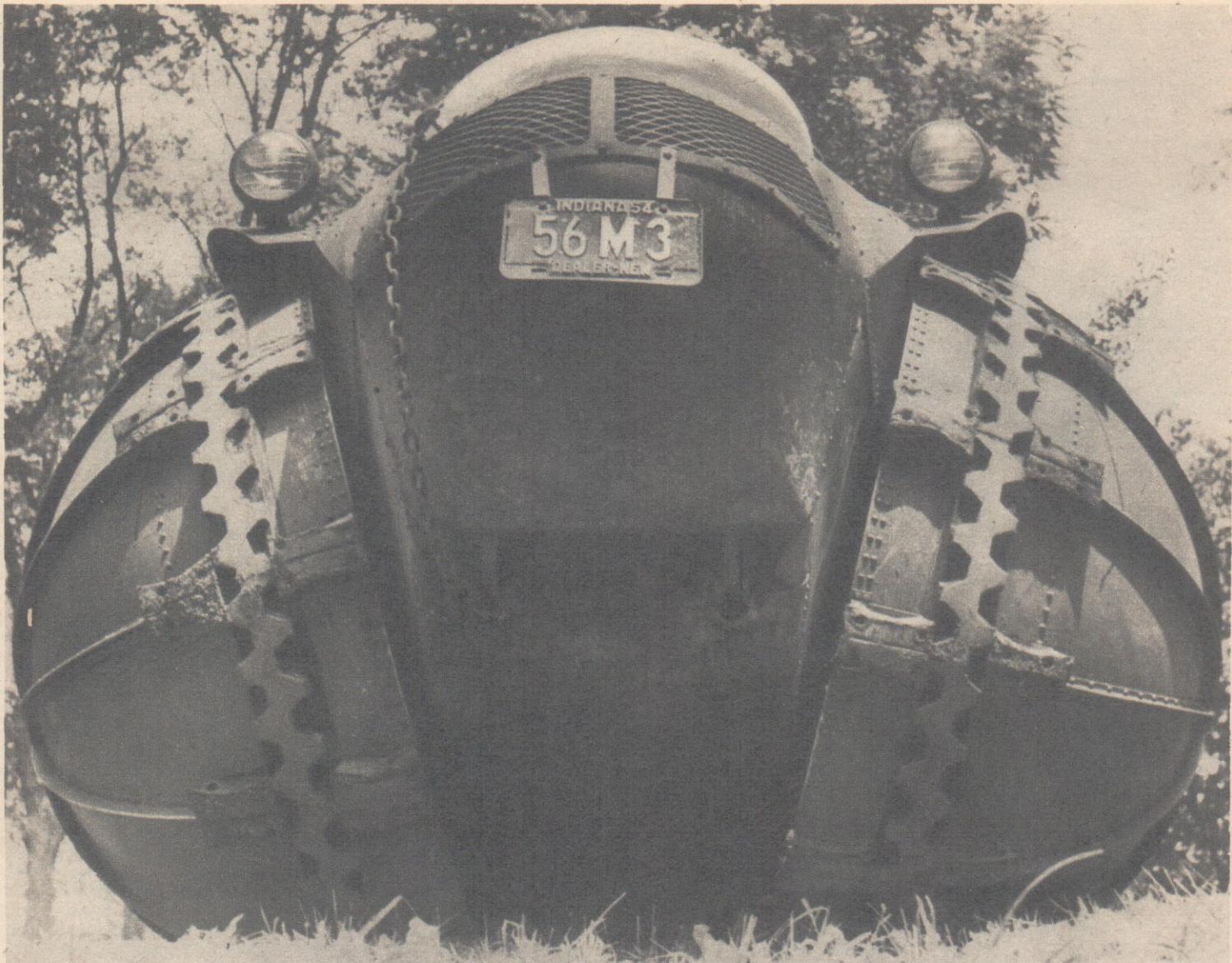
Today it is probable that any renewed proposal for a Channel tunnel would have to be put up to the North Atlantic Treaty powers. Some amateur strategists say that a hostile power could drop an invasion force more rapidly by parachute, and with a better chance of effecting surprise. What effect an atom bomb would have on a long submarine tunnel is anybody's guess.

But supporters of the Channel Tunnel still live in hopes of seeing it built. The original workings at Dover—barred from public view by wire fences and high gates—are preserved by British Railways. If ever the Government permits the tunnel to be constructed, it would not take long for the site to be cleared and for work to begin.

Each year the shareholders of the Channel Tunnel Company meet in London to discuss their plans and declare a small dividend. This year the chairman said there was a very large potential support for a Channel Tunnel but the political climate was not yet right for a new approach to be made to the Government.

At the same meeting one of the shareholders, 82-year-old Mr. F. H. Woodward, had a novel idea for using the one-and-a-quarter miles of tunnel which has already been driven under the sea at Dover. He said it should be extended to take it outside the three miles territorial limit. There an underground casino could be built—and champagne would be duty-free.

E. J. GROVE



MONSTER OF THE RIVER

WHAT'S better than a wheel?

The answer may be
"a half-sphere."

The "Rumbling Rhino," a five-ton American-built vehicle, is something new in amphibians. Thanks to its water-tight body and the immense grip of its half-spherical wheels it can charge confidently through thick river ooze, rolling without strain. In deep water it wallows along with the aid of a hydro-jet unit for propulsion and steering. It can tackle swamp or soft sand. On highways, propelled by its 110 horse-power Ford engine, it reaches a speed of 45 miles an hour.

American military experts are impressed by the possibilities of their "mud baby."

BATTLE ROYAL

Along a 60-mile front, 137,000 soldiers of five nations went to battle in mud and rain. For the first time British troops considered themselves "atomised," but war, to the sharp-end soldier, seemed much the same as ever

Special report by SOLDIER staff-writer RICHARD ELLEY and SOLDIER cameraman ARTHUR BLUNDELL.

SQUELCH WENT SIX DIVISIONS

FOR 137,000 British, Dutch, Belgian, Canadian and American troops, Northern Army Group's Exercise "Battle Royal" was the largest ever held this side of the Iron Curtain. It was also one of the muddiest.

There was never a day without rain. Mud-spattered Infantry squelched ankle-deep over farm-tracks. Road verges subsided under trucks and tanks.

It was, however, a happy exercise and the cheerfulness of the troops, at the end of a week's strenuous campaigning, led General Sir Richard Gale, who directed the exercise, to pay a tribute to their fitness and robustness. He said he had been told that the men were disappointed that they could not carry out the assault crossing of the River Lippe. In fact, SOLDIER watched the 2nd Battalion Scots Guards make the crossing, happily unaware that the exercise had been called off.

One object of "Battle Royal" was to practise commanders in handling formations of other nations. Thus, 48,000 British troops found themselves variously under British, Dutch and Belgian commanders.

Northland, the aggressor army, was commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir Lashmer Whistler ("borrowed" from Western Command) with the integrated headquarters of the 1st British-Netherlands Army. Under him were 1st British Corps (two British divisions) and 1st Netherlands Corps (one British division and one Dutch).

Southland comprised 1st Belgian Corps under General A. F. Tromme, in which were two Belgian Divisions, 1st Canadian Independent Brigade Group and, for a week-end, the Territorials of the British 46 Parachute Brigade Group from Britain. Each side also had a battalion of American atomic guns (see p. 17).

The umpires were also international. They were headed by Major-General H. E. Pyman, commander of 11th Armoured.

OVER ➔



The Infantry whom nothing surprises: Men of the 1st Suffolks machine-gun platoon attend an "O-group". Below: Under daily rain, many a road-verge found itself unable to support a Centurion.





BATTLE

(continued from page 13)

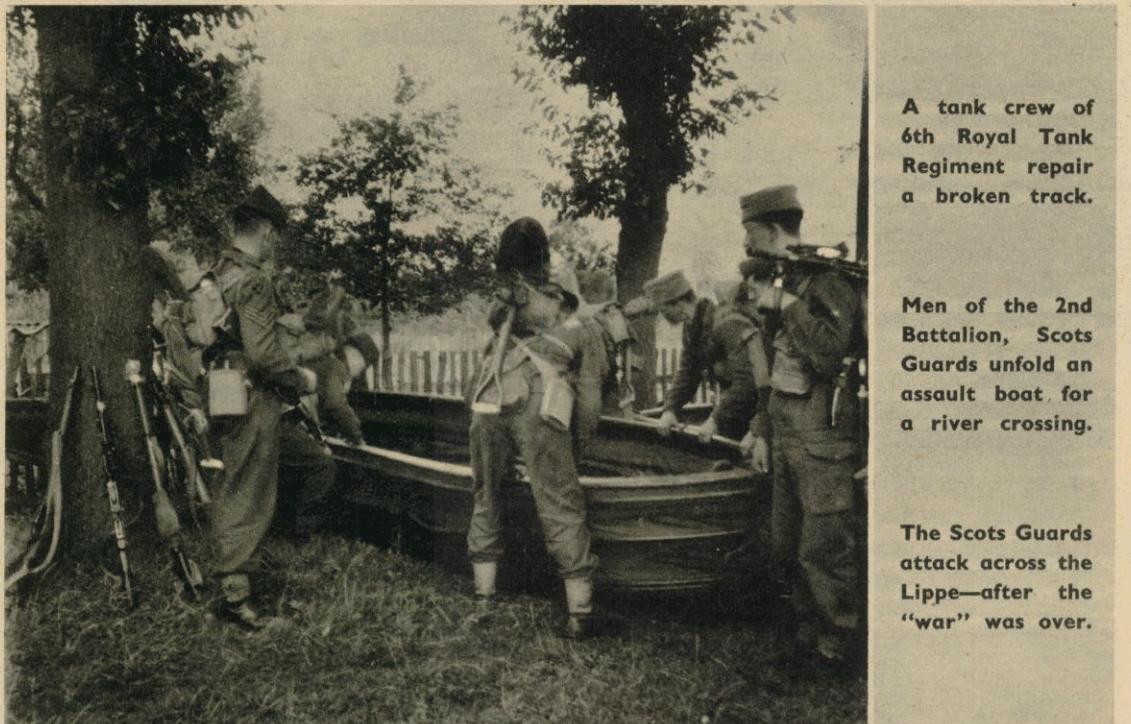
General Gale himself became international for the occasion. As General Gale, he directed the exercise. As General Boreas he functioned as superior commander of the Northland forces. As General Mistral he was Southland's commander.

It all worked very well. The language difficulties, reported General Gale, were far fewer than had been expected, and six divisions had been in contact without anybody hitting anybody else on the jaw.

In planning the exercise, weapons of the future—the hydrogen bomb, guided missiles and chemical warfare—were not considered. The atomic bomb and the atomic shell, weapons of the present, were very much in mind, however.

One of the problems General Gale was anxious to study was the effect of knocking out higher command in the field. The headquarters of 1st Corps were atom-bombed, but only partly knocked out, and two brigadiers were "killed" elsewhere. The news that these headquarters were out of action was conveyed, as it would be in war, by the fact that their wireless sets went off the air. The results of this damage to the command machinery were not stated, but General Gale pointed out that there were alternative links of command.

An experiment was also made with a new kind of division, and for the occasion, 2nd Infantry Division consisted of two brigades, each of four battalions. General Gale said he did not much like the arrangement, because such a formation would lack the flexibility of a three-brigade division with three battalions to each brigade; but he would not commit himself to an opinion until he had studied the divisional commander's report. General Gale added that he



Men of the 2nd Battalion, Scots Guards unfold an assault boat for a river crossing.

The Scots Guards attack across the Lippe—after the "war" was over.



ROYAL

thought the divisional and corps organisation was sound and that the division, which came into being in the Peninsula, was "here for ever," though its make-up might alter.

For the front-line soldier, the conclusion the exercise seemed to offer was that war with atomic weapons would be little different from war without them. In "Battle Royal," the use of such weapons was to supplement, not to replace, conventional weapons. That might mean even more digging, however.

There was much cloak-and-dagger activity, since both sides employed agents for intelligence purposes, and the exercise control employed others to test security. As a result, two senior NAAFI officials, lacking passes, were detained for nearly half an hour and enviously watched one of their own mobile canteens pass unhindered.

An officer of the 6th Armoured Division suffered an even more uncomfortable lesson. He was captured by Canadians, escaped and was recaptured. This time the Canadians took his boots away, so he escaped again in his socks, dropped into a German shop and bought a pair of wooden clogs. Some time later, he turned up at his unit, again walking in his socks and carrying his clogs in his hand. They had given him the worst blisters of his life.



Men of the Dutch Limburgse Jagers Regiment man a recoilless 75-millimetre anti-tank weapon.

This Canadian took part in a unit gas-mask practice while on outpost duty.

Through a smoke-screen, the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards advance.



They Flew Anything Anywhere

ONE of the least orthodox units operated under Army control was that assembled for light liaison duties in "Battle Royal." It operated impartially in the interests of both sides and of "neutrals."

Its basis was four Austers of 1912 Light Liaison Flight, Royal Air Force. The pilots of the Flight belong to the Glider Pilot Regiment which, now that the Army no longer uses gliders, flies all Army-controlled light liaison aircraft. The ground staff are soldiers and airmen.

To supplement the Flight's Austers came five more, with nine Glider Pilot Regiment pilots, from the Light Aircraft School at Middle Wallop. Then there were two of the Army-controlled Sycamore helicopters, piloted by Lieutenant-Colonel Bernard Repton and Captain John Spittal. Colonel Repton used to fly Field-Marshal Sir William Slim, when he was Chief of the Imperial General Staff, and Captain Spittal now pilots Field-Marshal Sir John Harding.

The Royal Navy contributed two Dragonfly helicopters, with their ground-crews. Finally, two light aeroplanes were provided by their makers. One of these was the de Havilland Beaver, a six-passenger aircraft which is made in Canada and is in use with the American Army. The other was the four-passenger Prestwick Pioneer, which is made in Scotland and is in service with the Royal Air Force. Each was piloted by a civilian eager to show the aircraft's paces. SOLDIER accepted a ride in each and can vouch that they are both capable of climbing faster than is good for a delicate stomach, and of landing in an alarmingly small space.

The duties of the light liaison organisation included an air despatch letter service, which was mainly entrusted to students, officers and non-commissioned officers from Middle Wallop who had only just earned their "wings." Other jobs included carrying passengers, including press photographers seeking aerial pictures, casualty evacuation, reconnaissance, photography and dropping light supplies. The aircraft could also have been used for laying signal cables.

THE WAR AT BATTLE WARENDORF



Across a crop-field, Territorials of 46 Parachute Group set out for Warendorf.

WARENDORF is one of many picturesque little German country towns. To most soldiers, it is no more than a collection of narrow streets which mean slowing down on the journey from Paderborn to Munster.

For a day, Warendorf became a noisy centre of interest in "Battle Royal." The reason: its two fine, modern bridges over the Ems.

Canadians held the approaches on behalf of Southland. For the Northland aggressors, 61 British Lorried Brigade attacked the bridges, captured them and were then driven back.

It was Saturday, and that made a great deal of difference to the course of the battle. The previous day, Territorials scattered over England, Scotland and Wales had knocked off from their civilian jobs and flown to Buckeburg as 46 Parachute Brigade Group. Now they were at the disposal of Lieutenant-General A. F. Tromme, of the Royal Canadian Regiment were covering the approaches.

Around them was a steadily growing crowd of German spectators. As the action speeded up, the numbers of watchers rose from hundreds to thousands. Along came a squad of green-coated German police (under an officer who had commanded a Wehrmacht battalion on the Russian front) to control them.

The weather was not good enough for them to use their parachutes, so they "dropped" from lorries, in enemy territory three miles or more from Warendorf and marched off towards the bridges. The sounds of thunderflashes and blank am-

munition from woods and behind hedges indicated that it was an opposed advance.

Within an hour and a half, however, the first parachutists were in sight of the bridges. They joined up with the Canadian defence screen and withdrew with them. The focal point of the battle became the little square on the north of the bridges. Here tanks of Lord Strathcona's Horse and Infantrymen of the Royal Canadian Regiment were covering the approaches.

Around them was a steadily growing crowd of German spectators. As the action speeded up, the numbers of watchers rose from hundreds to thousands. Along came a squad of green-coated German police (under an officer who had commanded a Wehrmacht battalion on the Russian front) to control them.

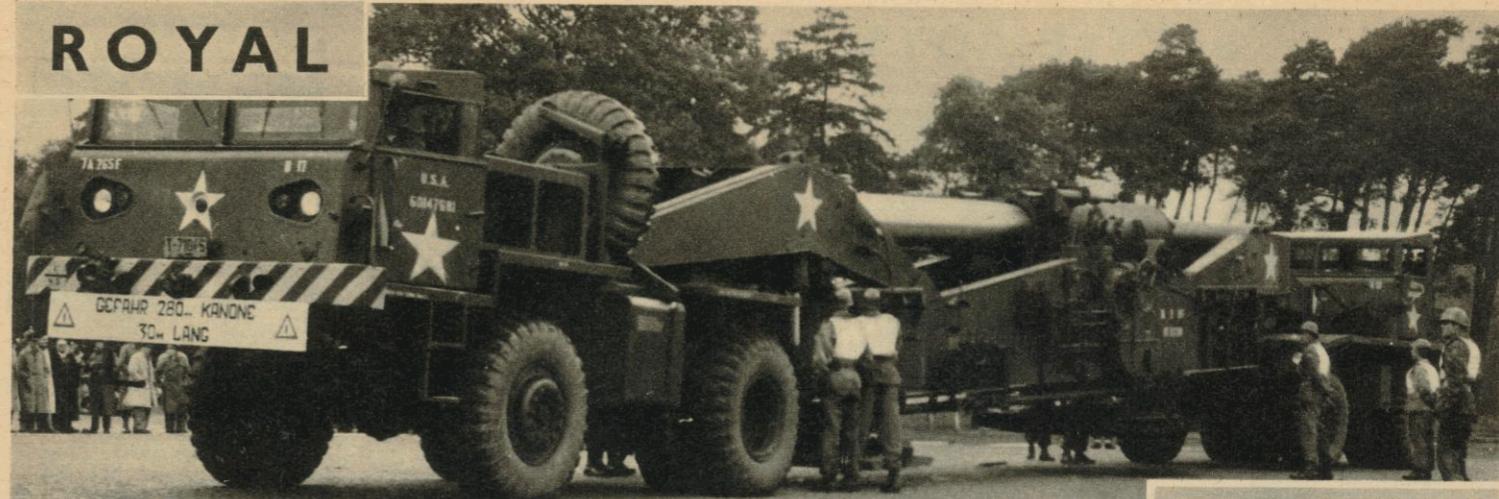
Canadian Infantry returned to the north of the river and the Territorials withdrew into the town. Then an officer with the white arm-band of an umpire came and announced a "standfast." From behind the "knocked-out" tanks of the 17/21st Lancers appeared another column of parachutists. A lieutenant-colonel of the umpire staff explained: "The troops are so mixed up, it is impossible to umpire any more, so we have stopped the fighting to let them sort themselves out. The bridge is blown and the battle is over."

The Southlanders had succeeded in their object of denying the bridges to the enemy, and causing damage to his forces, but the casualties to the Airborne brigade were officially described as "heavy." It was said that the people most disappointed by the umpires' decision were wives of 17/21st Lancers who had travelled to Warendorf to watch their husbands make a triumphal entry into the town.



On the square at the head of the bridges, parachutists watch out for Dutch "enemy."

ROYAL



"THIS ITEM COST \$431,263"

FOR "Battle Royal" spectators an American 280-millimetre gun detachment demonstrated their gun-drill at Sennelager. Two battalions of the guns, which can fire atomic shells and have a range of 20 miles, took part in the exercise.

On its two transporters, the 84 feet long cannon, weighing 85 tons, manoeuvred smartly into position. The driver of the front transporter controls the throttle and brakes of the rear one, as well as his own, but they are steered independently. It takes considerable training for the drivers to co-ordinate their steering over a telephone.

The transporters lowered the gun to the ground, then un hitched themselves and drove off. This left the main weight of the piece resting on a turn-table and a plate supporting the rear of the carriage. By hand-wheel, the gun could then be traversed

through a small arc. By using jacks mounted above wheels on the turn-table, however, the crew lifted the rear of the carriage and the whole gun was then balanced on a large steel ball and was traversed full circle.

The crew of the gun consisted of an officer, a non-commissioned officer, a gunner (who looks after the controls), seven gunners, two drivers and two assistant drivers. In the normal way they can bring the gun into action in 12 minutes.

Stencilled on the cannon was: "This item cost \$431,263." The transporters were each priced at \$77,318.

A hand-operated davit lifts the shell from its carriage.



The tail-end of the atomic cannon is lowered to the ground from the front transporter. Below: This could have been an atomic shell... but it wasn't.



C/S



Above: Ronald Noble, BBC television cameraman. Left: A BBC broadcast in progress, with Lt-General Sir Brian Horrocks, Jean Metcalfe and Brian Johnston. Below: Lt-General H. G. Martin of the Daily Telegraph.

THREE GENERALS WERE THERE—AS REPORTERS

EXERCISE "Battle Royal" was not only the biggest Northern Army Group exercise ever held, it was also the most widely-reported.

Into the spectators' headquarters at Sennelager poured 135 reporters, military correspondents, broadcasters, photographers, newsreel and television cameramen. They came from 12 countries and included two Turkish newspapermen who had motored from Istanbul on a European tour. Others came from America and Scandinavia, Australia and Greece, Canada and Belgium.

There were three retired generals, Lieutenant-General H. G. Martin (*Daily Telegraph*), Lieutenant-General Sir Brian Horrocks (British Broadcasting Corporation and *Sunday Times*) and Major-General L. O. Lyne (British Broadcasting Corporation—his assignment included a Third Programme talk).

There were men whose names are familiar to readers of popular newspapers—Bill Greig of the *Daily Mirror*, A. J. McWhinnie of the *Daily Herald*,

From 12 countries journalists, photographers and broadcasters converged on the press camp at Sennelager.

Noel Monks of the *Daily Mail*, Ronald Walker of the *News Chronicle*. There were those whose names are less widely known but whose work is seriously studied—Eric Phillips of *The Times*, John Grant of the *Manchester Guardian*, Colonel the Honourable H. E. Wyndham of the *Army Quarterly* and the *Economist*. There were popular broadcasters, like Brian Johnston, Neville Barker and Miss Jean Metcalfe. There were correspondents of the big agencies. On top of it all, a film unit was at work studying the National Serviceman on behalf of the Central Office of Information.

Planning for the pressmen began months before "Battle Royal" started, when Lieutenant-Colonel T. L. Laister, who is in

charge of Northern Army Group's Public Relations branch, visited Belgium, Holland and the American Zone of Germany to make arrangements with the other armies participating. A Public Relations officer of long experience, he is "Tommy" to scores of newspapermen.

To help him he had five Northern Army Group Public Relations officers, and eight Staff officers, of field rank, whose duty was to conduct correspondents around the battle area. A major of the Women's Royal Army Corps looked after the British Broadcasting Corporation unit.

The Belgian, Dutch, Canadian and American armies also attached Public Relations officers to Colonel Laister's team.

For the benefit of the press-



men, six international telephones and three telex machines (direct teleprinter links) were provided. A fleet of 66 vehicles, mostly Volkswagen, was organised to take them around. Trips were arranged in Light Liaison Flight aircraft and helicopters. An officer left Sennelager at five o'clock each morning to take photographers' plates and television film to catch the London aircraft from Dusseldorf. A studio was provided for the daily BBC broadcast from Sennelager.

With each of the three British divisions in the field was an observer officer of Public Relations. His main task was to photograph and write about units and soldiers for their home newspapers.

Like other spectators, the pressmen could always find out the latest battle news from the information tents; and there were briefings twice daily.

"The correspondents were most helpful," said Colonel Laister on the last day. "Not once were we asked a question which, if answered, might have led to a security leak. Everybody understood that there were certain factors in the exercise, like the effectiveness of an atomic shell, which would have made first-class news-stories, but which could not be discussed."

"It is rare for such a large party of journalists from so many countries to work and live together. We feel that it has done something to further the mutual understanding of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation countries."



Neville Barker of the BBC (left) toured the "Battle Royal" exercise area with a tape-recorder. Right: Eric Phillips of *The Times*, and Colonel the Hon. H. E. Wyndham of the *Army Quarterly*.

They have been on the job since 1923—

Desert Linemen

WHEN the full story of the British Army's sojourn in Egypt is told in the history books, high credit must be paid to the desert linemen—the men who kept up a complex network of communications and ceaselessly extended and improved it.

The men of 3rd Lines of Communication Signal Regiment (headquarters: Moascar) had the climate and the terrain against them, and also, on occasions, the inhabitants. At first light the men of the Underground Cable Troops would be seen in Arab villages, digging, testing, repairing, often till dusk. These repair parties consisted sometimes of only six or eight men, under a corporal. Like all men of Royal Signals, they had to be able soldiers; and the NCOs were men of marked initiative.

To lay cables across great distances by hand digging would be impracticable, so in the Zone are two mechanical diggers which carve a six-foot trench at the rate of 50 yards an hour. Bulldozers fill up the trench afterwards.

In oases there may be water below the surface which would damage buried cables; at such times the bulldozer rips up a sample of sand.

The Regiment has been in Egypt since 1923 and its task will go on until the last flag is lowered. It undertakes many operations besides line laying and maintenance: it operates, with the help of the Women's Royal Army Corps, 12 of the main Army telephone exchanges in the Zone; it handles hundreds of teleprinter and radio messages daily; it delivers the Signals Despatch mail; and it operates a radio net to "cover" the telephone service in emergency. Thus there are many trades to be learned in the unit, from driver to radio mechanic, from telephone fitter to teleprinter operator.

One young corporal said: "I worked as a labourer before I came into the Army, but now, as a result of my trade training, I hope to get a job with the General Post Office after I go out." He is one of many—both Regulars and National Servicemen—who value highly the experience the Royal Signals has afforded them.—From a report by Lieutenant P. M. Bonner, *Military Observer* in Egypt.



The din of battle is mellowed in—

The Shandur Bell

IN the proud note of the Shandur bell are symbolised 25,000 ear-cracking bangs.

The bell sounds in the camp of 1st Royal Tank Regiment, now at Shandur, in Egypt's Canal Zone. It is inscribed "Korea 1952-53. God Save the Queen."

At the end of the Regiment's tour in Korea the 20-pounders of its Centurions had pumped 25,000 rounds at the enemy. Lieutenant-Colonel G. C. Hopkinson, then commanding, had the idea of forging from empty cartridge cases a talisman of the Regiment's part in the Korean war.

Now the sounding of the bell has become part of the regimental life.

When the men of the 1st Royal Tank Regiment first saw their allocated stretch of sand at Shandur they said: "Let's go back to Korea." Then they remembered that they were Desert Rats.

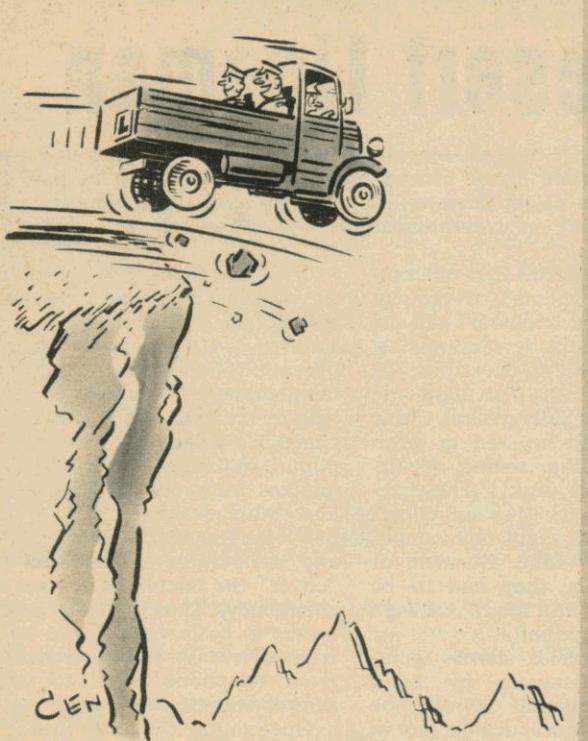
The Regiment decided to convert a number of Nissen huts into unofficial married quarters, an operation carried out entirely by the officers and men concerned.

Desert Rats return to the Desert—for the last lap in Egypt.

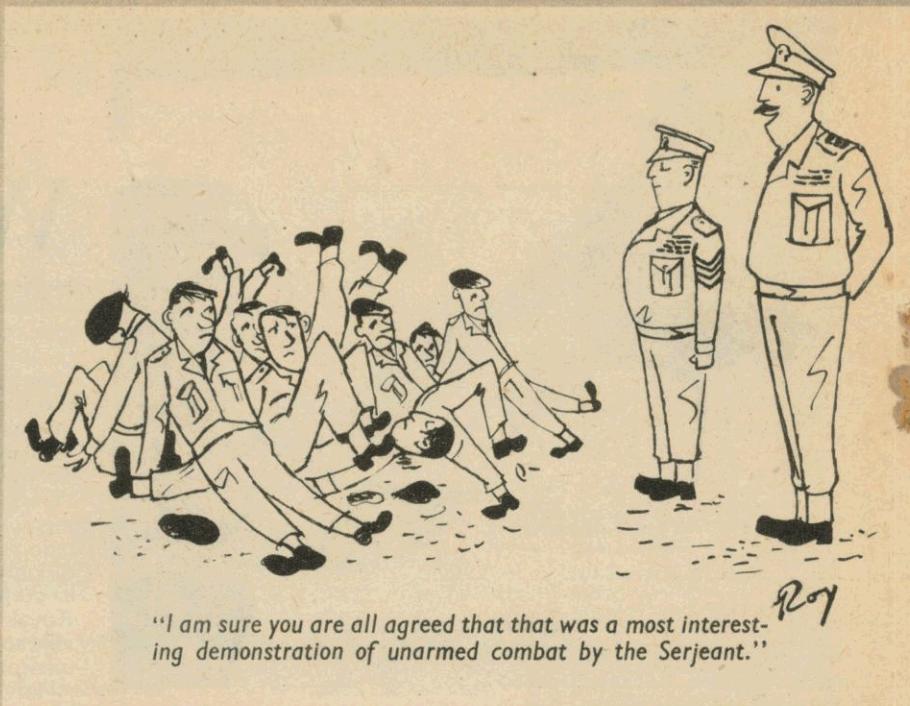


If the telephones fail, this powerful aimed-beam radio transmitter can send messages over big distances in the Middle East command.

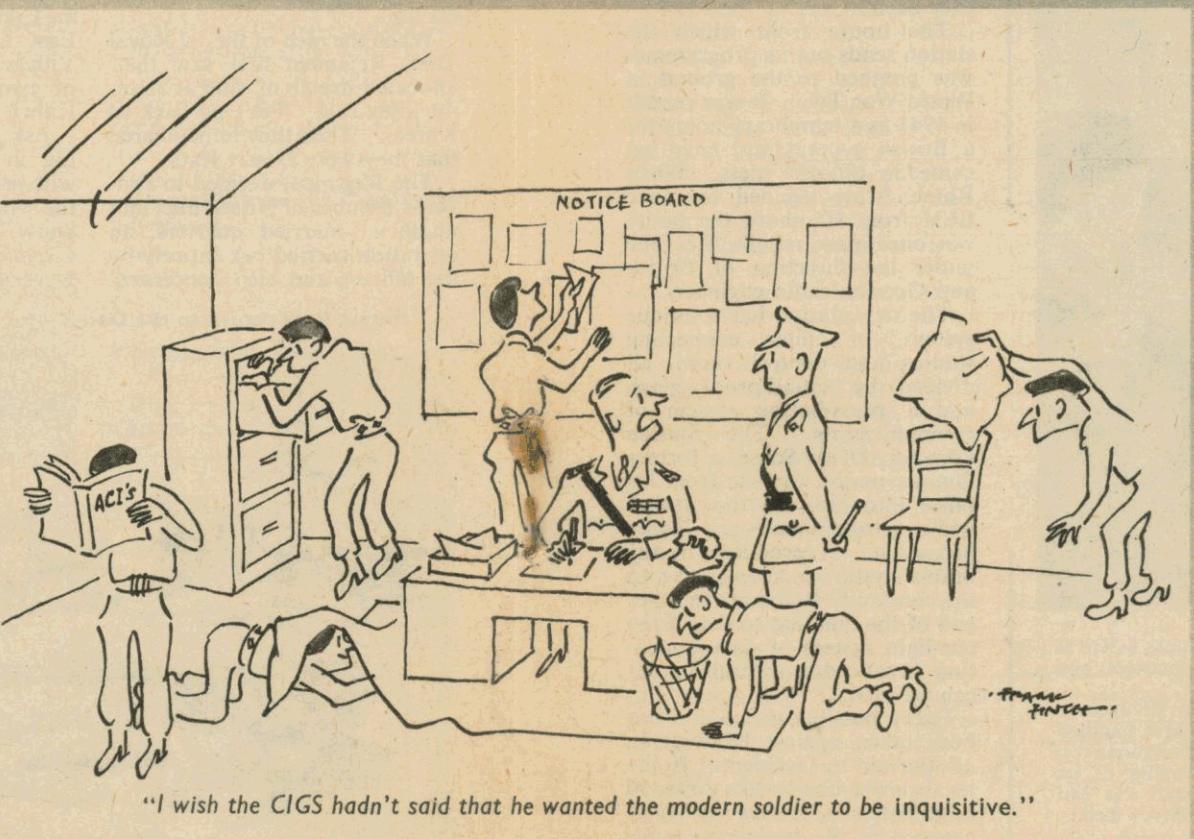




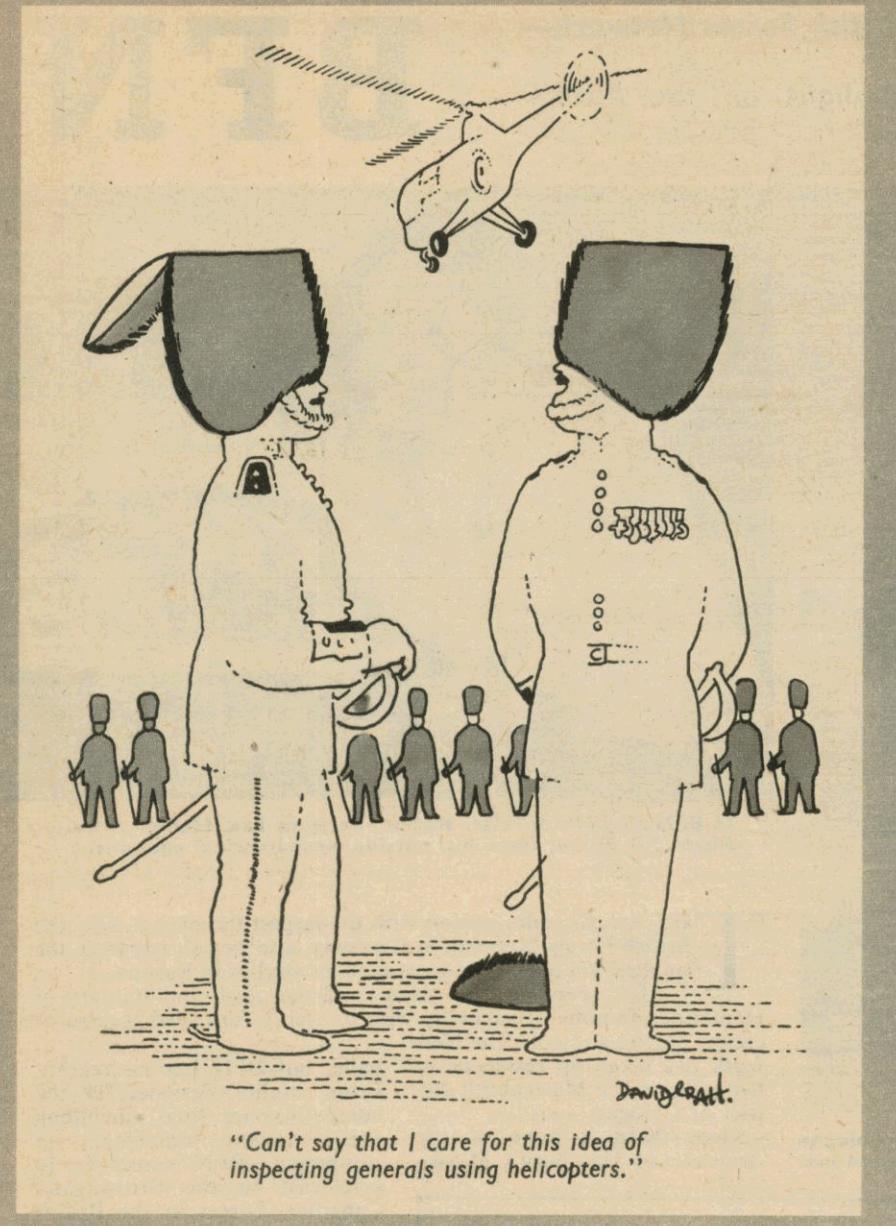
"This new chap's a quick learner—never makes the same mistake twice."



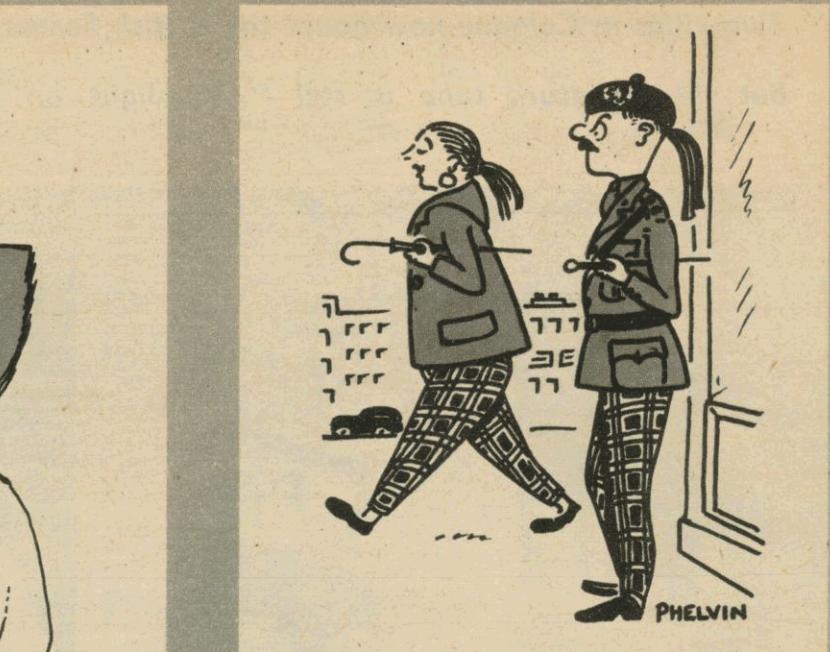
SOLDIER HUMOUR



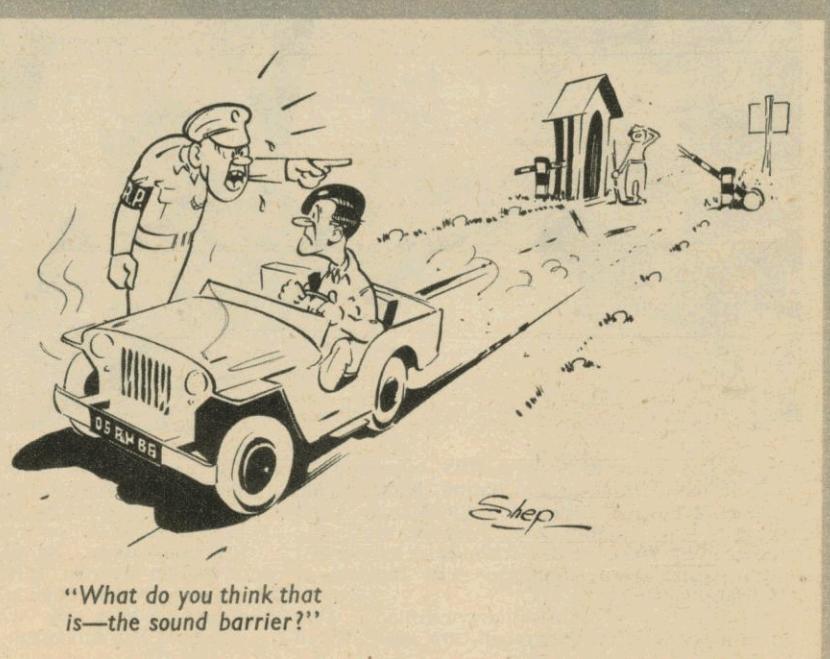
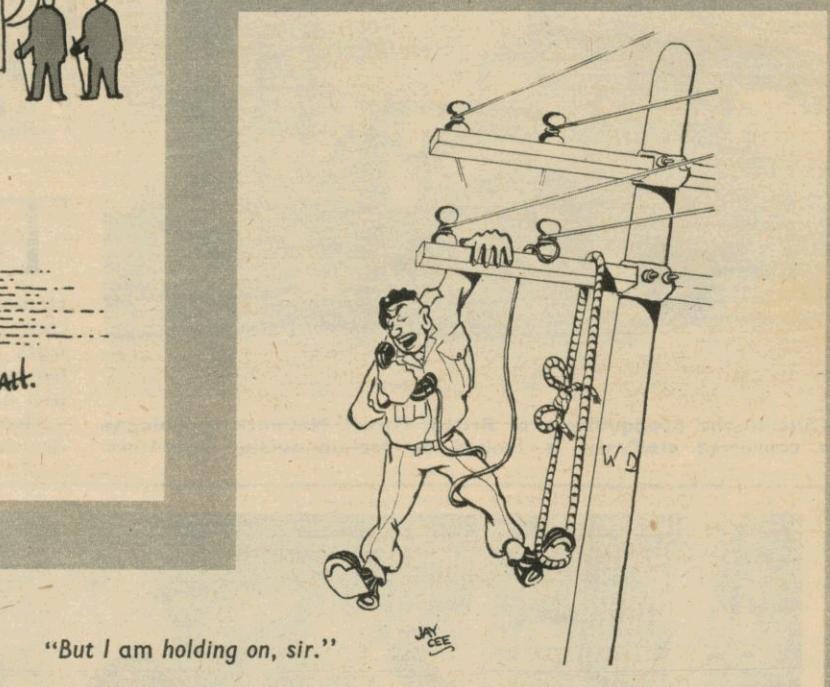
"I wish the CIGS hadn't said that he wanted the modern soldier to be inquisitive."



"Can't say that I care for this idea of inspecting generals using helicopters."



"But I am holding on, sir."



"What do you think that is—the sound barrier?"

Two villas in Cologne now house the British Forces Network—
but the signature tune is still "Moonlight on the Alster"

BFN ON THE RHINE



Outside the headquarters of British Forces Network in Cologne a converted staff car is loaded up for an outside broadcast.



In BFN's mobile wireless station, Sergeant Eric Hamer of the Royal Air Force, tests his outside broadcasting equipment.

THE Army's radio station with the largest listening public, the British Forces Network in Germany, now broadcasts from the smallest yet one of the most modern studios in Europe.

After spending nine years amid the plush and statuary of Hamburg's famous Musikhalle, with its richly furnished theatre of cream, scarlet and gold, the Network has taken up residence in two villas in the Marienburg district of Cologne.

Here there is none of the opulence of Hamburg's Musikhalle, but BFN has no regrets.

From studios designed in the latest manner and including every modern refinement in equipment, BFN continues to broadcast to the British and Canadian Forces in the British Zone of Germany and Berlin. Reception is as good as it has ever been.

The house from which the station sends out its programmes was bombed to the ground in World War Two. It was rebuilt in 1948 as a temporary home for a British general and later became an officers' mess. When Rhine Army decided to move BFN from Hamburg the house was once more rebuilt, this time under the direction of British and German radio engineers.

The new station has a unique system of inter-connecting studios and control room, all divided by sound-proof glass, and a press-button system of communication. The Station Director, Denis Scuse, a former Gunner major, can see from his office into most of the studios while programmes are being broadcast. A producer in the drama studio can keep an eye on the continuity studio at the other end of the building so that if the cue-light system of communication breaks down hand signals can be used.

Every possible precaution has been taken against BFN going off the air by accident. If the local power line breaks down 50 large batteries, always kept fully charged in the basement, auto-



NO, this is not BFN—it is BBS, otherwise the Britcom Broadcasting Station, Kure, Japan, master station of Crown Radio in Korea. Girls playing *koto* (centre) and *shamisen* are being recorded by WO1 Frank Burton, chief announcer, from Sydney, and Signalman Peter Burnett, of Weymouth, Dorset.

The station is Australian-controlled. Two British soldiers on the strength are administered



Denis Scuse, former Gunner major, is station director. From his control room he can see into almost all the studios at once.



Sergeant Islwyn Williams, RAF, simulates torrential rain. In his spare time he writes futuristic thrillers (his publisher ordered six at once).



If the script calls for footsteps on the gravel, there's a built-in "path" in the studio.

matically take over. If the breakdown lasts longer than four hours a diesel generator stands by to provide the power for operating.

The disc studio has an enviable refinement in its three glass-topped turn-tables, each covered with a baize mat. When the record is held by a finger-tip the glass turn-table continues to spin silently so that when the record is released the music or sound effect is brought in immediately and at the correct speed.

The floor of the features and drama studio is of the latest three-tier type—one half has a base of wooden parquet, the other is covered with linoleum with a layer of carpeting over both. According to the type of programme the flooring is arranged to obtain the best acoustic effects. The sound effects room contains a bathroom for making "live" water sounds and a cubicle in which a narrow footway, half covered with gravel and half with wood, has been let into the floor for making the noise of footsteps.

Close by is a play-back studio where producers check their recorded programmes before they go on the air. There are recording rooms fitted with the most modern machines and there is a gramophone library in which 64,000 records are filed. They include long-playing transcriptions of BBC variety shows and orchestral concerts and hundreds of sound effect records which can reproduce almost every known noise, from a baby crying to a sea-lion diving into a lake.

In the basement are workshops, a blacksmith's shop for repairing heavy equipment at the two receiver stations elsewhere, visits by

where in Germany, and a testing room from which any fault in the Network's transmission or reception can be traced on a machine.

BFN is on the air for an average of 17 hours a day, every day of the year, and it produces about eight hours of its own programmes each day. The rest are relayed from the BBC, whose Light Programme shares BFN's wavelength. Programmes have to be prepared four weeks in advance. To perform this task the Station Director has the surprisingly small British staff of seven and a team of German technicians.

Alastair McDougall, former Gunner, who produces the popular Mid-Week Magazine feature, is the programme compiler. Bill Crozier, ex-Royal Air Force, is in charge of all variety programmes. John Mead is head of presentation and Gerald Sinstadt, formerly a sergeant in the Intelligence Corps, is responsible for classical music and sports. He went to Berne to broadcast commentaries of the World Football Cup matches in which England and Scotland took part.

Sergeant Islwyn Williams of the Royal Air Force, author of six mystery-thrillers, prepares all the news broadcasts and produces BFN's weekly programme sheet. All do their share of announcing.

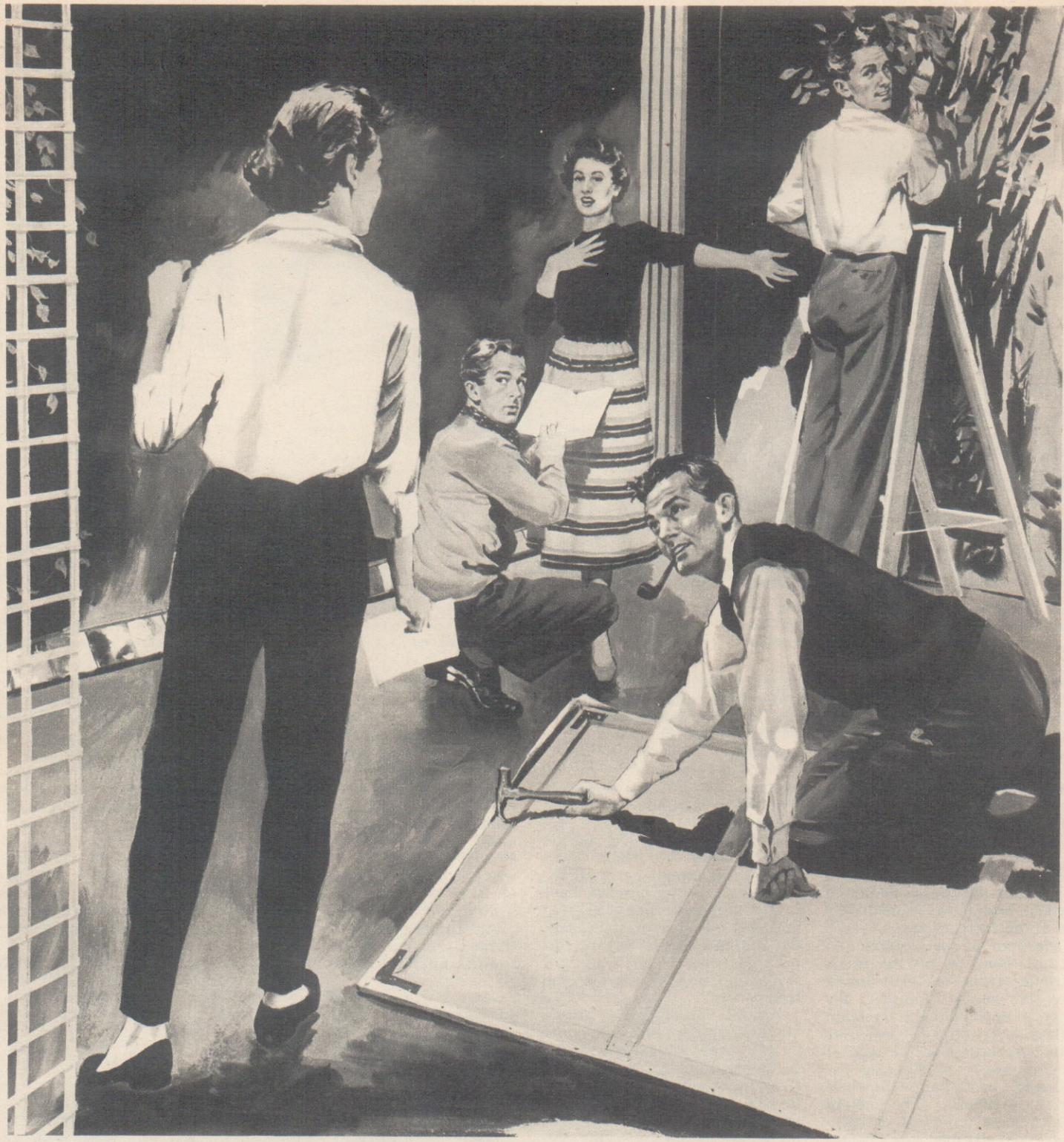
For outside broadcasting, which is in the hands of RAF Sergeant Eric Hamer, BFN has a mobile wireless station made out of an old Humber staff car. Years ago its inside was torn out and recording equipment was built into it. It has travelled to every part of the British Zone, covering manoeuvres, visits by

connection with that city. From a small studio in the Army Kinema Corporation Cinema there Chris Howland, son of one of the first BBC announcers, and a member of the Network's staff for several years, contributes a weekly film review. One of BFN's two call signs is still the tune "Moonlight on the Alster" which BFN adopted in Hamburg in 1954. The other is "Strings on Parade," composed by the well-known BBC conductor Ray Martin who was once a sergeant at BFN.

E. J. GROVE

Ex-CQMS Tom Cousens, formerly of the Royal Signals, has an unusual hobby: he runs a mink farm at the bottom of BFN's garden.

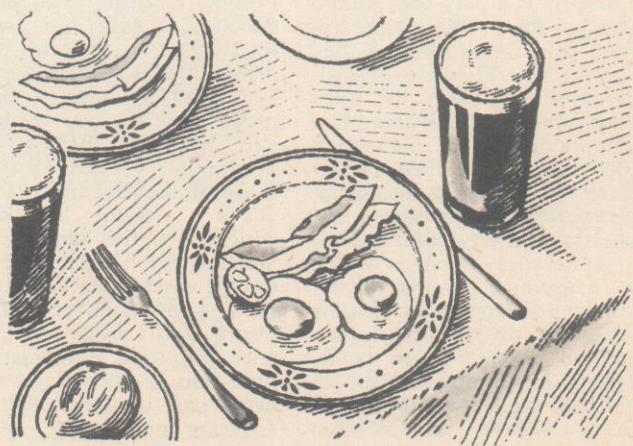




“Come and eat . . . it’s Guinness Time!”

GUINNESS TIME! That's music to the ears when you've been hard at it! Guinness at the right moment sets you up no end. Its appetising taste goes down a treat with a tasty snack. "Guinness!" says your Inner Man, "that's the stuff for *my* money!"

G.E.2375.C





On parade in London: "The Oldest Chartered Military Organisation in the Western Hemisphere." Photographs: W. J. STIRLING.

They Were Formed to Fight Redskins

AN American "private army" founded more than 300 years ago by Robert Keane, a former member of the Honourable Artillery Company of London, has been visiting Britain—for the fifth time.

It is the Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company of Massachusetts, which was accorded recognition by the Governor of Boston in 1638.

Originally its purpose was to defend the early settlers in New England against redskins. Today it is no longer a fighting body,

but its 600 members—of whom 140 flew to Britain—wear a dark blue military uniform and have army ranks. Each year a new captain is elected.

The notepaper of the Company reads: "The Oldest Chartered Military Organisation in the Western Hemisphere."

The visitors lost no time in paying their respects to the Honourable Artillery Company in the City of London. This body, which was given its first charter in 1537, is a flourishing unit of the Territorial Army and is also generally conceded to be

Britain's oldest regiment.

At Armoury House the descendants of the early settlers were welcomed by Major-General Sir Julian Gascoigne, Colonel Commandant and President of the Honourable Artillery Company. They took part in a field parade and marched with Colours—including the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes—to the Church of St. Botolph-Without-Bishopsgate.

King George VI was an honorary member of the American company; so is the Duke of Edinburgh.



Wearing insignia of office: Captain T. J. Carty, who commands the Company from Boston.



A pikeman of the Honourable Artillery Company bows to the Colours paraded at Armoury House. Right: The Boston Company has a smart line in pikes. This one is held by Lieut. A. J. Magell, second-in-command.





At Home - or Overseas . . .



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THE GREEKS HAD A WORD FOR IT

The 1954 British Modern Pentathlon, 20th-century version of an ancient Olympic contest, was won by last year's champion

COMPANY Serjeant-Major Instructor George Norman, of the Army Physical Training Corps, retained his title at this year's British Modern Pentathlon Championships at Aldershot.

He thus becomes the second soldier to win the individual championship two years running. The other was Lance-Corporal Andrew Martin, 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards, who won in 1947 and 1948.

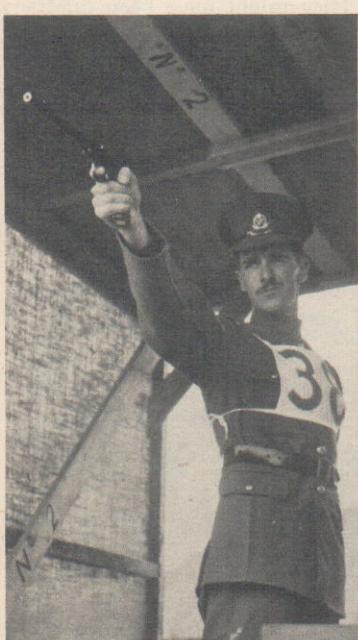
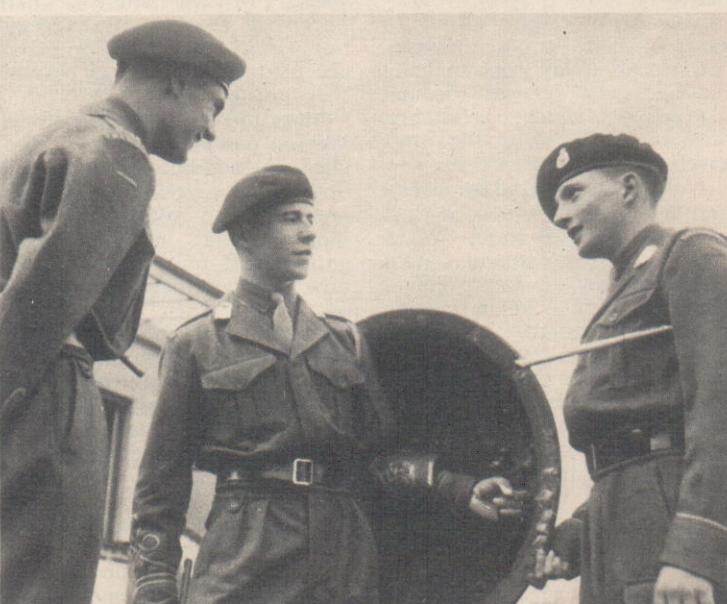
In this five-in-one contest which derives from the ancient Greek Olympic Games there were more entries from the three Services than ever before. Over a period of five days 69 competitors (including two civilians) pitted their skill, strength and endurance against each other in five events — riding, fencing, revolver shooting, swimming and running.

CSMI Norman was third in riding and seventh in fencing, which put him in the over-all lead, but he fell back to second place when he was placed 25th in the shooting match. He went into the lead again after taking sixth place in swimming and held off a strong challenge by the championship runner-up, Serjeant D. Cobley, Royal Air Force, by returning sixth fastest time in the cross-country race.

A few minutes after the results were announced CSMI Norman, who is stationed in Rhine Army with 4 Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery, was told that he had been selected as one of the British team to compete in the



CSMI G. Norman, the winner, straightens his épée before a fencing bout. Below: Lance-Corporal F. G. Walker (left) examines the medal awarded to Lance-Corporal T. Hudson as swimming champion.



Above: A study in concentration in the pistol butts; Captain P. A. Duckworth, 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards, former Pentathlon champion, was 17th this year. Right: The winning Army team.





"A little wider, please . . ." Too many people, says Lieutenant Colonel W. F. N. Watson, try to speak with their mouths closed.

The Army takes measures against another kind of careless talk

REINFORCEMENTS—NOT THREE-AND-FOURPENCE

IN an Army lecture-room in Kensington soldiers and Service girls were pulling faces at a lieutenant-colonel. And the colonel was urging them on.

The grimaces they were making were designed to exercise their lips, jaws and other speech organs, with the object of improving clarity of speech in passing messages.

Remember the old tale about the oral message which began as "Send reinforcements, we're going to advance" and ended (after being repeated by a score of soldiers) as "Send three-and-fourpence, we're going to a dance"?

The Army cannot afford to make mistakes in oral messages—especially today when so many messages are relayed through instruments which, inevitably, tend to distort even the most carefully enunciated words.

Nowhere is the need for clarity and accuracy more needed than in an anti-aircraft shoot. When Anti-Aircraft Command sought ideas on how an improvement could be effected in the passing of messages, notably in the aircraft reporting system, the answer came in the shape of speech-training classes by Lieut-Colonel W. F. N. Watson, Royal Army Educational Corps Staff officer in No. 1 Group. Before and during World War Two one of his jobs was teaching Indians how to speak English; the task now was to teach the English to speak English.

A fire command troop in Lon-

don was selected to undergo experimental instruction by teachers of elocution from a speech-training school and a tape-recording machine was used to demonstrate good and bad speech. After only a few lessons the standard of clarity in the speech of the students had improved beyond all expectation. Anti-Aircraft Command accepted the lectures as part of their normal training.

Since then Lieutenant-Colonel Watson and his staff have travelled throughout London and South-East England with their tape recorder, giving lessons to most Regular and Territorial anti-aircraft units. Some units now conduct their own classes on similar lines. Post Office representatives on the look-out for new ways of training their telephonists have been shown the system; and demonstrations have been recorded by the BBC and the National Broadcasting Company of America:

Lieutenant-Colonel Watson and his staff make no attempt to "correct" natural dialect, except when a word is so pronounced that it could be misunderstood. Their only aim is to achieve ab-

solute clarity of speech by teaching students how to sound every syllable of a word, to speak incisively and with a reasonable degree of uniformity in pronunciation.

Students are told that bad enunciation is largely due to carelessness and the English tendency to speak with a rigid jaw and a stiff upper lip as though they had a pipe clenched between their teeth. Lieutenant-Colonel Watson demonstrates exercises to loosen up the jaw and to make the lips more mobile and then makes the class do the same. Next they record their voices, repeating a message typical of one they would use in

their work, and immediately afterwards listen to themselves. In most cases students are embarrassed to hear their faults. Some drone with flat voices, others slur their words, fail to sound middle and final consonants or mispronounce vowels. There and then they are shown how to correct their faults and the corrected versions are played back to them.

Lieutenant-Colonel Watson says the most common fault is the dropping of the final consonant. This can be cured by constant practice in completing the movement of tongue or lips made in forming the sound. He has a quick cure for the dropped aspirate—to make the student inhale deeply and breathe out before beginning to speak the word that starts with an "h." Failure to sound the letter "r" correctly is overcome by allowing the pressure of the breath to vibrate the tip of the tongue.

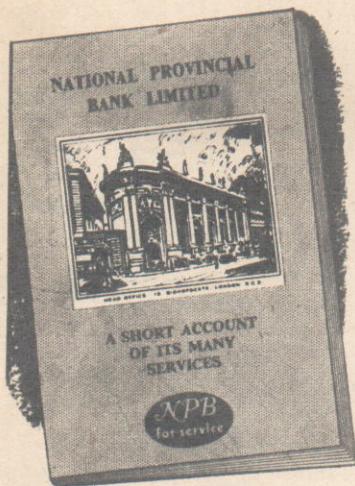
According to the Colonel the North Countryman is less guilty of failing to sound consonants than the Southerner. On the other hand he has more difficulty with his vowels. Generally women speak more clearly than men even when they belong to the same family, probably because they take a greater pride in creating a good impression.

But some women lapse into slipshod speech when talking to each other. Before beginning a lecture to one Territorial Army unit the Colonel overheard two of the girl students talking. "They dropped their consonants and mispronounced their vowels so badly that it made me wince to listen to them. But when they recorded their voices they took great care to sound every syllable and spoke beautifully. They might have been different people."

This is not the first time that tape-recorders have been used for speech training in the Army. In 1948 *SOLDIER* described how the Women's Royal Army Corps Signals Training Wing at Catterick were using them to help telephone operators.



Voices of men and women in anti-aircraft units are recorded, then played back—often an embarrassing moment for the speaker.



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From: Air Marshal

Sir Thomas Williams, K.C.B., O.B.E., M.C., D.F.C., M.A.

Chairman, H.M. Forces Savings Committee

To: All Serving or About to Serve in
Her Majesty's Forces

Subject: SAVE WHILE YOU SERVE

Many of you will be used to this way of starting a message and those of you who are about to join the Services will soon grow accustomed to it!

You may say that you find it hard enough to save in "Civvy Street" so how on earth can you do so in the Services? However, if you think about it seriously there is no better time to start — if you haven't already done so. Every unit in all the services "lays on" National Savings facilities and the Unit Savings Officer will be only too pleased to help would-be savers.

I recently retired after many years in the Royal Air Force. I know how valuable a service Forces Savings is giving to both Regulars and National Service personnel, and no matter where you may be stationed you can save a bit from your pay if you want to do so.

I also commend Forces Savings for mention by parents and friends to young men who are going into the Services (and to young women too, as in the Women's Services there are some of our best savers!).

We have an excellent series of leaflets (shown above) which tell, in simple language, all about Forces Savings. Why not write for a copy of the one which applies. Address your letter to me:—

Air Marshal Sir Thomas Williams,
H.M. Forces Savings Committee,
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"THEY say that His Royal Highness, in one of his furies with someone, said to the Adjutant-General, 'Send him to hell!' The Adjutant-General replied: 'We have no station there, Your Royal Highness.' Whereupon HRH returned: 'Then send him to Mauritius!'"

That is from a letter written in 1881 by Colonel C. G. Gordon (Gordon of Khartoum), who was then Garrison Commander of Mauritius.

Life in Mauritius would seem to have changed since 1881. It is an agreeable posting, generally well liked by the British troops and families stationed there.

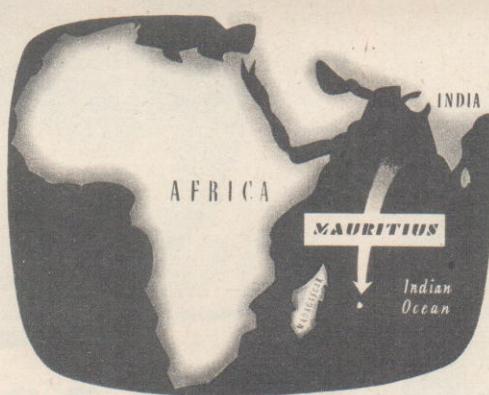
All too few soldiers can say with confidence where Mauritius is situated. But not only soldiers are hazy on the subject. A letter sent by Queen Victoria to a Governor of the island was addressed to "Mauritius, West Indies." The envelope is still treasured.

In fact, Mauritius is a tropic isle in the Indian Ocean 1400 miles from the east coast of Africa. It has all the standard attractions that go with a tropic isle: reefs, coral beaches, lagoons, mountains. The novelist H. de Vere Stacpoole is said to have derived inspiration from Mauritius's Blue Bay for his famous story "The Blue Lagoon." In their leave camp at Le Chaland British troops and their families are able to soak up the exotic atmosphere to their hearts' content.

Mauritius was taken from the French by Sir John Abercrombie in 1810, mainly because of its strategic importance. There was no Suez Canal then and the island lay on the Cape route from India to Europe. To have such a strong point in the hands of a hostile nation was, at that time, unthinkable. Incidentally, the admirals commanding the opposing naval forces were both

The British Army still has a garrison on the tropic isle of Mauritius, in the Indian Ocean. It is a pleasant posting

OCEAN OUTPOST



wounded and lay in the same hospital at Mahebourg. No attempt was made, apparently, to take over the island of Reunion, lying some 120 miles to the west. This is still a French possession.

From the time of the capture of Mauritius the British Army has maintained a garrison there. In the beginning there were two battalions of Infantry; the Royal Artillery was there in force, and so were the Royal Engineers. Garrison commanders have varied in rank from major-general down to major and up a few ranks again as the size of the garrison fluctuated. At the time of writing the Commander is Colonel J. F. Wilkins and his garrison consists of his headquarters staff with its signal troop; the Mauritian Pioneer Depot; a battalion of the King's African Rifles; the Mauritian Coast Battery, Royal Artillery; and men of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps, the Royal Army Service Corps, Royal

Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Royal Army Pay Corps, Royal Army Medical Corps and Royal Military Police. These units are based mainly on Vacoas and Port Louis, the capital and port of the island.

Although Mauritius has been a British colony for over 140 years,

French is still the main language and many French customs remain. However, most of the people are bi-lingual, and so British troops suffer little inconvenience on this score. The inhabitants include those of French and part-French extraction, a few British, white and black Mauritians, Indian and Chinese—the latter making up the majority of shopkeepers.

From the military point of view, the most important unit is the Mauritian Pioneer Depot, located at Le Chaland on Blue Bay. Set amid the coconut trees and banana foliage, its buildings of split bamboo walls and palm thatch are hardly recognisable as those of a depot. Here the Mauritian Pioneers are recruited, trained and formed into drafts for the Canal Zone (where they supply much of the military labour) and, in due time, discharged from the Service.

Many of the new recruits have little idea of Army discipline, or

even what is required of them. One man, who had been awarded CB by the Commandant, failed to salute that officer later the same day. Asked why, he replied: "I do not salute those with whom I am angry, only my friends." Many think nothing of absenting themselves for a few days after "signing on," and a few sharp lessons are necessary from time to time. One of the most amazing sights is the rush of friends and relations on to the quayside as the ship bearing a draft pulls away. Experience has taught the authorities to keep them outside the dock gates until the last minute, or embarkation would be impossible in the melee.

The Mauritian Coast Battery, Royal Artillery, is at Fort George, at the entrance to Port Louis. It has a permanent commanding officer—Major E. F. W. Northam—and a Master Gunner, but the troops are Mauritian reservists, who cheerfully turn to when occasion demands. The port is a Flag Station and saluting base.

Battalions of the King's African Rifles take tours of duty in Mauritius. The askaris live in comfortable barracks at Vacoas, along with their *bibis* and *m' totos* (wives and children).

A notable occasion this year was the visit to Mauritius by the Commander-in-Chief East Africa, General Sir George Erskine. Even in the air age visits by Commanders-in-Chief to this outpost of the Empire are rare.—*From a report by Major J. F. Westerman.*

A READER has sent *SOLDIER* a batch of copies of *The Regiment*, the unofficial Army journal which flourished in the early years of this century.

A feature of this weekly was "What Tommy Wants to Know." It was a list of piquant and often libellous-seeming questions about goings-on in various regiments, often fully identified.

The Regiment's intelligence service was world-wide. No scandal—or imagined scandal—was too trivial to expose. Thus, in 1907:

"Is it true that the 'library' of the detachment 2nd Suffolk Regiment, Steamer Point, Aden, consists of four second-hand penny papers?"

"Is it a fact that the clothing store of No. 40 Company RE, Hong-Kong, has been closed

WHAT TOMMY WANTED TO KNOW

for stock-taking for seven months out of twelve?"

The Regiment frequently demanded to know the whereabouts of vanished pianos. It asked why men who contributed to sports funds were debarred from using the equipment—although serjeants did. It was always unearthing messin' iniquities, like "Where does the dripping go in the 1st Black Watch, Curragh Camp?" In the 18th Hussars, it was darkly hinted, steaks were served up mysteriously at ten in the morning to the privileged. Men of the Northamptonshire Regiment at Jullundur were losing their sugar ration because the cooks were making toffee apples with it.

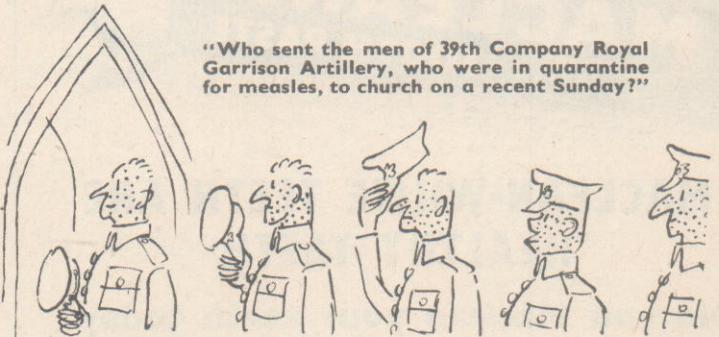
Over-zealous NCOs were attacked—often, no doubt, un-

fairly. "Is it a fact that a certain corporal of the 1st East Surrey Regiment, St. Peter's Barracks, Jersey, puts two police on sentry-go outside the windows to stop the men from looking out?" A "certain non-com in 'E' Company, 2nd Norfolk Regiment" was always throw-

ing men out of windows. The Royal Fusiliers at Trimulgerry were kept awake all night "by shouting and screaming of serjeants and women."

How did *The Regiment* get all this information? No doubt that was what the Commanding Officer wanted to know.

"Who sent the men of 39th Company Royal Garrison Artillery, who were in quarantine for measles, to church on a recent Sunday?"



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*There's something
about a soldier...*

EVEN WHEN HE'S OUT OF UNIFORM

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Honour Came Late

IF anyone, in the first 250 years of the Army's history, had been eccentric enough to write a book on the history of the British soldier, he might have had great difficulty in finding a publisher.

Who would want to read about that dull and drunken fellow whose duty was to garrison fever islands and die on alien hillsides—and not come round badgering his betters for a pension?

Today the time is more than ripe for a book with the title "The British Soldier" (*Dent 18s*). Colonel H. de Watteville, late Royal Artillery, is the author. There have been histories of the Army, histories of campaigns, books of reminiscences by the thousand, but why not (he argued) a history of the man who from Crecy through Minden to Mons and Alamein served and sacrificed for his country—till the sun set, the whole world round, to the sound of a British bugle?

So here is the story, and a worthy one it is. Colonel de Watteville's pride in Army tradition is deep-rooted. He has a passing, piquant reference to "Watteville's Regiment," a highly trained "Swiss regiment of the British Army" in the eighteenth century.

The tale starts with the forerunners of Britain's permanent Army, mercenary bands of men from these islands who soldiered in various causes on the Continent.

Colonel de Watteville traces very clearly how and why, after Cromwell's day, the soldier became unpopular, both with the citizen and the Government. After a campaign he would be turned adrift, and not surprisingly would resort to begging, thieving or highway robbery.

The crimps who "recruited" soldiers by making them drunk and slipping the fatal shilling in their pockets landed the Army with some very raw material. Many regiments could by no stretch of imagination be described as "a fine body of men." In 1688 King James II saw a glimpse of what a regiment might be when he inspected a Scots battalion just returned from Holland to take service at home. "God damn me," moaned the Earl of Clarendon, "this Scotch battalion has undone us; the King is so pleased with it that he will have all his forces in the same posture. We have here a great many old men and of different statures; they must all be turned out."

Slowly, but oh how slowly, the nation grew to honour the soldier and his trade. The authorities ceased to quarter him in the lowest ale-house; they omitted to lash him when he made an interruption in church; they stopped pulling his scalp tight at the back in order to keep his eyes open; they forced his playboy officers to learn the rudiments of their profession; they even built a home for his wife, instead of letting her sleep in the barrack-room. Curiously, the moral tone of soldiers' families degenerated after the introduction of married quarters—wives began to fight and drink and be unfaithful. Happily it was not a permanent deterioration. This is only one of many fascinating sidelights in this social study of the soldier.



Armoured cars on the Syrian-Turkish border. The Syrian campaign is one of five described in the book reviewed below.

Five Wars Within a War

IN Syria a trumpet sounded and a squadron of Spahis horsemen, fighting with the Vichy troops, rode out from shelter and charged against Indian battalions.

This was, perhaps, the only time Allied troops had to face a Cavalry charge in World War Two. It was a magnificent gesture—but the horsemen did not get very far against automatic weapons.

The story is told by the late Christopher Buckley in "Five Ventures" (*Stationery Office, 10s 6d*), latest in the series of popular official histories of World War Two. The five cam-

paigns it describes include four victories—Iraq, Syria, Persia and Madagascar—and one defeat—the Dodecanese in 1943.

They were sideshows, dwarfed in history by the major campaigns. The first four each had a place in the strategic picture of the war. The usefulness of the Dodecanese venture, if it had been successful, is open to speculation. Except for Madagascar, all were "shoestring" campaigns, fought with scanty troops and equipment and much improvisation. All were lively with incident.

In Iraq, airmen dropping propaganda leaflets were

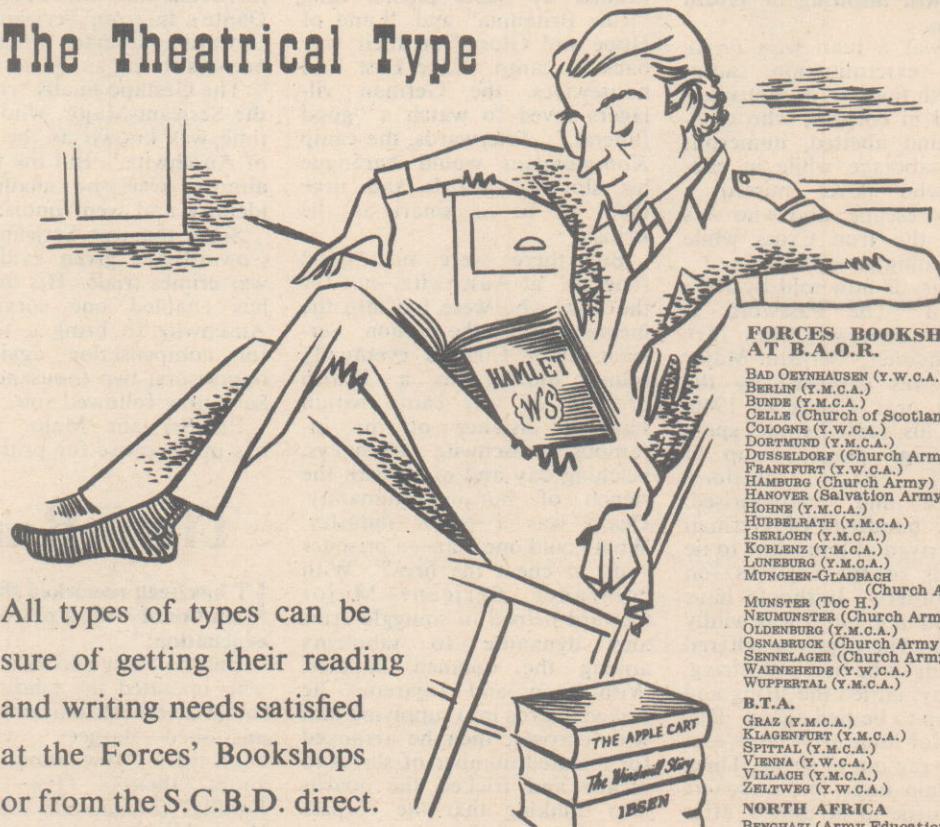
angered by enemy machine-gun fire, so they refrained from undoing the parcels of leaflets before "bombing" with them.

In Madagascar, the British invaders used dummy parachutists to such good effect that in England a well-known military commentator said "reports reaching this country show that our parachutists have given an excellent account of themselves."

In Persia, work went on as usual while Indian troops fought with Persian snipers in the Abadan oil installations.

On Leros, in the Dodecanese, the brigadier in command and the senior naval officer took up tommy-guns and helped to hold a German assault.

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BAD OENHAUSEN (Y.W.C.A.)
BERLIN (Y.M.C.A.)
BUNDE (Y.M.C.A.)
CELLE (Church of Scotland)
COLOGNE (Y.W.C.A.)
DORTMUND (Y.M.C.A.)
DUSSELDORF (Church Army)
FRANKFURT (Y.W.C.A.)
HAMBURG (Church Army)
HANOVER (Salvation Army)
HOHNE (Y.M.C.A.)
HUBBELRATH (Y.M.C.A.)
ISERLOHN (Y.M.C.A.)
KOBLENZ (Y.M.C.A.)
LUNEBURG (Y.M.C.A.)
MÜNCHEN-GLADBACH
(Church Army)
MÜNSTER (Toc H.)
NEUMUNSTER (Church Army)
OLDENBURG (Y.M.C.A.)
OSNABRÜCK (Church Army)
SENNELAGER (Church Army)
WAHNEHEIDE (Y.W.C.A.)
WUPPERTAL (Y.M.C.A.)

B.T.A.

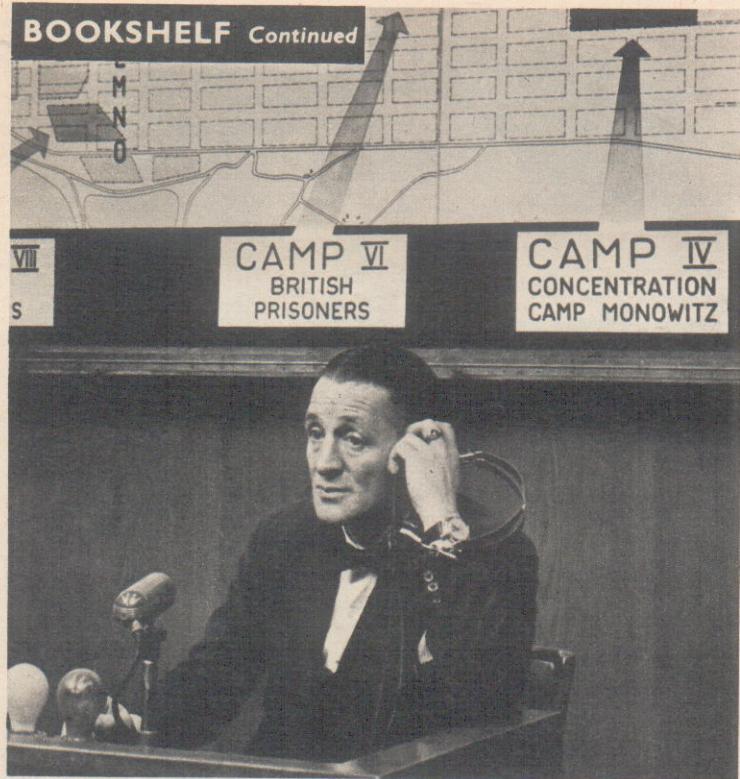
GRAZ (Y.M.C.A.)
KLAGENFURT (Y.M.C.A.)
SPITTAL (Y.M.C.A.)
VIENNA (Y.W.C.A.)
VILLACH (Y.M.C.A.)
ZELTWEG (Y.W.C.A.)

NORTH AFRICA

BENGHAZI (Army Education)
TRIPOLI (Y.M.C.A.)

CANAL ZONE

FANARA (Y.M.C.A.)
FAYID (C. OF S.)
FAYID (Y.M.C.A.)
MOASCAR (Y.W.C.A.)
SUZZ (C. OF S.)
TEL EL KEBIR (C. OF S.)



In the witness-box at Nuremberg: ex-Sergeant-Major Coward.

The Sergeant-Major Who Broke Into a Death Camp

FOR one reason or another, the story of Sergeant-Major Charles Coward, late Royal Artillery, has been a long time coming. It is one of the most macabre, yet one of the most inspiring of World War Two.

Here was a man who broke into an extermination camp; who—with the best of motives—trafficked in corpses; who committed, and abetted, numerous acts of sabotage while in captivity; who never missed a chance to escape; and who was awarded the Iron Cross while masquerading as a German.

His story is now told by John Castle in "The Password Is Courage" (Souvenir Press, 15s).

A Londoner, Sergeant-Major Coward was captured by the Germans near Calais in 1940. Most of his captivity was spent in the huge prison camp at Lamsdorf—with excursions, authorised and unauthorised. One day hundreds of German troops arrived at Lamsdorf to tie the hands of the captives—on Hitler's orders. It should have been a sad day, but it was wildly hilarious. The captives suffered their hands to be tied with string, went away, untied the string and queued up to be tied again. This went on for hour after hour, and the camp ran out of string. Then, at a certain hour, the prisoners had to queue to be untied, after which they tied themselves up again and queued once more.

It was good clean fun while it lasted, but later the Germans used chains.

When British captives died they were buried with military honours in the cemetery of

Lamsdorf village, and their scrubbed and polished comrades, headed by Scots pipers, sang "Rule Britannia" and "Land of Hope and Glory" on their way back to camp. Like East End housewives, the German villagers loved to watch a "good funeral." Afterwards, the camp Kommandant would harangue his slovenly guards and urge them to be as smart as the British.

But there were no "good funerals" at Auschwitz—not for the Jews who were fed into the incinerators by the million. Sergeant-Major Coward eventually found himself in a British prisoner of war camp within smelling distance of the infamous Auschwitz chimneys, belching day and night with the stench of burning humanity. Death was a major industry. What could one man—a prisoner—do to cheat the fires? With comrades, Sergeant-Major Coward helped to smuggle arms and dynamite to saboteurs among the doomed inmates. With soap and cigarettes he bribed guards into supplying him with corpses; then he arranged for a stated number of slaves to escape and tricked the guards into thinking that the corpses were those of the missing men. And at every opportunity he "created" in the offices of the Farben factory which was employing the slave workers—but to no avail.

His night spent in a filthy dormitory in the slave camp,

JERBOA SAGA

THE ninth of the ten war-time commanders of the "Desert Rats" (7th Armoured Division) was Major-General G. L. Verney, who began his Army service in the Grenadier Guards. He has written a war-time history of the Division—"The Desert Rats" (Hutchinson, 21s)—which will be in keen demand by all who have worn the jerboa flash.

No division had a longer record of contact with the enemy. The nucleus of the "Desert Rats," drawn from the Cairo Cavalry Brigade, stood prepared at Mersa Matruh in 1938. The survivors of it, in 1945, paraded in Berlin on a famous day in Britain's military history.

In the Desert the Division endured all the exasperations of scarce supplies. Their petrol, thanks to flimsy drums, evaporated at the dismaying rate of one per cent every ten miles. In the later years of the war the Division used 30,000 gallons of petrol daily *even in a static role*; during the big push on Ghent, in which by no means all the



Division was engaged, the petrol consumption was 70,000 gallons a day. Nothing can underline more forcefully the problem of keeping an armoured division moving.

General Verney concentrates on the main engagements which, some day, will appear as battle honours: Sidi Rezegh, Alam Halfa, Alamein, Tripoli, Tunis, the Volturno, the Normandy Bocage. From Tunis a commander reported: "Street fighting not facilitated by cheering local populace trying to mount tanks and throwing flowers." In Scafati (Italy) there were not only cheers and kisses; "on the Cathedral steps stood a priest robed in scarlet surrounded by acolytes and nuns chanting and swinging incense burners, and as the armoured cars passed he sprinkled them with holy water."

Not that the Division was neglected by its chaplains. They had been up in the front line from the beginning (the Senior Chaplain was killed by a German bomb in the Desert), and this at a time when the War Office "considered that the place for them was the waggon lines." When, during the preparations for Normandy, higher authority suggested that the chaplains should attend a course at battle school, the then commander (now General Sir George Erskine) successfully resisted the proposal, on the grounds that they had already seen enough of the real thing.

The jerboa flash was first designed by the wife of Major-General M. O'M. Creagh after a visit to the Cairo Zoo. It later developed into an animal more like a kangaroo, but to those who served in the division it is still a desert rat. "Floreat Jerboa" are General Verney's last words.

They Ran D-Day Ferries

IT has been remarked that the Royal Navy always receive the Army on board with a patronising twinkle, as if to say, "What, another evacuation!"

But the Navy carries the Army into battle as well as out. The men who operated the landing craft in World War Two have already found several chroniclers ("Commissioned Barges" was one book title). Now comes a novel about them: "The English Flotilla" (Macdonald 12s 6d) by Hugh Hickling, who served in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. The Army emerges from this book as a rather tiresome body of men who leave craft littered with "bags, vomit" and other refuse.

If this is unflattering, so is the

picture of the landing craft officers, who are well provided with weaknesses and vices. Their life is one of frustrations, with occasional excitements as when a tank or two wallow off the craft into deep water and sink—the tiresome Army again! Those who took part in the Normandy landings and in the rehearsals for them will no doubt find their memories stirred in these pages.

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LETTERS

OUT OF EGYPT

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Neither of your two articles on Egypt (SOLDIER, September) makes any reference to the very many Egyptians who have spent a lifetime in loyal and faithful service to the British Army. I quote three examples:—

I first knew "A" as a company office *marasha* (messenger) in 1932. In January 1942 I met him again, by this time a clerk in one of the big base installations in Abbassia. On joining Headquarters, British Troops in Egypt in 1948, I again renewed acquaintance with him, still serving as a senior civilian clerk.

"B" and "C" were two civilian mess waiters in the RASC officers' mess in Abbassia when I joined it in 1932. At that time I remember being told that one had been continuously in his job for 15 years and the other for 22. Ten years later they were still there. They served for a time after the war and, I was told, moved to the Canal Zone for further service. I believe both have now retired, having been replaced by sons or nephews.

About 1933 or 1934 when the Inspector of Royal Army Service Corps, a brigadier, visited the RASC bakery in Abbassia, the oldest civilian baker produced a photograph of the brigadier and himself, taken 30 years earlier when the brigadier was a sub-altern.

I could quote many other similar examples, but the above will show the kind of Egyptians I have in mind. Let us hope that those who want it will find suitable employment with the civilian contractors who are to take over the Canal base. The British Army never had more loyal servants.—Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) G. R. C. Barnett, late RASC, HQ 5 Anti-Aircraft Group.

When we finally left Cairo in 1947, leave to Cairo in civilian clothes was instituted and everyone had to book in at Cook's, next to Shepheard's. I got off a tram near Bab-el-Hadid and an Egyptian pushed a police card in front of me and demanded to know who I was. I produced my AB 64, which admittedly was old and full, and this did not satisfy him. He dug a revolver in my ribs and marched me off to a *caracol* (police station). I was a bit put out, but thought it must be genuine as a spectacular hold-up like this was too much even for Cairo.

Inside the jug I was questioned and it came to light that in view of my fair hair the plain-clothes man had decided I was an escaped German prisoner-of-war, of whom there were a great number in Cairo at the time. They still showed no signs of releasing me, and so my language did not improve. Eventually an Egyptian Army officer appeared and received the full stream of my profanity. He ordered my release and assured me that he was sure I was the genuine article as only a British soldier would possess such a vocabulary.—Reginald Cole (ex-warrant officer), "Rosina," College Road, Haywards Heath.

RAINCOATS

The persistent inclement weather of "summer" this year has revealed a long-standing need regarding walking-out dress for soldiers—raincoats, macintoshes or waterproofs, issue of.

A junior seaman of the Royal Navy or a lowly airman of the Royal Air Force, also the Women's Services, can walk out in uniform quite smartly in wet weather, wearing a good issue raincoat. But the hardy soldier has either to dodge the rain, get soaked to the skin, or persevere with the old adaptable groundsheet. Of course, the groundsheet is intended for use on field service, conditions which do not normally apply to the other Services, and can be slept under or upon.

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

Anonymous or insufficiently addressed letters are not published.

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

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

But surely a very light raincoat could be issued quite cheaply for use when walking out in uniform, to bring the Army in line with the other Services. "Hopeful" (name and address supplied).

★ There is no move towards issuing raincoats to soldiers or allowing soldiers to wear their own raincoats with uniform. The War Office says: "We realise the greatcoat is not altogether suitable and we have been experimenting for a long time to produce a garment that is both warm and waterproof, which will stand up to hard usage. So far, we may add, without success."

Raincoats are issued to ratings in the Royal Navy, but not to men below commissioned rank in the Royal Air Force. In the Army, the only men below commissioned rank to receive them are military policemen, and that is because it would be impossible for them to carry out traffic control point duty wearing capes.

VETERAN OF "TEK"

My father, who died two years ago at the age of 90, was one of England's oldest pensioners. He was a member of the old Army Hospital Corps, took part in the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir (1882) and the abortive attempt to relieve General Gordon. He fought and lost a leg in the engagement featured in the film "The Four Feathers" (the Battle of Omdurman). While in Netley Hospital he was presented with an artificial leg by Queen Victoria. He drew a pension more than 60 years.

In spite of his handicap, he founded and captained the Robin Cycle Club of Battersea and set up a London-to-Brighton record which has never been beaten. He was a master-builder and public figure because no ladder was too high for him to climb and no obstacle too difficult to cross. He never laid aside his bicycle and was active almost to the end.—Henry J. D. Cook, 77 Palmerston Road, Parkstone, Dorset.

TRY THIS

We have been thinking up a few collective nouns for the Army and wonder if any of your readers can improve on the following: A precipitation of privates (particularly at NAAFI time); A litter of lance-corporals; A canteen of corporals; A sitting of sergeants; A callous of company sergeant majors; A wangle of warrant officers; A residue of regimental sergeant-majors; A sweetening of subalterns; A carping of captains; A murraun of majors; A congery of colonels; A gymkhana of generals; A fulmination of field-marshals; A wriggle of WRACs.—A nebula of non-commissioned officers (name and address supplied).

★ Murraun—plague; Congery—heap; Fulmination—explosion; Nebula—vague, indistinct patch of light in the sky.



"... a callous of sergeant-majors ..."

Whatever the pleasure
Player's complete it

Player's
Please



RAILCARS

The 17th Indian Division, having just failed to capture Rangoon before 26th Indian Division landed there from the sea on May 3, 1945, took up positions on the road and railway between Pyu and Pyibongyi ready to complete the destruction of the Japanese 28th Army, which was still in the Pegu Yomas. 48th Infantry Brigade was located in Nyaunglebin (1 West Yorks) and Daiku (4 Frontier Force Rifles and 1/7 Gurkha Rifles) with 6 Rajput across the River Sittang at Shwesgyin.

There was a branch line of the railway running from Nyaunglebin to Madauk on the right bank of the Sittang, opposite Shwesgyin. Not only were jeep cars used for communication purposes and also for transport of supplies, but a 25-pounder belonging to 1st Indian Field Regiment was lashed on to a flat behind the jeep car and run down the loop line nearly every day to Madauk, where it was used for harassing fire on the Japs who were near Shwesgyin.

Fortunately, just before where the loop line terminated, there was a pronounced curve on the line, which enabled the gun to be fired in any direction where there were likely to be any Japs, as it was essential that the gun should be fired only in the direction in which the flat was pointing, otherwise the recoil would have derailed it. Having engaged its target or targets for the day, the gun was taken back to Nyaunglebin.—Major-General R. C. O. Hedley, CB, CBE, DSO (ret'd), one-time commander 48th Infantry Brigade, Headquarters, Western Command, Chester.

UPSIDE DOWN

I read with interest the article "Three Days Hard in Cyprus" (SOLDIER, September) but was shocked to find in the photograph of the presentation of prizes that the Union Flag (Jack) which is draping the

FILMS

coming your way

The following films will shortly be shown in Army Kinema Corporation cinema overseas:

THE BEACHCOMBER: On a Technicolor South Sea Island, the only blot on the landscape is Robert Newton, the drunken remittance-man. Glynis Johns, the missionary's sister, is scared of him; Donald Sinden, the Resident, sends him to jail and then orders his deportation. When trouble comes, however, the remittance-man turns out to be a tower of strength. An elephant which didn't forget nearly saves a situation and there is a happy ending. From a story by Somerset Maugham.

THE CAINE MUTINY: The film of the best-selling novel that "rips the steel hatches off a minesweeper in the Pacific and reveals the raw emotions seething beneath her decks." Humphrey Bogart plays the crazy captain, who fusses over missing strawberries and a seaman's shirt-tail. Also in the cast are Jose Ferrer, Van Johnson (who was chased by a shark during filming) and Fred MacMurray. A typhoon was filmed in colour for the picture.

DIAL "M" FOR MURDER: The stage play by Frederick Knott, filmed in colour by Alfred Hitchcock. All about the lady who killed the man who had been hired by her husband to murder her. Ray Milland plays the husband and Grace Kelly the lady. Robert Cummings waits to welcome her from jail.

THE FAR COUNTRY: Cowboy James Stewart drives his cattle out of the cattle-country and into the Yukon gold-rush, assisted by his pard, Walter Brennan. They meet Ruth Roman (who caught a cold playing a night-club singer in evening dress in Yukon weather) and Corinne Calvet. "Breath-taking, gun-blazing climax." In colour.

LIVING IT UP: Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis in their habitual brand of breach of the peace. Edward Arnold, Janet Leigh and Sheree North assist. Music, Songs, Dancing, Colour.

table is upside down. In my humble job as a scoutmaster, one of the first things a boy is taught is flag etiquette. I would have thought someone present would have known better. I hope the Major-General and the local inhabitants didn't notice it.—L. A. Parmenter, 47 Romola Road, London, SE 24.

WALKING OUT

Your correspondent who writes to advocate a ban on the wearing of civilian clothes (SOLDIER, September) fails to understand the position of the National Serviceman.

The National Serviceman constitutes at least a third of the Regular Army but is not issued with Number One Dress. Captain Redfern's suggestion would deprive the National Serviceman of the right to walk out in any clothes other than those in which he carries out his daily duties.—Lance-Bombardier A. Andrews, 60 HAA Regiment, RA, Holywood, County Down.

When my daily duties are finished, it gives me great pleasure to be able to put on my civilian clothes. I feel more comfortable and my mind is much more at ease.

Recently I was at tombola with some friends who were in uniform. It was very hot, so they undid their uniforms and within five minutes were told they were on a charge. That is just one disadvantage of wearing uniform off duty.—"Hussar" (name and address supplied).

If your correspondent was a Marine, he would welcome the chance of wearing civilian clothes on going into barracks after two years on a ship, where dress uniform is compulsory.—"Uncomfortable Marine," Plymouth (name and address supplied).

It is high time that Her Majesty's uniform was considered an honour and a privilege, and not as a badge of disgrace. The policy, long overdue, should be to prohibit men of bad character, the untrained, and those incapable of wearing uniform smartly, from wearing uniform when off duty.—"Do-takra" (name and address supplied).

In my view the British soldier's uniform is the most uncomfortable in the world, besides not looking smart. The only enjoyment the soldier gets is at night or week-ends when he can take the straight-jacket off and put on civilian clothes. I have been on trains, boats and in the pictures, next to Americans, Canadians and others, and I've been sweating while they have been cool as ice in their gaberdine uniforms—and very smart. The sooner they dish out a new uniform, the sooner you will get the lads wearing it often after duty. They haven't issued me with a walking-out uniform—and it's too late.—"Driver" (name and address supplied).

★ *SOLDIER* cannot see how battle-dress can be described, by any stretch of the imagination, as a strait-jacket; nor how it can be called "the most uncomfortable in the world"—unless in very hot weather. Whether it looks smart or not depends on the man wearing it.

CRASH HELMETS

About a year ago, in answer to a reader's query, you suggested that a man who wore a civilian crash helmet with uniform while riding a motorcycle might plead that he was properly dressed for the form of sport in which he was engaged. I tried that on our regimental sergeant-major recently—but all I got was a stern warning not to do it again.—"Sergeant" (name and address supplied).

★ A recent Army Council Instruction, 453/54, says that, to reduce the number of head injuries caused by accidents, Servicemen riding motor-cycles off-duty may wear civilian-type crash helmets with uniform. Men who are entitled to Army crash-helmets may be permitted by commanding officers to wear them off-duty, either with uniform or civilian clothes, "provided there is no expense on public funds through loss or unfair wear and tear." Soldiers off-duty or on leave in uniform must have their normal headress with them to wear when they are not actually riding a motor-cycle.

LETTERS CONTINUED OVERLEAF

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MORE LETTERS

"BISCUITS"

No one who had slept on "biscuits" more than once or twice allowed them to slide apart and leave an uncomfortable gap (SOLDIER, September). *Folding a blanket in two, and using it lengthwise, very firmly secured all three biscuits in place for the night, and during the day with the iron bed closed together, a very comfortable armchair could be made.*—Major H. Milton, 118 Queens Road, Brighton.

lost, the date became the 13th?—Major H. P. E. Pereira, Scottish United Services Museum, Edinburgh.

★ *Marlborough did, in fact, date his letter "August 13." Continental countries had already adopted the new calendar, and Marlborough used the date of the country he was in. England did not adopt the new calendar until 1752, when eleven days were left out of September.*

SALUTING

There appears to be some confusion as to whether Home Guard officers in uniform should salute officers of the Regular Army. To see a Home Guard officer get "half-way up" with a salute, hesitate, then "let it fall away" is certainly disconcerting and, to an onlooker, amusing.—Major J. P. Buckingham, 32 Horseshoe Crescent, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire.

★ *Home Guard officers hold the Queen's Commission and normal saluting regulations apply when they meet officers of the Regular Army.*

A Part One order issued by our unit says the retired officer now working as a civil servant in the pay office is entitled to a salute while taking pay parade, as would a serving officer. What is the authority for this?—Staff-Sergeant (name and address supplied).

★ *It has recently been decided that soldiers must wear the pattern of Number One Dress of the regiment or corps with which they are serving. Any changes of uniform or stripes this involves will be at public expense. Headress will be changed in accordance with the usual procedure under the rules for Clothing Allowance (see ACI 190 of 1953).*

BLENEHIM

Is your reporter quite correct, in the article on Blenheim, when he dates Marlborough's letter "August 13, 1704"? Am I not right in saying that the battle was actually fought on August 2, but that with the alteration of the calendar, when eleven days were

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