

SOLDIER

THE BRITISH ARMY MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY 1956



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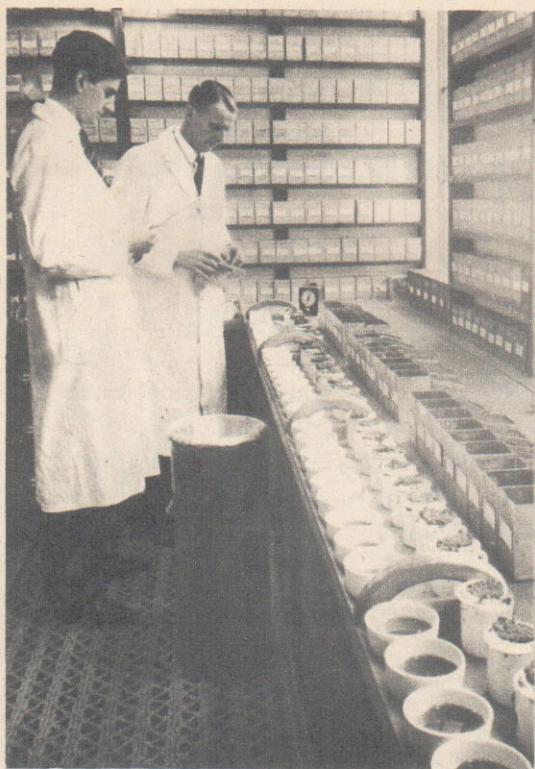
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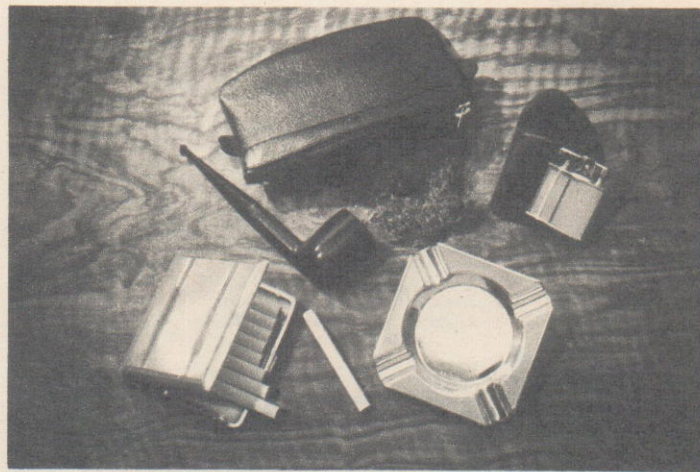
To see that Servicemen and women enjoy to the full their tea and tobacco is but one of the many and varied duties of . . .

to Tobacco

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THE ARMY WASHES THE CLIFFS

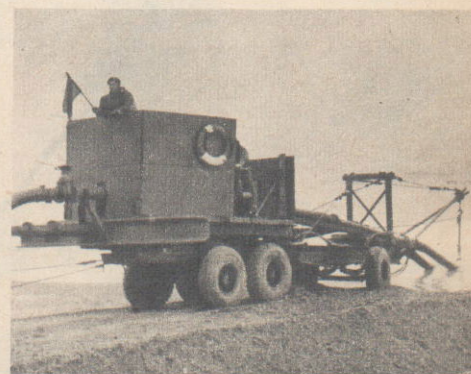
Sappers are using the sea to uncover deeply-buried anti-tank mines in the last remaining minefield in Britain

WHEN the Sappers have cleared the last of Britain's wartime minefields, in about three years time, it will be mainly thanks to "Hippo."

"Hippo" is a mobile pump mounted on an armour-plated 10-ton trailer chassis—the only machine of its type in the Army. It is being used by No. 1 Bomb Disposal Troop, Royal Engineers, to uncover mines too deeply buried to be found by any other process on the four-and-a-half mile Mundesley minefield on the Norfolk coast.

The machine sucks water from the sea at the rate of 90,000 gallons an hour and forces it

OVER ➔



Left: The cliffs crumble as the 120-lbs. per square inch jet gets to work. "Hippo" (above) supplies the water direct from the North Sea. Note the lifebelt.

Photographs: SOLDIER Cameraman FRANK TOMPSETT

THE ARMY WASHES THE CLIFFS

continued

Down to the water's edge the beach is cleared in 6-ft. lanes by electric locators. Below: At the end of a rope a Sapper searches the steep, sandy cliffs.



through a powerful jet built on to an armour-plated Bren-carrier. Safe behind the armour-plating the operator directs the jet on to the sandy cliff, washing it away in great lumps into a gully where dislodged mines are deposited. Sometimes the force of the jet—120 lbs. per square inch—explodes the mines, hence the armour-plating. Without "Hippo" the minefield would take twice as long to clear and be twice as dangerous.

Sixteen years ago, when invasion seemed imminent, the Sappers planted Mundesley minefield, one of the largest in the country, in a matter of weeks. Today, a new generation of Sappers has the much more difficult and dangerous job of clearing it: a task which by the time the last mine has been exploded will have taken at least six years. Soldiers will still be working on it long after every other minefield in Britain has been made harmless.

Shortly after the war, this minefield with its 1500 anti-tank mines was given up as impossible to clear. In 1946 it was closed off in "semi-perpetuity" by a special Act of Parliament. Then, in 1953, after some of the mines had been washed away and deposited farther along the coast, the Army was called in to disarm it.

The Sappers were faced with a tremendous

Preparing the charge for a mine washed up by the sea. The trowel is non-magnetic. Right: One more mine is exploded on Mundesley beach.



problem. Over the years the mines had shifted in the soft sand and the original plans marking their exact location, while useful as a rough guide, were dangerous to rely on. Every foot of beach and cliff was suspect. Many mines had rolled down the cliffs to be buried in the beach. In some places the cliffs had crumbled and buried mines as deep as 20 feet, making them impossible to locate electronically.

The mines themselves had become highly dangerous and could not be disarmed by the simple method of pushing in the arming handle. Some needed only a slight touch to set them off. Others, their rubber caps perished or missing, had become badly rusted and the explosive inside highly sensitive.

The only safe way to deal with the minefield was to search every foot of the coast and to destroy each mine by blowing it up with a charge. This could be done only by a few men working methodically from one end of the minefield to the other.

No. 1 Bomb Disposal Troop has been on the job since the start and to date has destroyed about 300 mines. More ground might have been cleared if sections had not been called away on many occasions to disarm unexploded bombs and ammunition elsewhere.

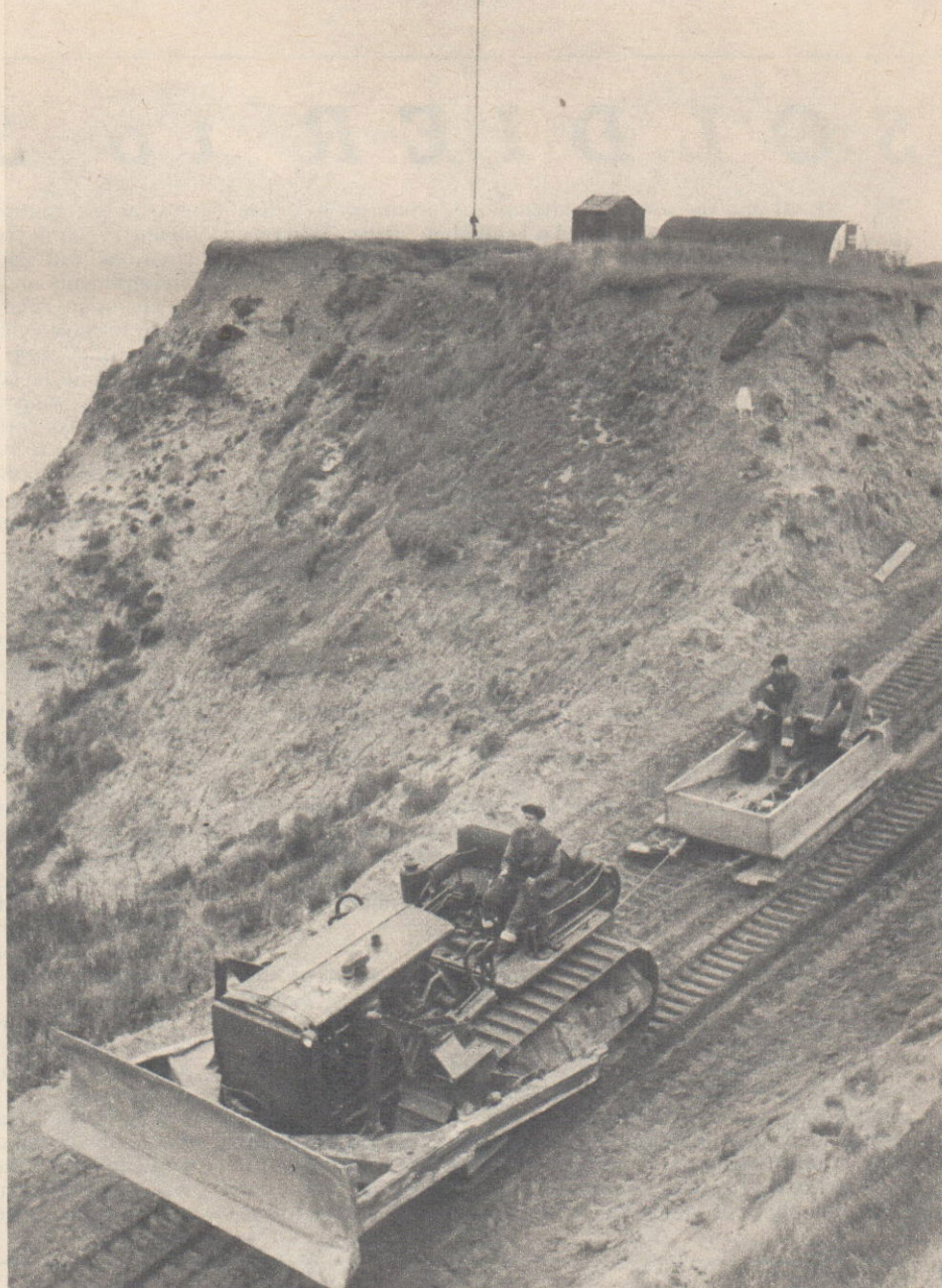
The first mines were discovered and blown up on 25 March, 1953. Sometimes the Sappers may search for a week without finding one mine and then in one day they may unearth a dozen. The record yield was 19 one day last summer. Only a few yards of the minefield can be cleared each day.

The Sappers doing this work receive no extra pay. Despite all precautions, two men were killed last year when a mine they were about to blow up exploded.

At first light every day a Sapper walks along the cliff-top searching every yard of beach and cliff for mines which may have been washed up or uncovered by the sea or wind during the night. When he declares the area free his comrades go down to the minefield's edge to begin work.

The flat parts of the beach and cliff are searched by two-man locators which can pick up a mine buried five feet deep. On the steep cliff-sides, where footholds are precarious, Sappers are lowered by rope to search with one-man detectors. These have a range of two feet. Where it is impossible or

OVER →



Down the cliff road made by the Sappers a bulldozer drags a home-made sledge. It saves petrol.



The Bomb Disposal men warn the villagers by siren when mines are to be exploded.

SOLDIER to Soldier

A YEAR ago there was an attempt in Parliament to delete the phrase "an officer and a gentleman" from the Army Act. "What a piece of snobbery!" the critics said. "In any case, there is no legal definition of a gentleman." **The attempt failed.**

It is quite true that there is no legal definition of a gentleman. But some words do not need to be defined in legal terms.

Recently the world had an educative glimpse of what constitutes "an officer and a gentleman" when Major Brian Jackson Coombe GM gave an interview to the press in Cyprus. Major Coombe, as everyone knows, shot his way out of an ambush in which his driver was killed, and routed his attackers, killing one, capturing one and wounding two. By any standards it was a brilliant feat; every soldier must have prayed that, in a similar emergency, he could react as quickly and coolly.

It was the officer who shot his way out of trouble. It was the gentleman who addressed the press. He had seen some of their headlines and he did not like them. He asked that there should be no exultation over the incident and no hero-worship of himself. "You may think I am talking like a grandmother," he said, "but there is far too much hatred here and I appeal to you all not to deepen the rift between peaceful Cyprus citizens and equally peaceful Britons."

On this statement, one newspaper commented: "It may not be war; but it is magnificent."

Whether or not Major Coombe's words cause any lessening of bitterness in Cyprus, it is good to have them on record—if only to discourage those who would seek to remove from the vocabulary the phrase "an officer and a gentleman."

Needless to add, you don't have to be an officer to be a gentleman.

"YOU can be sure that if thermonukes rain down on this fair land of ours, there will be immediate and insistent and desperate cries for Army help..."

You heard: thermonukes!

That is the chatty abbreviation for thermo-nuclear weapons now in use in American military circles, to judge from an article in the *Army Combat Forces Journal*, quoted above.

Needless to say, if thermonukes rain down on Britain, there will also be immediate and insistent and desperate cries for Army help. Hence the big changes recently announced in the Territorial Army, the effect of which will be to make the volunteer forces

a strategic reserve charged with "maintaining the life of the country," and frustrating raids and sabotage. Two full-scale divisions will still be maintained, however, to meet Britain's commitments under NATO.

The home reserve is to be organised in divisions and will continue to have a "fighting capacity," but its weapons will be less spectacular ones. To the tank men of the armoured divisions which are to be converted to Infantry, to the parachutists whose division is being reduced to a brigade, to the field gunners who are promised "other roles," the farewell to armour, wings and guns is going to be a poignant occasion.

There is a natural tendency to ask, "How do you know you won't want more tanks next time?" "Who says there is no foreseeable role for paratroops?" and (to quote a correspondent in *The Times*) "For how long must we continue to exchange the rapier and pistol for the shield and whistle?" This game of speculating about the shape of the "next war" is a game at which any number can play, but a handful of men have the unenviable task of choosing one plan and forcing it through. No doubt the experts would like to prepare for every kind of war; but tell that to the taxpayers!

The details of the big change-over are being worked out. It will, of course, be a gradual process, since no army can change its scope and character overnight. Not even to meet thermonukes.

THE standing down of the Home Guard has received little public notice. Yet this force is sure of an honoured place in history.

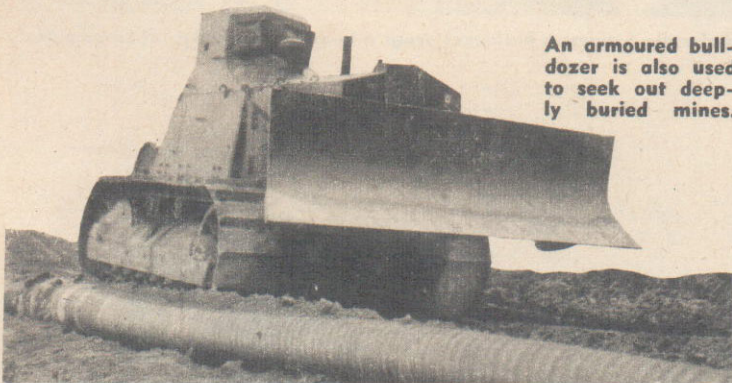
Those who volunteered in the post-war years, when no enemy parachutists were imminently expected, deserve as much praise as those who came forward in the perilous days of 1940. A country will not retain its independence long if volunteers put on uniform only when the enemy is at the gates, or in the tree-tops.

In some quarters, there is a notion that the Home Guard never fired a shot "in anger." How quickly forgotten is the part they played in manning anti-aircraft batteries during the latter part of the war!

The Home Guard, apart from anything else, was one of the best clubs in the district. Officially it has been stood down, but you can't keep the spirit of it in a filing cabinet. The members will be meeting and greeting each other for long years yet.

(See pages 15-16.)

An armoured bulldozer is also used to seek out deeply buried mines.



concluding

THE ARMY WASHES THE CLIFFS

too dangerous for a man to climb, and where cliff-falls have occurred, "Hippo" is brought into action and the spoil washed down is afterwards searched with locators.

When armoured bulldozers are used to cut away the base of the cliff and allow the sand to fall on to the beach, Sappers are stationed 200 yards away to watch through binoculars for any mines that become uncovered. Any found are destroyed immediately. If they were left to the end of the day some might be overlooked.

Only one man is allowed to be near the mines while preparations are being made to blow them up. Red danger flags are hoisted and sentries posted to keep people out of the area. The police and the nearby Royal Air Force station are informed and a telephone call goes to all local hotels, warning them to open windows. Meanwhile two men set off to patrol the nearby villages, stopping every few hundred yards to sound a siren, warning people to stay indoors.

The villagers, who are probably even more anxious than the

Army to see the minefield cleared and Mundesley once again a thriving holiday resort, co-operate fully, especially since a large stone thrown up by an exploded mine smashed the lawn-mower one of them was pushing in his garden. At one time or another most of the villagers have had their windows broken, but no one has been injured. The Army pays all claims promptly, which is one reason why the local inhabitants and the Sappers are on such good terms.

No. 1 Bomb Disposal Troop—which has the unusual postal address of The Minefield, Mundesley—is commanded by Captain G. R. Fletcher. He was transport officer and engineer of the British North Greenland Expedition for its last year in the Arctic in 1953. His second-in-command is Captain P. W. Gilson, not long returned from Hong Kong where he helped destroy unexploded Japanese bombs.

Working under them are a dozen Sappers and a team of civilians, four of them German ex-prisoners-of-war who decided to stay in England. The civilians get danger money at the rate of fourpence an hour when they work on the minefield.

Sergeant John Laverty, who has been in bomb disposal for ten years, reckons he has disarmed more than 1000 mines along the Lincolnshire and Norfolk coasts, as well as 20 unexploded bombs. The most dangerous job he has tackled was in 1946 when he disarmed a German bomb brought up from the bed of the Severn at Bristol. As he was about to remove the fuse the bomb suddenly began to tick. "I was away like a shot from a gun," Sergeant Laverty told **SOLDIER**.

The docks were cleared and all shipping was brought to a standstill. The sergeant and the officer in charge took cover only 50 yards away. Suddenly the ticking stopped and they returned to the bomb, removed the base plate and hosed out the explosive.

"Although it was only eight o'clock in the morning the landlord of the nearby public house was so relieved that he treated us all to a party."

When Mundesley Minefield is finally cleared the local inhabitants are planning to invite the Sappers of No. 1 Bomb Disposal Troop to another party.

E. J. GROVE.



Shirley Ann Hilton was a student teacher—and woman swimming champion of Gibraltar. She likes under-water fishing.



Ruth Philippa Smart, from Wallasey, Cheshire, was a secretary. She gained a French diploma at Grenoble University.



Lois Jean Edlin was educated at Elmhurst, Camberley. Her father is a retired Army chaplain. Hobbies: swimming, riding

'Trusty and Well Beloved'

These officer-cadets of the Women's Royal Army Corps are the latest to win the Queen's Commission. Five out of nine who passed out at Hindhead were under 21



Elsie Chadwick was educated at Manchester and won a BA (Honours) degree at Manchester University in French.



Beryl Marjorie Bowen went from London University to the Foreign Office, thence to market research. She was Sash winner.



Jean Davidson Gordon, educated at Abbots Bromley, worked on a farm for a year. She is a colonel's daughter.



Bridget Mary Hickey, educated at Berkhamstead, was an assistant house-mistress. Hobbies: sailing, ski-ing, riding.



Margaret Rae Allen was apprentice in a Birmingham gown shop, has been instructor at WRAC Depot for two years.



Eileen Welford, who was educated at Norton-on-Tees, entered the Women's Royal Army Corps straight from school.

The most hated day of the week in the Army was Sunday, said a field-marshal who served in the ranks. What would he have said about the modern Army Sunday?

*Kip down, you gallant soldier,
Kip down, you light dragoon.
The sergeant-major's in his bunk.
It's Sunday afternoon.*

WAS ALWAYS A PROBLEM

THE Army Sunday is not what it was—or is it?

Today traditionalists bemoan that the one object of the soldier is to get as far from camp on Sunday as his thumb will take him—preferably home to “Mum.”

“In our days,” they say, “Sunday was Sunday. We marched to church, spruce and glittering, and were proud to do so. It never occurred to us that we were suffering any injustice. We didn’t scatter all over the country. We found our fun in camp. Ah yes, we had *esprit-de-corps* then.”

Ah yes, but what did they really do on Sunday afternoon?

Could it be that they just lay and snored?

It could. There is no use denying that “beds down” has been a Sunday afternoon ritual for a large part of the Army ever

since there was an Army. “In bed or out of barracks” has been the traditional rule.

Sunday was always a problem day for the soldier. Economic circumstances—a polite phrase meaning bad pay—tended to keep soldiers in camp in the old days. Many of them did walk out, of course, without cash, and therefore without girls.

Nearly one hundred years ago a Mrs. Young published a book about Aldershot which contained the following:

“The Sunday of the Camp at Aldershot is the most painful reverse of the quiet tone which pervades the villages of Hampshire and Surrey. All looks dirt and confusion, confusion without action, idleness without refreshment. Noisy half-dressed soldiers with pipes between their lips are lounging at the door.

Slatternly women are hanging wet clothes on lines; unwashed children, clad in remnants of their mothers’ finery, roll or quarrel together in the dust; oaths, tobacco smoke and the fumes of liquor defile the sweet breath of Heaven; and all that brings before the mind a momentary idea of the day being Sunday is the absence of bodies of men preparing for drill, or an occasional regiment falling in for Church parade, marching onward to the sound of their band to take part in that duty which, collectively, perhaps is more distasteful to the soldiers than any other. There are two or three services on a Sunday morning—an arrangement intended to take in all the regiments—with a ‘Volunteer Service’ in the New Church of an afternoon, to which the men can take their wives and

children if they please.”

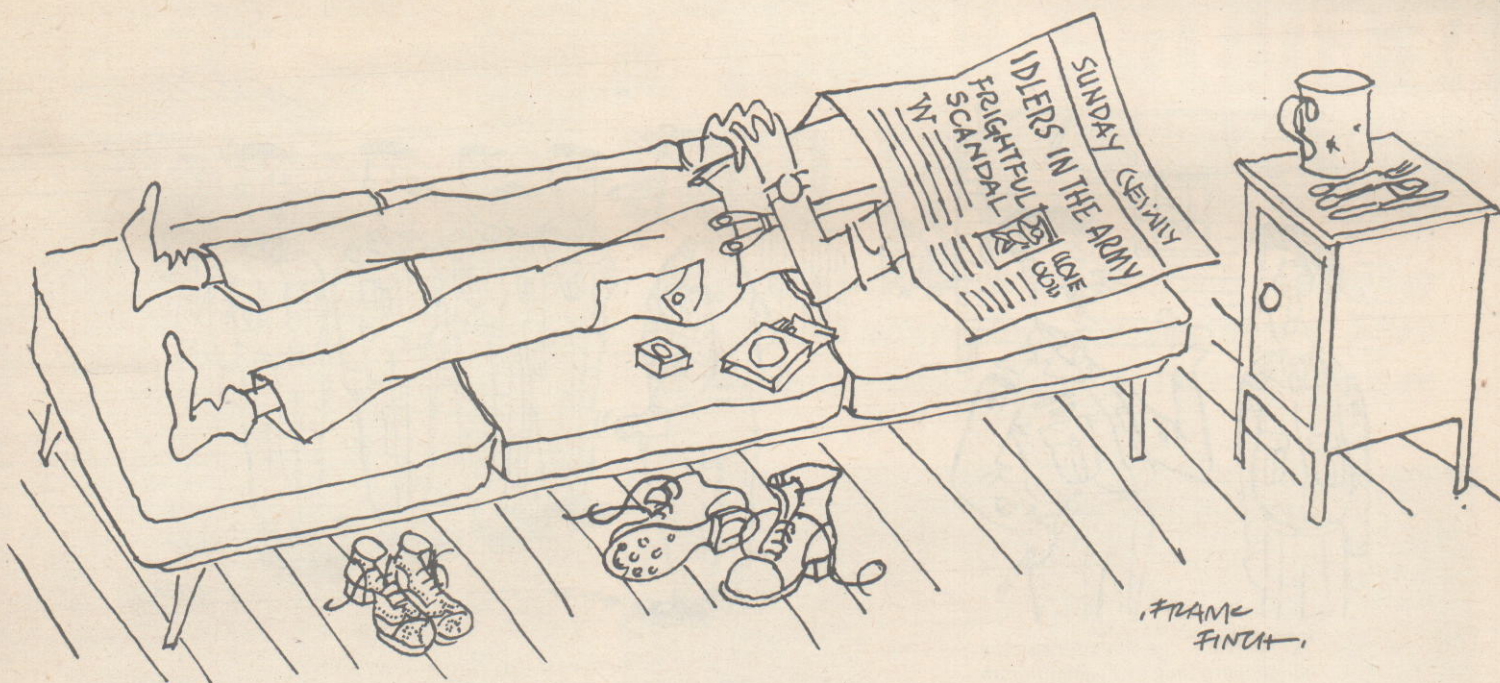
And what was Sunday like for the next generation? Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson, who started his Army career as a private in the ‘seventies, says in his autobiography that “of all the days in the week, Sunday was most hated. A sad confession to make, but none the less true.”

Why was this?

“After morning stables, there was a general rush, often with little or no time for breakfast, to turn out in full dress for Divine Service, attendance at which was compulsory. On return to barracks, there was a general scramble preparatory to the Commanding Officer’s inspection of stables, saddlery and barrack-rooms. From early morning until half-past one in the afternoon, there was more work to be done, more grumbling and

At this old-time drumhead service (sketched by Thomas Rowlandson) the congregation can hardly be said to be sitting to attention.





"Beds down" has always been a Sunday afternoon ritual in the Army.

swearing, and more fault-finding than on any other day."

Although Sir William was describing the lot of the cavalryman, similar conditions existed in most other arms.

What the generation after Sir William Robertson's thought of Sunday may be gauged by these grumbles from old copies of *The Regiment* early this century:

Can it be true that men of "B" Company 1st Highland Light Infantry, Dinapore, have to scrub and oil doors after returning from church on Sunday?

Who is the officer of "A" Company M.I., Longmoor, who indulges in "stripped saddle" inspection after church on Sunday?

Can it be true that a certain non-com of "E" Company, 2nd Bedfordshire Regiment, Tidworth, orders the men to scrub coalboxes, baths, etc., on Sunday afternoons?

Is it true that the men of a certain company of the Royal West Kent Regiment, Singapore, were ordered to leave their dinners and sweep round their cots and clean up the room on a Sunday?

And so on, and so on.

Any honest historian will probably conclude that much of the opposition to church parades, in our own times, sprang not so much from hostility to "compulsory religion," as from the series of inspections which preceded church parade, and which sometimes followed it. A great many soldiers enjoyed the service itself.

The decision, after World War Two, to make Sunday church attendance voluntary in the Army broke a tradition nearly three centuries old. Even in Charles II's dissolute days, commanding officers were enjoined to hold Sunday services for their men. The first modified edition of Queen's Regulations, in 1799, laid down that "Divine service is to be constantly performed, and regularly attended." That royal

reformer, the Duke of York, issued an instruction designed to discourage the rounding up of oversize congregations for church services:

"His Royal Highness particularly enjoins that more men shall not be assembled for that purpose at a time than The Voice can reach."

A chaplain with a roar like a bull was not necessarily the most popular man in the regiment.

The Duke of Wellington was all for Church services on Sundays, but chaplains were deplorably few. What worried the Duke was the growth of Methodism. Soldiers were presuming to preach to their officers, inviting them to repent of their sins; and this, while good for the soul, was bad for discipline.

A hundred years later, Lord Kitchener at the War Office waxed cross at the multiplicity of "fancy religions" in his New Armies. So did his NCOs, who on Sunday mornings had to march squads to a growing variety of places of worship. Cynics said that the denominational strengths in a unit would vary according to the distance from barracks of the places of worship.

To the ordinary public, church parades were definitely an attraction. On a sunny Sunday morning hundreds of people would stream into Aldershot to see the soldiers march to church, bands playing. Those who knew which services started early would contrive to see two or more parades.

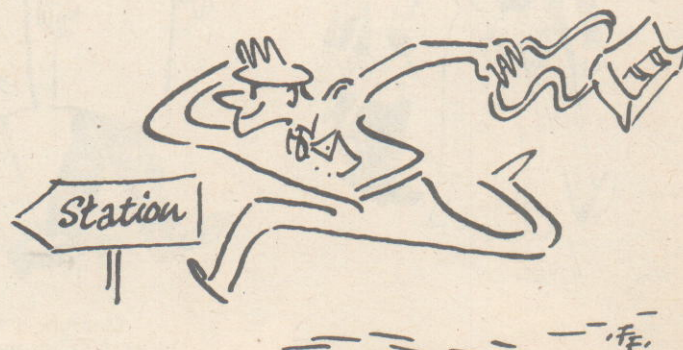
In York, "Military Sunday," which was instituted about 1880, became an outstanding event of the year. Representatives of all three Services still attend, and the service is often broadcast.

Now most Army units have a do-what-you-like Sunday. You can go hiking, cheer the unit football team, write letters or sleep.

They can't make you go to church—but they can't stop you going, either.



Sunday parade in the Old Army: the Connaught Rangers march to church in style through the streets of Aldershot.



Sunday in the Army—modern version.



"So Private Smith informs the newspapers that he has nothing to do on his National Service—eh?"



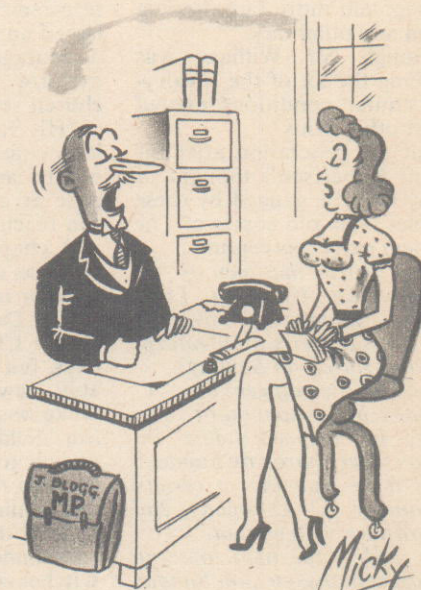
"My number is legs eleven, Kelly's eye, clickety-click, unlucky for some."

MICKY - his page

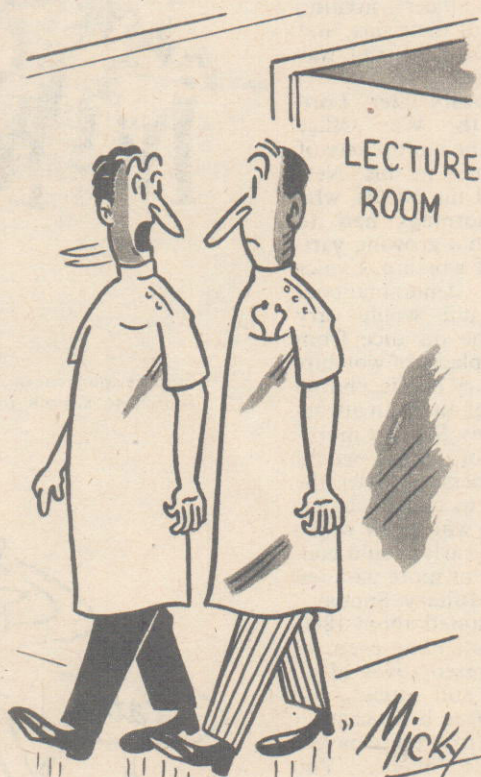


LATEST in SOLDIER's series of soldier-cartoonists is "Micky"—otherwise Private Michael Carnell, Royal Army Pay Corps, a National Serviceman stationed at Prince Maurice Barracks, Devizes.

Private Carnell, who has been in the Army about a year, was a lithographic artist before call-up. His cartoons have appeared in a score of newspapers and magazines. His luckiest break so far was when he won a £50 award in a cartoon competition organised by the London Evening Standard.



"Dear Private Jones, I am sorry to hear that the sergeant called you a two-toed sloth. It may interest you to know that one of my constituents has just called me a yellow-bellied titmouse."



"I thought a red corpuscle was an NCO in the Russian Army."



"Well, it's not my fault if we have twins. In the Army we have to do everything at the double."



A TOUGH SOLDIER? SEND FOR MADDERN

The face of Victor Maddern is cropping up in film after film. He has never been a sergeant—but he certainly acts like one

HE has been a soldier, sailor and airman. He has been blown to smithereens twice and battered to death in a wood. He has been stripped of his rank, sent to prison as a deserter and mourned as a hero.

Such has been the screen life of Victor Maddern, the actor for whom the film companies always send when they want someone to play the part of a tough, tight-lipped Cockney soldier.

Maddern, who has never been in the Army but got to know it very well when he served in the Merchant Navy on a troopship during the War, first became a screen soldier in "Seven Days To Noon." He was the trigger-happy soldier who shot dead the mad professor in the church. In "Highly Dangerous," he played a Russian soldier who was kicked to death while hunting fugitives.

Remember "Malta Story?" Victor Maddern was the Cockney private who raised a laugh with his grumble about the high-ups who one day wanted all obstructions cleared away from an airfield so that our own planes could land safely and the next day wanted poles erected to stop enemy gliders landing.

He had a bigger part in "Corrington VC," in which he appeared as the pay sergeant who loses his stripes for remaining loyal to his battery commander and who embarrasses the prosecuting officer in the court scene.

It was while rehearsing for this film that Victor Maddern received his first "military" training.

OVER ➔

As the trigger-happy private in the film "Seven Days To Noon."

Right: As the sergeant in "Corrington VC," with Noelle Middleton.

As a somnolent soldier (extreme right) in "Private's Progress" which is now filming.





Down to private again—for the new film "A Hill in Korea."

being taught by other members of the cast, including David Niven, a former lieutenant-colonel, how to march, about turn and salute.

He gives a fine performance in "Cockleshell Heroes" as a hard-bitten Royal Marines sergeant who helps to pull together an undisciplined unit. He comes to a violent end, blowing himself up when about to be captured.

He suffered a similar fate—this time as a signaller in the Royal Navy in "Single Handed"—while sticking to his post on the bridge of his ship. As an airman—in "The Sea Shall Not Have Them" and "The Night My Number Came Up"—he survived. "It made a very pleasant change after having been killed so often," he says.

Now, Victor Maddern is taking part in two more films about the Army. One is a comedy called "Private's Progress" in which he is a scrounging misfit in a training unit commanded by Terry-Thomas. His one ambition is to remain in the unit, so he works out a scheme never to complete his recruit training. At the end of each fortnight he deserts, goes to the guardroom for a spell and then starts all over again. (Some soldiers have

thought of this one before—but they were not so successful.

The second is a more serious film—"A Hill in Korea"—which is now being made by Wessex Film Productions. It is the story of a section of typical British soldiers on patrol in Korea. Victor Maddern is one of the bazooka detachment who cling to their weapon through thick and thin.

Making films can be a tough job and Victor Maddern has had many a hard knock to prove it. His top lip is permanently scarred where his teeth were driven through it in a "free for all," and he once spent three months in hospital with a dislocated back after falling down a flight of steps.

But there are lighter moments. There was the time when a burly Cockney asked him, "Aren't you Victor Maddern, the bloke what took part in that film where you get killed?" Victor agreed he was. "Well, nah, after you was killed the 'ero went back..." and the stranger launched into a detailed explanation of what happened after his death.

On another occasion, in Malta, members of the film company were invited to an officers' mess party, but only those who played the parts of officers received invitations.

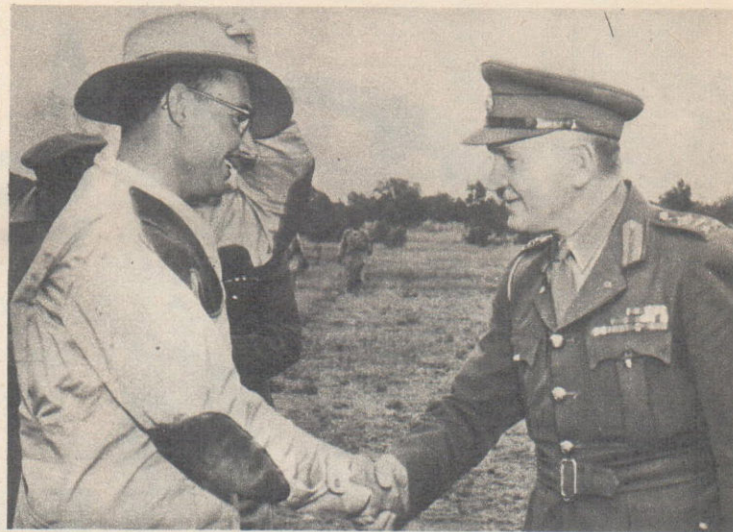
No, it wasn't an Army mess.

Although Victor Maddern has never been in the Army he has felt the lash of a drill-instructor's tongue. During the making of "Cockleshell Heroes" the cast went to the Royal Marines Depot at Eastney for a week's training under a colour-sergeant well known throughout that Corps for his severity.

"He was told to treat us like ordinary recruits," Victor Maddern told **SOLDIER**, "and he needed no second bidding. At the end of the week we really hated that man—but he did teach us how to drill."

Recently the cast of "A Hill in Korea" went to the Guards Depot at Pirbright for instruction in the use of small arms.

One of Victor Maddern's crispest performances was as the sergeant in "Cockleshell Heroes." The Royal Marines smartened up his drill.



Sergeant meets brigadier: Typical of the informality of the modern South African commandos is this handshake between Sergeant W. J. Bramley and Brigadier P. H. Grobbelaar, of South Africa's regular army.

COMMANDOS LIVE ON

THE first commandos did not wear green berets. They were shaggy men on shaggy ponies, festooned with bandoliers, living on dried meat. They had what seemed a very relaxed form of discipline. But they were matchless guerrillas, and they defied the British Empire for three years.

That was in the Boer War.

Today South Africa still has her commandos, who have inherited the spirit and traditions of the men who served under Generals Smuts, Botha and de Wet. There are nearly 100,000 men under arms in rifle commandos scattered throughout the country. With a white population of fewer than 3,000,000 the Union cannot afford to keep a large Regular army.

As in the old commandos, there is little formal discipline to hold the men together—only a sense of comradeship.

Any South African up to the age of 60 may join his local commando. He is given a rifle for which he must pay the Government in instalments. Afterwards it becomes his property.

The question of who is to give orders is quickly settled. The men get together and by popular vote choose their commandant (equivalent in rank to lieutenant-colonel) and their other officers. Then they select their NCOs.

Members of a commando attend a certain number of Saturday afternoon rifle practices each year, ammunition being provided by the Government. There are no parades. There is no drill.

Only the officers wear uniform—identical to that worn by Regular officers except for regimental badges.

The word "sir" is not heard and everyone from the commandant to the newest recruit is usually known by his first name.

Take a stroll to the butts any weekend and there you will find a band of men in their gardening clothes firing Bren, Vickers and rifle. A private may walk up to a lieutenant-colonel, smoking a cigarette, slap him on the back and start discussing politics.

Recently the Government began to train the commandos on modern weapons, including machine-guns and mortars. Officers and NCOs attend camps for a few weeks a year to learn about other weapons and tactics.

An army of amateurs would be useless against seasoned troops, it may be thought. But the commando system was never designed for that purpose.

Africa is a restless continent. That is why the first commandos were raised, before the Boer War, when farmers on the eastern border of the Cape Province banded together in loose military formation to guard their homes against raids.

The modern commandos are there to tackle internal unrest or to provide a nucleus of a well-equipped and trained guerrilla army in time of invasion. And not least of their tasks would be to help guard the Union's gold and uranium mines.

D. M. BROKENSHA



The journal of the Union Defence Forces bears the name **Commando** (Kommando in Afrikaans).

West Country manoeuvres: "We are held up by ferocious Home Guards." A sketch by Edward Ardizzone, then a war artist.



IT'S "Stand Down" again for the Home Guard.

Before long, each battalion will consist only of three men and a filing cabinet listing volunteers.

The Home Guard was born in the hour of crisis in 1940 as the Local Defence Volunteers. In six weeks, a million men enrolled. It was a be-medalled force, a little stiff of limb and grey of hair, perhaps, but full of enthusiasm and experience. It stood down at the end of 1944.

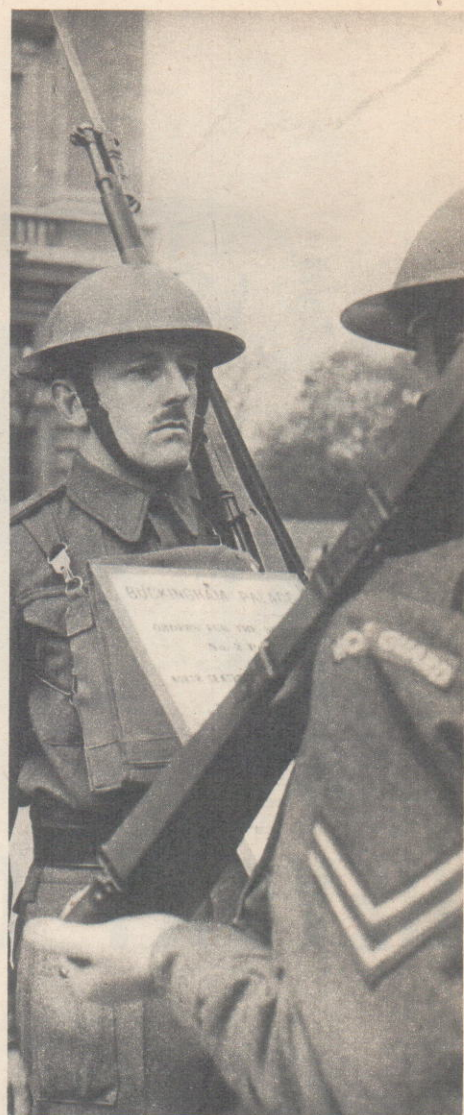
The new Home Guard was created in 1952. This was a keen and active skeleton force on which a flesh of volunteers could quickly be grafted in emergency. Once again it stands down—but it is not disbanded. It is placed on a "reserve basis" and its mobilisation role is being worked into the pattern of home defence.

OVER ➔

HEYDAY OF THE HOME GUARD

The risk of enemy seaplanes landing on Lake Windermere in 1940 led to the formation of fast boat patrols manned by these Home Guard "Marines."





HOME GUARD continued

At speed on Lake Windermere: an offensively equipped speed boat makes one of the more unusual pictures of World War Two.

Right: It was a red letter day for the Home Guard when they mounted guard at Buckingham Palace.

According to the wives, this was the reason the Home Guard joined up. They missed no chances of promoting good comradeship.



It looks like a heap of debris—but underneath it lurks a sniper of the Home Guard at the ready.



ISLAND AT ARMS

NOTHING discourages a terrorist so much as when the intended victim strikes back, instantly. If all ambushers of British troops could be confounded as they were by Major Brian Coombe GM the outrages in Cyprus would subside rapidly.

Too often the ambusher escapes and the civil population suffers the resulting inconveniences of house searches, road blocks and curfews. It can be a distasteful task for the troops. No soldier is particularly happy about searching the voluminous persons of priests or tramping into the houses of peasants or pursuing stone-throwing schoolboys. But it is part of the job, to be done with restraint and tolerance. Even women suspects must be searched, a task for which members of the Women's Royal Army Corps have been called in.

More strenuous—and rather more satisfying—operations are those mountain searches in which soldiers and Royal Marine Commandos have discovered caves stocked with terrorist weapons.

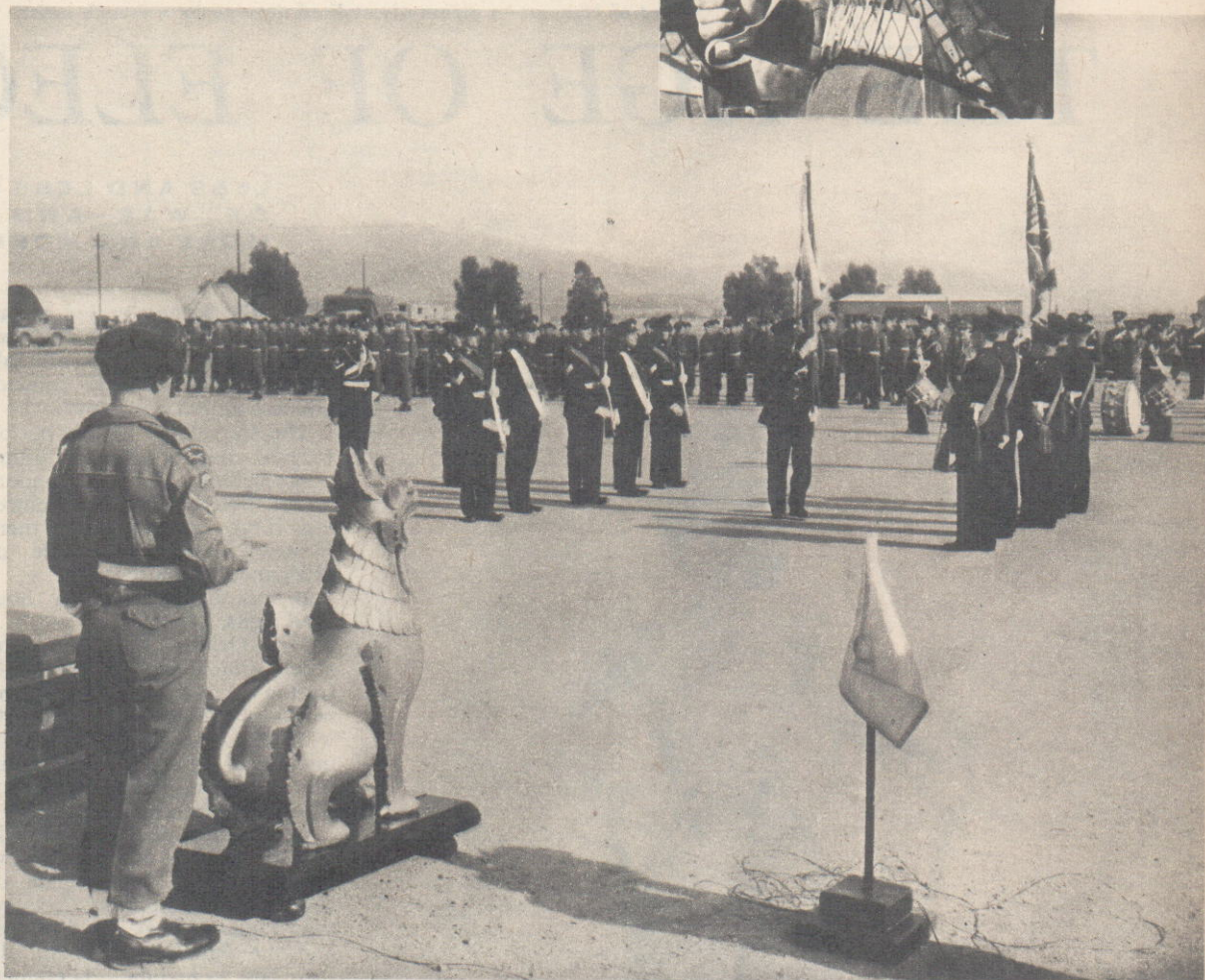
Soldiers in Cyprus no longer go out alone and unarmed. Their wives go shopping and their children travel to school under armed guard. The windows of bars and clubs are covered by metal grilles. Heavily guarded observation posts have been set up at vantage points. In some areas soldiers and British civilians have formed their own "Home Guard" to patrol British homes at night.

The situation is not without its humour. Recently British soldiers in the Famagusta area were handed leaflets urging them to disobey their orders and join the terrorists.

Back on duty, after being awarded the George Medal for turning the tables on his terrorist ambushers, is Major Brian Coombe, Royal Engineers.



Riot - shields you can see through are now being used by troops in Cyprus. Made of expanded steel, from a single sheet of metal without joins or welding, they are light but strong.



Terrorists or no terrorists, the 1st Battalion The South Staffordshire Regiment (complete with Chinthe emblem) celebrated Ferozeshah Day at Wayne's Keep, near Nicosia. On this day, the Colours are handed over to the sergeants in memory of the capture by a colour-sergeant of the Sikh standard at Ferozeshah, in India, in 1845.



"Death to Harding" is scrawled on Cyprus walls. An armoured car is there to prevent the threat from being carried out.



Guard of Honour—a pleasantly stylised drawing by a French artist.

THE AGE OF ELEGANCE

LESS AND LESS GREW THE SHADOW
OF WAR—AND SOLDIERS GREW
MORE AND MORE LIKE PARRAKEETS



Fine feathers—with baggy trousers: a French drum-major, by Charles Morel.

THE longest period of unbroken peace enjoyed by the British nation was probably that which extended from the defeat of Napoleon to the outbreak of the Crimean War.

It is no mere coincidence that this was also the age of greatest military elegance.

The splendours of this period were recalled by a fine exhibition at the Redfern Galleries, London, of one thousand military pictures—a large proportion of them French—under the title of "Élégance Militaire."

It was the gallery of a thousand sighs.

Mr. Osbert Lancaster, the artist, wrote a provocative article for the catalogue, contrasting the works of the old military artists with "the enormities today commissioned by the military authorities to advertise tattoos or stimulate recruiting."

Today, he says, there is little enough material for the aspiring military artist. "The Brigade of Guards, the Household Cavalry, the Evzones [Greek kilted troops] and the Papal Guards still do their best to maintain 'la coquetterie militaire.'" Otherwise the outlook is bleak. Oh for those "happier days, when the various branches of the service were kept sartorially distinct, before the shako, the busby, the pickelhauber, the bearskin and the kalpak had all gone down before the ubiquitous beret, and Uhlans and Zouaves, Hussars and Grenadiers, Dragoons and Cuirassiers had not yet been reduced to a featureless and functional uniformity."

Some may welcome this degeneration, thinks Mr. Lancaster, in the belief that "anything which tends to glamourise the bearing of arms undermines the will to peace." That notion is false in his opinion. He is not surprised that the period of greatest extra-

vagance in military uniform was that of the longest peace. "For, after all, if one prides oneself on having the most elegant and expensively dressed army in the world one will go to infinite trouble to avoid any possibility of its getting dirty."

The moral seems to be: Let's all dress up and then there will be no more war!

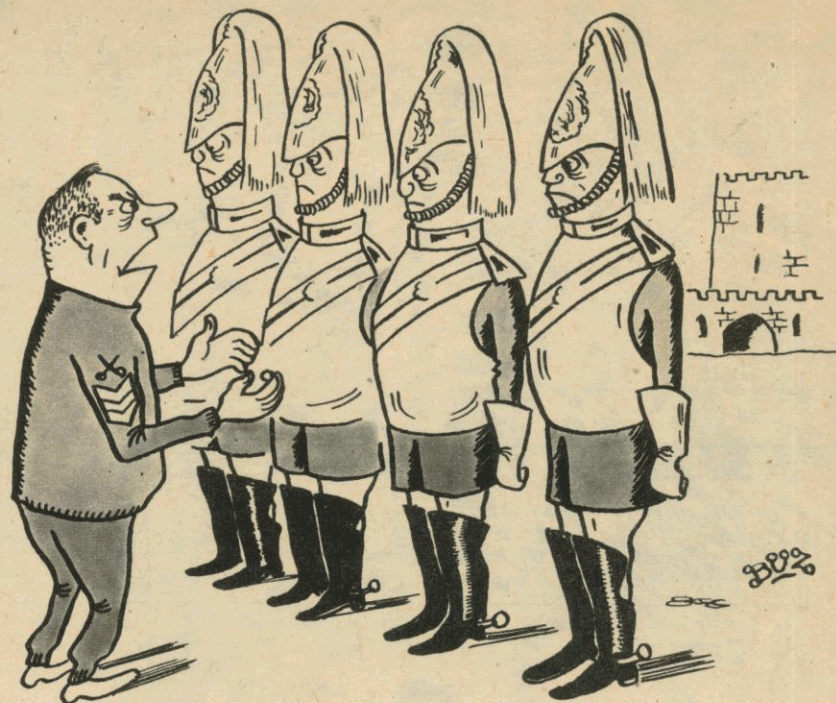
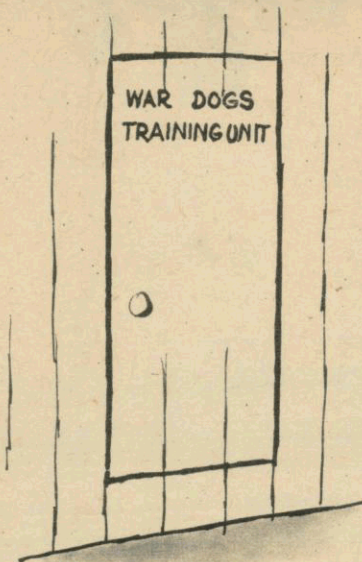
The age of military elegance drew much of its fanciful inspiration from occupied Paris after Waterloo. Dashing styles worn by Prussians, Austrians and Cossacks excited the military tailors, who were not above borrowing ideas from the French (including ideas which the French had already borrowed from the Poles). King George IV and King William IV both fancied themselves as military tailors, as did Prince Albert. So tight did uniforms become that seams were in constant peril of bursting; so vast were head-dresses that they caught the wind like sails.

Yet no evidence has come down to suggest that the men who rode in the charge of the Light Brigade, or with the Heavy Brigade, were hampered by their finery.

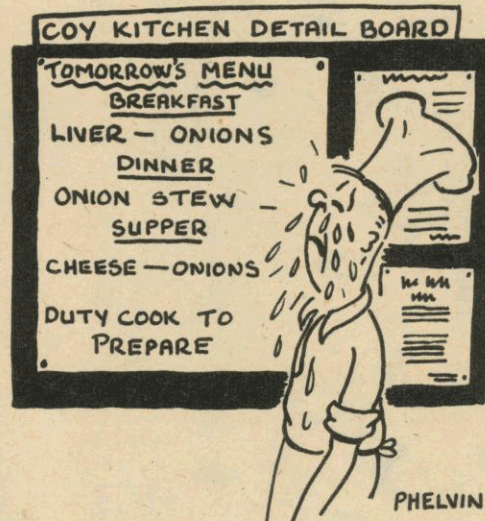
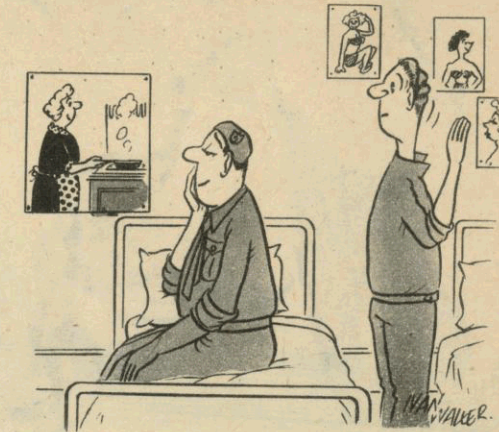
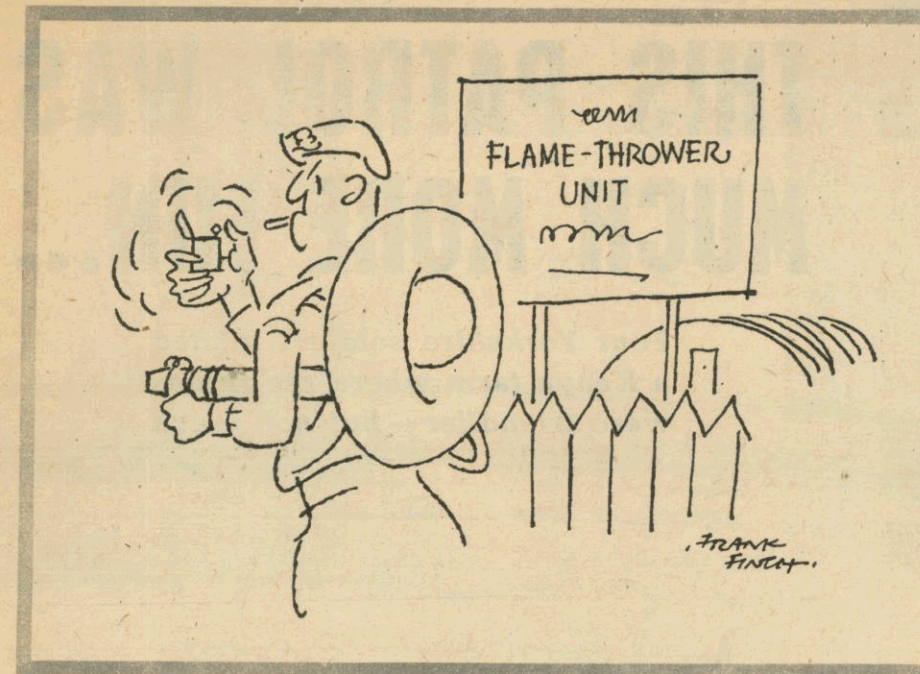
*The illustrations on these pages are reproduced by courtesy of the Redfern Galleries, London.

Elegance did not always cramp movement: in a grand review like this—in Hyde Park in 1838—the result was pure poetry.

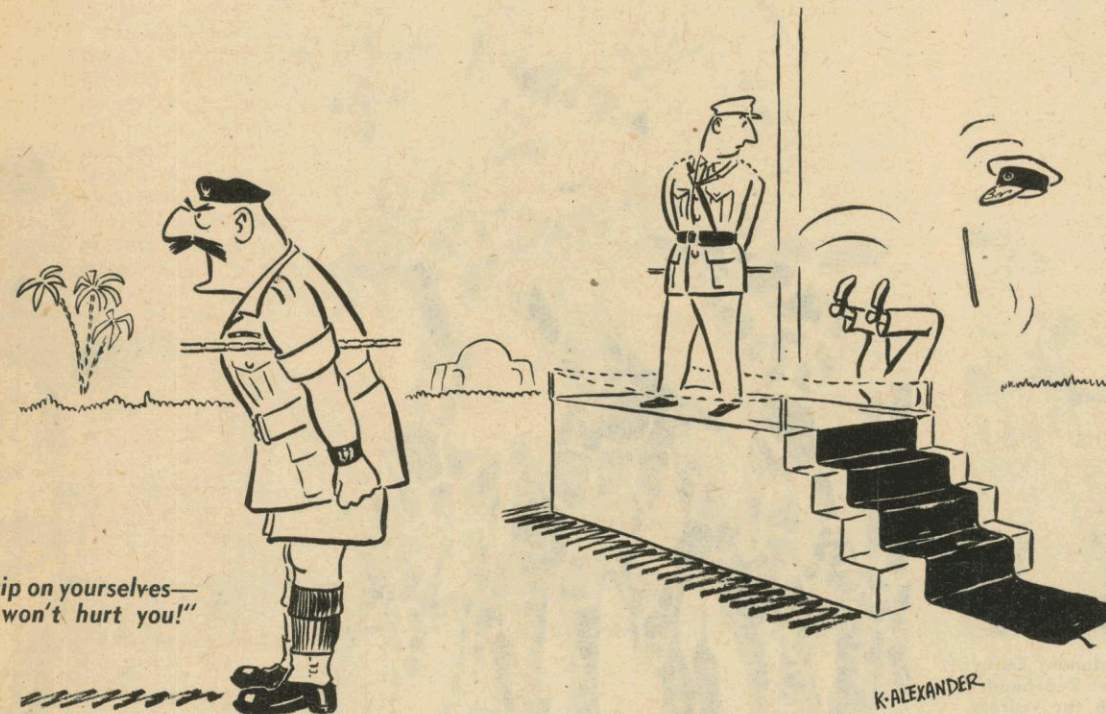




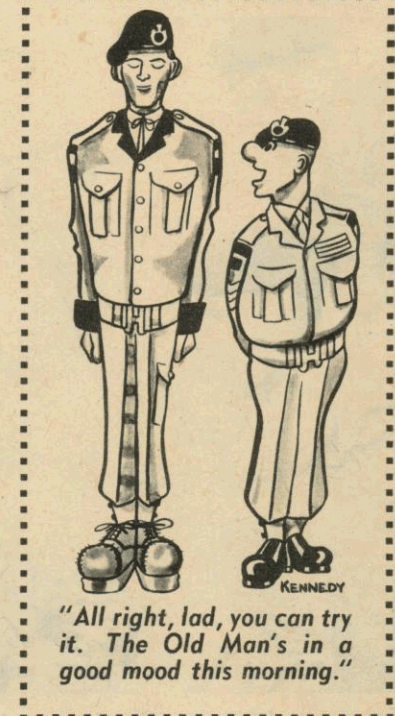
"Right, thirty seconds and back here in PT kit! GO!"



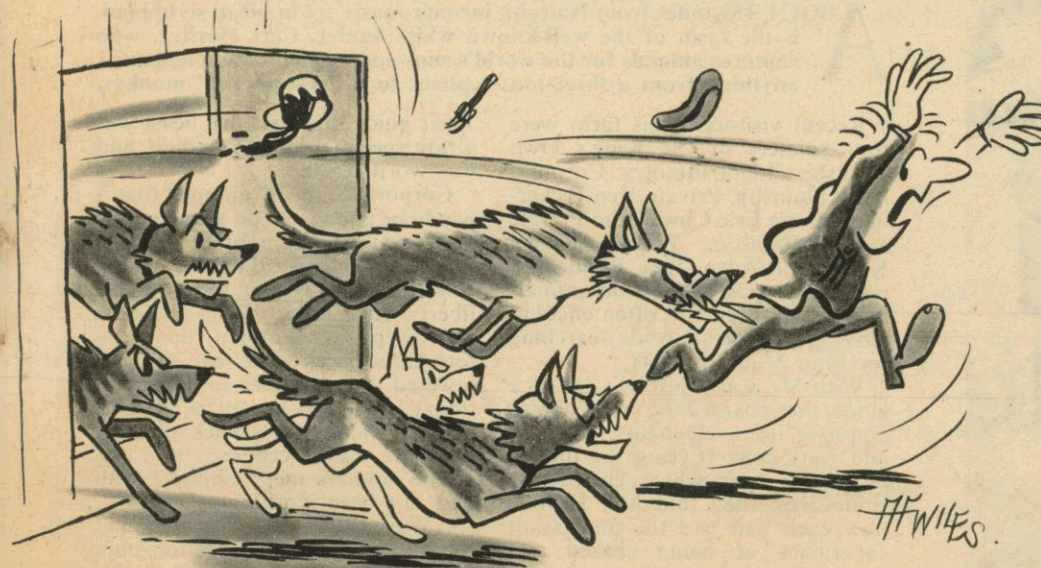
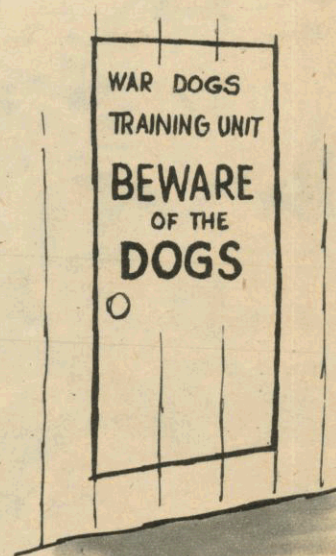
SOLDIER HUMOUR



"Get a grip on yourselves—the sun won't hurt you!"



"All right, lad, you can try it. The Old Man's in a good mood this morning."



"Johnson, what vaccine did you put in this syringe?"



The Cheetah's Kiss—starring Corporal Peter Stainsby.



"So you're off to Aden?" said actor Macdonald Carey. "Say, you get a good summer there." Below: Red-headed Rhonda Fleming, between shots, chats with the visitors.



THIS PATROL WAS MUCH MORE FUN...

Four Yorkshire soldiers visited a Kenya farm where the rhinos were friendlier—but not much

Photographs: Sergeant W. R. Hawes



Private Eric Cowell offers the giraffes an off-the-ration titbit.

ABOUT 150 miles from Nairobi, incongruously set in bleak scrubland, is the farm of the well-known white hunter, Carr Hartley, who captures animals for the world's zoos and can lend film companies anything from a three-ton elephant to a "vest-pocket" monkey.

Recent visitors to his farm were four soldiers of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry: Corporal Peter Stainsby, Private Ken Pickering, Private Eric Cowell and Private John Morrison. Before leaving Kenya for Aden, they decided to take a last look at the wild animals of the kind they had often encountered in the forests while searching for Mau Mau terrorists.

With Mr. Carr Hartley's son as a guide, they roamed the farm, photographing lions, elephants, cheetahs and wart hogs. Eyeing the flimsy-looking barrier which enclosed a rhinoceros, they told Mr. Hartley how each had had the unpleasant experience of being chased and "treed" by rhinos while on patrol.

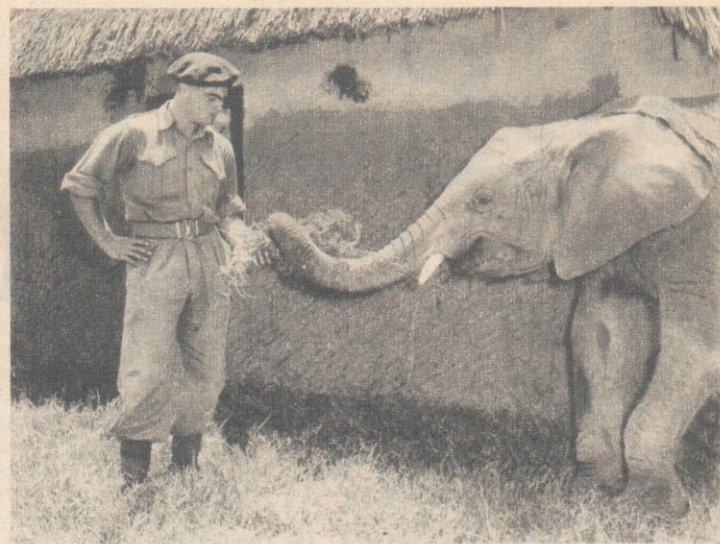
Their guide said that this beast was a rare specimen, a white rhino, and was worth £5000.

Corporal Stainsby quipped that it would be good to sit on a nest-egg of £5000—and, after a brief struggle, succeeded in bestriding the rhino. The rhino was willing to allow this liberty once only. When the next man prepared to mount, the rhino took three paces to the rear, snorted, lowered its huge horn to an operational level, and began to advance . . . The party were back through the fence within seconds.

The soldiers met "Chimp," who had just been working as an extra for Warwick Films. Learning that the film unit was on location only 15 miles away, they decided to pay



Left: "Chimp" has been working as a film extra in the new film "Odongo."



Right: A baby elephant accepts an offering of food from Private Ken Pickering.

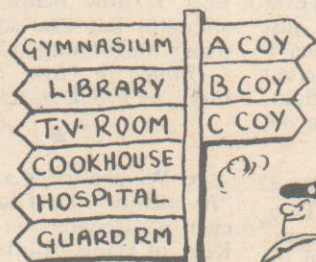
Below: Corporal Stainsby, who has been "treed" by a rhino while on patrol, enjoys his "revenge."

it a visit.

After a rough ride over dusty tracks, they found the American film stars Rhonda Fleming and Macdonald Carey shooting a scene for the film "Odongo," in a rugged setting of huge boulders, thorn bushes and a cascade. When the cameramen "cut" the soldiers were introduced all round. They approached red-haired Miss Fleming with more nervousness than they had shown an hour before in their encounter with the rhino; but she soon charmed away their shyness. —Report by Lance-Corporal T. W. Murphy, Military Observer.



SOLDIER's cover of May, 1954 showed a familiar Kenya hazard.



BEER

It is unlikely to reach the soldier in pill form, but it may arrive as a kind of "treacle"—for diluting. This feature brings the subject of the Army's beer right up-to-date

FROTH

SIXTY years ago, strong drink (mainly beer) accounted for 19s of every pound spent in canteens.

Today, NAAFI estimate, alcoholic drink accounts for only one shilling in the pound of takings.

In 1878 the "wet canteen" of the Royal Artillery canteen at Woolwich occupied nearly the whole of one floor of the building. It sold ale at fivepence a quart, porter at threepence a quart and stout at fourpence. By 1928, beer was being sold in half-pints instead of quarts, the beer-bar was tucked away in one corner, and someone calculated the consumption at a quarter of a pint a man per month.

Early this century, it was the habit of some old soldiers to leave the canteen each night with a bucket filled with eight pints of beer (at twopence a pint), which they would drink lying in their beds.

"East India Pale Ale" was brewed at Burton-on-Trent for India, where troops were probably among the best customers. A ship carrying the brew was wrecked and salvaged hogsheads were sold in Liverpool, where the beer was so popular that a steady demand sprang up. India Pale

Ale is still sold in large quantities in England.

In the days before barracks, when soldiers were quartered in inns, part of the contract was that the innkeeper should supply the troops with beer. When troops moved into barracks, "beer-money," at the rate of a penny or five-farthings a day was issued.



They went to their huts with buckets of beer. . .

IT'S HARD TO CONCENTRATE

THAT concentrated beer which was mentioned recently in Parliament is still a long way in time from the canteens of Cyprus and Singapore.

The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Mr. D. Heathcoat-Amory) told the House of Commons that the object of the experiments was largely to see whether beer could be concentrated for convenience of transit to troops overseas. Why ship water round the world if you can draw it off?

Members of Parliament found the subject of beer diverting, as always. Dr. Edith Summerskill wanted to know "the lethal dose of concentrated beer," and Mr. Gibson, Member for Clapham, asked what the troops thought about "the suggestion that their pints should come in little pills." The Minister, with a twinkle, answered: "That is one of the things which, for security reasons, is being kept away from the troops at the present time."

SOLDIER is informed that beer has been successfully concentrated to a quarter of its volume by freezing, stored for months, and then successfully reconstituted by adding water and carbonating. But that was in laboratory conditions—perfect conditions, in which bacteriological reaction and other factors

could be satisfactorily controlled.

How the process will stand up to commercial conditions is another question. The experimenters at the Brewing Industry Research Foundation expect many headaches. Their next step is to set up a "pilot" commercial concentrating plant for more trials.

The laboratory experiments have been carried out on light ales, brown ales, stouts and strong ales. Whether draught beer can be concentrated in the same way remains to be seen.

The concentrates produced during the laboratory experiments are "very good indeed to drink," SOLDIER was told. They taste like the super-strength beers which were exported to foreign courts in the 18th century. At the court of Catherine the Great, such beer was judged to be good if a spilled drop would stick a glass to the table in a minute or two.

If the experiments are successful, the concentrated beer will not be such a novelty as some people suppose. Before World War Two, a good deal of beer was sent to the troops in Egypt concentrated to two-thirds of its volume. The odd third was made up with water by the bottlers in Egypt. But reconstituted beer never tasted quite like the original.

Until the 1930s, many breweries had military departments which specialised in supplying unit canteens and messes. Brewers' drays were a familiar part of the scenery on manoeuvres and marquees bearing brewers' names were landmarks in tented camps.

In the Western Desert, the men of Eighth Army thought themselves lucky if they received two bottles of beer in a month. In Burma, Fourteenth Army's beer-ration was three bottles a month—if they were lucky.

The only time NAAFI has ever brewed its own beer was just after World War Two, when a brewery was set up in a converted minesweeper, turned into a floating club for the British Pacific Fleet.

At the end of World War Two, a famous Hamburg brewery was provided with materials and instructions for brewing beer the British way. "We have never brewed beer like this in 500 years," mourned the brewery's director when he tasted a sample. But the British troops liked it.

American soldiers arriving in Britain in World War Two were



Only two bottles a month.

warned: "The usual British drink is beer, which is not an imitation of German beer, as our beer is, but ale (but they usually call it beer or bitter). The British are beer-drinkers, and can hold it. Beer is now below peacetime strength, but can still make a man's tongue wag at both ends." —Quoted in "Beer Has a History," by Frank A. King.

At Winchester is a tombstone "In memory of Thomas Thetcher, a Grenadier in the North Regt. of Hants Militia, who died of violent Fever contracted by drinking Small Beer when hot the 12th of May 1764 Aged 26 Years." The tombstone was erected by his comrades who added,

An honest Soldier never is forgot
Whether he die by
Musket or by Pot. **OVER**



**"You
look
plastered!"**

*"What d'you mean?
Haven't had a drink all day."*

"Sorry—I meant your hair."

*"Oh! that. Can't seem to keep it tidy
without plastering it down."*

"Why not try a different hair dressing?"

"I have; but they all seem to be the same."

*"Well, I've found one that's different.
It's clean and crystal-clear, and a small
bead of it keeps me smart all day."*

*"I must say your hair does look good.
What is it you use?"*

*"It's Tru-gel. Costs 3/- but one tube
lasts a very long time. All chemists
and barbers have it."*

"Thanks. I'll try it . . . Tru-gel."

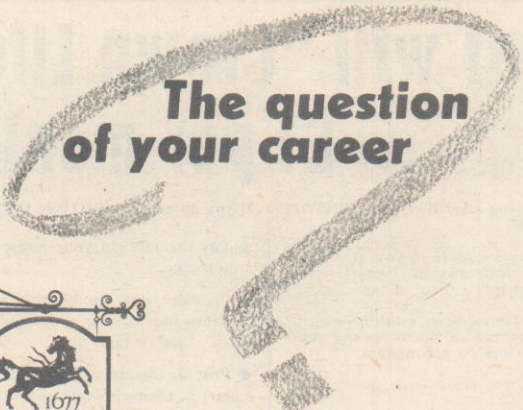
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And have you tried 'Ovaltine' Biscuits yet? If not, you have a splendid treat in store. These crisp and delightful biscuits are made from the finest ingredients, and they have an attractive flavour that appeals to everyone.

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GRADE "C"		GRADE "B"		GRADE "A"	
Age	Salary	Age	Salary	Age	Salary
17	£240	24	£480	24	£550
26	£600	28	£710	26	£700
39	£900	31	£820	28	£820

Remuneration will then progress according to status.

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★ Create an immediate estate for your family which otherwise would require years of constant savings to accumulate.

★ Build up an emergency cash reserve fund.

★ Create in later years collateral security so helpful when seeking loans for house purchase and other purposes.

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All enquiries will be dealt with personally by Major A. E. Arnold (ret'd.) who for some years has been giving the benefit of his advice and experience to members of the Forces on all forms of insurance, and who will be very pleased to assist you to find the right plan.

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After your training you may qualify as a shift boss, earning at least £1,000 a year. The next grade is a mine captain who earns upwards of £1,350.

Board and lodging for bachelors cost £12-£16 a month. Houses for married men are available at rents of about £5 a month after completion of training. The climate is sunny, income tax is low, and facilities are available for nearly every kind of sport at low cost.

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with the hair!

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Just a few drops of 'Vaseline' Brand Hair Tonic massaged gently into the scalp for 20 seconds daily checks Dry Scalp, supplements the natural scalp oils, and keeps your hair looking really neat and handsome all day.

If you want to be Sarge's pride and joy—and cut a dash with the girls on Saturday night—nip down to the NAAFI now and buy a bottle of 'Vaseline' Hair Tonic. You'll soon see the difference.



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HE IS NAAFI'S ALE CONNER



Mr. J. Munton Foxley shows his tinned beers—for export.

IT is a collection to bring memories to any beer-drinking soldier who has ever served overseas.

There is Stella from Egypt, Lion from Cyprus, Diamond from Malta, Asahi from Japan, Tusker from Kenya—plus a selection of German, Dutch, Swedish and Danish beers, and some British export brands with labels never seen at home.

The possessor of these bottles is a dapper man with a job which affects every soldier who buys a glass of beer in a canteen: Mr. J. Munton Foxley, NAAFI's beer-buyer and ale "conner."

Unlike the ale-conners (official testers) of 400 or 500 years ago, Mr. Foxley does not wear leather breeches in which to sit for half-an-hour in a puddle of ale. (If the ale stuck the breeches to the bench, it contained sugar and was impure.)

Mr. Foxley, who has been in the licensed trade for 30 years, joined NAAFI when his Lake District hotel was commandeered in 1940. Beer was growing scarce at that time, and especially so for Service units stationed in "under-brewed" rural areas. Organising supplies was not easy. It was his task to keep the tap open to Services at home, to negotiate with brewers on prices and quality.

Little enough beer was going to troops overseas, owing to shortages of materials and shipping space. But after Sir Winston Churchill visited Italy, a "beer for the troops" committee was set up, and the brewers, always co-operative though handicapped, were able to provide more beer for Mr. Foxley to send abroad. They were encouraged by a famous Churchillian minute: "Good. Press on. Make sure that the beer—four pints a week—goes to the troops under fire of the enemy before any of the parties in the rear get a drop."

In those days, Mr. Foxley recalls, they exported 100,000 cases, each of four dozen quarts, equivalent to 20,000 barrels, to troops overseas every month.

Today Mr. Foxley negotiates on prices and supplies with 200 brewers in Britain and keeps an eye on supplies from local brewers in overseas stations. (He

also looks after NAAFI's soft-drinks—another 200 manufacturers—and ice-cream supplies.) When samples come into his office, Mr. Foxley not only tries them on his own expert palate, but sends a bottle to NAAFI's analysts.

In his office is a variety of beers, mostly British export brands, in tins. This form of container soldiers tend to regard with suspicion, sometimes because they have had a shower-bath of beer when trying to open a tin. "Use the opener decisively," says Mr. Foxley. "It's when you make a small hole that the beer spurts out."

Exports of tinned beer are increasing, and the reason is not far to seek. A tin of beer takes up little more than half the space occupied by a bottle containing the same amount.

Does canning affect the flavour? "I am not swanking when I say that I can tell the difference," says Mr. Foxley. "You see, I don't smoke, which preserves my palate, and I study these things. I don't think the average beer-drinker who smokes

notices any difference between bottled and canned beer."

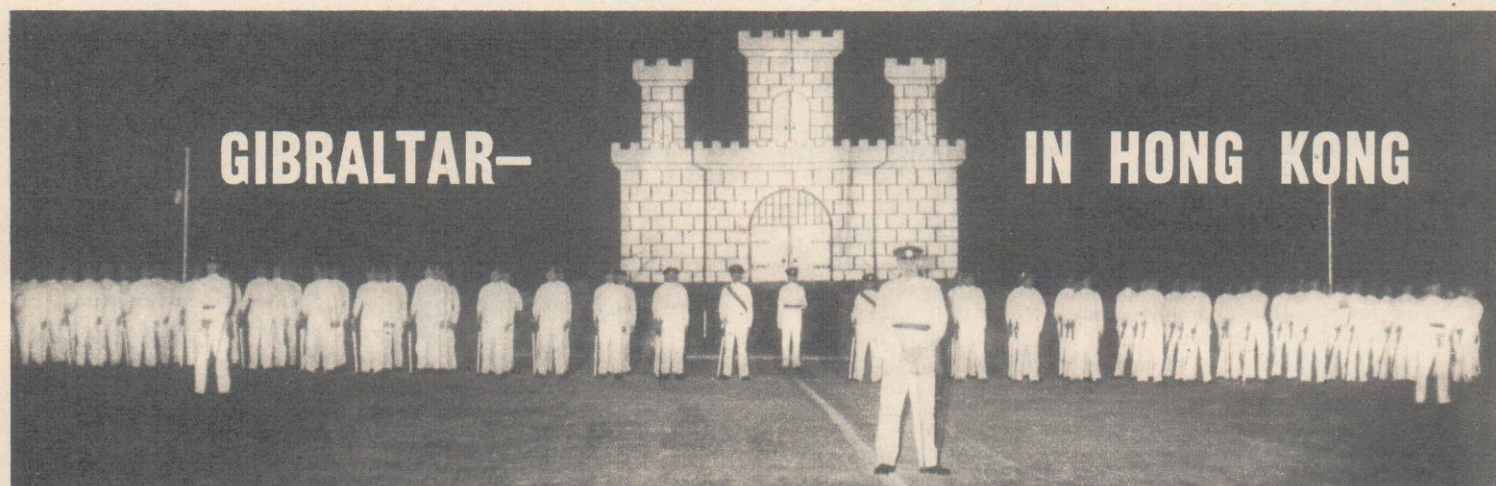
As in the civilian market, so in the Services draught beer is losing its popularity to bottled beer. Soldiers, says Mr. Foxley, like brown ale, probably because it is sweeter than most beers, but light ales are also popular. Price, he thinks, has a great deal to do with the soldier's choice. "Men will smoke," he says, "and beer comes after cigarettes. If the Chancellor cut the tobacco tax I think beer consumption would go up." Mr. Foxley believes that NAAFI's high lemonade sales are due to the popularity of shandy.

At home, NAAFI's beer prices are based on the local public-bar prices. "Woe betide us if we charge a halfpenny more a pint!" says Mr. Foxley. The men who use a canteen selling draught beer nominate the brewer who is to supply the canteen. If the troops do not like the beer, the brewer is changed.

Overseas, NAAFI sells local brews. Troops newly arrived at a station may not like the local beer at first, but they soon acquire the taste for it, says Mr. Foxley.

And what does Mr. Foxley drink himself, in the way of beer?

"I am so used to sampling good quality export beers that I am afraid I am spoiled," he says. He likes certain more expensive draught beers. And when he goes home to Brighton after the day's work, he usually has one bottle of beer with his evening meal. "Occasionally," he says, "I also have a nip of strong ale. I rarely exceed that."



Under searchlights, the Essex and Northamptonshire Regiments parade in the New Territories of Hong Kong.

TWO non-existent battalions have celebrated their bicentenaries in Hong Kong: the 2nd Battalion The Essex Regiment and the 2nd Battalion The Northamptonshire Regiment.

Both went into suspended animation in 1947. For this important anniversary, the 1st Battalions of each regiment, stationed in Hong Kong, were allowed to assume the titles of their second battalions.

The parade was staged at night at San Wai, Fanling, in the New Territories, under the searchlights of a movement troop, Royal Artillery. Those present included Sir Alexander Grantham, the Governor of Hong Kong, and Lieutenant-General Sir Cecil Sugden, commanding British Forces in Hong Kong.

An impressive backcloth showed the Castle of Gibraltar, the emblem awarded to both regiments for their part in the defence of the Rock in the great siege.

The 2nd Battalion The Essex Regiment were formerly the 56th of Foot and were known as "The Pompadours." That name derived from the shade selected for the colour of their facings—"rose-

pompadour," the favourite colour of Madame de Pompadour, mistress of Louis XV.

The 2nd Battalion The Northamptonshire Regiment were formerly the 60th, later renumbered the 58th. The Colours carried on this parade were presented in 1860, and are among the very few remaining sets of Colours of the old dimensions—five feet flying, and four feet six inches to the pike. The pikes are surmounted by spearheads instead of crowns.

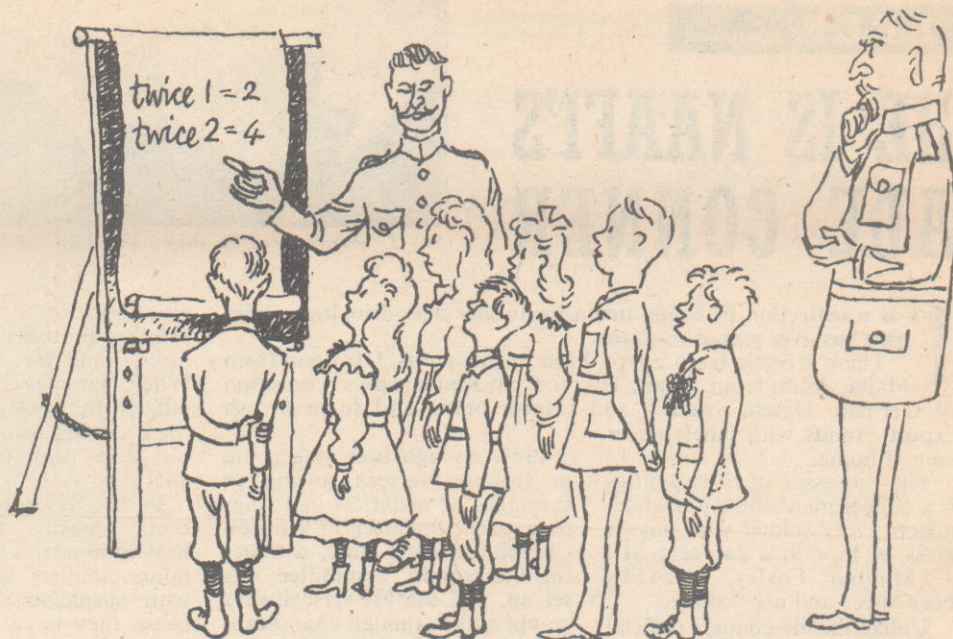
They are believed to be the last Colours in present-day use to have been carried in action—at the Battle of Laing's Nek, in 1881.

At the Royal Review at Aldershot in 1935 King George V directed that these Colours, because of their age, would not be flown during the march-past. Now, on all occasions, the Colours are held to the pikes.

To commemorate the battle honour "Gibraltar" the parade fired a *feu-de-joie*, a salute permitted only on the Sovereign's birthday or in recognition of a notable victory.—From a report by Major K. C. Harvey, Army Public Relations.

"Twice two is four," said the bombardier . . . but was he right?

Here is an entertaining story by an old soldier about life in a garrison school in India under the erratic Mr. Springheel, an Army Schoolmaster of an extinct generation. The author, J. E. STRATFORD, left school at 12 and continued his education in the Army, helping at the same time to educate children of soldiers



LIFE WITH Mr. SPRINGHEEL

MR. SPRINGHEEL (let us call him that) first crossed my path in India, in 1897, when I was serving in the Royal Artillery. He was the local Army Schoolmaster.

One day, out of the blue, I found myself detailed to report to the garrison school for duty as a teacher—this on the strength of possessing a second-class certificate of education (in those days something of a rarity in the lower ranks).

I reported to Mr. Springheel, who looked me over superciliously, weighing me up. Then he finally decided to take a chance.

The school was run in "shifts" for children and the troops of the garrison. Usually the only classes Mr. Springheel taught were those of men sitting for first-class certificates or on the "acting schoolmasters" course.

Mr. Springheel put me in charge of his youngest class, children of eight to nine or so, perhaps a dozen of them.

I was given for my first lesson the "twice times" table. I hung the appropriate long linen scroll on the board, and began to expound to the class. The schoolmaster stood outside the half-circle at the blackboard. In what I hoped was a teacher-like voice I said, "Twice two is four. Twice three is six. Twice four is eight . . ." As I flattered myself that I was doing very well, Mr. Springheel leaned over and whispered in my ear, bitterly sarcastic: "Twice two are four; twice three are six; twice four are eight."

That was a lesson I have not forgotten.

Came the day when I had to take my class of little ones in history. Their text-book was a collection of short stories with titles like "Alfred and the Burnt Cakes," "King Canute and the Disloyal Tide."

I began: "Now we're going to talk about history. What is this history?"

Pat came back the chorus, "The story of our country."

We went on:

"Who was Alfred?"—"The King of England."

"Now he was called something else beside Alfred—what was it?"—"Alfred the Great."

"Why was he called Great?"

"Because he did so much good for our country."

Of course, they had been over it before, many times, and knew all the answers.

Mr. Springheel was standing outside the circle fingering his chin, and with that cultivated sneer on his face, which by now I had recognised as a permanency.

"You think you're doing very well, don't you?" he said. "You seem to have not the slightest idea of teaching. Let me take them."

I saw a change come over the faces of these little mites. They knew Mr. Springheel and his methods. For a few minutes he talked about Alfred, going over much the same ground that I had. Then suddenly he said, "Now, Alfred is a nice name, isn't it?" Quavering voices agreed that it was.

"Now, do you know anyone else named Alfred?"

The children looked at each other, but were silent. Mr. Springheel spoke to one of the boys: "Fetch my cane."

Then the master asked each child in turn: "Did you ever hear of Alfred Warner or Alfred Strong?"—two boys in higher classes. Each one answered, tremblingly, "Yes, Sir," and at

that answer received a cruel stroke on the hand.

Mr. Springheel handed the book over to me, saying, "You see what I mean? Get them to use their initiative, their brains. Most of them haven't got any."

Leaving me with a dozen crying children he then stalked off to "the Office," which usually meant the Sergeants' Mess. Sometimes, after one of his visits to "the Office" he would return, in good humour, send all the children packing, and regale us with stories of his college days.

Mr. Springheel's Scripture instruction would scarcely have commended itself to higher authority. Once we heard the fol-

lowing: "Now children, you all know the story of the Ark."

"Yes, Sir."

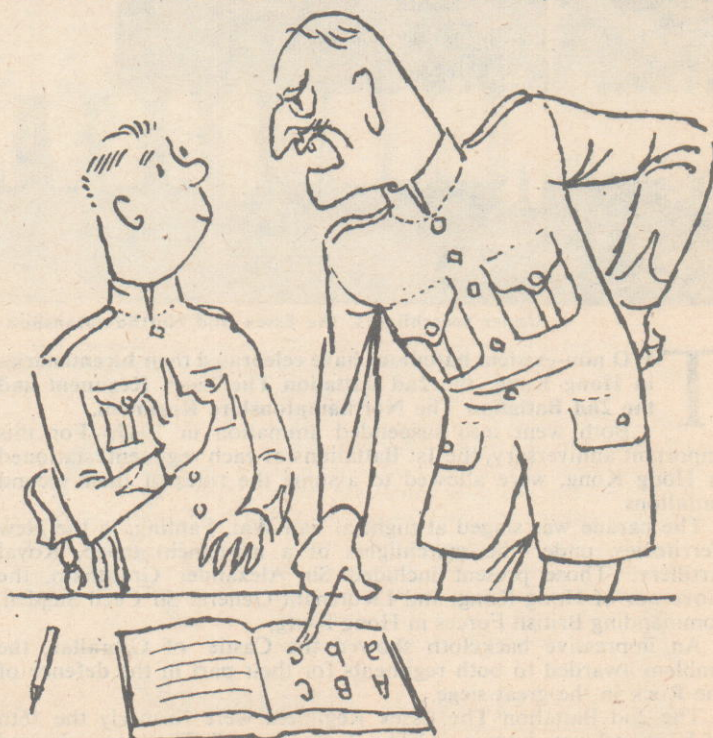
"And you have been told how two of every living creature went into that Ark, and lived there during the Flood?"

"Yes, Sir."

"You are told its size, so many cubits long and broad and high. Now, you see that barrack-room over there?" (pointing to a two-storey block). "Well, it was about the size of that. Now, do you believe that all those animals—and he catalogued some of them—could get into that Ark?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Well, I don't! But, mind you, don't take any notice of that



"No. no, no—this one is C!"

statement. You are expected to believe it and you must do so. Read on, the next boy."

And the reading of the Scriptures was resumed.

As an Army Schoolmaster of that generation, Mr. Springheel had not been taught music but that did not stop him taking the school in singing lessons. He struck a tuning fork to give the note and beat time with his cane. Sometimes he would say:

"Now as you sing, I want you all to follow me as I move backwards." Then he began slowly to back, across the floor, out of the open doorway, and all round the school building, and again into the school. It was a curious sight, to see this six-foot man waving his cane, walking backwards, 70 children following him, with heads up, mouths wide open, and hands behind their backs singing their hearts out. Round about were perhaps a score of the men of the garrison, grinning and enjoying the spectacle.

One day Mr. Springheel came into the school apparently in good mood, due possibly to a convivial glass or two at "the Office" or possibly because he had just drawn his month's pay. He sat down at his desk, and called to his son, a boy of about 12, "Tommy, bring your school bag, and take this money home to your mother."

The boy brought his bag, and from the pockets of his uniform the master pulled out handfuls of rupees, and put them into the receptacle. Thinking that his father was in a good mood, the boy said with a shy grin: "Father, what about those four annas you promised me?" At that, without a word of warning, Mr. Springheel slammed his son across the face with the back of his hand.

The boy was knocked off the dais, flat on to the stone floor of the school. The money, some 200-odd rupees, was scattered all over the floor. The boy picked himself up and Mr. Springheel made for him to strike him again, but the lad ran out of the school, his father calling abuse after him—"Go home to your mother, you—". The schoolmaster had a pencil between his teeth, and in his rage he bit it into shreds—a really painful sight. As the boy sped towards home, a mile away, bare-headed in the midday sun, the other children gathered up the rupees, and restored them to the leather school bag.

Then Mr. Springheel, a little cooler, said to me, the senior teacher: "Carry on, bombardier, I'm going to the Office." We saw him no more that day.

The modern Army takes rather more pains with the illiterate than did Mr. Springheel—but he did try, in his fashion.

Once there came to the school a young soldier who confessed that he had never been to school, and did not know the alphabet. Mr. Springheel called us teachers over to him.

"Now, this young man is quite illiterate, and just to show you

what can be done with this type, I will take him on myself. You chaps are to leave him entirely to me."

We grinned at each other as he and his pupil sat together at a desk. We knew this soldier.

I overheard some of Mr. Springheel's private lesson, which went like this: "No, this one is 'B', now what is this one?" "No, it is 'C'. Look here, this is 'A', this is 'B', and this one is 'C'—A.B.C. Now which is this?"

The boy again gave the wrong answer, almost as if he was doing so intentionally. I could see that the master's temper was getting the better of him. The boy seemed incapable of recognising any of the letters when they were pointed to haphazard, and Mr. Springheel was all in.

"You are absolutely the limit!" he stormed. "Never in all my years of school-teaching, have I come across such a case." He stood up, and now he was very angry. Then he addressed the cowering soldier again:

"You would learn nothing in a hundred years. I'm nearly mad now, and if you don't get out of here, I shall be quite. Get out!"

The soldier was really frightened. He got up and Mr. Springheel stood over him, with a wild look in his eye.

"Get out! GET OUT!"

The boy ran out of the open door, and across the square towards his barrack-room. I sent one of the men after him with his helmet. He never came back to school.

As I was now confirmed as a teacher, with an acting stripe and pay at the rate of ten rupees a month, it seemed well that I should obtain a first-class certificate, so I took evening classes under Mr. Springheel. Soon I was on the course for "acting schoolmasters"—soldiers who were employed on stations where only a single battery or detachment were to be found.

I enjoyed Mr. Springheel's lessons immensely, though his views on grammar were unorthodox, and he openly disagreed with the rules in our school textbooks.

One of the subjects for first-class candidates was writing from dictation, usually a famous speech or similar theme. Candidates had to put in their own capitals and punctuation marks, and this was his system:

"Now, I will read the whole paragraph through. Then I will dictate. I will read on until the first stop. If I raise my voice, it means a comma; if I drop my voice it means a full stop. Then if I make a remark, 'time is getting on', or 'writing is half the battle', you must alter the full stop into a semi-colon."

We duly obliged.

I became an "acting schoolmaster" and eventually found myself a local sergeant on a hill station near Poona. Those were great times. I would not have missed a day of my 27 years in the ranks—nor would I have missed Mr. Springheel.

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The Women at the Wheel

THEY were known as the "Fannies" from the initials of their Corps. But if you had asked a hundred soldiers what the initials FANY stood for, very few could have answered "First-Aid Nursing Yeomanry."

The Corps was the inspiration of a British regimental sergeant-major, lying wounded on a Sudan battlefield in 1898. Later, as Captain Baker, he "sold" the authorities the idea of a women's yeomanry corps. It was proposed that these women should ride on horseback on to the battlefield and carry off the wounded. It was an idea which attracted high-spirited young women of the Edwardian era, and a number of "aristocratic amazons." The Corps always enjoyed such distinguished patronage that it is

salutary to remember who conceived it—a ranker officer.



A striking FANY "creation" of 1907—just the thing for the Edwardian belle. From "FANY Invicta."

Now comes a history of the corps, "FANY Invicta," (Hutchinson, 21s) by Dame Irene Ward, MP. "Throughout the book," she writes, "I have referred to members of the Corps by their surnames. This is in accordance with FANY tradition."

In World War One, the British Army, to its shame, spurned the first "Fannies," who thereupon entered the Belgian service. But in the summer of 1915 "Fannies" were driving ambulances in the "Calais Convoy," helping to evacuate the wounded. And a fine job they did. They had no formal rules of conduct—only an unwritten code.

The "Fannies" never did ride on horseback on to the battlefield; driving vehicles was their speciality. In 1937 the title of the corps was changed to the Women's Transport Service (FANY), but the old name remained in popular use.

The finest performances put up by "Fannies" in the second world war were those of the women couriers who were parachuted into occupied Europe.

A "Fanny" teaches an ATS girl to drive. Drawing by Anthony Gross.



This book contains a gallery of photographs of brave women, with captions like "murdered by injection at Natzweiler," "shot at Dachau," "sent to gas chamber at Ravensbruck." If the role conceived for FANY in 1907 seemed a daring one, what of the role which its heroines undertook in Hitler's war? Dame Irene Ward comments on the very modest decorations which were

awarded to some of the extraordinarily capable and brave women who survived.

One story which Dame Irene gives at length comes from the pages of SOLDIER, which in 1946 told how Joan Bamford-Fletcher, "the only white woman ever to take command of a force of Japanese soldiers," brought 2000 internees to safety under the noses of Indonesian bandits.

"Gad Sir, the Wrong Type—What?"

THE odious phrase "temporary gentleman" became current early in World War One, when tens of thousands of officers had to be produced from social strata hitherto untapped.

The Old Army had always been officered by the upper classes, who rode horses, and the New Army was officered by schoolmasters and clerks, who rode motor-cycles. Not only did the New Army scare the Old, but their motor-cycles scared the horses.

A long novel which brings back vividly the social and military atmosphere of those days is Henry Williamson's "A Fox Under My Cloak" (Macdonald, 15s). The hero, if that is the right word, is Phillip Maddison, who has already fought through an earlier novel ("How Dear Is Life") as a private soldier.

Second-Lieutenant Maddison finds himself posted to a fashionable "county" regiment of un-blooded Territorials, more regular than the Regulars. He is a tiresome young man in many ways; he talks too much, he drinks too much, and he rides a horrible motor-cycle. His fellow officers send him a "round robin" asking him to leave the regiment. They subject him to all the time-honoured "ragging" indignities, deluging him with water in bed and throwing his belongings out of the window. They also bring him before an (illegal) subalterns' court-martial. But they never quite succeed in making Phillip a gentleman. Eventually he goes off to the Battle of Loos.

It is the period when the professional army has been wiped out or promoted; when young officers sport monocles and are beginning to transfer their "pips" from their cuffs to their shoulder-straps; when the soldiers in the trenches believe every word of the arch-rogue, Bottomley.

Mr. Williamson paints a crowded canvas in which every detail is meticulously executed. To anyone who served through the first world war the story must bring back proud, and also disconcerting memories.



Mr. H. A. Morgan-Browne is responsible for selection and purchasing of books and supervising the fulfilment of orders to individuals, units and Forces bookshops the world over. Served in the Royal Artillery 1940-45 in India and Burma.

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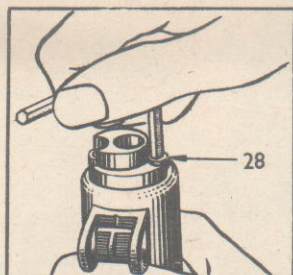
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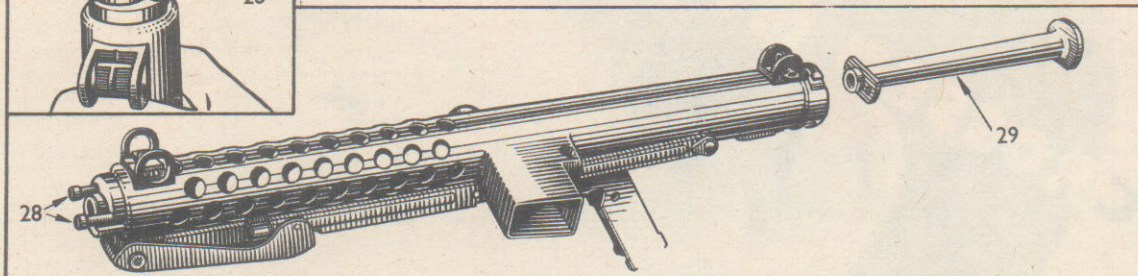
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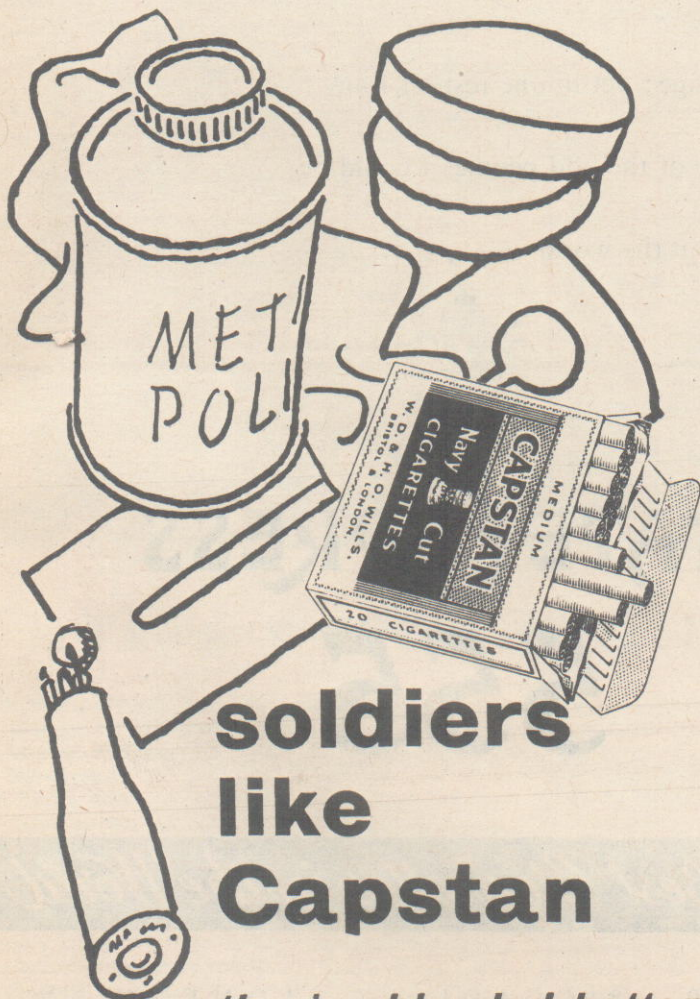
lug and withdraw it from the case. To replace the barrel insert it into the case, rotating it to clear the bayonet lug. The extractor clearance groove in the barrel face should be in line with the ejector opening. Insert screws and screw up tight.

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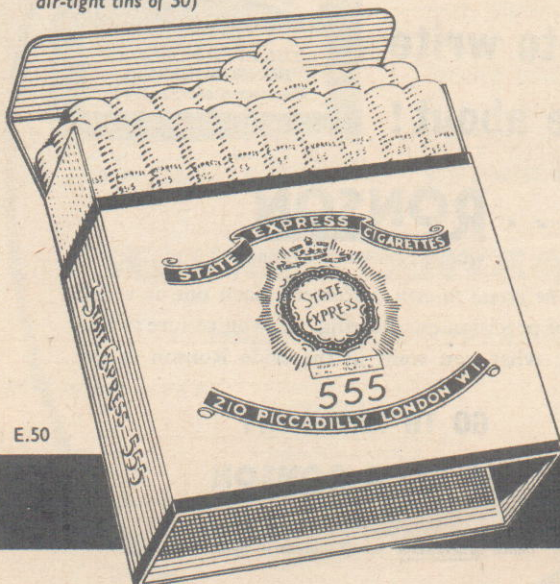
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"A FILTHY GAME" SAID THE GENERAL

AND what was your job in the war?" asked the general of John Baker White.

"Mostly psychological warfare, deception and kindred activities," was the reply.

The general turned away growling, "Filthy game." But the man he had interrogated pursued him and protested that, filthy or not, this game had cut the casualty lists and shortened the war.

A little more of what John Baker White would have liked to tell the general is contained in "The Big Lie" (Evans, 15s.), a record of the bluffs and hoaxes perpetrated against the Axis in World War Two.

Any chronicle of this type is bound to cause controversy. The old idea of "clean fighting" still persists, even in the midst of total war, and it is well that it should.

It is more honourable to assault a man's body than to debauch his spirit, says the old school. Yet it would be absurd to say that bluff must not be used in war.

Where is the line to be drawn? If it is permissible to spread rumours of terror weapons, is it wrong to tell the enemy that his allies are seducing his women? Is it any worse to distribute faked ration cards behind the lines than to bomb railways and factories?

The author was serving in the Directorate of Military Intelli-

gence when war began. He helped to spread the famous rumour that the British could set the sea on fire. This notion was "fed into the 'pipe line' that ran to the bar of the Grand Hotel in Stockholm, the Avenida in Lisbon, the Ritz in Madrid, and other places in Cairo, Istanbul, Ankara and elsewhere, not forgetting New York." The success of this rumour may be judged from the fact that the British came to believe it too—remember those tales of hundreds of charred corpses of German soldiers in the English Channel?

Rumours concocted by I.P.2 (the unfortunate designation of the author's branch) had to be "vetted" by a committee before

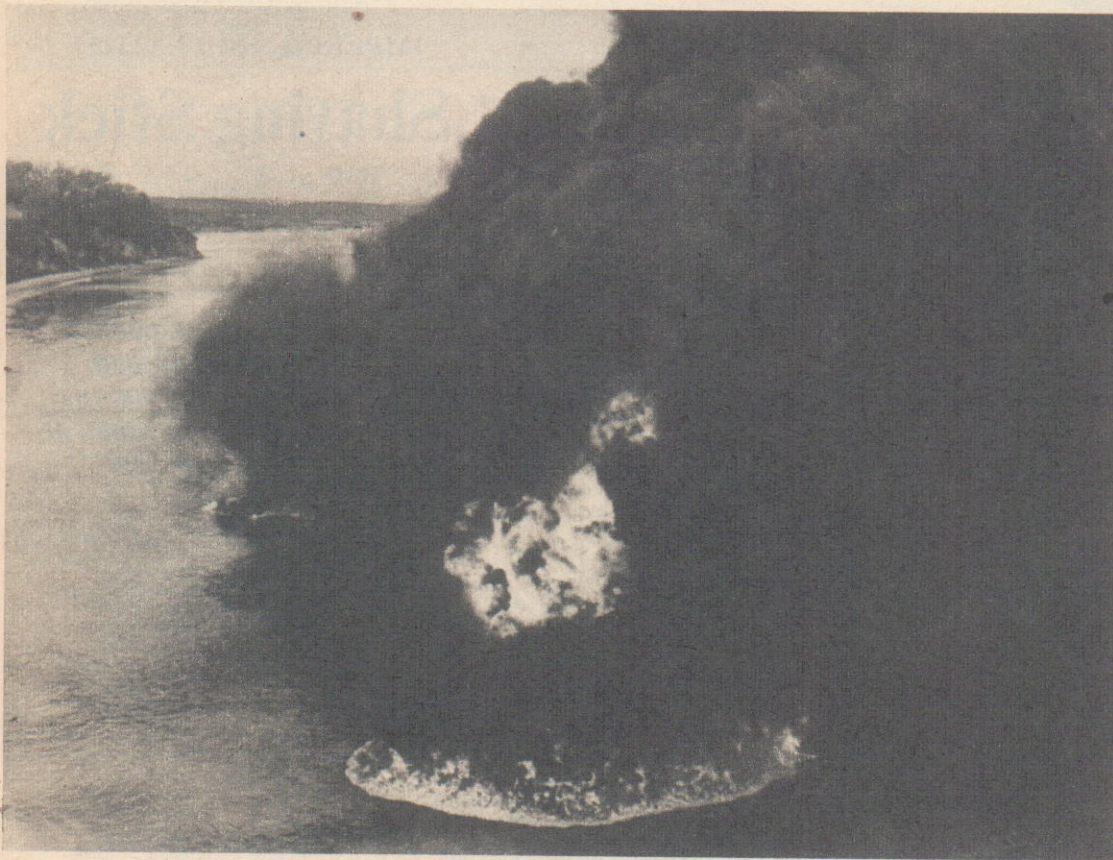
being disseminated. One member wanted to spread a rumour that the British knew how to make an atom bomb. As the scientists had just reported success in this field, the suggestion caused a great "flap" in Security. It was necessary, of course, that Security should know which rumours were our own, and who was deliberately being careless in his talk. At one stage the author had to attract attention to himself in the best bars in Beirut in order to give the impression that he was the vanguard of a battalion (he wore the unfamiliar peewit's-head badge which belonged to the Political Warfare Executive in Middle East, an emblem guaranteed to puzzle enemy agents).

The author deals with such matters (some of them familiar) as "the case of the cardboard tank," the "V" campaign, broadcasts to the Germans, and the launching of "Major Martin" with the false invasion plans in his pocket. Some readers may regret that it was thought necessary to include a photograph of the dead officer, dressed for the hoax.

Possibly the most startling item is the allegation that members of an Allied colonial regiment serving at Geneifa, in Egypt, ate three German prisoners-of-war serving in the bakehouse, and threatened that if they were not moved quickly they would eat their white officers.

British troops did not like Geneifa either, but they never tried that way of getting out!

Britain's defenders **COULD** set the sea on fire—but not so direfully as the Germans believed. This particular display was produced with the aid of fuel pipe-lines running under water.



TANK WORE A WHITE ENSIGN

IN 1940, a World War One tank, wearing a White Ensign at her stern, was to be seen cruising round Portsmouth ready to repel German invaders.

It had a story, of course. In 1919, the veteran had been presented to HMS *Excellent*, the Royal Navy's School of Gunnery, by the Royal Tank Corps, to acknowledge the fact that, faced for the first time with the problem of firing guns from moving platforms, the Army had sent its early tank gunners to *Excellent* to be trained. In 1940, a war-time subaltern, converted into a sub-lieutenant, set the old tank moving with the aid of spare parts from museum pieces in Battersea and Southsea parks.

The circumstances which took the tank to Whale Island (*Excellent's* geographical name) were reversed in World War Two, records Commander R. T. Young, RN, in "The House that Jack Built" (Gale and Polden, 15s.), a lively history of *Excellent*. In World War Two, the Royal Navy received some gunboats with a motion at sea unlike that of any other ship, but like that of a tank. This time the Royal Armoured Corps came to the rescue with advice on how to train gunlayers.

The author also records *Excellent's* close liaison with the Queen's Royal Regiment, which fought as a regiment of marines in HMS *Queen Charlotte*, at the battle of the Glorious First of June, in 1794.

The Army in Brief

AN early, and famous, Soldier's Pocket Book was written by Field-Marshal Lord Wolseley. The latest in the line comes from Major R. C. W. Thomas, of the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment: "The Soldier's Pocket Book" (Evans, 5s). In its 150 pages is a great quantity of information which can normally be found only by diligent searching through the Manual of Military Law, Army Council Instructions and Queen's Regulations—and all their amendments. It ranges from a description of the organisation and rôles of the Army, through pay and allowances, pensions, commissions, and military law, to useful hints for making Army life more enjoyable.

Miscellaneous "don'ts" include: Don't borrow from an inferior; Don't sit on a troopship rail; Don't be familiar to women in the Middle East.



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SUBJECT(S) OF INTEREST.....



Second-Lieutenant G. Read touches down to score Rhine Army's second unconverted try.

BAOR Too Fast For Germany



Rhine Army's captain, 2/Lieut E. A. J. Fergusson, presents a pennant to the German captain, K. Wiegmann (Viktoria Club, Hanover) before the game.

RHINE Army's rugby XV were just too good for the German XV (including 13 Internationals) whom they met at Hanover. The result, a Rhine Army win by six points to five—two tries to a goal—was a fair reflection of the play.

The Army team, led by Second-Lieutenant E. A. J. Fergusson, King's Royal Rifle Corps (Scotland and Oxford Blue) went straight into the attack and good feeding from scrum and line-out was followed up by brilliant work by the three-quarters. After 15 minutes, Second-Lieutenant G. Windsor-Lewis, Royal Horse Artillery, touched down, but the try was not converted.

The German defence then improved, but some fine passing by Rhine Army's three-quarters at last led to another try, this time by Second-Lieutenant G. Read,

Royal Armoured Corps. Once again, Rhine Army failed to convert.

Now the Germans, who had seemed bewildered by the fast, open play asserted themselves and C. Wesch (Viktoria Hanover) made an opening for Bauch (97 Linden) to cross the line. This try was converted by H. Albers (Viktoria Hanover).

In the second half, neither side could penetrate the other's defence. For Rhine Army, whose finishing was better than the Germans', the outstanding players were Lieutenant D. Hayburn, East Lancashire Regiment (hooker), Lieutenant R. Jordan, Royal Engineers (the full back), Lieutenant W. P. Thurgood, Royal Artillery (wing) and Captain T. Carter, Wiltshire Regiment (wing).—From a report by Captain P. Sawyer, Military Observer in Germany.

ARMY DARTS CHAMPION

IN NAAFI clubs throughout Britain, nearly 1000 members of all three Services played off preliminary matches in a darts championship sponsored by NAAFI.

Then, at Chatham, 12 regional champions competed in the finals and from these emerged the Services darts champion—Warrant Officer Class One J. Haslam, Lancashire Fusiliers, garrison sergeant-major at Chatham.

Meanwhile, Territorials throughout the country were getting down to a darts team contest, conceived by Major-General M. M. A. R. West, Director of the Territorial Army, to foster the club spirit in Territorial units and to obtain publicity. District finals will be completed in March and the national final will be held in London on 12 May. Territorials of the Women's Royal Army Corps are not included in the competition but hope to have their own next year.

The Services darts champion: Garrison Sergeant-Major J. Haslam of Chatham, 26 years' service.



DOOLALLY TAP

The statement that soldiers who had too long endured the heat and frustrations of Deolali used to suffer from "Doolally Tap" (SOLDIER, December) gives a wrong impression.

Before 1926 all soldiers entering India spent two weeks at Deolali to become acclimatised, before joining their units. They were instructed in living conditions, on the wearing of topees between sunrise and retreat, how to contact the *char* and *dhobi wallahs* and how to sleep in bug-ridden beds. In other words, they were "Indianised"; they had had the Deolali tap.—Sergeant J. R. Davidson, 239 Bolton Road, Bury.

★This may have been the original meaning of the phrase, but in recent times it has been used—rightly or wrongly—to describe those who behaved oddly.

KING'S BADGE

I was discharged from the Army last year with a 100 per cent disability pension. I have seen other disabled ex-soldiers wearing a round silver badge, which bears the inscription "For King and Country." Am I entitled to wear it? — "Ex-Sergeant, RASC (name and address supplied).

★The King's Badge was issued by the Ministry of Pensions to men and women invalided from the Services for wounds or war disability incurred between 3 September, 1939 and VJ Day.

CHARGING SAPPERS

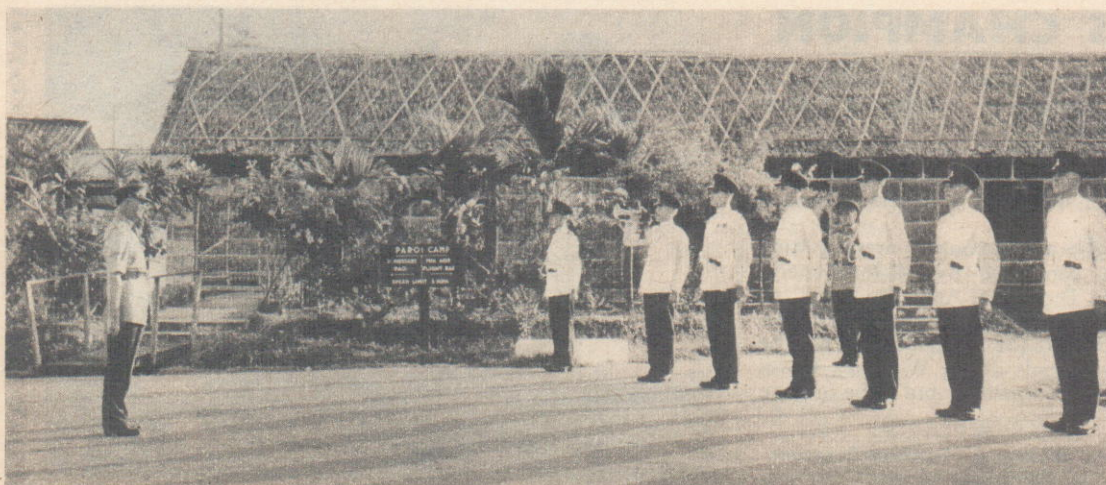
Is it true that Royal Engineers once took part in a cavalry charge?—"Sapper" (name and address supplied).

★Probably the only recorded mounted charge by Royal Engineers occurred when 15th Cavalry Brigade charged the Turks to capture Haifa on 23 September, 1918. Just before the charge, 15th Field Troop happened to be alongside the Jodhpore Lancers, who invited them to join in. They armed themselves with lances and swords from casualties—though they had never handled such weapons before—and rode with the Lancers.

HONOUR GUARD

Since when have British troops been issued with silk jungle green and allowed to wear white gloves and scarves on ceremonial parades (as in the photograph of the ten-nation Honour Guard in Korea—SOLDIER, November)? We enclose a photograph of a guard of honour mounted by men of the XIth Hussars, Prince Albert's Own, and seriously suggest that the British contingent of the ten-nation Honour Guard drop the American influence and stick to traditional British dress.—Corporal Well-belove, Nee-Soon Garrison, Singapore.

★The British contingent in the Korea Honour Guard wear the uniform ordered, like all soldiers anywhere.



A guard of honour mounted by the XIth Hussars. (See letter above.)

Letters

UNEMPLOYED

When I joined the Army in 1950 as an apprentice I was given to understand that I would be primarily a tradesman and, secondly, a soldier and that the Army would continue to be in need of tradesmen. Since entering the Royal Engineers, for more than two years I have done almost nothing in my own trade and my time has been taken up learning and practising soldering or the Corps trade of field engineering.

Now that I wish to purchase my discharge I am told that I cannot do so as I am on a restricted trade list, my trade being that of general electrician RE, AII. It seems so unfair that I can be kept in the Army when they refuse to let me practise my trade. Without practical experience I cannot hope to gain higher qualifications.—"Sapper" (name and address supplied).

★The amount of actual trade employment varies enormously between one unit and another.

Whatever this reader may have been told Sappers are soldiers first and tradesmen afterwards; this follows from the rôle of the field unit in support of divisions and corps. Apart from the need for tradesmen within units, the Corps requires tradesmen for training as clerks of works in Royal Engineers Works Services. Potential clerks of works undergo a course lasting about a year and are granted the rank of staff-sergeant on appointment. The Royal Engineers rely largely on ex-apprentice tradesmen boys to provide students for these courses. This Sapper's trade classification qualifies him for such a course.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Although I originally enlisted for 22 years I am leaving the Army unless I can improve my present status, which is that of chief clerk.

I have been able to study in my free time and have obtained diplomas in surgical chiropody, naturopathy and osteopathy. I am an external student of the Rome Academy, studying psychology, and I also hope to obtain next month the American degree of doctor of psychology.

I like the Army, but by remaining could I obtain commissioned rank? Is an American degree accepted in the British Army and are commissions

●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 a unit.

given to psychologists?—"Medic" (name and address supplied).

★Only a fully registered medical practitioner may hold a commission as a medical officer in the Royal Army Medical Corps; that is, one who holds a degree registrable in the British medical register. A medical degree obtained outside the United Kingdom may be accepted for registration. The qualification of doctor of psychology (American) would not be recognised for this purpose. There is no such appointment as psychologist in the British Army.

THOSE HOSTELS

When a soldier's family arrives in the United Kingdom it may be sent to a hostel. This is likely to be a boarding house in a seaside resort and "very nice" except for the following: cost per week for wife and two children £3 10s; husband £3 17s; gas fire in room 12s; a total of £7 9s per week. The other rooms for my children remain cold as I cannot afford to put more money in the meter. Junior NCOs and below cannot pay 11s per day for themselves, so most of them go back to their units.

Unless the landladies employ help they cannot cope with several families. Often the wives volunteer to wash the pots, scrub the sink, kitchen and dining hall, set the tables and run errands. Yet they have young children to cope with—and are still paying through the nose for the accommodation. If the wives did not do these tasks the standard of living would further deteriorate. There is no provision for washing clothes, unless in

wash-basins in the rooms. Ironing is quite a problem and the husband is lucky to get hot water for a shave.

This is a perfect example of why Regulars want to leave the Army. I am sure the authorities are doing their best, but we are being victimised. Why not use the money paid to the landladies to build decent hostel accommodation?—"Fair Play" (name and address supplied).

★The object of hostels is to house Service families which would otherwise be homeless. A committee recently examined the whole question of separated families and decided that these boarding-type hostels were eminently suitable as temporary accommodation.

There are three boarding-type hostels, at Blackpool, Scarborough and Southend. Most families arriving from overseas go to one of these. They are not designed to provide quarters for a united family. If husbands wish to visit their families they have to pay, in boarding-type hostels, the accommodation charges asked for by the proprietors. The husband draws ration allowance of 4s. 8d. a day, which he can offset against these charges.

Heating is not normally provided free in bedrooms, but all hotels or boarding-houses used by the War Department provide heated sitting-rooms. Wives are expected to keep their own rooms clean and make their own beds, but are not required to take part in washing up or in cleaning the communal rooms, though some wives like to help proprietors in these tasks.

The War Office has received one or two complaints about lack of washing facilities, but it has always been found that no mention of the matter had been made to the proprietors nor had the commandant of the hostel been approached. Where commandants or proprietors have been approached, it has generally been possible to come to some satisfactory arrangement.

When more married quarters have been provided and the civil housing situation becomes less acute, it is hoped to dispense with families' hostels.

THE CARROT

Another soldier and I decided to re-engage to complete 12 years Colour service. He had done five-and-a-half years of an eight-and-four years engagement and I had done six years of a nine-and-three. He extended his engagement and received a £60 bounty. I discovered that I would get no bounty whatsoever. What is the reason for this?—"Band NCO" (name and address supplied).

★The bounty scheme was designed to meet the needs of the Army, not the individual. It was considered that a soldier on an eight-and-four years' engagement would require a greater financial inducement to extend than the soldier on a nine-and-three, who is within reach of a gratuity at the nine-year point.

CLEAN RECORDS

I have always been given to understand that if a soldier has an entry on his regimental conduct sheet he will not get the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

In Egypt I had an argument with a staff-sergeant, who told me he was going to apply for a Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, even though he had an entry on his conduct sheet. Will he get it?—"Nosy Sergeant" (name and address supplied).

★Queen's Regulations say that when initiating a recommendation the commanding officer is the sole judge of the standard of conduct required and will recommend only those who are in every way worthy of the distinction and whose character has been irreproachable. The standard required for a grading of "irreproachable" should normally be a regimental conduct sheet clear of entries for 18 years. In exceptional cases, however, a recommendation may be submitted if, in the opinion of the commanding officer, the offences recorded on a soldier's conduct sheet are trivial or of a technical nature and there is no evidence of deliberate misconduct.

"NEXT WAR"

Can SOLDIER say whether men discharged as medically unfit in the 1939-45 war could be called up in another war? I received 100 per cent disability pension after being discharged with tuberculosis in 1944. This was stopped ten years later so, presumably, I am considered up to Army medical standards again. Recently I have heard rumours that last war pensioners like myself are not liable to recall. Is there any official ruling? — "Ex-Jimmy" (name and address supplied).

★No one can forecast what emergency legislation might be passed in another war.

EPITAPH

Those who thought the Kohima epitaph (Letters, December) was a translation from the ancient Greek were not far wrong. I am sure the author of the lines quoted must have had in mind the poet Simonides' epitaph to the Spartans at Thermopylae which, translated, reads:

Go tell the Spartans, thou that passest by,
That here, obedient to their words, we lie.

Major J. H. Brock, 1st Bn The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, BAOR.

★The Kohima epitaph reads:
When you go home, tell them of us,
and say
For your tomorrow, we gave our
today.

OFFICERS? YES

I have had an argument with two of my pals. I say there are no officers in the Corps of Royal Military Police. They both insist that they have seen such officers.—Sapper R. Peters, 9 Training Regiment, RE, Southwood Camp, Cove, Farnborough.

★The Corps of Royal Military Police now has its own corps of officers. Until after World War Two, the only officers belonging to the Corps were one or two quartermasters; the other officers employed with the Corps were seconded to it. Later, short-service, Territorial and National Service officers were commissioned to the Corps, and since 1954 the first Regular officers, other than quartermasters, have been gazetted.

NO RETURN

When I joined the Army in 1951 I signed for eight years with the Colours and four with the Reserve. Two and a half years later I changed to an engagement of 12 years with the Colours and received a bounty of £50. Is it now possible to refund the bounty and revert to my original engagement? — "Bandsman" (name and address supplied).

★No.

OLD BRIGADE

I am six years older than Sergeant Agnes Russell (SOLDIER, December) and I joined the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps two years earlier than she did—in 1916. I was sent to France as a forewoman the following year and as a cook went to Le Havre to get camps organised. After that I was at Etaples, Abbeville, and Dieppe. In October 1918 I was married in London to a Gordon Highlander and he was sent back to France. I took my discharge from the WAAC 14 months later. I have the General Service and Victory medals from World War One and the Defence medal from World War Two, for serving with the Civil Defence Corps. Two of my sons served in World War Two, and we all belong to the British Legion. I have been our branch secretary for many years.—Mrs. A. Lees, High Street, Hallaton, Market Harborough.

★Staff-Sergeant Agnes Russell, featured in SOLDIER'S article, retired recently from the Women's Royal Army Corps, aged 63.

NO DEDUCTION

If a warrant officer is reduced to the rank of private just before he is due to retire how does it affect his pension? Are his increments for years of service as a non-commissioned officer and warrant officer forfeited? — "Still a Gunner" (name and address supplied).

★No, unless he is discharged with ignominy.

STAMP CLUB

Since I started stamp collecting two years ago I have often wondered whether there exists a Forces' stamp club. There is a Royal Air Force Association Stamp Club, of which I am a member, and a very good one it is. There must be a large number of khaki-clad collectors and there ought to be a stamp club for them and their friends. Is there not a small core of Army philatelists who would be prepared to give a lot of their spare time and interest in their hobby to forming one?—Staff-Sergeant W. Flight, Royal Engineers, 152 DCRE, BFPO 21.

★Anyone interested should get in touch with Staff-Sergeant Flight.

NO ESPRESSO

When shall we be able to drink Espresso coffee in the NAAFI? — "Elevenes" (name and address supplied).

★NAAFI say their sale of coffee, compared with their tea sale, is so small that it would not justify introducing expensive Espresso machines. If they were installed, coffee provided by them would have to be sold at about eightpence a cup. NAAFI's present price for a cup of coffee is threepence. NAAFI has been experimenting with a "press-button" tea dispenser which is said to be capable of serving 600 cups of tea an hour.

TWO CHOICES

After serving from 1941 on a Territorial Army war-duration engagement I voluntarily deferred my release until 1947. Then I signed for an engagement of five years with the Colours and seven with the Reserve. I converted this to a full 12 years engagement. This terminates in 1959 and my service since 1941 has been allowed to count for pension. Can I now sign on for another 10 years to complete 22 years regular service, thus bringing my pensionable service to 28 years, or must I first sign on to complete 22? — "BQMS" (name and address supplied).

★This warrant officer has the choice of re-engaging to complete 22 years service reckoned from 1947 or changing to a 22-years engagement, to reckon from 1941.

LIKES MALAYA

I am an Army cook and have just completed my overseas tour in Malaya. Can I go back there for further service with a regiment? — "Cookie" (name and address supplied).

★Army Catering Corps cooks who have finished a tour in Malaya are not normally re-posted there until they have served an intervening tour elsewhere overseas. Exceptions are made according to the needs of the Service, however, and applications for re-posting are considered on their merits. No guarantee is given that a cook will be attached to the regiment of his choice.

GIVING NOTICE

Having agreed to re-enlist for three years supplemental service, I subsequently re-engaged to extend my initial engagement from 21 to 22 years. This expires next month. If I elect not to serve the additional three years how much notice must I give? — "Second Thoughts" (name and address supplied).

★A soldier who does not intend to implement his supplemental service undertaking should give as much notice as possible to his commanding officer. Six months is a reasonable period.

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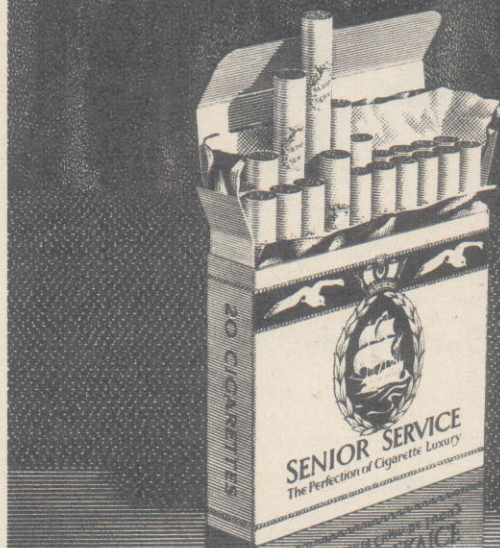


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Commercial Art	Municipal Eng.	Shorthand
Company Sec'y.	Naval Architect	Sound Film Eng.
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more letters

VC BY BALLOT

You state ("For Valour," SOLDIER, January) that the last time the VC was awarded by ballot was in the South African War, whereas to my knowledge the Lancashire Fusiliers, who were awarded six VCs at Gallipoli in 1915, balloted for theirs.

This method is not a very fair way of awarding the decoration since, as time passes, the recipients become "individual" VCs and the fact that they bear the decoration on behalf of their regiment is forgotten. The better way was in the case of the 2nd Battalion The Devonshire Regiment, which was awarded the Croix-de-Guerre in the 1914-18 war.—C. J. Potts, Brunswick Square, Hove, Sussex.

★It is correct that six men of the Lancashire Fusiliers were granted the VC by selection at Gallipoli. Also, for gallantry at Zeebrugge in 1918, a Royal Navy commander, an able seaman, a captain of the Royal Marine Light Infantry and a sergeant in the Royal Marine Artillery were chosen for the VC by their comrades.

Regiments awarded the Croix-de-Guerre wear a strip of the ribbon below their shoulder titles.

In SOLDIER's list, the Royal Artillery entry read "including Honourable Artillery Company, 2." The Honourable Artillery Company should, of course, have been listed separately. These two awards were, in fact, won by Infantry members of the Company.

TOO BIG

Is it not time that those responsible for ordering household articles for married quarters realised that Victorian-size families nowadays are rare? Wives do appreciate the fact that these articles are free, but their size and weight are out of all proportion to modern requirements. Recently, I was issued with a flour bin capable of holding 14 pounds of flour, a bread bin that for size compares favourably with the coal bunker and a pie dish which, as a friend remarked, "will be handy when the regiment comes to dinner."

Apart from the difficulty of storing these huge utensils (many of us have our own miniature versions which we prefer to use) surely it would be less costly for the Army to order normal-sized goods, or else grade the articles—say, small for "A" type and large for "C" type quarters?—Mrs. Jean Richardson, 28 Rawlinson Quarters, Mons Barracks, Aldershot.

CHANGING ARMS

I have just finished seven years service with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. Can I rejoin the Colours in a different regiment?—

FILMS

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

THE LADYKILLERS: A comedy-thriller, with Alec Guinness as the leader of a gang of desperadoes who draw lots to kill an innocent old lady, lose their nerve and are themselves bumped off. Cecil Parker is the crook with a keen sense of humour, Herbert Lom the one with unusually blood-thirsty tastes. In colour.

ARTISTS AND MODELS: Yet another piece of tomfoolery by Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis who get involved with a spy ring, the Federal sleuths and two pretty girls. Shirley McLaine and Dorothy Malone sing and dance. In colour.

TO CATCH A THIEF: Romance on the Riviera with Cary Grant as the retired cat burglar who is suspected

"Pastures New" (name and address supplied).

★In certain circumstances soldiers may re-enlist in other corps. In this instance permission would have to be given by Officer i/c REME Records.

LANGUAGES

I understand that an examination in foreign languages is held for Other Ranks twice a year and that successful candidates receive a financial award. Can SOLDIER quote the authority under which a linguist can apply?—Sergeant C. Savona, RAPC, 4 Williams Road, Chilwell, Nottingham.

★The examinations are held twice a year, but the only eligible Other Ranks are those of the Intelligence Corps. See ACI 513/1955.

REFRESHER

When I finish my 22 years service next September I hope to be employed by a shipping firm. Having spent eight post-war years with my regiment in Germany I have a very good knowledge of the language and would like to take a refresher course. I am now in the Middle East, but my old regiment is still in Germany. Is it possible to spend my last six months of service with the regiment and so have an opportunity of attending German classes after duty?—"Tankman" (name and address supplied).

★A pre-release German course in England would serve the same purpose and, from the Army's point of view, be less complicated. This reader, however, has been advised to make application through his unit to his personnel branch at the War Office.

HONORARY RANK

I recently relinquished my commission as a lieutenant quartermaster and in the "London Gazette" I was granted the honorary rank. What privileges does this give me? Can I still sign myself "Lieutenant (QM)" and call myself by that rank?—"Lieutenant (QM)" (name and address supplied).

★It would be permissible, though contrary to custom to use the rank.

ARMoured TRAIN

What happened to the armoured train that stood in the Kasr-el-Nil Barracks, Cairo? It had one gun, a brass two-pounder, I believe, fixed in the coach, which was open at the sides and back to allow for traversing. The remainder of the armament consisted of machine-guns and rifles. The train rarely went out of barracks. Had it any history?—D. Watson, COD, Chilwell, Nottingham.

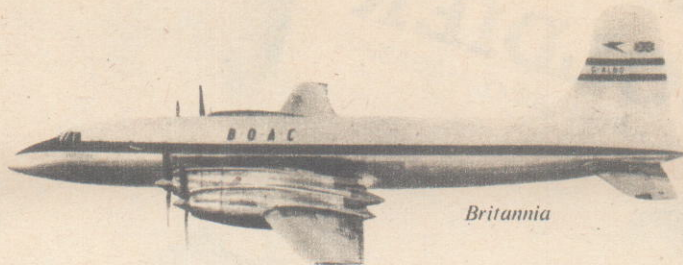
coming your way

of robbing wealthy visitors and has a tough time proving his innocence. Right triumphs in the end, the real thief is unmasked and the reformed crook marries the American heiress, Grace Kelly. In colour.

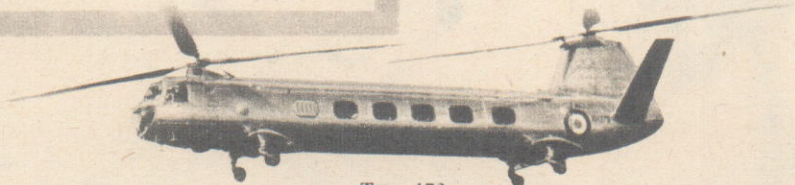
SIMON AND LAURA: On the television screen Peter Finch and Kay Kendall are the ideal married couple. But at home it's a different story. Pots and pans fly and jealousy brings the couple to the brink of divorce. The television cameras visit them in their home, with catastrophic results. Muriel Pavlov plays a script-writer and Ian Carmichael a television producer.

COCKLESHELL HEROES: The thrilling story of a Royal Marines raid on German shipping in Bordeaux Harbour. Trevor Howard and Jose Ferrer play the main parts (see SOLDIER, January).

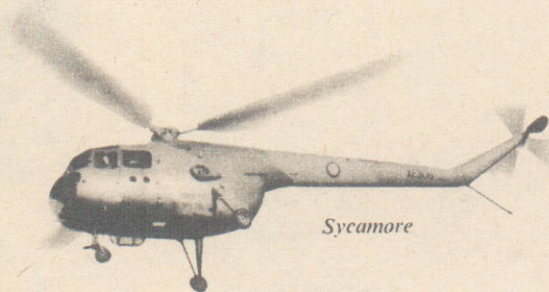
opportunity in industry



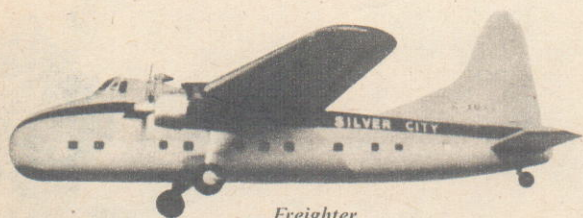
Britannia



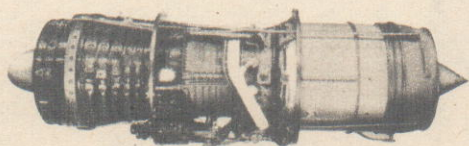
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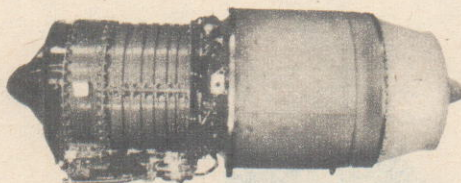
Sycamore



Freighter



Olympus

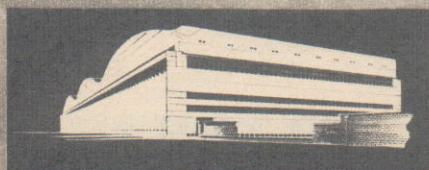


Orpheus



Type 405 Saloon

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SOLDIER

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LUDMILLA TCHERINA
in "Oh, Rosalinda!!"