

SOLDIER

THE BRITISH ARMY MAGAZINE
AUGUST 1954  NINEPENCE



VICTOR OF BLENHEIM

This portrait of John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough, is reproduced by courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery.
(see page 14)



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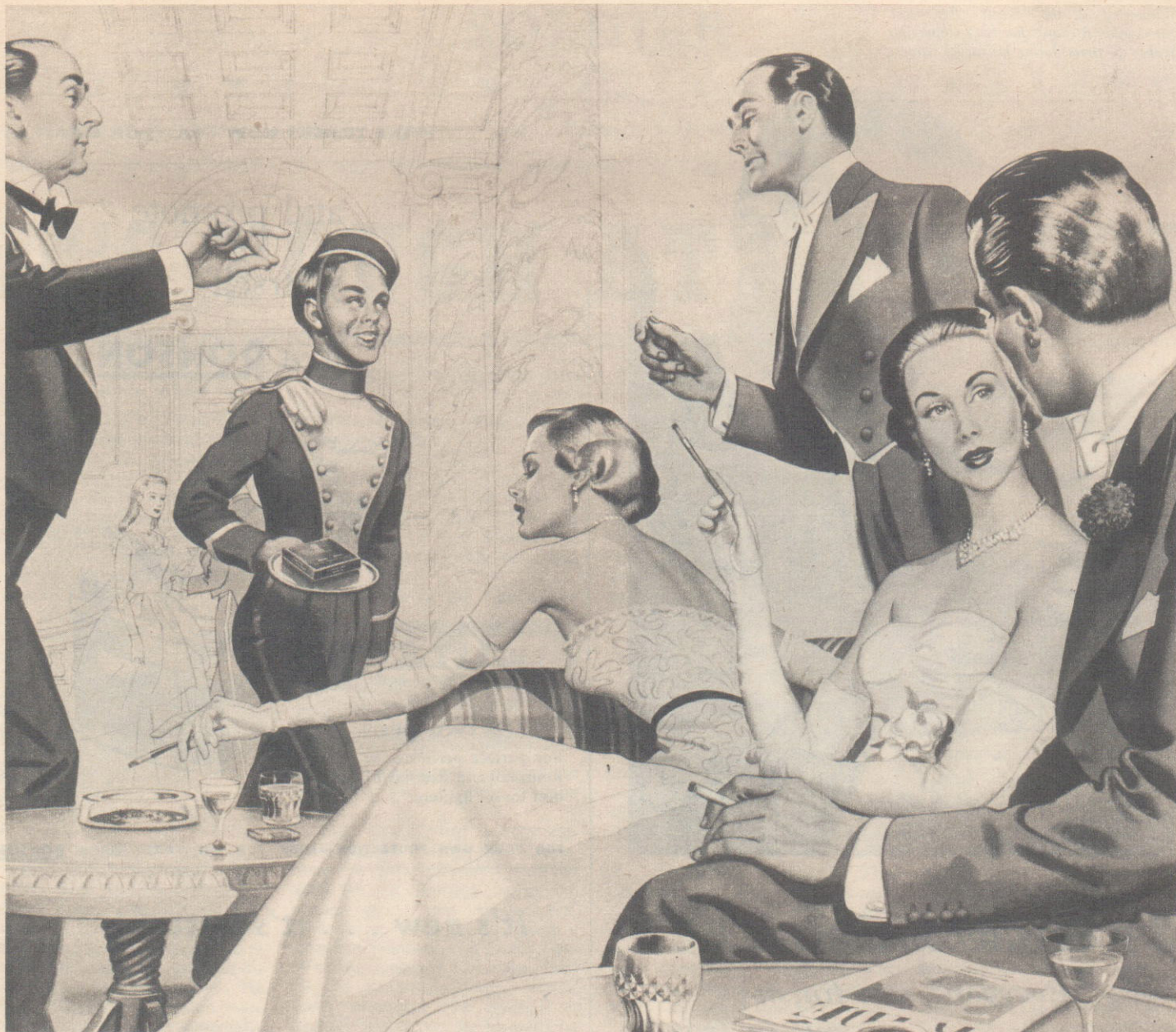
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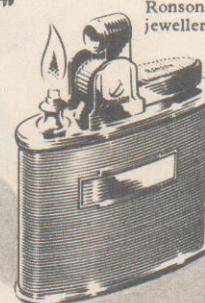
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IT'S TOUGH AT THE TOP

"Let the lance-corporal who suspects that his squad are 'taking the mickey' out of him reflect what it means to impose one's personality on a territory"

MR. JOHN MASEFIELD, the Poet Laureate, once said in a famous poem that it was time to praise:

*Not the bemedalled commander, beloved of the Throne,
Riding cockhorse to parade when the bugles are blown,
But the men who carried the kopje and cannot be known.*

This was excellent in its way, but there are times when it is worth remembering what it means, and what it takes, to be a bemedalled commander. There's rather more to it than handing out leeks and shamrock, or welcoming home troopships.

One of the least enviable moments in the life of the man at the top is when he is sent out, with the maximum publicity, to take charge of a bedevilled situation which has already cost the lives, health or reputations of other commanders. Perhaps his orders are to shake up an army, perhaps to purge a territory of terrorists. The summons can come in war or in peace.

The newspapers revel in appointments like these. Whether he likes it or not, the general is hailed as a "strong man". The cuttings files are ransacked for piquant stories about him. The general, if he reads the reports, may find nicknames attributed to him which he and his staff and his troops have never heard of. He will be subjected to much popping of flash bulbs—especially on the day when he climbs into his aeroplane and flies off to the field of duty. At the other end will come more popping of flash bulbs, then a guard of honour to inspect, and charming and influential people to shake by the hand.

"So far it is easy. Now all the strong man has to do is to change the course of history. They don't teach this subject at Sandhurst, but generals have to know the art.

Each commander has his own methods. Everyone knows how General Montgomery, arriving in the Western Desert (that "graveyard of lieutenant-generals"), made his impact felt by Eighth Army. A touch of the theatrical can help. In 1950, when General de Lattre de Tassigny arrived in Indo-China, morale in the territory was low. At Saigon airfield the guard of honour presented arms and the band struck up the Marseillaise. The General did not accept the Marseillaise unquestioningly, as conventional background music. He listened. Someone was out of tune. 'The General recognised his cue for shock treatment. "In a flash," says his biographer, "he unleashed that torrent of abuse

SOLDIER to Soldier

that had no equal . . . everyone was sent for to listen to the tirade."

That bawling-out on the airfield echoed across Indo-China. Was the Army offended? On the contrary, a feeling began to spread that *it was commanded*, and when that feeling gains a grip every battalion is worth two. Whether General de Lattre, "last of the Beaux Sabreurs," could have changed the course of history will never be known; he was felled by an older and more sinister foe than the Viet Minh.

General Sir Gerald Templer arrived in Malaya to the popping of flash bulbs. So far as is known the musical honours were impec-

cable. But the task, half-military, half-political, facing him was a daunting one. Bold and able men, hard pressed, had done their utmost to restore order; their plans still had to be forced through. Even to a man with plenary powers, Malaya was a tough proposition. But so was General Templer. The colony quickly became aware of a spare, rasping figure in its midst, a restless emissary prepared to tread on corns if necessary, to blast prejudice and explode complacency. But breaking opposition is not enough; the other half of the problem is to build up, to inspire. And this General Templer did, with results which are today apparent.

There were many yelps about the Templer treatment. The General was too brusque, he was anti-this, he was pro-that, he was unfair to squatters, disrespectful to colonists. Strong action always hurts somebody. When there is no such chorus, a commander may well suspect that he is falling down on his job. In Kenya today General Sir George Erskine, though acting in a different role, knows something of what General Templer had to face, and has heard the hubbub in his ears.

The truth is that history resents being jolted out of its course. No man can perform this feat by merely sitting in a room lined with maps, and hopefully marking up graphs. No prizes are won by trying to emulate those of whom Mr. Chesterton wrote:

*They fight by shuffling papers; they have bright dead alien eyes,
And they look on our labour and laughter as a tired man looks at flies.*

Outside the quiet, map-lined room, let us suppose, is the territory which the commander has been called upon to reduce to order: a territory seething, as like as not, with racialism, Communism, religious intolerance, terrorism and corruption. The general has his directive; he has, in his mind, stripped the problem of its "muckage" and knows what he wants to do. Almost certainly the problem is not just a military one.

Where shall he begin? There may be cynics on his military staff; if so, they must be inspired, or fired. Equally there will be burning enthusiasts anxious to "sell" him a policy which his predecessors have rejected. He must judge the policy—and the men—and give a firm yes or no. The civil servants may be in a state of fatigue or umbrage; he must galvanise them too. He must distinguish between careerists and **OVER**

Send-off after a tough stint: men of the Malay Regiment and the Malay Police haul the car containing General Sir Gerald Templer to Kota Bahru airfield on his farewell tour as Malaya's High Commissioner.



idealists. He must inspire subtle and highly civilised minds, and the minds of aborigines. He must gain the confidence of wealth, and rally those who could not count wealth if they had it. He must treat with touchy potentates and labour leaders. He must know when to allow demonstrations and when to clamp down on them. He must know how to say the right thing at a public dinner, and—no less important—must not hesitate to walk out when someone else says the wrong thing. And at no time must he forget his battalions, on Minden Day or Waterloo Day or any other day.

Only a man who is tough and sanguine can tackle a job like this, only the man with personal dynamism and that contagious enthusiasm which makes the half-hearted whole-hearted—and makes them think they are doing what they themselves want to do. When harsh measures are needed he may do well to adopt "the air, not of a dictator, but of an angry uncle" (a description of General Templer). He must be the instigator and the originator; the detonator and the lubricant; the lever and the flail; the purge and the tonic. A lesser man will sink without trace in a morass of polite obstruction and entrenched privilege—and back home the newspapers will call for yet another strong man.

Let the newly-appointed lance-corporal who suspects that his squad are "taking the mickey" out of him reflect what it means to impose one's personality—and orders—on a territory. Yet

SOLDIER to Soldier (continued)

Britain has never failed to produce the robust and brilliant few who can keep from foundering in that morass and find their way through to firm ground.

At the end of it all the successful general may or may not find himself in the company of

"... the princes and prelates with periwigged charioteers Riding triumphantly laurelled to lap the fat of the years."

He is more likely to end up pottering around as a country gentleman, respected by a small

both ways. It is all a dubious tribute to the impact serjeant-majors have made on the male population of these islands, over a couple of generations.

Most serjeant-majors, in SOLDIER's experience, are docile men about the house. No doubt there will be psychologists ready to argue that the serjeant-majors who roar the loudest on parade are those who are henpecked at home.

HE was a gentle sergeant-major

Why get him both ways?

circle, forgotten by a wider one.

EVERY now and then, like other men, a serjeant-major has domestic trouble. When this happens he should remember that he has a peculiar news value.

If it is alleged against him that he ordered his wife and family about like so many recruits, be sure the headline writers will make the most of it. If, on the other hand, the evidence is that he was mild and considerate in his domestic dealings, the headline writers will express surprise across three or four columns. In other words, they will get him

THE Army, man and boy, should be pleased that the Queen has bestowed a knighthood on Dr. Arthur Bryant, the historian.

No one has written more fairly or sympathetically about the role of the British soldier in history than Arthur Bryant (one-time of the Royal Flying Corps). No one has paid finer tribute to the regimental tradition.

His *English Saga*, published in 1940 just after Dunkirk, was at once a brilliant exposition of what we were fighting for and a skilled diagnosis of our virtues and failings.

At one point he deplored how the British artisan was denied the joy of giving quality to his task, and was at the mercy of forces beyond his control. He was not a freeman.

"That is why so many



Englishmen found so surprising a degree of satisfaction amidst the perils, pain and discomfort of the last war (1914-18). The Army, for all its harshness, gave comradeship, pride in achievement and the assurance that a man who did his best would receive his reward."

In peace time, as Dr. Bryant points out, Britain was full of men owing loyalty to school or club, to the Oddfellows or the Old Kent Road. "It only needed the alchemy of war and national peril to harness these diverse enthusiasms and loyalties to the service of the community." And once in the Army they would again develop fierce internal loyalties, boasting that they were the "Devil's Own", the "Die-hards" or "The Fighting Fifth."

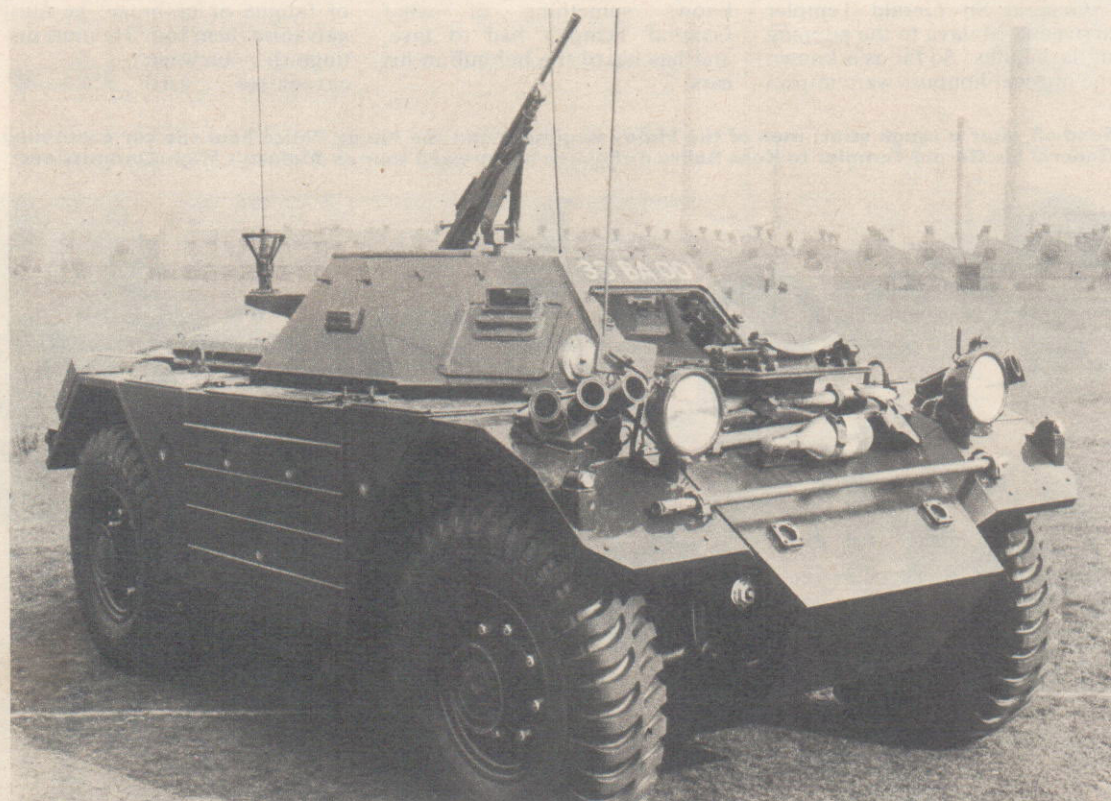
ALL who know the peculiar problems of organising amateur drama in the Army, and even those who do not, will join in congratulating the soldier-players of 10 Wireless Training Squadron, Royal Signals, the first military group to reach the community drama finals of the British Drama League.

This team from Loughborough, Leicestershire, which produced an excerpt from "Murder in the Cathedral," was placed second in the all-Britain contest. The players had been acting together for less than four months.

The last time the Army made drama history—and this really was an occasion—was when members of the three Services training to become Russian interpreters produced "Hamlet" at Bodmin—in Russian. ("To be or not to be" became "Bytj eelee nje bytj.") Though the play was public, these players of the Joint Services School of Linguists had to remain anonymous—for security reasons. It was a brilliant, if bizarre, moment in the annals of Her Majesty's Forces.

Congratulations, also, to the colour sergeant of the Coldstream Guards who, in the Queen's Birthday ceremony at Bonn, "let his company Colour flap stiffly in his face for 55 minutes rather than lift a hand to brush it aside" (*Times* report).

The Ferret is an up-and-coming Army vehicle. Troops in Britain, Germany and Egypt have tried it out; now production models are being issued. The Ferret will gradually replace Daimler and Humber scout cars. There are two types, one for liaison, with commander, driver and radio operator, the other for reconnaissance, with commander-gunner and driver. Both have rear-mounted Rolls-Royce six-cylinder engines, with pre-selector gear-box. Advantages of the Ferret include lively cross-country performance (it is equipped to cross ditches) and low silhouette.





In the glittering wastes of the Unicorn Glacier men of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers kept the tracks of the Weasels turning—but it was tough travelling.

BACK FROM THE ICE-CAP

THE British North Greenland Expedition, due to return to Britain this month, has done much to restore Britain's lead in Polar exploration. In its achievements, the Army can take especial pride.

The expedition will have provided specimens for its scientists' laboratories and facts for their note-books. It will also have taught Britain's fighting Services a good deal about living and travelling in Arctic conditions.

But for the Services, there might have been no expedition. The idea of exploring Greenland's huge dome of ice, which reaches 10,000 feet above sea-level and was believed to have its base below sea-level in places, was conceived by an officer of the Royal Navy, Commander C. J. W. Simpson, DSC.

Commander Simpson led the expedition, and along with the scientists went Army officers and

non-commissioned officers, Naval officers and ratings, an officer of the Royal Marines and a Danish officer (who lost his life while making a survey). There were 25 in the expedition, the biggest British Polar exploration party since that of Scott, 40 years ago.

Second-in-command for the first year of the expedition was Captain J. D. Walker, Royal Engineers. Captain Walker, who served as a parachutist in Italy and North-West Europe in World War Two, and is still only 31, was one of the only two

members of the expedition who had previously experienced Arctic winters. Mountain warfare training stimulated his interest in the Arctic. He visited Lapland, was sent to Canada and Alaska to test Arctic equipment for the Army, and led a Canadian expedition on the Mackenzie River.

As a Royal Engineer, he took charge of erecting the prefabricated huts at the expedition's main base on Britannia Lake, and of their heating. Preparations for this task included a two-day course in assembling a solid-fuel cooker at the maker's works.

Captain Walker was also in charge of the expedition's eight ex-Army Weasels. He set off charges of Army explosives for

the benefit of the team which was making a seismic survey. And when a Royal Air Force Sunderland flying boat ran aground on Britannia Lake, it was Captain Walker who filled up the leaks with cement so that it could take off again.

The other Army officer on the expedition was Captain J. S. Agar, Royal Signals, who, with Naval ratings to help him, was in charge of communications. It was a difficult task, especially at first when temporary aerials were blown down. The radio not only maintained the expedition's official communications with the outside world, but also kept the explorers in touch with their families.

Mechanics to the expedition, with

OVER →

Home to an English summer come the explorers of the British North Greenland Expedition. The Army lent men and machines—and learned a useful tip or two about Arctic life and travel.



Hair styles on the ice-cap: Staff-Serjeant A. P. Boardman (left) and Staff-Serjeant J. W. Oakley, of REME, who looked after the machines.

In charge of communications: Captain J. S. Agar, Royal Signals.

BACK FROM THE ICE - CAP continued

special responsibility for the Weasels, were Staff-Serjeants A. P. Boardman and J. W. Oakley, both of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. At the end of the first year, Captain Walker, Captain Agar and Staff-Serjeant Boardman returned to England, and Captain G. R. Fletcher, Royal Engineers, and Warrant Officer Class Two

D. Howard, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, went out to Greenland to join Staff-Serjeant Oakley for the second year.

The ex-Army Weasels, war-veterans all, did yeoman service. Foreknowledge of their weaknesses (they were not intended originally for Arctic conditions) helped a great deal. They were much modified before starting by

10 Command Workshops, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, at Mill Hill, London. (SOLDIER, September 1952). Insulated cabs made the Weasels warm for driving and sleeping. Aircraft-type seat-belts saved lives on at least one occasion, when a Weasel plunged through a snow-bridge into a deep crevasse. (Some of the shock

was taken up by another Weasel travelling behind, linked by a heavy nylon rope.)

The men at Mill Hill, who removed 22,000 rivets from the tracks and substituted nuts and bolts (because members of an Antarctic expedition had reported they could not repair riveted tracks), will be glad to hear the effort was worthwhile. There was no trouble about repairing tracks.

The Weasels had some difficulty in reaching the Greenland ice-cap. Owing to pack-ice, the expedition's ship had to land them 160 miles south of the spot originally picked. There were four men with the Weasels, including the two staff-serjeants, and Captain Walker set out from Britannia Lake with three others to collect the machines. After travelling 180 miles on foot, over a glacier, and 200 by dog-sledge, Captain Walker's party joined the Weasels and the convoy set off.

The Weasels were towing seven aluminium load-carrying sledges and two "caboozes," caravan-type sledges for housing scientific instruments and for cooking and sleeping. Much of the journey was over rough ice, a difficult surface for the Weasels. After laborious reconnaissances, the vehicles were navigated over it without damage, but the sledges, designed for smoother going on the ice-cap, suffered badly. The convoy made its way to the Danish weather-station at Danmarkshavn, and there the two staff-serjeants were left with the vehicles for the winter, during which they repaired the sledges.

In the spring, Commander Simpson led a party on foot to Danmarkshavn, to set the Weasels on the way over the difficult Storstrom glacier to Britannia Lake. Shortage of petrol limited the reconnaissance trips, so a party of four, including Commander Simpson, Captain Walker and Staff-Serjeant Boardman, set off in two of the Weasels to try to find a way across the glacier. Rough ice, deep snow-drifts, pot-holes, icebergs and ice-cliffs impeded the way. The best going, when luck provided it, was in snow-filled river-beds. Mostly, however, it was slow going, with Commander Simpson walking ahead to pick the route. The Weasel tracks stood up to 55 miles of rugged ice, and the two vehicles reached Britannia Lake in safety.

Commander Simpson then went back to Danmarkshavn to collect the remaining Weasels, now reduced to five, because lack of spares had forced the mechanics to "cannibalise" one. These five, with heavily-laden sledges behind them, had a more difficult time than the first two. On smooth ice, the weight-towing Weasels were hard to steer. A combination of smooth ice and high wind made the caboozes unmanageable and liable to turn over. So many tow-bars were



Weasel and trailer pick their way over the wilderness. One Weasel was "cannibalised" to keep the others going.

Staff-Serjeant Boardman fraternises with the Expedition's frisky puppies, surprise additions to husky strength.





No, it isn't Boris Karloff—it's a member of the Expedition newly returned from a spot of survey. Below (left): a Weasel in Young Sound; (right) Captain J. D. Walker, Royal Engineers, at a "make and mend" job.

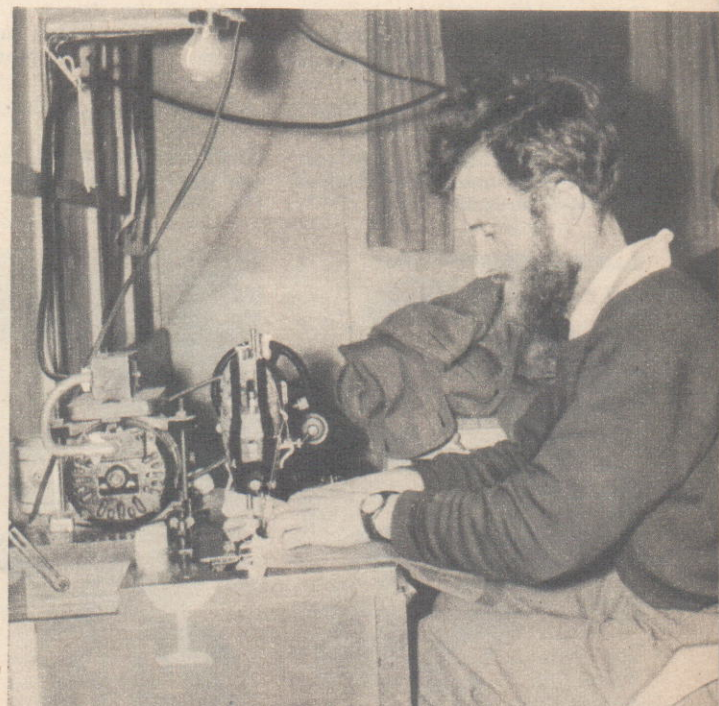
broken that improvised splints had to be made of crow-bars. Ice hummocks had to be hacked away to let the trailers pass. Seven miles in a day was good going.

Once again, the sledges suffered from the rough surfaces. To lighten the loads, spare caterpillar tracks were fitted to the Weasels, then the part-worn tracks were discarded, but not before nuts and bolts had been removed to replace worn-out rivets in the sledges. As the rivet-holes were not big enough to take the bolts, they had to be enlarged with the spike end of an ice-axe. This operation took 24 hours, and the men were grateful that there was no more than 20 degrees of frost and a light wind.

The Weasels and their tows all reached Britannia Lake, 2000 miles from their starting-place in London. After further repairs, the sledges were ready for work. It was a Weasel team which relieved the three men who had wintered at Northice, the expedition's smaller base, spending eight months 200 miles from anywhere.

Like the Weasels, the Army cold-weather clothing which the expedition tried out was a great success. "It was better than any other clothing we had," Captain Walker told SOLDIER. He said it with some satisfaction. He had played a big part in developing this winter clothing for the Army. Greenland provided him with material for another report on the subject, and more suggestions, for the War Office.

Besides the soldiers in the expedition, others helped from the air. They were men of the Royal Army Service Corps air despatch teams flying in the Royal Air Force Hastings aircraft which supplied the Northice base. One of these teams spent an uncomfortable ten days on the ice-cap after their Hastings crashed.



For two generations, the Regular Army has been a breeding-ground for brilliantly successful writers of popular fiction—chiefly thrillers

THE ARMY'S

STORY-TELLERS

NO summit is harder to reach than that on which the writers of best-sellers scramble to retain their hard-won footing. Over the last two generations, former Regular Army officers have shown most conspicuous skill in scaling these treacherous slopes. And having attained the summit, they have successfully defended their positions against all comers—even after death.

Few people realise what a high proportion of popular fiction—notably thrillers—has been written by professional soldiers. How does this come about?

No doubt the reasons include these: a professional soldier sees more colourful and varied backgrounds and meets a richer assortment of people than the stay-at-home novelist (who tends to write stories about other novelists); and men who live a life of action seem to have a natural advantage when it comes to packing action into their stories.

In most instances, the tales the Regulars write are not concerned with psychological subtleties—professional soldiers rarely are. Nor are the masses who read for recreation. They demand action. So the lieutenant-colonels (odd that so many of these soldier-writers should have been lieutenant-colonels!) turn out their action-filled stories—stories which the critics may never review, or only review patronisingly, because they are “popular.” But whereas the well-reviewed “literary” novels sell in modest thousands (or even hundreds), the stories of some of these soldier-authors sell in scores of thousands, hundreds of thousands, or—in the case of

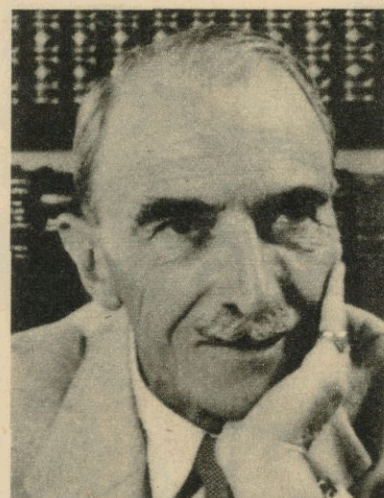
writers like “Sapper”—in millions. The fly-leaves of their books bear magic legends like “Sixty-fifth impression.”

These soldier-authors are one thing first and foremost: they are story-tellers.

Since World War Two, two soldier-novelists of high promise—and performance—to emerge are John Masters and David Walker.

JOHN MASTERS, who retired from the Indian Army as a lieutenant-colonel in 1948, with a DSO and an OBE, embarked on an uncommonly ambitious project—a series of 35 novels covering the history of the British in India, and linked by the fortunes of the same family. The first, *Nightrunners of Bengal*, published in 1951, had an Indian Mutiny background. Then came a story about the Thugs, and another set in the 'eighties during the Russian scare. Now his fourth and most successful story has appeared—*Bhowani Junction*, with a 1946 background of India struggling towards her independence. It was a triple choice—by the Book Society and by two national newspapers.

Calcutta-born John Masters is of the fifth generation of his family to serve in India. In 1934 he joined the Prince of Wales's Own Gurkha Rifles, and saw action on the North-West



DORNFORD YATES (Major C. W. Mercer): His score: more than 30 successful novels—all still in print.



“SAPPER” (Lieut-Col. H. C. McNeile): His Bulldog Drummond tales became a legend.

Frontier. After the outbreak of World War Two he served in Iraq, Syria and Persia, and in 1944 joined General Wingate's Chindits in Burma, commanding a brigade. He saw the fall of Mandalay.

His first idea, on leaving the Army, was to conduct American tourists to the Himalayas. This fell through, and he turned to fiction. Today he lives with his wife and children in a farmhouse 40 miles from New York city. He writes only in winter, regarding the summer as a time for outdoor pleasures. Not long ago he went on a voyage round Cape Horn on a Chilean patrol ship.

John Masters may or may not write those 35 novels—but he had the wit to see what a fund of story-telling material there was in British India. (It is worth recalling here that another Regular officer, Major Francis Yeats-Brown, drew on the rich Indian background for his autobiographical *Bengal Lancer*, a phenomenal publishing success of 1930.)

DAVID WALKER is one of many writers produced by the *Black Watch* (Eric Linklater wore the red hackle for a short period at the end of World War One, as a private soldier; Colonel Bernard Fergusson still combines authorship and soldiering). In his first novel, the irresistibly cheerful *Geordie* (1950), David Walker did almost everything that a professional writer would have cautioned him not to do. It has been said that he walked right through a literary minefield—but he reaped a fine reward for his temerity.

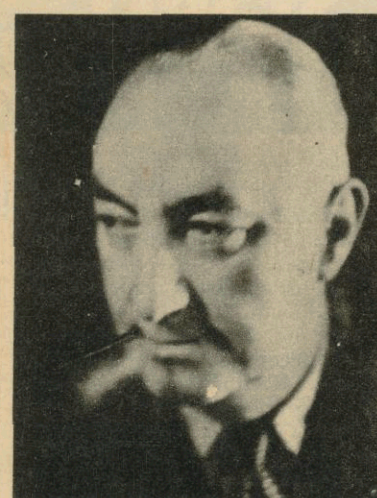
David Walker's link with the *Black Watch* began in 1931. He spent the best five years of his life in India. In Munich year

he was aide-de-camp to the Governor-General of Canada, but he returned to join his regiment when war broke out. In May 1940 he went “into the bag” at St. Valery. He has written an excellent book based on life in a prisoner-of-war camp: *The Pillar*. Now he lives with his Canadian wife in New Brunswick—and continues to write his cheerful brand of fiction.

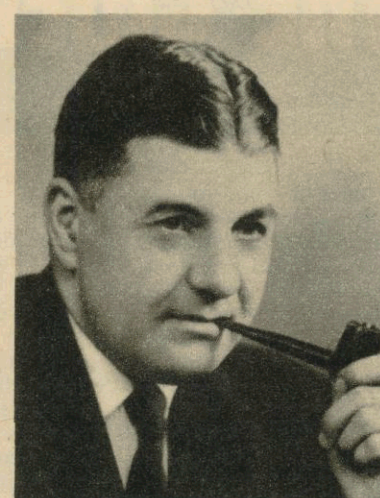
In a different class comes **COLONEL ROBERT HENRIQUES**, whose books began to appear just before World War Two, and who has consolidated his reputation since. Twice he has been awarded literary prizes. Colonel Henriques joined the Royal Artillery in 1926, soldiered in Egypt and the Sudan, retired in 1933 and joined the Territorial Army. In World War Two he served in the Royal Artillery, the Commandos and at Combined Operations Headquarters. His *No Arms, No Armour* (1939) won a British Empire and international prize for literature, and his *Through The Valley* (1950) earned the James Tait Black Memorial prize.

Between the world wars, popular literature was dominated by the figures of three former professional soldiers—two of them Regular officers, the third a private soldier: “Sapper,” Dornford Yates and Edgar Wallace.

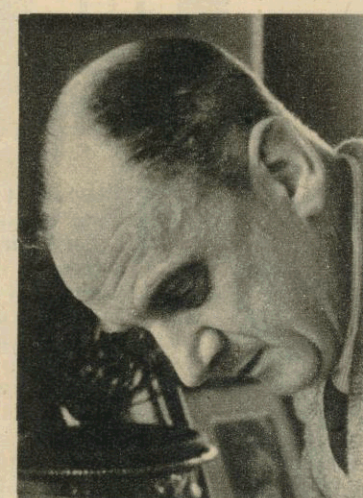
EDGAR WALLACE was probably the most prolific of them all, and his books still sell in gratifying numbers long after his death (royalties soon wiped out the heavy debts he left). It was back in 1893 that Edgar Wallace enlisted as a private in the Royal West Kent Regiment. Injured when helping to eject soldiers from public-houses, he went for treatment to the Medical Staff Corps (forerunner of the Royal



EDGAR WALLACE: Six years in the ranks, then came fame and fortune. He turned out 150-odd novels.



CAPTAIN W. E. JOHNS: High in the ranks of surtax-payers is the soldier-airman who writes for boys.



CAPTAIN A. O. POLLARD, VC, MC, DCM: He writes successful thrillers—total exceeds 40.

Army Medical Corps). It seemed to him that the men of the Medical Staff Corps had superior uniforms, pay and accommodation—so he engineered a transfer. His military experiences were never less than lively—he had at least one brief session in the “glasshouse.” Then came the South African War, which brought him fame on the battlefield—not as a soldier, but as a war correspondent. In 1906 he wrote his hugely successful thriller “The Four Just Men,” which was the foundation-stone in an edifice of more than 150 novels.

In later life he dictated his stories at fantastic speed. There were jokes like: “Have you seen the mid-day Wallace?” His publishers used the slogan: “It is impossible not to be thrilled by Edgar Wallace,” and claimed bishops and prime ministers among his devotees.

Lieutenant-Colonel H. C. McNeile, who was commissioned in the Royal Engineers in 1907, was given his pen-name “SAPPER” by Lord Northcliffe, to whose *Daily Mail* he contributed short stories during World War One. As a serving officer he was not allowed to sign his stories. Later “Sapper” tried to write under his own name, but the public preferred the established pen-name. The first Bulldog Drummond story came out in 1920 and has been on the book-stalls ever since. In the 'twenties and 'thirties Bulldog Drummond became a character firmly entrenched in popular mythology. For a period, his creator was probably the highest-paid popular writer. Shortly after Lieutenant-Colonel McNeile died in 1937 the character of Bulldog Drummond was taken over by his friend **GERARD FAIRLIE**,

also an ex-Regular, who is still turning out the stories with great success today. Gerard Fairlie served in the Scots Guards from 1918 to 1924, and in the Royal Sussex Regiment and various extra-regimental rôles in World War Two.

DORNFORD YATES is the pen-name of Major C. W. Mercer. The author of the light-hearted and spirited Berry books joined the 3rd County of London Yeomanry in 1914, served through the war and then soldiered on until 1925. Re-commissioned in the Second World War, he served in East Africa Command and in the Southern Rhodesia Military Forces. For health reasons he must live abroad. Since the war he has built for himself a fine home on a mountain-side at Umtali, Southern Rhodesia—with all modern conveniences. “In Southern Rhodesia,” he says, “people live and let live. I don't think anyone can ask more than that.” He has just written his thirty-second novel, and his first book published 35 years ago is still selling steadily.

Between the wars, too, flourished **GRAHAM SETON**, otherwise Lieutenant-Colonel Graham Seton Hutchison, DSO, MC, author of *The W Plan* and many other exciting stories with titles like *The Governor of Kattowitz*, *The Viper of Luxor* and *Scar 77*. Like “Sapper” he was educated at “The Shop.” His first regiment (1909) was the King's Own Scottish Borderers, in which he served in Egypt, the Sudan and India. Later he turned up in the Rhodesia Defence Force, and then served in World War One in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. After the war he was to be found executing many unusual tasks—

like arranging an armistice between Korfenty's Polish Insurgents and the German Defence Corps, in 1921. In 1932 he was appointed First Principal at the Shri Shivaji Military School at Poona. It all added up to an unusually rich background which many a writer must have envied.

A winner of the Victoria Cross also carved a literary career for himself between the wars—and is still flourishing. **CAPTAIN A. O. POLLARD, VC, MC, DCM**, joined the Honourable Artillery Company as an Infantry private as soon as World War One was declared. Demobilised in 1918, he tried various jobs, then took a short-service Royal Air Force commission, serving as a pilot with an Army air-cooperation squadron. During the General Strike of 1926 he and his wife were living in a hotel, bored with restrictions, when he said: “Damn it, I think I shall write a book.” He had a hard struggle. In his first year as an author he earned only £65; not until 1929 did he decide to take up writing as a full-time occupation. Now he has written more than 40 books, mostly thrillers, like *The Death Flight*, *The Phantom Plane*, *Flanders Spy*, *Wanted by the Gestapo*.

Another soldier-into-airman, **CAPTAIN W. E. JOHNS**, turned to writing books for boys, and has achieved a spectacular success with his character of “Biggles.” Captain Johns joined the Norfolk Yeomanry in 1913 and later served in Salonica, transferring to a machine-gun cavalry squadron. Commissioned in 1916, he joined the Royal Flying Corps, and served on in the Royal Air Force until 1930. The exploits of “Biggles,” who made his appearance in the 1930s, have now been told in more than

50 books, translated into some 17 languages. The series of tales spans a period of more than 30 years, during which the speed of fighter aircraft has advanced from 150 to 600 miles an hour. A reader dipping at random into the Biggles archives has to remember which war is being described, and whether the Japanese (for example) are allies or enemies. Biggles would have been enough work for most writers, but Captain Johns also produced a popular “Worrals of the WAAF,” not to mention “Gimlet of the Commandos.” One advantage of writing for boys and girls—a fiercely competitive field—is that the turnover of readers is much more rapid. (The most famous writer for boys of an earlier generation was also a one-time Regular, G. A. Henty. He served in the Crimean War and later as a war correspondent).

The Services have produced at least one humorist, too. **ANTHONY ARMSTRONG** (real name A. A. Willis, OBE, MC) entered the Royal Engineers in 1915 and served for ten years. From then onwards he turned out, prolifically, humorous novels, crime novels and volumes of humorous articles, besides contributing to every issue of *Punch* from 1925 to 1933. In World War Two he joined the Royal Air Force and founded *Tee Emm*, the celebrated Training Memorandum.

Many readers of *SOLDIER* will be aware that in another literary field—that of play-writing—**GENERAL CAMPBELL CHRISTIE**, a one-time Gunner, writing in partnership with his wife, has established a sound reputation for himself. His latest play “Carrington VC” (*SOLDIER*, September, 1953) is now being filmed, with David Niven in the leading part.

Probably the most successful, and the most fashionable, playwright between the wars was the late **FREDERICK LONSDALE**, whose plays were always well sprinkled with dukes and duchesses. He once served as a Regular soldier in the South Lancashire Regiment, though it seems unlikely that this is where he gained his knowledge of the foibles of the aristocracy.

This article does not take account of the many popular writers, like Hammond Innes and Gerald Kersh, who served during World War Two, or like Bruce Marshall and Selwyn Jepson, who served in both world wars. Scores of excellent novels have been written by war-time soldiers, from private upwards, many of whom drew liberally and gratefully on their Service experiences.

JOHN MASTERS: This ex-Chindit commander has achieved literary success since 1945.

DAVID WALKER: Another post-war novelist (late *Black Watch*): He triumphed with *Geordie*.



A CASKET OF SAND FOR THE CHIEF SCOUT



Lord Rowallan, the Chief Scout, tries out the "monkey bridge" built by some of the 350 Scouts of the Canal Zone at Moascar Stadium.

Right: Tips on tracking in the sand, from a Scoutmaster. The Army provided the tents.

Below: A patrol is ready to demonstrate its wood-chopping skill before the Chief Scout.



Right: A party of Greek Scouts employed in Canal Zone garrisons sang and danced in traditional costume — one of many displays.

THOUGH the tang of wood-smoke and cooking fires did not scent the desert air, the horseshoe of tents grouped round a central flag pole was reminiscent of an English camp site.

In the centre of the rich green grass of Moascar Stadium stood the Chief Scout, Lord Rowallan (who won the Military Cross in the first world war, and commanded a battalion of the Royal Scots Fusiliers in the second). Three hundred and fifty yelling Scouts converged on him to greet him in traditional manner.

The Army provided most of the equipment, such as tents and blankets. It was impossible to carry out normal camp

cooking, so meals were cooked by NAAFI. Displays and sing-song showed that the desert Scouts lacked nothing in gusto. Wolf Cubs presented Lord Rowallan with a polished casket containing—appropriately—sand.

Though hiking and camping in the Canal Zone are necessarily restricted, Scouting flourishes. Not the least attraction is the annual camp 6000 feet up on the slopes of Mount Olympus, in Cyprus.

The Scout movement was founded by a distinguished soldier, Lord Baden-Powell—and the Army still encourages it, especially among soldiers' sons in overseas garrisons.



DOES the Army need a Corps of Hairdressers? According to Mr. Leonard Pountney, a Hounslow hair stylist who once served in the Army Physical Training Corps, it does. Not everyone, even in his own profession, will agree with him.

SOLDIER may well have started Mr. Pountney thinking on these lines with an article "Is the Army Haircut a Menace?" last November. This article, which was widely-quoted, recorded Mr. Pountney's view that a soldier who was displeased with his Army haircut lost interest in his appearance.

Members of the corps Mr. Pountney now proposes would enter the Army after training as apprentices in their trade. They would dispense hair-cuts which would please not only the sergeant-major but also the soldier's girl-friend. For this, Mr. Pountney believes, many young soldiers would willingly submit to 20 or 30 minutes in the hairdresser's chair, undergoing various chemical and electrical processes—and pay a bill for seven shillings at the end of it.

"When a lad who has taken pride in his hair goes on leave," says Mr. Pountney, "his girl-friends laugh at his Army haircut. So he won't go dancing, and stays at home and is disgruntled with the Army."

"If the Army had a Corps of Hairdressers, carrying out modern processes, you would hear soldiers say, 'I must get back to barracks to get my hair cut. The civilian hairdressers don't do it properly.' The boys would be pleased with their appearance and many more of them might be glad to stay in the Army."

A man who disagrees with Mr. Pountney is Mr. Chris Hooker, who has hairdressing shops in three Aldershot barracks, providing shilling haircuts. Young soldiers, he believes, have neither time nor money for elaborate hair-treatment. He thinks hairdressers in barracks would be unable to cope with large intakes of recruits if they had to spend 20 or 30 minutes on each.

"I admit," he says, "that a soldier worries about his first haircut in the Army, but after that he is quite pleased with it. At any rate, we never have any complaints. Of course, we

THAT HAIRCUT AGAIN

A critic of the Army hair-cut devises some alternative styles—and proposes a Corps of Hairdressers



Regimental Serjeant-Major H. Kay, Grenadier Guards (left), headed the judges who picked this as the best of 15 styles for soldiers.

make the haircut suit the man."

Mr. Pountney, who is president of the Artistic Creators Committee of the National Hairdressers' Federation, has supported his idea by devising styles suitable, in his opinion, for wear in the Forces. Bearing in mind the Army's need for short hair, for hygienic reasons, Mr. Pountney set to work with all the scientific aids available to his profession to make short hair slightly in the eyes of girl-friends.

He paraded the results on the heads of 15 volunteers, mostly from the Army, in a Hounslow dance-hall. The styles all had much in common. They were short at the back and sides, and there were waves at the front or on top or both—though there had been no waves on some of

those heads when Mr. Pountney started on them.

The hair on the top of the head did not look short, and there was none of that bristly effect which goes with styles like the crew-cut. But short it was. The longest hair on show was three inches—in a style for which Mr. Pountney had relaxed the rules a little to show his idea of what a young officer's head should look like. The shortest style contained no hair longer than one inch. There were no locks to fall forward over the eyes, and no unsightly ridges at the back.

The styles certainly conformed with Queen's Regulations ("The hair of the head will be kept short"). Some of them are illustrated on this page.

What do you think?



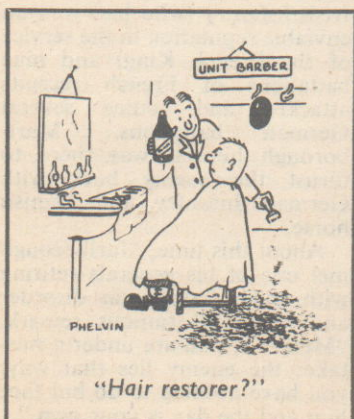
Mr. Leonard Pountney discourses on his winning hair-style (cost: seven shillings).



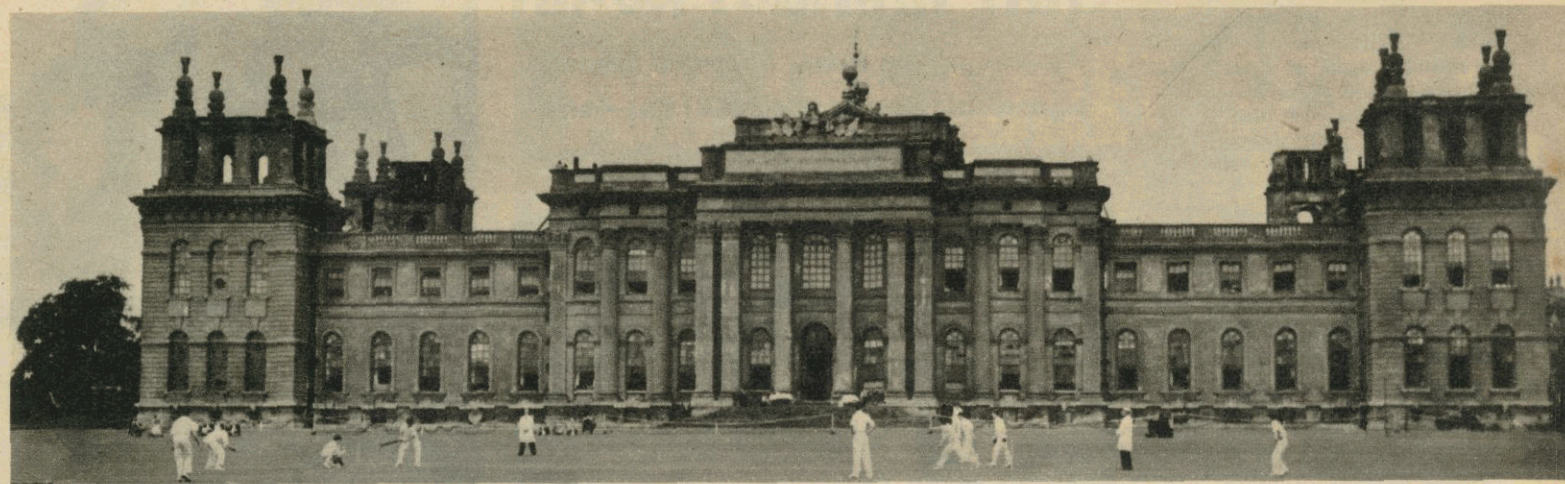
Each "model" after being styled paraded with a girl.

Boxer Freddie Mills (left) introduced the demonstration. His own hair-style he described as "Three Nones—none last month, none this and none next." The others are three more of Mr. Pountney's creations.

Photographs: SOLDIER Cameraman FRANK TOMPSETT



"Hair restorer?"



Blenheim Palace, which Queen Anne built at her own expense for the victorious Marlborough.

"IT WAS A FAMOUS VICTORY"

IN the midst of battle, a horseman bent over his saddle and with a stub of pencil scribbled a note on the back of a tavern-bill.

It was a letter which was to be reproduced in many a history-book. Addressed to the writer's wife, it read:

Aug. 13, 1704

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Marlborough

The note, carried on horseback by Colonel Parke from the Danube to Windsor, brought England the finest news since the War of the Spanish Succession had begun in 1701. The Duke of Marlborough had campaigned indecisively in the Lowlands for two seasons. For 1704 he had more far-reaching plans. He would strike right through from Holland to the Danube, reconquer Bavaria and relieve Vienna, capital of the tottering Holy Roman Empire, from the threat of capture by the armies of Louis XIV.

In the spring, he set off along

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the Rhine. It was a magnificently-organised march on which the troops found meals, shoes, bridges and hospitals waiting wherever they were needed. The men enjoyed the Rhineland scenery, the local beer and wines and the smiles of the *fräuleins*. Over six weeks, Marlborough's men averaged ten miles a day. At the end, they stormed the fortified hill of the Schellenberg, to secure their base on the Danube.

On the night of 12 August, the enemy were in a strong position. The right of their four-mile line, held by the French Marshal Tallard, lay on the Danube and included Blenheim village. The left, held by Marshal Marsin and the Elector of Bavaria, ended in wooded hills.

Before the line ran the marshy Nebel stream, and the line itself was covered by loop-holed and defended villages. Marlborough lay only five miles away. The enemy heard his drums in the night and saw his patrols through the early-morning mists. The enemy generals thought these were the preliminaries to retreat rather than attack. It was two hours after the mists cleared

away before they discovered the Duke's intention.

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It was after midday when the battle opened with an assault on Blenheim by a British brigade commanded by Brigadier-General Rowe. They had crossed the Nebel three hours before, and waited under cannon-fire ever since. Silently they marched forward, over the 150 yards which separated them from the village's defences. They were 30 yards away when the French fired a deadly volley. Then

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More attacks followed, and British and Dutch Infantry established themselves on the outskirts of the village. As at the Schellenberg, they did not take the position they assailed, but attracted there a substantial part of the enemy—12,000 of France's best Infantry, crammed and cramped among the buildings of Blenheim.

The vital blow was delivered in the centre, where Marlborough confounded tacticians by sandwiching two lines of Cavalry between two of Infantry. When the Cavalry charged, the Infantry stood in reserve, with gaps in their ranks through which the Cavalry could pass for shelter, while the foot soldiers fired volleys by platoons at pursuing Cavalry.

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"I congratulate you," said Tallard, "on defeating the best soldiers in the world."

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Serjeant John Hedgethorne at work on his oil-painting of the Gunners in action at Hahlen, near Minden.

RHINE ARMY REMEMBERS

August 1 is Minden Day. Many British soldiers in Germany have visited the battlefield.

THERE are plenty of long-established hobbies connected with the Army, ranging from badge-collecting to historical research, but Major F. J. G. Graham, Royal Army Educational Corps, found a new one. He adopted a battle as his hobby.

It started when Major Graham was posted to the command of 49 Education Centre at Minden, in Westphalia. Minden is a name of great significance in the annals of the British Army. On the plain outside the town, on 1 August, 1759, six battalions of British Infantry wrote one of the finest pages in the story of the British Army, and British gunners proved their efficiency to the world.

Every year, on the anniversary, men of certain British Infantry regiments wear roses in their caps, as the men of Minden did.

It follows that Minden is something of a place of pilgrimage for troops posted to Rhine Army, and for visitors to the nearby headquarters of Northern Army Group at Bad Oeynhausen. Encouraged by the local commander, Major Graham set out to help soldier-visitors to the battlefield. He produced a concise account of the battle, and began to hunt around for more information. Minden town's museum and archives produced some; German accounts of the campaign more. Major Graham toured the battlefield and came to



The Hahlen windmill, where British Gunners fought, today.

BLENHEIM INSPIRED THE POETS

AFTER Blenheim, the British Government called on poets for triumphal odes. The contributions were, in the main, indifferent. Joseph Addison pictured "great Marlbro" thus:

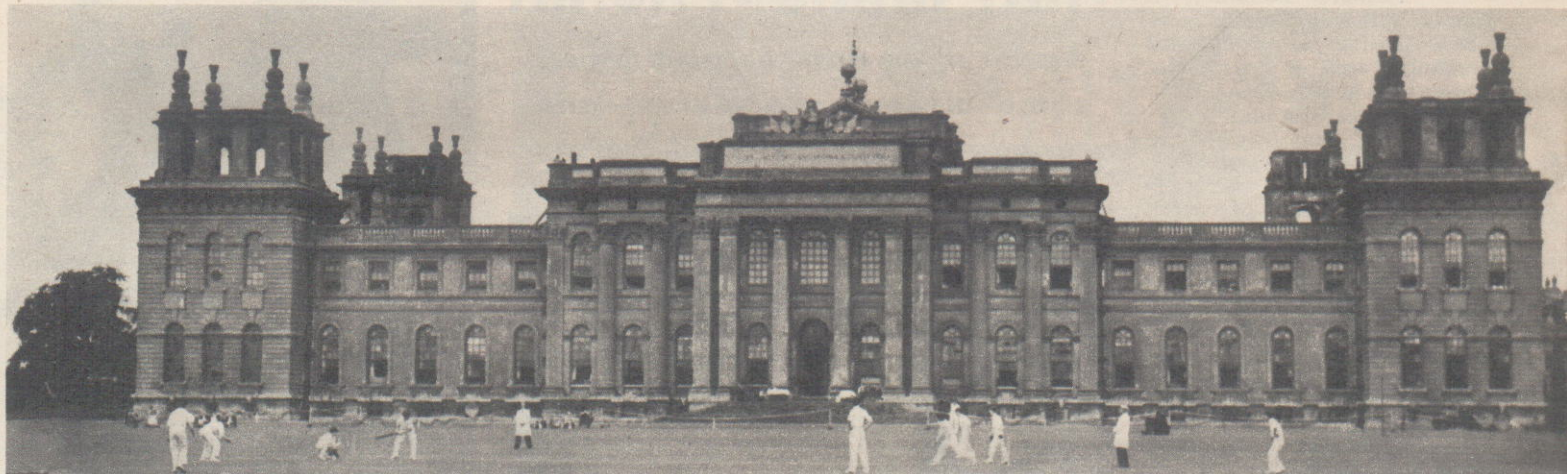
*Calm and serene he drives the furious blast;
And, pleased th' Almighty's orders to perform,
Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm.*

One bard exclaimed:

*Think of three hundred gentlemen at least,
And each man mounted on his capering beast,
Into the Danube they were flung in shoals. . .*

The best known of poems about Blenheim was written, generations later, by Robert Southey. It describes an old man telling his grandchildren, who have found a skull on the battlefield, about the great encounter. One verse runs:

*"It was the English," Kaspar cried,
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The Hahlen windmill, where British Gunners fought, today.

THERE are plenty of long-established hobbies connected with the Army, ranging from badge-collecting to historical research, but Major F. J. G. Graham, Royal Army Educational Corps, found a new one. He adopted a battle as his hobby.

It started when Major Graham was posted to the command of 49 Education Centre at Minden, in Westphalia. Minden is a name of great significance in the annals of the British Army. On the plain outside the town, on 1 August, 1759, six battalions of British Infantry wrote one of the finest pages in the story of the British Army, and British gunners proved their efficiency to the world.

Every year, on the anniversary, men of certain British Infantry regiments wear roses in their caps, as the men of Minden did.

It follows that Minden is something of a place of pilgrimage for troops posted to Rhine Army, and for visitors to the nearby headquarters of Northern Army Group at Bad Oeynhausen. Encouraged by the local commander, Major Graham set out to help soldier-visitors to the battlefield. He produced a concise account of the battle, and began to hunt around for more information. Minden town's museum and archives produced some; German accounts of the campaign more. Major Graham toured the battlefield and came to

OVER →

RHINE ARMY REMEMBERS

Continued

know its places of interest.

Meanwhile, his enthusiasm had infected the staff of his education centre. Staff-Serjeant John Hedgethorpe, a 22-year-old Regular soldier who teaches art, made an oil painting of the Royal Artillery in action during the battle. Warrant Officer Class One T. A. Grant, whose hobby is military uniforms, produced a set of illustrations of troops of various armies in the uniforms worn during the engagement. With the aid of a large wall-map, visitors may plan their trip to the battlefield. Briefings are held when a large party is expected and the education centre staff become guides.

All these exhibits, and some others, Major Graham set up in a Battle of Minden room when the education centre held its art and crafts exhibition last year. It was a feature which achieved a good deal of space in the local German newspapers. "We have stirred up a lot of local interest in the battle where there was very little before," says Major Graham.

The story Major Graham has to tell is of a small British Army, about 10,000 strong, fighting as an ally of Prussia against French, Austrians and Russians under Marshal Contades. At the Battle of Minden, this small British force was part of an Army commanded by Prince Ferdinand



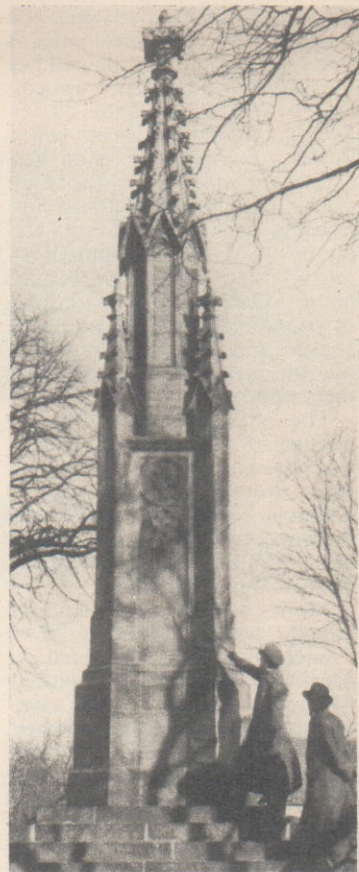
of Brunswick. By an error, the six British Infantry battalions, wearing roses in their hats, and three Hanoverian battalions, were set in motion before Ferdinand intended. They advanced, drums rolling, into a crossfire from more than 60 cannon, alone and unsupported, towards a wall of French Cavalry. On the right of the line, the six British battalions bore the brunt of the fighting. The first line of French horsemen charged, but the Infantry held their fire until the Cavalry were ten yards away, then fired a volley which "immediately ruined them," as an officer afterwards wrote. An attack by the second line of French Cavalry, and by French Infantry suffered the same fate. The third assault by the French

Cavalry broke through the first line, but the second line of British Infantry defeated that attempt, too, and the French Cavalry was finished. The British had lost about one-third of their total strength, but their audacious attack virtually won the day.

Through the failure of the British Cavalry commander, Lord George Sackville, to obey orders, the Cavalry did not support the Infantry or follow up its victory. (Sackville was court-martialled and pronounced unfit to serve the King in any military capacity, but turned up later, disastrously, as Minister for War). Thus it fell to the three British "brigades" of Artillery which had already done splendid service, to chase the French Cavalry off the battlefield and turn defeat into rout. One of the Gunner units which took part, 32 (Minden) Light Anti-Aircraft Battery, Royal Artillery, last year left its station in Germany to spend a day on the battlefield. Major Graham gave the Battery a cannon-ball found at Todthausen, where Buckeburg Gunners distinguished themselves, helped by a tax official who picked up spent enemy cannon-balls to keep up their supply of ammunition.

Among the places of interest to which the staff of the education centre take their visitors is Sudhemmern, a hamlet with a chapel from the wall of which a cannon-ball still protrudes. At Hahlen, there stands a windmill in front of which British Gunners fought. At Luttern there is a farmhouse which was half-built at the time of the battle; the French took the beams to make a bridge across the river Bastau, but the farmer retrieved them afterwards and went on with the building. His descendants still live there. On the outskirts of Minden town stands a memorial set up by the people of Minden a century after the battle, to commemorate the allied victory. Opposite is a café kept by a descendant of a Minden native named Lohrmann who is said to have played a remarkable part in the battle. He was commissioned by Marshal Contades to take a pair of shoes from Minden

The cannon-ball which is said to have been embedded in the wall of the chapel at Sudhemmern since it was fired in the Battle of Minden. Below: The memorial with which Minden town commemorates its famous battle.



to Herford, where another French commander was to have them copied to make boots for his men. Lohrmann, however, took the shoes first to Ferdinand's headquarters where they were taken to pieces. Contades's plan of attack was found in the soles, read, sewn back and taken on by Lohrmann to Herford.

The solution to one mystery of the Battle of Minden still eludes Major Graham. Where were the bodies of the British soldiers buried after the battle? The archives of Minden town give clear evidence that the officers' bodies were taken to Hamburg and then shipped to Britain for burial. But of the men's graves there is no trace.

Major Graham has now left Minden, but 49 Education Centre keeps up its interest in the battle, and a pool of knowledgeable guides.

This farmhouse was half-built when Minden was fought. French troops used the beams to bridge a stream. The farmer recovered them.



MEN OF MINDEN

MINDEN was not entirely overlooked by the poets. Rudyard Kipling said:

The men that fought at Minden, they was armed with musketoons.

Also, they was drilled by 'alberdiers.

I don't know what they were, but the serjeants took good care,

They washed be'ind their ears.



LONDON

PRIDE of PARADE

*From Whitehall to
Korea the British
Army paraded at
its best for the
Queen's Birthday*

Left: On Horse Guards Parade men of the 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards trooped their Regimental Colour before the Queen.

Below: In the dust of Egypt, the Colour trooped was that of the 1st Battalion Irish Guards. Taking part in this ceremony were the Grenadier, Scots and Welsh Guards.

OVER

MOASCAR



PRIDE of PARADE (Cont'd)



BERLIN



Beside the Olympic Stadium: a Royal Salute for the Queen's Standard. The 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards trooped the Colour. On parade were the Royal Lincolns, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, Royal Air Force Regiment and tanks of 1st Independent Squadron Royal Tank Regiment.

Below: Against Korean hills bayonets of the 1st Commonwealth Division glinted. Marching past are men of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment.

KOREA



In the good old days of life insurance, smart operators used to gamble on soldiers' lives



The merchant stood to gain £200 if the cornet was killed.

Anybody Could Insure The General

THE soldier serving in Britain or in Rhine Army, unless he is engaged on flying duties, is less likely to lose his life or be seriously injured in peacetime than a farmer or a machine-minder.

British insurance companies place him well down the list of "insurable risks." Sometimes, as when he is sent to tropical or semi-tropical countries, he may have to pay higher premiums to cover increased "climatic risks." But if war broke out the soldier would find himself at the top of the list and no company would issue a policy covering risks arising from war.

Insurance companies and underwriters have not always been so shy of insuring soldiers in wartime. Some 200 years ago, when the idea of life insurance was gaining ground, large sums were wagered by get-rich-quick city gamblers on the safe return of soldiers ordered overseas.

An early instance of this gambling on soldiers' lives was on New Year's Day, 1733, when John Clark of the Inner Temple took out with a firm of underwriters in London a policy on the life of Cornet Guildford Killegrew, of Lord Mark Kerr's Regiment of Dragoons, which had been ordered abroad. If Cornet Killegrew was killed in action or died while overseas Clark stood to receive the sum of £200—for a premium of £40 a year.

Sometimes officers gambled on the lives of their friends. In May, 1733, a Captain John Broughton, of St. Margaret's, Westminster, insured his friend Cornet Richard Philips, of Brigadier Churchill's Regiment of Dragoons, for a period of two years at £40 a year and stood to gain £200 if Philips was killed.

When King George II, the last English monarch to lead his men in the field, was preparing for the Battle of Dettingen in 1743, London underwriters offered to pay four times the stake-money if he failed to return, and found many eager takers. As it happened the King came through unscathed and the gamblers lost their stake-money.

The Duke of Cumberland, the "Butcher of Culloden," was also

heavily insured. One London company has in its museum today a record of a Mr. Abraham Furtado taking out a policy on the Duke's life for £350. The firm refused to issue a policy for £700 "in view of the hazardous life the Duke led."

The Life Assurance Act of 1744, which did much to clean-up insurance abuses, put a stop to gambling in men's lives, but even after this date it was still possible for people who were not close relatives to insure soldiers who owed them money. As late as 1815 military tailors insured officers who had gone off to the wars without paying their bills.

Until just before World War One soldiers could insure their own lives, but very few companies were anxious to accept them. Those which did demanded annual premiums of as much as five per cent of the sum assured in peacetime and as high as 25 per cent

in wartime. Early in 1914 when hostilities seemed inevitable the now familiar war clause was imposed by all insurance companies. They stated that they could accept no liability in any new policies if death was caused as a result of "war, invasion, act of foreign enemy, hostilities (whether war be declared or not), civil war, rebellion, revolution, insurrection or military or usurped power." This clause governed both life insurance (sum payable on death or at stated age) and personal accident insurance.

Between the world wars most companies lifted the war clause restriction in life policies. Persons who insured their lives in peacetime were fully covered in World War Two. Only new policies taken out after the re-imposition of the war clause in 1939 were affected by the restriction. One company, bolder than the rest, collected much good business in World War Two by offering a policy under which the family of the soldier received half the normal insurable sum in the event of death from war causes.

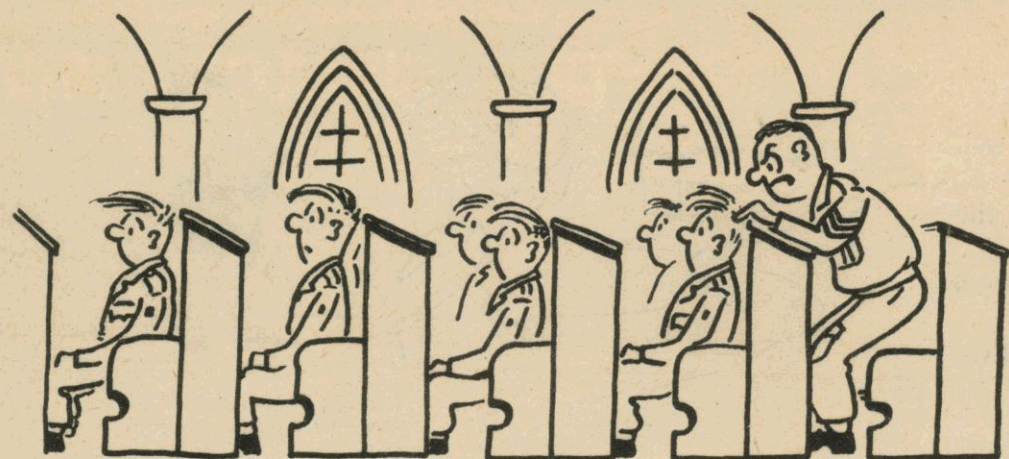
Since World War Two many companies have freed their life policies from the war clause restriction. Some re-imposed it every time the international situation looked black, as during the Berlin air-lift and the Korean war. But even when a war clause was retained some offices, in special cases, paid out in full to families of soldiers killed in Korea and Malaya, though not legally liable.

In the United States Army every soldier, Regular or conscripted, is insured by the Government for \$10,000 (about £3000) which is paid to his wife or family if he is killed. If the soldier wants to continue the policy after leaving the Army he has to pay back to the Government the premiums it has already contributed. This scheme was operated throughout World War Two and the Korean war.

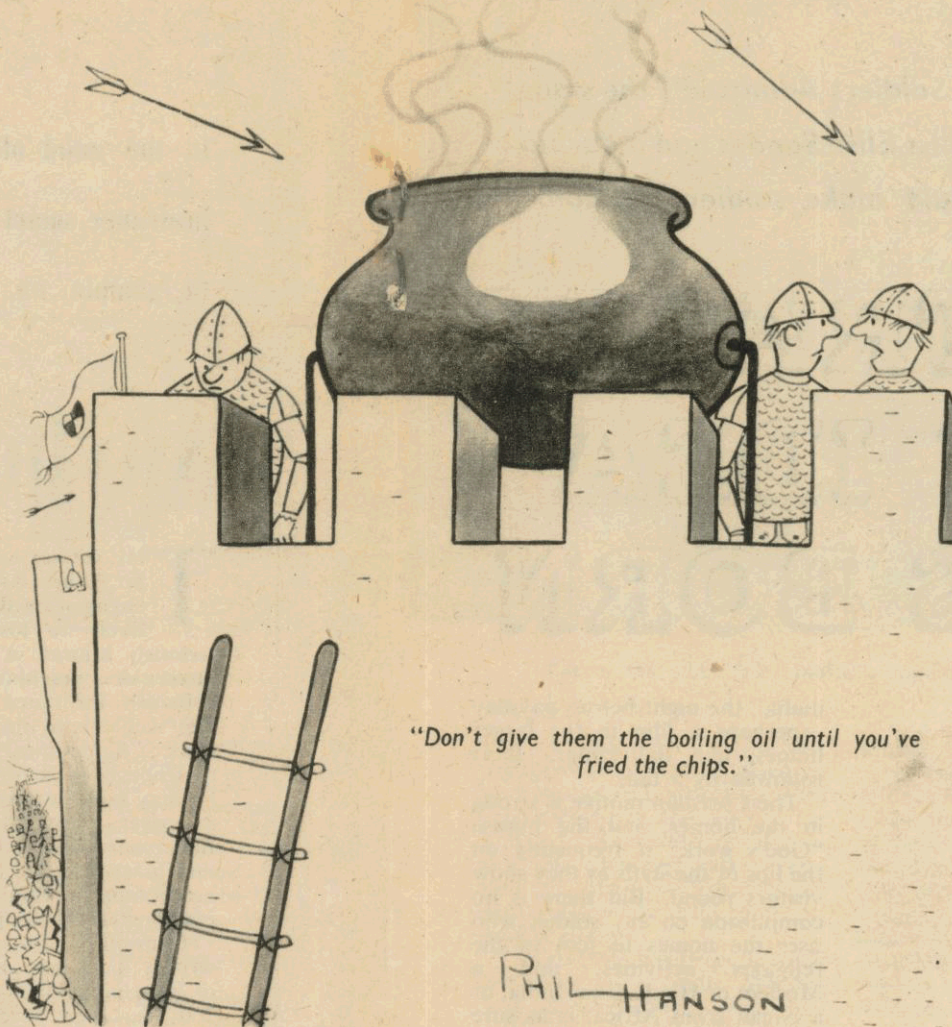
Members of Parliament have several times suggested that the scheme should be adopted in the British Army. It has always been rejected on the grounds that the British Army's pensions scheme and national welfare allowances make it unnecessary.



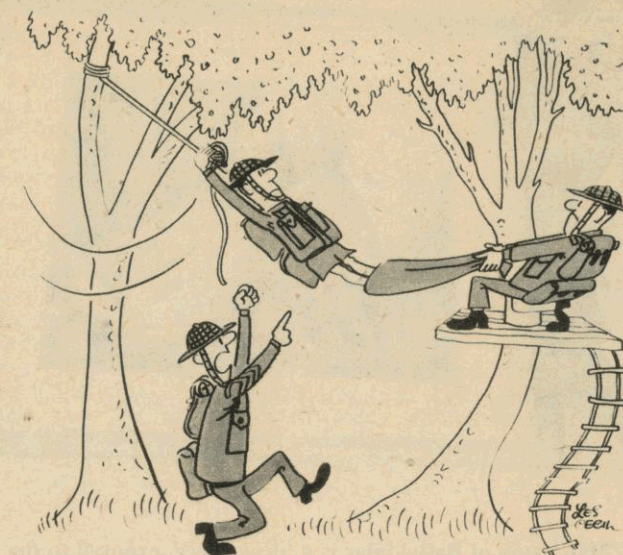
Tailors insured officers who had not paid their bills.



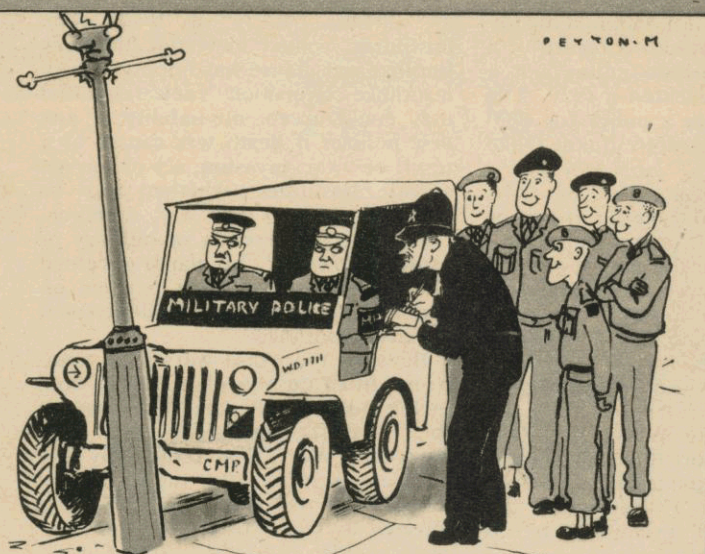
"Haircut—pass it on!" PHELVIN



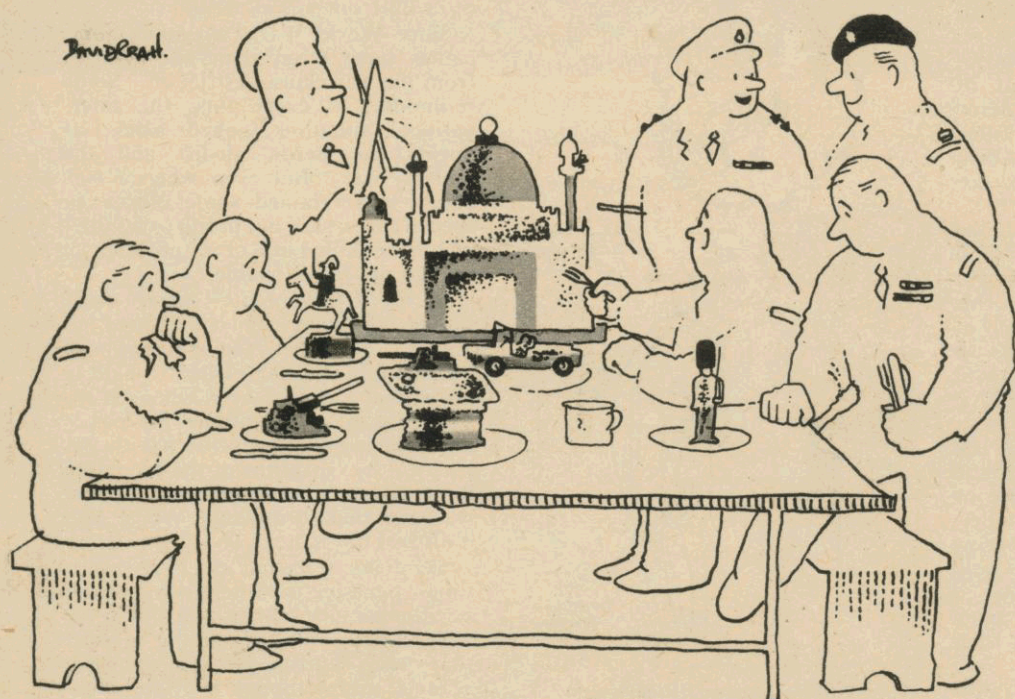
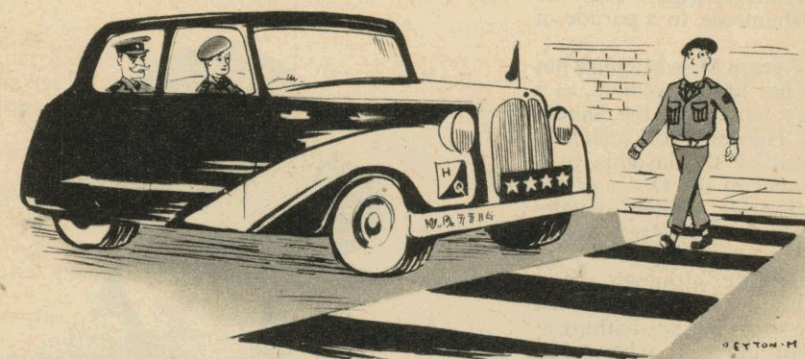
"Don't give them the boiling oil until you've fried the chips." PHIL HANSON



"What do you think this is—Bertram Mills' Circus?" PHELVIN



SOLDIER HUMOUR



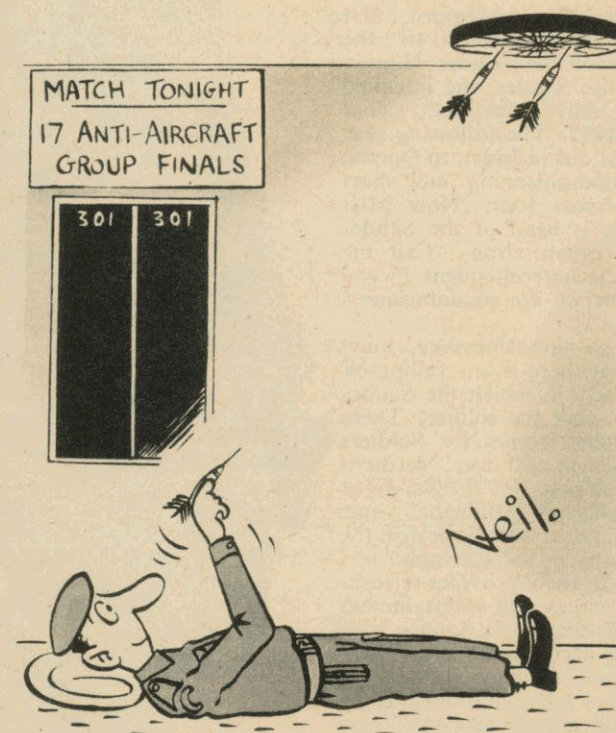
"Yes, this unit did remarkably well in the cookery finals yesterday." PHELVIN



Neil.



"Look mate, specially made for the new hairless sporrans!" EUN SON



MATCH TONIGHT
17 ANTI-AIRCRAFT
GROUP FINALS

301 301

Neil.

In the Ballykinlar home hangs a faded photograph of Miss Elise Sandes, who gave thousands of soldiers rest, recreation and religion.

"No Dogs or Soldiers Admitted" the signs used to say. Miss Elise Sandes had a daring idea—she would make soldiers welcome

IN TRALEE AN IDEA WAS BORN

THE camp at Ballykinlar is a bleak place, exposed to the winds of the Irish Sea.

When a grey-haired lady walks past the open parade-grounds, she is always likely to be approached by a solicitous officer or private. "Now don't you catch cold, Miss Maguire," they will say.

But Miss Eva Maguire just laughs and goes on her way—to call on a battalion commander in his office, to visit a soldier's sick wife or, if it be St. Patrick's Day, to present shamrock to a parade of recruits.

For 57 years Miss Maguire has devoted her life to soldiers, as a voluntary worker in the Sandes Soldiers' Homes—work officially recognised by the insignia of a Commander of the Order of the British Empire, which dangles from her coat on ceremonial occasions.

Furthermore, although she is now in her eighties, Miss Maguire starts her sea-bathing at a time of the year when most people think the water could do with a good deal more sun on it. She is still bathing long after the last holiday-maker has left the seaside. So the rigours of Ballykinlar have no terrors for her.

When Miss Maguire first offered her services to the founder of the Sandes Homes, Miss Elise Sandes, she intended to stay only a fortnight. That was in 1897. The following year she went out to India, to Quetta, but blood-poisoning cut short her overseas tour. Now Miss Maguire is head of the Sandes Homes organisation—"Call me honorary superintendent if you like—but we are so unbusiness-like."

Not so unbusinesslike, however, that there is any falling-off in the way in which the Sandes Homes serve the soldier. There are Sandes Homes for Soldiers and Airmen all over Northern Ireland, two in England—at Catterick and Mildenhall—one in Singapore, and three for the Eire Army in the Curragh.

Each of them provides refreshments, games and entertainment for Servicemen. Some have sleeping accommodation. There are also religious meetings. ("Perhaps a hymn and a talk by some old grannie like me," says Miss Maguire.) A feature of many of the homes is a free entertainment on "stony-broke

night," the night before pay-day—perhaps a film in the larger homes, like Ballykinlar. It is followed by a talk.

The Christian motive is strong in the homes, and the phrase "God's work" is frequently on the lips of the staffs as they show visitors round. But there is no compulsion on any soldier who uses the homes to join in the religious activities, and a Moslem or Hindu from India, or a pagan from Africa, is as sure of a welcome as any other soldier.

It all started back in Tralee in the 1860s when Elise Sandes was a young girl. On a school holiday, she found one of her friends teaching drummer-boys to sing hymns, and joined in the work.

At 19, she invited home the first soldier, and from this grew small Bible-meetings, for men of the 89th. The 89th moved away and the 65th took their place in Tralee. Elise Sandes and her mother visited the barracks and invited members of the new regiment to their home. The men were shy. Some reached the gate, but could not face the ordeal of walking up the drive and knocking at the door. At last one plucked up his courage and knocked. The following night he brought a friend, and so the meetings began again.

Then the 65th moved off to Cork, and Miss Sandes went to visit them. She discovered there was nothing for soldiers out of barracks but public-houses and places of more evil repute. So, with her own money and gifts from friends, she started a tiny home in a private house. It was here that Miss Sandes discovered that soldiers on leave were not allowed to sleep in barracks and that no respectable lodging-house would take a soldier in.

A bigger and better home, with sleeping accommodation, was obviously needed. Armed



Miss Eva Maguire, CBE, has spent 57 years in the service of the Sandes Homes for Soldiers and Airmen.



Karom, the game from India, is popular at Ballykinlar.

with letters of introduction, young Miss Sandes departed on her first visit to London, to beard rich Victorians and appeal for money for this unheard-of project. She returned with several hundred pounds. From these beginnings grew the chain of Sandes Homes.

"'Welcome' has been the only rule hung on our walls. We discard all other rules. 'Welcome' is the only one we require; for we find the kindly, personal influence of ladies living in our homes is quite sufficient restraint; and—all honour to our brave soldiers and sailors—we can testify that never in our recreation rooms are our ears offended by expressions to which the most refined lady might not listen." Miss Sandes wrote that before World War One, and it is still applicable today.

Miss Sandes, who died in 1934, saw a great upheaval in her organisation when the partition of Ireland came into effect. "We stayed in the camps in Southern Ireland until the last British soldiers had marched out," says Miss Maguire. "Then we sold out as best we could. Rival parties of Republicans fought over some of our homes—but not until after we had moved out, for Miss Sandes was beloved by all types of Irishmen."

Three of the Homes in Southern Ireland were burned, three were dismantled and transferred to Northern Ireland. Three in the Curragh were maintained for the Army of Eire. The Dublin home was among those sold, but the purchasers continued its use as a soldiers' home.

When the British Army left India, eight Sandes Homes closed. In their stead, a fine new home was built at Singapore. A relic of the Sandes Home at Chakrata is still in use at Bally-

kinlar, a *karom* board. *Karom* is an Indian game played on a table about a yard square with billiard-type pockets at the corners. The players flick a white, flat disc at counters about the size of draughtsmen, to "pot" them. The counters at Ballykinlar have, all but one, been replaced by draughtsmen, but to replace a lost or broken "flick," the home has to write to Bombay.

Events of recent years have changed conditions in Sandes Homes in Britain, too. The one at Belfast was started about 70 years ago, when theatres and other places of amusement in the city bore notices saying, "No dogs or soldiers admitted." It was opened with small funds. A carpenter's bench, left behind by the builders, was a valued piece

of its equipment. When the first two ladies to staff it debated one Sunday night whether to attend church, one of them clinched the matter by saying, "Well, it will be nice to sit on cushioned seats for an hour."

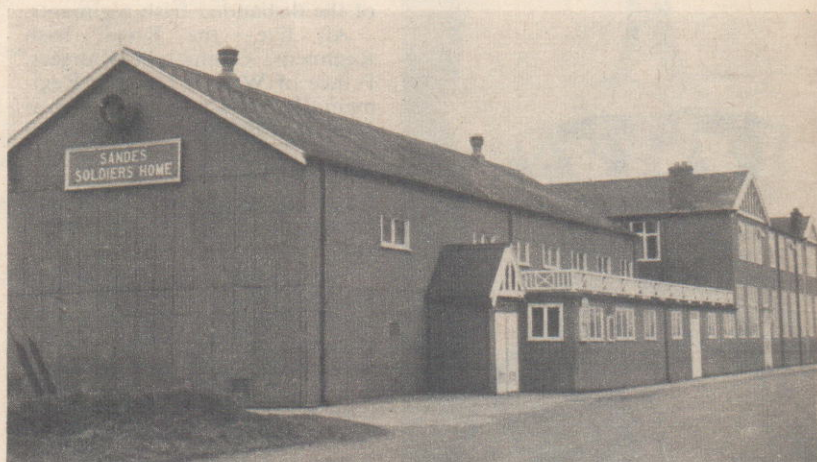
In World War Two, thousands of Servicemen passed through the doors of the Belfast home. Its sleeping accommodation was increased from 60 to 90, and the local authorities winked at regulations. The home was damaged by bombs. Miss Claire Stoney, superintendent in Belfast for the past 19 years, recalls how at two o'clock one morning she and her helpers took refuge from bombing under the stairs with a group of sailors and sang "O God, our help in ages past."

The Belfast home was built just outside Victoria Barracks, once the city's most important military centre. Now the barracks are given over to the Territorial Army, and canteen takings have dropped considerably. Yet, says Miss Stoney, the home must go on, if only to continue providing beds with clean sheets at 2s 6d a night for Servicemen passing through Belfast on leave. The next cheapest

beds in Belfast are 8s 6d, and not always available.

There have been other changes in the Sandes Homes in the past few years. The ladies of private means who were the mainstay of the organisation are now few; salaries, small but enough to affect the home's budget, are now being paid. Canteen profits are lower, since wholesale prices have risen. The organisation's income from dividends and subscriptions is £5000 a year; it needs twice as much to keep the homes going.

In the large room which serves as a combined office and sitting-room at Ballykinlar, a room in which photographs of privates and field-m Marshals, royalty and Sandes Homes workers, crowd the walls, a new desk has appeared. Behind it sits Major A. Gordon Greenwood, a war-time officer of the Royal Fusiliers, now the Sandes Homes' first general secretary. His appointment is a sign of a change in the administration, to meet the new conditions. Soon Miss Maguire will no longer sigh, "We are so unbusinesslike." But the personal touch will continue in the homes.



The Ballykinlar Sandes Home. The building nearest the camera is used as a cinema and for religious meetings. Below: When Sandes homes in India were closed, this new one in Singapore was built.



THE FIVE LOST REGIMENTS

THEY disbanded the Leinsters in 1922, along with the other four regiments from Southern Ireland.

Serjeant Tom Mitten, who had retired from the Leinsters on pension two years previously, had his own plan for seeing that the Regiment was not forgotten. He had his full-dress uniform tucked away in his civilian wardrobe, and from time to time since he has turned up in it at ex-Service-men's parades. Once he was presented to the Queen while wearing it.

Recently, an upright 82, he wore his uniform again to visit the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. There he told SOLDIER: "My scarlet tunic cost twelve-and-six at the Quartermaster's stores—and you wouldn't get one like it at that price now. My blue trousers cost seven-and-six and my helmet thirty shillings."

Then, Serjeant Mitten marched into a building—and looked at a similar uniform in a glass case. He had come to Sandhurst to see the new museum of the disbanded Irish regiments.

All five—the Royal Irish Regiment, Connaught Rangers, Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians), Royal Munster Fusiliers and Royal Dublin Fusiliers—are represented. There are uniforms and fragments of Colours, drums and bandmasters' staffs, documents and medals.

Here is the famous "Jingling Johnnie" captured by the Connaught Rangers in the Peninsula. It is a kind of tall mace from which hang bells and horsehair and which is rotated by a handle with the aid of cogwheels. Jingling Johnnies are of Oriental origin and were once much favoured by military bands.

One exhibit is a picture frame containing dried wild flowers gathered in the Light Division cemetery the day before the Connaughts left the Crimea in 1856, together with the names of the men from whose graves they were gathered. Also on view is a French railwayman's horn, used by the officer commanding a raiding party of the Leinsters at Loos in 1917.

It was the Partition of Ireland which led immediately to the disbandment of the five regiments. After this treaty, it was no longer possible for British regiments to recruit and have depots in the South. This would not necessarily have meant disbandment—some of the regiments, centuries old, had had their Irish connections only 40 years, and new homes and names might have been found for them. It was the time, however, when the Army was being reduced after World War One, and the disbandment of the regiments was incorporated in the general economy plan. Most of the five had long histories.

THE ROYAL IRISH REGIMENT, the 18th Foot, was formed in 1684 by Charles II. It was the first regiment of the British Army to win the right to wear a badge—the arms of Nassau inscribed with the words: "The reward of valour at Namur." In World War One the second battalion was almost wiped out four times. The seventh battalion was the **SOUTH IRISH HORSE**, for long a special reserve Cavalry regiment. It was first blooded at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690.

THE CONNAUGHT RANGERS was first raised in the Irish province of Connaught in 1793. In 1801 the Regiment was ordered home from Egypt for disbandment, but landed at Portsmouth in 1802 on the day war broke out with France. It was made up to strength and lived another 120 years. In the Peninsula, the Regiment's drum-major eloped with a Spanish girl. Her father inspected the Regiment to find her, but she escaped by disguising herself as a negro drummer. The drum-major was killed by the last shot of the Peninsula War.

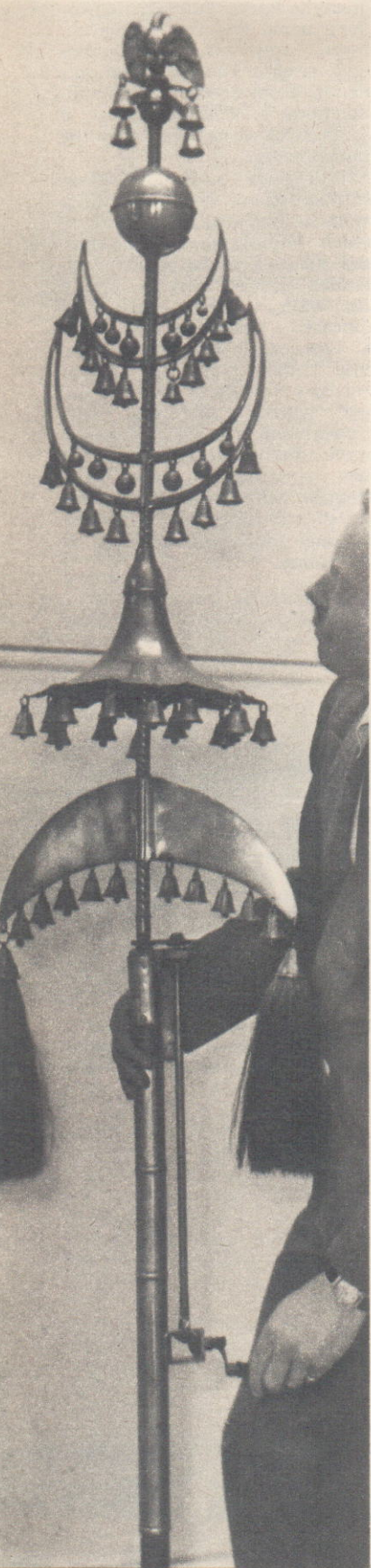
THE PRINCE OF WALES'S LEINSTER REGIMENT (ROYAL CANADIANS) was raised in Canada as the 100th Foot in 1858. Officers were elected according to the number of recruits they produced. In England, the following year the Regiment was stationed with the

Royal City of Dublin Militia, who also wore the numerals 100 in their caps. The Dublin men were ordered to take down their numerals to avoid confusion, and their resentment led to a pitched battle. The 100th boasted a number of "characters," including one whose feet were so big his boots would not fit into his kit-bag and a cook who picked up a troublesome subordinate and dropped him into a vat saying, "Yer God-darned winkle, I'll boil you for my breakfast." They became the 1st Battalion The Leinster Regiment in 1881, when the 109th, formerly the 3rd Bombay European Regiment, became the second battalion. The Regiment was noted for its strong men and in 1887 its tug-of-war team took part in a celebrated 57-minute pull against the Sherwood Foresters in India. In World War One many Leinsters were recruited in County Cork.

THE ROYAL MUNSTER FUSILIERS had their origins in the Bengal European Regiment, raised by the Honourable East India Company in 1652. Lord Clive was the first colonel. The Regiment had a long list of battle honours for its campaigns in India, beginning with Plassey. After the Mutiny, in which it served as the Bengal Fusiliers at the siege of Delhi and at Lucknow, it was taken on the British Army List as the 101st. When it was amalgamated with the 104th, another former regiment of the Honourable East India Company, to make up the Royal Munster Fusiliers in 1881, its headquarters were set up in Tralee. In World War One, one battalion of the Munsters alone lost 180 officers and more than 4000 men.

THE ROYAL DUBLIN FUSILIERS was another Irish regiment of which both Regular battalions had their origins in the service of the Honourable East India Company. The first battalion was born in the 17th century and was known as the Madras European Regiment. A nickname which stuck to it was "Neill's Bluecaps," after a former commander who was killed while leading a brigade which included his regiment to the relief of Lucknow. For the Regiment's services in the Indian Mutiny, its officers were given permission to wear a blue cap. The Regiment joined the Queen's Army as the 103rd Regiment, The Royal Madras Fusiliers, and was linked to the 102nd, Royal Bombay Fusiliers, to make the Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

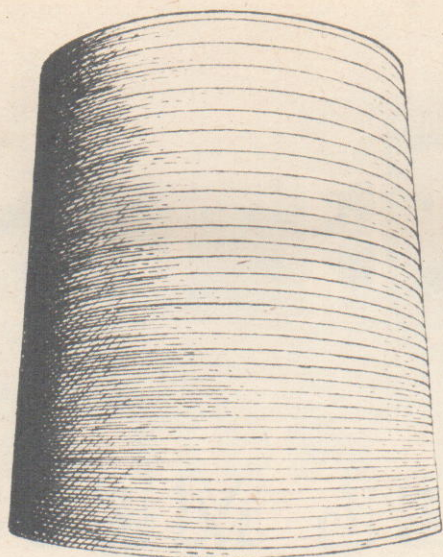
Although the five regiments have been disbanded for 32 years, former members still hold reunions.



The Connaughts' "Jingling Johnnie"—topped by a French eagle. When the handle is turned the bells ripple and tassels fly.

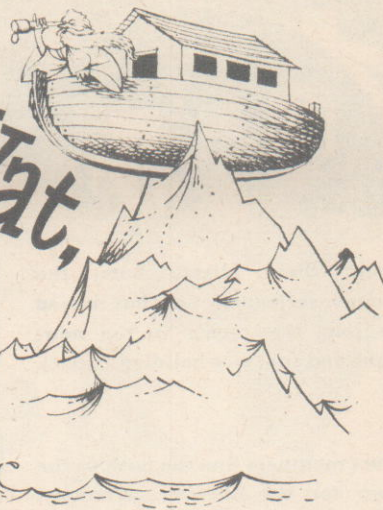


Another new section of the Sandhurst museum is devoted to Cavalry regiments which, lacking depots, cannot have museums of their own. This bearskin-topped helmet (such a problem in a high wind) was worn by the Life Guards early last century.



There's a Vat, Vat, Big as Ararat

(TO THE TUNE OF
'THE QUARTER-MASTER'S STORES')



March tempo.

Solo G.[:s.,s | m:- | m:-.r | d.,r:d.,l, | s, | **Chorus** :d.,r | m:- | -:d.,r |

There's a vat - vat - Big as A - ra - rat In the Brew - brew - er

Solo m:- | -:s.,s | m:- | m:-.r | d.,r:d.,l, | s, | **Chorus** :d.,r | m:f | m:r | d:- | - ||

- ee, And I'd like - to - Quench a thirst in that, In the Guin - ness Brew - er - ee.

CHORUS (:s, | d m.r | d :t, | l, :l | l, ' :l, | r :f .m | r :d | t, :r | s :s, |

My heart is high, My chest is deep, My wind is sound and so's my sleep, For

Solo (| m:- | m:m | r :f .r | d :t, | d :- | - | s.,s | m:- | m:-.r |

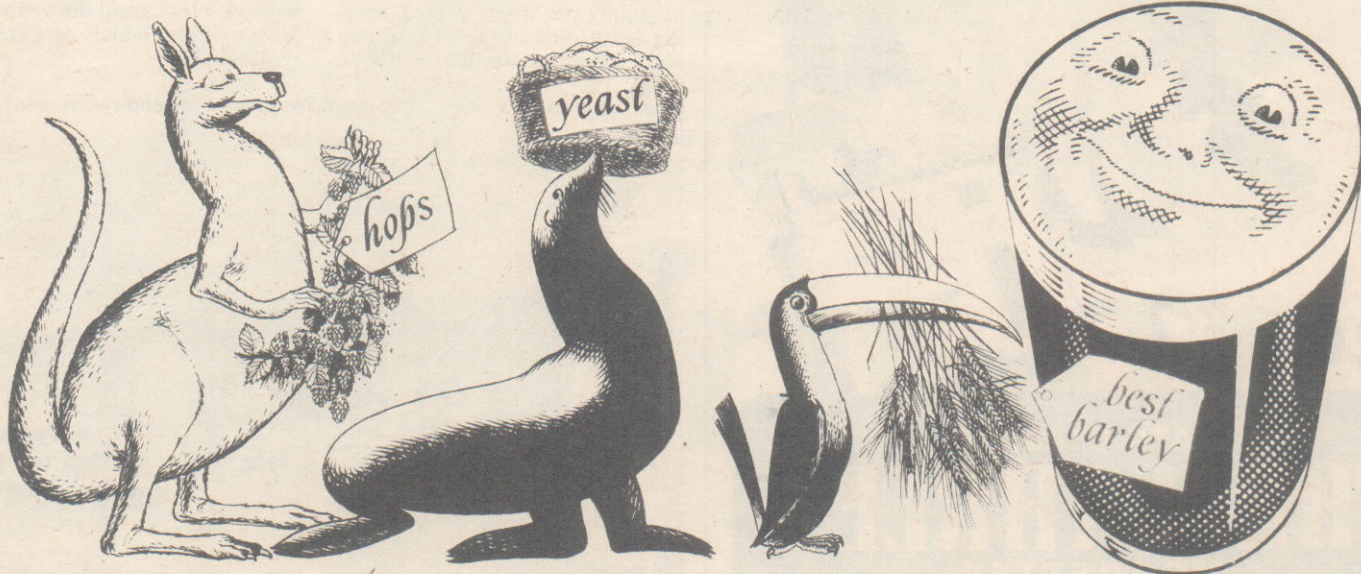
Guin - ness, thank Good - ness, Is - Good - for - me.

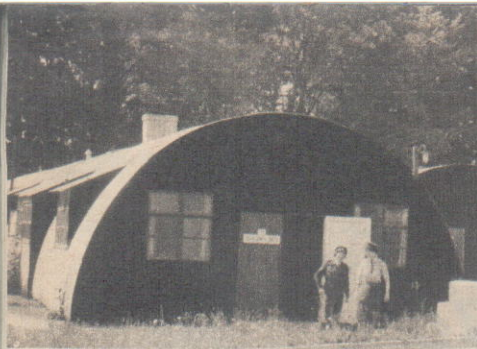
There are crops - crops -
Barley-malt and hops,
In the brew, in the brew,
And its taste - is -
Just about the tops,
It's extremely good for you.

CHORUS: My heart etc.

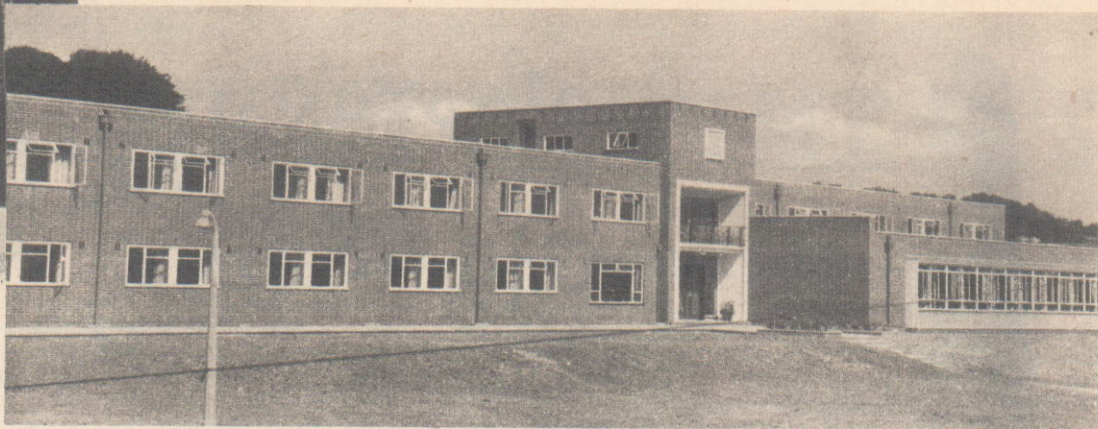
There's a head - head -
(Nothing does instead)
On the brew, on the brew,
It's a real - meal -
With Cheddar cheese and bread,
Why not see what toucan do?

CHORUS: My heart etc.





From these Nissen huts, the women serjeants' mess has moved to join the men's in the new, light and spacious building (right).



Mess members line the path to the door for the opening ceremony.

THE MODEL MESS

Serjeants of both sexes move into a 'miniature Ritz' near Salisbury



"MADAM VICE, The Queen!" called Regimental Serjeant-Major A. Bottle of the Rifle Brigade.

Blushing, a young serjeant of the Women's Royal Army Corps stood up and, for the first time, the loyal toast was proposed in the new serjeants' mess of Southern Command Headquarters at Fugglestone Camp, near Salisbury.

It was a rare occasion. "Eclipses of the sun happen more often than the opening of a new serjeants' mess," said the principal guest, Lieutenant-General Sir Ernest Down, the Commander-in-Chief. "I have never attended such a function before, in 32 years in the Army."

It had started formally, with a guard of honour for the General and a gold-plated key to open the door (the key was destined to hang behind the bar thereafter). Then the mess members took their guests—mostly senior officers of the headquarters—around the building.

What is most notably up-to-date about the new mess is that it is entirely self-contained, for sleeping, eating and relaxation. Another modern feature is that each serjeant has a single room. Each room has hot and cold running water and central heating (from a power-house set up to supply the whole camp), reading lamp, bedside table and mat and heavy curtains. "It's a

miniature Ritz hotel," says the Camp Commandant, Major J. Sawdon, Coldstream Guards.

At present there are 32 rooms for men and 14 for women, but the proportions can be varied by shifting a partition along the corridor of the upper floor. Similarly, curtains can vary the sizes of the ante-room and dining-room, or turn them into one big room.

The mess is not built to a standard design, but to suit the site, which has a slope of one-in-ten. It is part of a project to build completely new headquarters for Southern Command. Already some new barrack-blocks are in use.

The mess stands near the top of the slope and, as the estate agents say, commands a magnificent view over a wooded valley to downland. It also overlooks the pleasantly geometric new barrack-blocks and the venerable Nissen huts which are to be replaced.

Used as a single room, the ante-room and dining-room seat 150.



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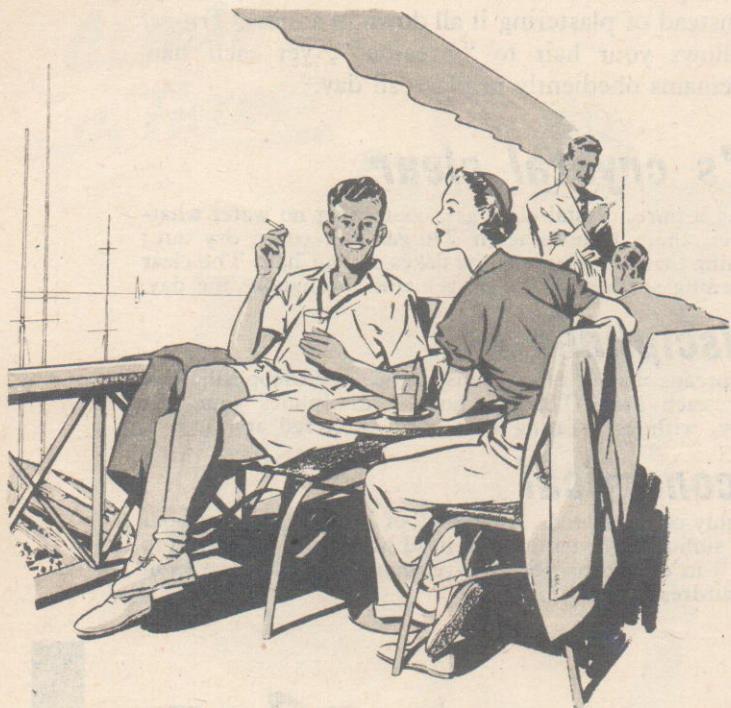
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The Ordeal of an Adjutant—

CAPTURED after the Imjin battle, the Adjutant of the Glosters, Captain Anthony Farrar-Hockley, DSO, MC, escaped seven times from his brutal captors—and was seven times recaptured.

He tells his grim story, and that of other British and American captives, in "The Edge of the Sword" (Muller, 12s 6d).

Captain Farrar-Hockley won the DSO in the Imjin battle for "outstanding gallantry, fighting spirit and great powers of leadership." These qualities remained undimmed through his 28 months of captivity.

Once, after escaping, he walked for 16 days, reached the shores of the Yellow Sea, and then, through lack of food, fell so seriously ill that he was unable to go farther. Once he posed as a Korean and another time as a Russian, a ruse which almost

bluffed his Korean captors until a Russian interpreter was brought up. Twice he gave himself up to allow others to make good their escape. Even at the end, when release seemed certain, he was planning to escape again.

After his sixth escape the Chinese decided to give him the "water treatment." This consisted of covering his face in a towel and then soaking it with water until it seeped into his mouth and nose and "drowned" him into unconsciousness. This was repeated several times, with savage beatings in between, every other day for a week. Captain Farrar-Hockley refused to sign a "confession" and was then ordered to be shot. His regret as he was led out was that his appearance, without a cap or a comb to smooth his unkempt hair, would not be soldierly. For some reason the sentence was not carried out.



He escaped seven times: Captain A. Farrar-Hockley, DSO, MC.

It was in this camp that Captain Farrar-Hockley met Lieutenant Terence Waters, who was posthumously awarded the George Cross. Earlier, in another camp, the author shared a cell with Fusilier Derek Kinne, who was also awarded the George Cross.

After his seventh escape, Captain Farrar-Hockley was sent to another camp where he found Lieutenant-Colonel James Carne, VC, who spent 19 months in solitary confinement. By this time, early in 1953, the Chinese had almost despaired of indoctrinating their prisoners, but they were still suspicious of everything their prisoners did and insisted on censoring the padre's sermons, prayers, psalms and hymns, lest fun be poked at Communism. This is what happened when the pantomime script was vetted:

Tien (a Chinese camp official):

What is this?

Us: That is a joke.

Tien: What is a joke?

Us: Well, you see, two men meet. The fat man says, "Have you seen a fat man about here?"

Tien: Why does he say that?

Us: It's part of the joke. Then the second man says, "No."

Tien: But he has seen the fat man.

Us: Yes, of course. That's why the fat man says, "Well, if you haven't seen a fat man about here, I must be lost."

Tien: But he is not lost.

Us (exhausted after three hours of this): But it's a joke, don't you see? Not a very good joke—just a pantomime joke.

Tien: This is some plot against the Chinese People's Volunteers. You are trying to say that there are no fat men here because we do not feed you; you must remove it from the drama!

This is one of the few funny stories in a book which makes no attempt to gloss over the appalling experiences of men who lived almost like animals yet never lost their self-respect or loyalties.

—and a Serjeant-Major

THE serjeant-major's eight children sat down to breakfast. All were well. By tea-time six were dead of cholera, and in their graves two hours later. A seventh died that same day. The serjeant-major's wife was given up, but recovered.

It was a bad day for Serjeant-Major Timothy Gowing, Royal Fusiliers. But they were tough, those soldiers of an earlier Queen.

For many years before he died, in 1908, survived by only one of his 19 children, this thrice-married warrior was a "character" in Lancashire. He could lift two loaded kitchen scuttles on the little finger of each hand and carry them over his head. He was a great story-teller and singer of camp songs.

To supplement his pension, Serjeant-major Gowing set out most days with a bag filled with copies of a book written by himself, and peddled it to workers in factories and offices. This book has now been republished as "A Voice from the Ranks" (Folio Society, 15s), and contains his reminiscences of the Crimean War.

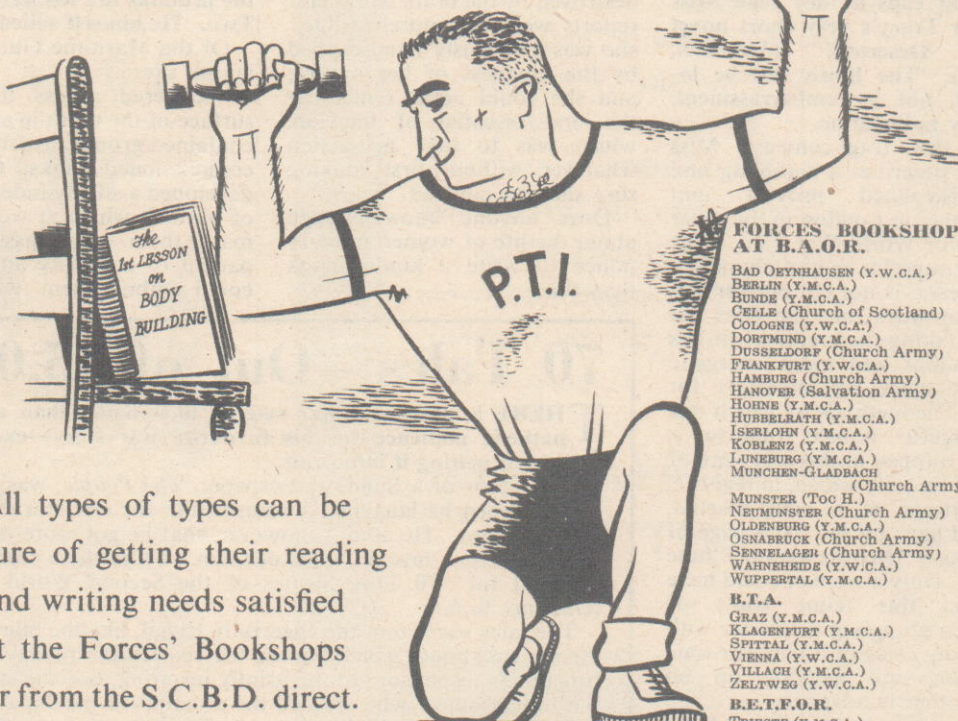
Gowing fought at Alma, Inkerman and Sebastopol and, while leading an unarmed fatigue-party, had a grandstand view of the Battle of Balaklava. He was twice wounded and records an appalling journey in a hospital ship to Malta.

One of his stories is about a serjeant who buried two men in much-needed blankets. His angry colonel roared: "Where are the blankets, sir? Go back and get them—and parade them before me, when washed!"

The Serjeant-major was a fire-eater, full of phrases like: "We longed to be at them." He fought for "the glorious old flag."

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THE GREAT IMPERSONATION

WHEN Lieutenant M. E. Clifton James left his desk in the offices of the Royal Army Pay Corps in Leicester, and did not come back, the story got around that he was a prisoner in the Tower.

The truth was much more exciting—and creditable. Lieutenant Clifton James was being schooled for the nerve-racking role of impersonating Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery at Gibraltar and Algiers.

In a fascinating book entitled—inevitably—“I was Monty’s Double” (*Rider, 12s 6d*), Lieutenant James has at last been allowed to fill in most of the background to the already well-known story of the great impersonation.

He tells how the plot was hatched, and how—dressed as an Intelligence serjeant—he attached himself to the Field-Marshal’s entourage in order to study his mannerisms and voice. The author had a natural awe, ingrained from World War One, of senior officers. Now he would have to return their salutes, shake them by the hand, call them by their Christian names, say “It’s a long time since Sandhurst, isn’t it?” and—worst of all—talk plausible military gibberish to them. Moreover, the gibberish



He talked nonsense to generals: Lieutenant M. E. Clifton James

had to be plausible enough to interest the various spies who (by arrangement of MI5) would be hanging around to pick up what they could. It was a daunting prospect. “What I needed,” he writes, “was a transfusion of morale such as sales managers of furniture firms attempt to give

their unfortunate travelling salesmen who have to sell their goods on HP.” In fact, it was the resourceful officers of Military Intelligence who, by admonition and a touch of flattery, helped him to screw his courage to the sticking-point.

The impersonation was nearly cancelled out by misadventure. For some reason unknown, the aircraft flying the bogus general to Gibraltar ran short of petrol and touched down with tanks almost dry. Happily Lieutenant James did not know this at the time. The impersonation, both at Gibraltar and Algiers was a great success. Afterwards, Lieutenant James was smuggled to Cairo, whence he made his way back to England by Service aircraft, piloted by a somnambulist crew. The officer who had left England to the salutes of generals now had to battle with sceptical RTO’s and Customs officers; indeed the return home was a resounding and comical anti-climax.



It is an engrossing story. Judging from many of his photographs Lieutenant Clifton James does not look overwhelmingly like the Field-Marshal; therefore the job of acting he performed must have been the more remarkable.

The reader will also wonder what the Field-Marshal did while he was being impersonated for two or three days in the Mediterranean. Where did he lie low?



Red Caps, Red Faces

Two hitherto unsung arms of the Service have now attracted the novelist: the women's military police and the maritime Gunners

ARE the girls with the red-topped caps human? Human enough, probably, to blush the colour of their caps if they read Miss Honor Tracy’s very short novel “The Deserters” (*Methuen, 8s 6d*). The blush will be inspired, not by embarrassment, but by indignation.

In this tragic-comedy, Miss Tracy describes a fumbling and ill-disciplined “provost unit” operating in London in the latter stages of World War Two. The rather superior central character, a serjeant, is not cut out for this type of work, but she does not mind taking the credit when less scrupulous and more energetic NCOs snare her deserters for her. The methods by which one resourceful female fugitive is twice trapped in this story are of a chill iniquity which, in real life, if exposed at a court-martial, would have hit the front page of the *Daily Mirror* even on 7 June 1944. Only a woman could have written this feline study of women grappling helplessly with the seamy side of life in war-time London—and ganging up on each other in adversity.

To be fair to Miss Tracy (who has been less than fair to the women’s military police), her story has nimble touches of irony and her characterisation is slyly efficient. Sample paragraph:

“Poor Peggy Hume had joined the police hoping it would give

her a chance to run about in the open air blowing whistles, and to wrestle and box: instead of which she was being gradually destroyed by the brain work. Her reports were incomprehensible: she was grievously handicapped by the kindness of her nature; and she could never remember the first essential of the job, which was to take no action whatever without first making sure she was covered.”

Does anyone know enough about the life of women military police to write a kinder book than this?

THE men of the Maritime Royal Artillery deserved a book to themselves.

Although “Soldier, Sail North” (*Harrap, 10s 6d*) is fiction, the author, James Pattinson, gives a very convincing picture of the arduous life led by the Army’s seaborne Gunners in World War Two. He himself sailed on Russian convoys.

Of the Maritime Gunners, the author says:

“Scattered across the liquid surface of the earth in small self-contained groups, usually free of commissioned ranks, they had developed a sturdy independence of outlook which at worst could make them embarrassingly impatient of authority and at best could imbue them with those

qualities of hardihood and resourcefulness which distinguished the old soldiers of fortune.”

They served in DEMs, otherwise Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships, and—on the Russian convoy especially—were well placed to win DSMs, otherwise Distinguished Service Medals. Their living conditions, on battered tramp ships, were poor to bad. They visited many strange ports; they crossed the Line and they saw the Northern Lights; they also saw death in its more repulsive forms—for example, their comrades being roasted in flaming oil on a frozen sea.

On Arctic duty, a man would wear long woollen underpants, thick vest, flannel shirt, two pairs of trousers, two pullovers, battle-blouse, lambswool jerkin, Army greatcoat, duffle coat, two Balacavas, thick sea-boot stockings and leather sea-boots. And still he shivered.

Without “fine writing,” but by conscientious building up of detail, the author paints an unforgettable picture of the excitement and tedium and suffering of the Gunners who manned the ice-caked Bofors and Oerlikons in those deadly northern waters.

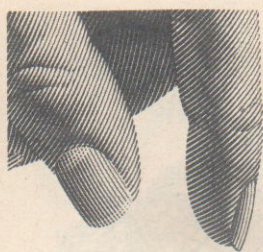
70 Tales—Out of 15,000

THERE is nothing a war veteran likes better than a sympathetic audience for his favourite war story—except a chance of getting it into print.

The editor of a Sunday newspaper, *The People*, was aware of that when he launched a competition for war stories, with money prizes. He admits, however, that he got more than he bargained for—nearly 15,000 of them. From these comes the material for “70 True Stories of the Second World War” (*Odhams, 9s 6d*).

The tales vary from the cheerfully trivial, like the tale of the lunatic cookhouse which burned the custard on the day of the brigadier’s inspection, to the grimly inspiring, like the story of the Indian officer who resisted the attempts of the Japanese to persuade him into their puppet Indian Army, escaped three times, was finally beheaded and awarded a posthumous George Cross.

There are prisoner-of-war escape stories, accounts of intimate incidents in battle and of moving little episodes, as when the prisoners working on the deadly Siam railway, sick, starved, wet and cold, astounded the Japanese guards by bursting into song. This is the war the history books miss.



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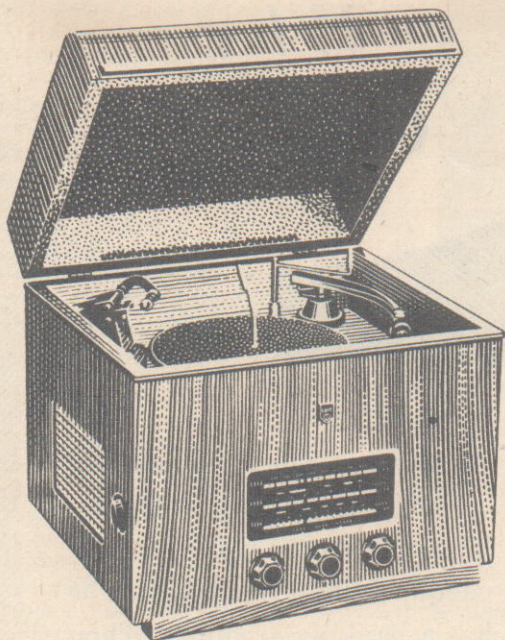
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WORCESTERSHIRE SLOGGER

THE sports writers are tipping a left-handed soldier as a possible member of the England cricket team to visit Australia next winter.

He is Lance-Corporal Peter E. Richardson, aged 23, of the Worcestershire Regiment, who made his mark on Army cricket by scoring 103 not out in his second innings for the Service against Oxford, in June.

There is a precedent for a National Serviceman travelling to Australia with a Test team. It happened to Brian Close of Yorkshire in the 1950-51 season. He was serving with the Royal Signals, and made up his lost Army service after the tour.

Lance-Corporal Richardson is an amateur member of the Worcestershire side. In civilian life he is a farmer, which is why his National Service was deferred until now.

He is a strongly-built, broad-shouldered young man who looks imperturbable at the wicket. His strokes are a joy to the cricketer's eye, he drives hard all round the wicket and his defence is sound.

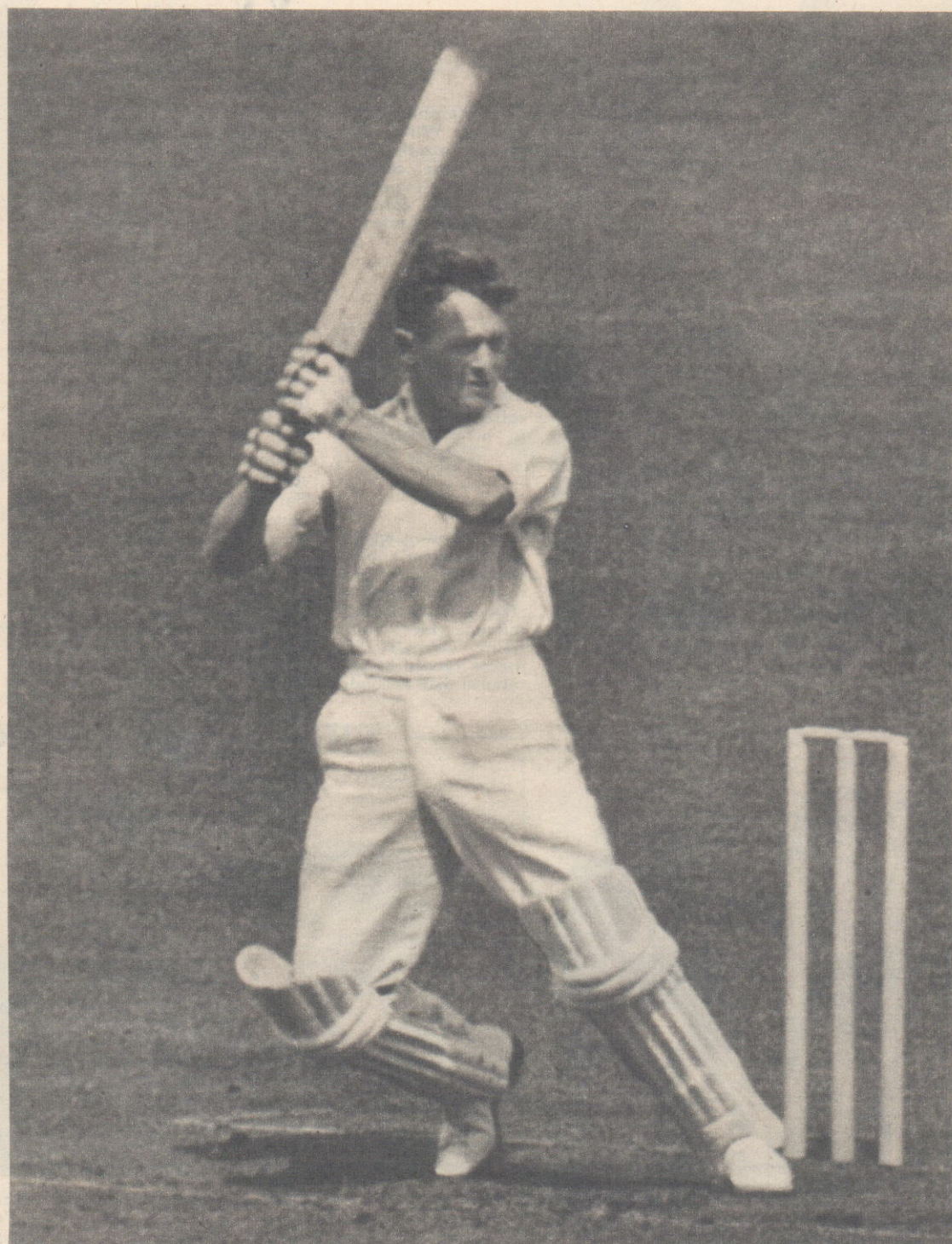
Lance-Corporal Richardson started his career in county championship cricket early—somewhere around his 18th birthday—with two appearances as No. 5 in his county's batting order. He made no great impression, but knocked up 39 and 35 in two innings against Cambridge University that season.

In 1950, he played in five county matches (highest score, 50) and in 1951 in seven (highest score, 63). By 1952, young Richardson was firmly installed as an opening bat in his county side. Before his 21st birthday, he scored his maiden century in first-class cricket, against Oxford (it included 15 boundaries). That same season, he made his first county championship century, with 102 against Essex. His aggregate for the season was 1502 runs and his average had stepped up to 31.95.

Last year brought him an aggregate of 2294 runs—a figure beaten only by Hutton, May, Edrich, Simpson and his own team-mate, Kenyon. It was a notable performance for a youngster of 22, in his second full season. His average had risen further, to 39.55. Highest score for the season was 171 against Oxford. He also scored 148 in a 290-run first-wicket stand with Kenyon against Gloucester.

When SOLDIER went to press, Lance-Corporal Richardson had just scored 185 for his county—his highest yet.

Twenty-three-year-old Lance-Corporal Peter Richardson has a good chance of a visit to Australia



Lance-Corporal Richardson in action. Last year he scored 2294 runs in first-class cricket.

SPORT

(Continued)



They said she was retiring—but you will hear more about Captain Audrey Williamson

18 TIMES AN ARMY CHAMPION

WHEN Captain Audrey Williamson, an official's brassard on her arm, stood and watched this year's women's 100 and 220 yards Army championship races, word got round that she had retired from track events.

"Those were just the individual events, and I was officiating that day," Captain Williamson told SOLDIER. "So I did not defend my sprint titles. But I may run for the Army. Next year? Well, I won't commit myself."

Left: Wembley, 1948: Captain Williamson sprints on to the front page. The camera catches her in perfect step with a competitor from America.

Captain Williamson defended her long jump championship this year, and successfully. She equalled her best at 17 feet. It made her 18th Army championship since—as Corporal Williamson, a physical training instructor—she won the 100 yards in 1946. Before this year's inter-Services meeting she had also collected 18 inter-Services championships.

Although Captain Williamson ran for Britain in the 1948 Olympic Games, and finished second to the redoubtable Mrs. Fanny Blankers-Koen, she has never hankered after the prizes of civilian athletics. As a result, she is one of the few Olympic-standard athletes with only two overseas trips in her running history—one to Dublin and one to Amsterdam. Often she has left the field laden down with silver, yet she has few cups to

display — most of those she has won have been challenge trophies. Instead, in a cabinet in her Cheltenham home there are 50 or 60 medals and a mere four or five small cups.

Captain Williamson has held three appointments as staff officer, physical training. Today she is a general instructor in the officer-cadets' wing of the Women's Royal Army Corps School of Instruction at Hindhead.

"I feel I've been hogging the limelight," says Captain Williamson. "My brother has been doing far more than I have."

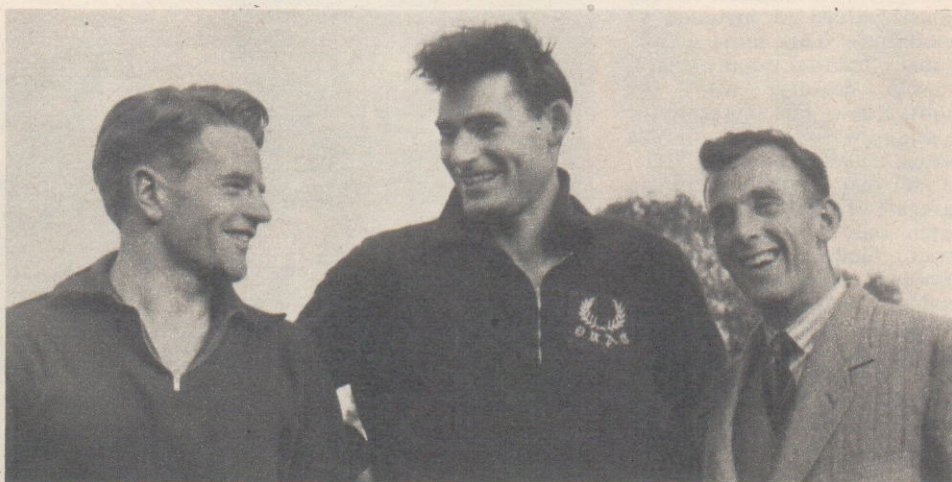
Her brother, Lieutenant Desmond Williamson, Royal Artillery, has established himself as one of Britain's three best half-milers. At this year's Army meeting he was hard on the heels of Bombardier Brian Hewson, the national champion at the distance, who finished in one minute 52 seconds, knocking 1.4 seconds off Nankeville's six-year-old record.

Cups by the score have been handed up to the Army's champion woman runner—but her permanent collection of silver is a modest one.

Left, below: Captain Williamson's brother, Lieutenant Desmond Williamson, (79), is a crack half-miler. He holds Rhine Army's 800 metre record of one minute 55.5 seconds.



THREE FOR VANCOUVER



Three Territorials who will represent Britain in this year's Empire Games at Vancouver. Left to right: Lieutenant Chris Chataway, Queen's Westminsters; Gunner Peter Higham, Honourable Artillery Company; and Lieutenant Kenneth Box, Royal Artillery.

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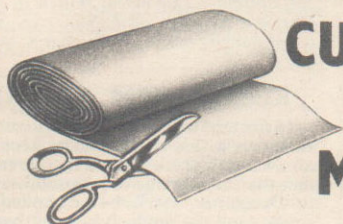


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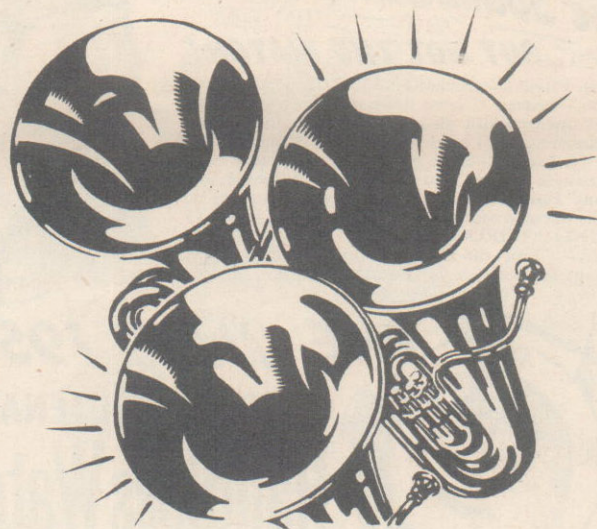
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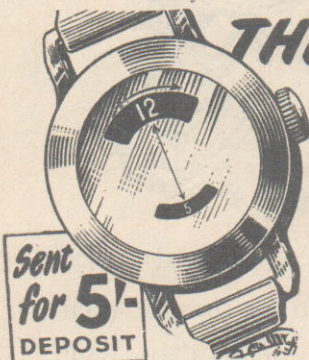
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LETTERS

PROFESSIONALS

I was very interested in Major H. P. E. Pereira's letter (SOLDIER, June) and your comments on professional footballers in the Army.

To me, and to many "unit standard" footballers I have spoken to, there seems to be a very strong case for a rule stipulating that no professional footballers play in Army Cup games.

While it is agreed that professionals do greatly improve the standard of football in the Army, the original thought behind the Cup is being obscured—that is, of an inter-unit knock-out competition with the regimental spirit the main driving force, and the standard of play improving as a consequence. The case for a "no-pro" rule in the Army Cup I would summarise as follows:

- All units would start off more or less equal. This would improve the spirit of the game; more important, I think, than the standard of play.
- It would abolish to some extent the real or supposed "holding on to pros" accusation.
- The greater satisfaction of winning a tie or the consolation of losing to an all-amateur side.
- When playing the Blankshire Regt. you would not, in fact, be playing half of Leeds United.

This would not, of course, mean that the professional would never play football during his Service, any more than the 50 per cent. of units that get knocked out in the first round stop playing for the rest of the season.

It is essential that a professional footballer keeps his playing fitness and football prowess right up to the mark ready for his return to civilian life. Let him play for his unit, command or even the Army, but please, not in the inter-unit Army Cup games.—"Serjeant-Major" (name and address supplied).

To say that professional footballers should not be allowed to play for their unit or for the Army is like saying that a man who has taught himself conjuring should not be allowed to perform at a camp concert.

Just because the footballer has been at pains to "learn a trade," why prevent him from following it in the Army?—"Jumping Jock" (name and address supplied).

Professionalism in boxing was abolished in the Army in 1926. Why is professionalism in football allowed?—"Curious" (name and address supplied).

★ National Service call-up of sportsmen presents the Army with a problem which did not exist in the nineteen-twenties.

Surely the Army Council could do something to improve the standard of football in the Army, and ultimately in the international field, by posting all soccer professionals and good amateurs to the Army Physical Training Corps at Aldershot, where they could be trained by a first-class coach. At the very least this would produce a very good Army XI and at the best a number of players fit for international matches.

The coach could also be made available for work with other units in the Command.—Mr. J. E. Hogan (formerly Corps of Military Police), Corderey Road, Evington, Leicester.

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

Anonymous or insufficiently addressed letters are not published.

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

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

UNIQUE POST?

Major K. L. Prendergast, Royal Army Medical Corps, who died recently, is said to have been the only woman to be appointed regimental medical officer to a British Infantry regiment.

I cannot help thinking there must have been other instances, apart from the enterprising lady who served in the Army under the name of Dr. James Barry (1795-1865).

Can any of your readers cite similar examples?—"Amateur Historian" (name and address supplied).

★ The late Major K. L. Prendergast, Australian-born, was appointed to the 1st Battalion The Black Watch in 1947 and held the post until 1952. She wore a red hackle and a Black Watch tartan skirt.

KEEPS THEM AWAKE

In my tent we have a man who moans so much in his sleep that he keeps us all awake. I think it is partly due to the fact that he was due for demobilisation in December, 1953, but extended his service on the understanding that he was given a posting to Malta where he hoped to marry. His posting has not materialised.—"Signalman," MELF (name and address supplied).

★ No guarantee of posting to a desired area can be given to a man enlisting or extending service.

PRACTICAL JOKE?

Your article on practical joking (July) did not mention the brilliant practical joke played by the Army Council on the Scots regiments: the issue of a hairless sporan.—"Scots Wha Hae" (name and address supplied).

Things You Wouldn't Know Unless We Told You

It is an offence for any sporting team "to live together in one room in barracks for the purposes of sport." Any team doing this is liable to disqualification.

SCOPE FOR ARTISTS

We have soldiers in our unit who are artists in civilian life, but who find it difficult to place their work with magazines and other publications. It seems a pity to waste their efforts. Could you suggest an outlet?—SQMS (name and address supplied).

★**SOLDIER** is always looking for artists who can produce lively cartoons with a military interest. All drawings accepted are paid for.

In other fields, success comes only by studying the types of cartoon used and submitting ideas in a similar vein. One magazine will specialise in husband-and-wife jokes, another in courting jokes, and so on. Drawings should be in black ink on good quality paper and free of unnecessary detail which prevents effective reproduction. Always send a stamped addressed envelope for return of the drawing if rejected. Although competition is keen, far more cartoons are published today than ever before—and there is no reason why serving soldiers should not pursue this paying hobby in their spare time. But remember—published drawings which look slapdash are not always as slapdash as all that.

There are agencies which handle the work of humorous artists; but if a drawing has merit it will be accepted when the artist submits it direct.

The market for serious work is more difficult. Again the best advice is: study the requirements of a periodical before submitting.

JOINING THE BAND

As an ex-Regular Army bandsman on the Reserve I would welcome the chance of joining my local Territorial Army band, but I am debarred because the "Reservist's Instruction Book" states that I can join only if I am not below the rank of Corporal. I feel that this rule is too drastic, because the chance of a Regular bandsman reaching non-commissioned rank in a branch of the service where non-commissioned officers usually serve long engagements is very remote. It seems a pity that my experience is to be entirely wasted when so many Territorial Army Bands would be only too pleased to have more experienced members.

A good band is of great benefit to a Territorial unit. It attracts recruits in many ways and generally stimulates interest when marching and at concerts and dances.—K. C. Jacobs, Coronation Avenue, Oldfield Park, Bath, Somerset.

★The reference in the Reservist's Instruction Book applies to instructors of the rank of corporal and above only. The idea was to provide trained instructors to the Territorial Army, and it was never intended that the scheme should apply to other than instructors.

Nevertheless, the question of attaching Reservist ex-bandsmen to Territorial Army bands has much to commend it, and is at present under consideration at the War Office.

KING'S HEAD

I was recently awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and was very surprised to find that it carried the head of King George VI.—RQMS R. Skinner, 28 Coast Regiment, Royal Artillery, Europa, Gibraltar.

★Army Medal Office say stocks of medals bearing King George VI's head are being used up before new medals bearing the Queen's head are issued.

SINGAPORE CORPS

On 8 July 1854 32 gentlemen signed on as the first Volunteers of Singapore. The Singapore Volunteer Corps thus celebrates its centenary this year and it is appropriate that the history of the Corps should be brought up to date.

Owing to loss of records this task cannot be achieved with accuracy, without the assistance of those who were in and associated with the Corps. I would appeal therefore to all who can help to send in their experiences and recollections.

The time to be covered can be divided conveniently into the following periods: 1. 1937 to 3 September 1939; 2. 3 September 1939 to the outbreak of war with Japan; 3. The period of fighting up to capitulation in day-to-day record as far as possible; 4. The period of occupa-

tion, February 1942 to September 1945; 5. Postwar reconstruction.

Captain E. T. Stokes SRA(V), who is well qualified for the task, being a Lecturer in History, has agreed to write the second volume. Any information sent to him at SVC Headquarters, Beach Road, Singapore 7, will be much appreciated.—Lieut.-Col. H. J. Rae, President, SVC Centenary Celebrations Committee.

TERRITORIAL DUTY

I am considering applying for a post as Permanent Staff Instructor REME (TA), and I would be grateful for some indication of the administrative and training duties involved. For instance, who is responsible for AB 406 inspections?—F. Gerard, Goshen, Stenhouse-muir, Stirlingshire.

★To serve in this appointment a man is required to enlist on a Regular Army Short-Service Engagement Type "T" (see ACI 175/1953).

Permanent Staff Instructors are provided for REME (TA) units to administer and train volunteers and National Servicemen. Also, since this is not a full-time job, they are required to assist with the inspection and repair of unit vehicles, and in the case of Local Aid Detachments, vehicles of the parent unit.

Vehicle inspections, in accordance with AB 406, are the responsibility of the officer commanding the unit, although this inspection can be carried out by subordinates. Only part of each inspection needs REME attention.

CADETS' CANES

Your article on Eaton Hall stated that a cadet may carry a cane between one parade and another after he has passed off the square. When I was there in 1951 carrying a cane was permitted only after parade hours. When was the privilege instituted?—Lieutenant T. G. Bullpitt, Rycroft Road, Streatham Common, London.

★**SOLDIER** is informed that the carrying of canes after "passing off" is a fairly new innovation.

LETTERS CONTINUED OVERLEAF

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MORE LETTERS

DEFINITION

Browsing through a recent Army Council Instruction (219 of 1954) I saw mention, in a list of crockery and glassware, of "cocottes, earthen, egg," and "ditto, 9in." The only definition my dictionary gives of cocotte is nothing to do with earthenware or eggs and is certainly not anything the Army would supply. Can you please explain?—**Company Clerk, BAOR.**

★Cocottes—the Army ones—are utensils in which eggs are cooked, and are issued to officers' messes.

THREE QUERIES

There was, between the wars, a member of the Royal Artillery Mounted Band at Aldershot who wore eight Good Conduct badges. Can anyone

remember his name, and has anyone been entitled to wear more?

What soldier of non-commissioned rank can claim to have, or have had, the greatest number of medals—including decorations?

A memorial has been unveiled in London to the "Old Contemptibles." Who can lay claim to being the youngest living "Old Contemptible"?—**J. W. Naylor (Lieut.-Col., ret'd), The Old Hall, Brackley, Northants.**

PARACHUTE WINGS

Last year I attended a parachute course at Singapore and on passing out received a parachute badge—the one worn on the battledress forearm. Since then I have heard that this badge is given to "course only personnel" on completing four descents, and that men

completing eight descents are entitled to wear the parachute wings.

My course consisted of eight descents, including two with kitbags and two with rifle/bren valise. Am I entitled to wear parachute wings or must I serve in the Parachute Regiment to do so?—**Corporal S. G. Graham, Gurkha Independent Brigade Signal Squadron, Ipoh, Perak, Malaya.**

★All men attending a parachute course must now complete eight descents. Only those who go on to serve in a parachute unit after completing a full course, and certain Royal Marines, are entitled to wear the parachute badge with wings on the upper right arm. Those who complete the course but who do not serve on the posted strength of a parachute unit are entitled to wear the parachute badge without wings on the left forearm. ACI 995/1948, which covers this subject, is about to be superseded.

PIONEER BADGE

Could you please tell me the significance of the badge of the Royal Pioneer Corps? The point most in question is the laurel wreath—is it upside down?—**Serjeant B. Hall, RAEC, attached No. 3 Camp, Arncott Camp, Bicester, Oxon.**

★During the 1914-18 War two designs were submitted and the one chosen is the one used today. There is no special significance in the points of the laurel leaves hanging down, but because the bow at the top of the wreath is intended to be tying the articles in the badge together, it is presumed that it looked better that way.

GIBRALTAR KEYS

Your excellent article on Gibraltar in the May SOLDIER was read with great interest on "The Rock." For the benefit of those outside "The Rock," I would like to point out that the Ceremony of the Keys is performed once a month and not once a week, as you state. The Port Serjeant holds his appointment for the duration of his service in Gibraltar but the Escort to the Keys is provided by units on a roster system.—**"Rock Ape" (name and address supplied.)**

SPIT-AND-POLISH

"Hut Six" on spit-and-polish (SOLDIER, July) was quite amusing. Why not offer a prize of one part-worn buttonstick for the best "bull" story to appear in your letter columns?—**"Hughie" (name and address supplied.)**

★This would mean following in the footsteps of a national newspaper, which recently held such a competition. Ideas contributed included: sending out lorries for clean snow, to lay over dirty snow; brushing sand smooth in tent areas in Egypt; dyeing faded grass green; blanching the outer edges of Bibles.

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MILK

I stopped drawing rations from the unit ration store recently and because of it I now find that I cannot have milk for my children under the national scheme. Could you give me any information on the subject and state my entitlements under the scheme?—**Staff-Serjeant E. Stratford, attached 5 Royal Horse Artillery, BAOR 10.**

★This reader received the benefit of cheap milk so long as he was drawing rations from his unit ration store, because special rations are provided for soldiers' children in BAOR. Since he cut off this supply at his own wish his only other possible source is National Dried Milk, which is available at NAAFI at the concessional price of 1s. 0½d. per 20-oz. tin.

FILMS

coming your way

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

THE RAINBOW JACKET: The colour camera goes to Lingfield for some race-course background. Everything is strictly authentic, except perhaps the races themselves. During filming, the wrong horses would keep winking and the sequences had to be retaken several times. Cast is headed by Kay Walsh, Bill Owen, Edward Underdown (who is a noted amateur jockey), Robert Morley, and a new star in his teens, Fella Edmonds, playing a boy jockey.

HIS MAJESTY O'KEEFE: There was once a wild Irishman who set himself up as king of a South Sea island, and this is the film which, inevitably, came to be based on his career. Burt Lancaster plays His Majesty with great energy and muscle. Joan Rice is a notable distraction; so are the Fijian belles who reverted to the long-discarded fashion of grass skirts for the occasion.

CARNIVAL STORY: An American carnival show tours in Germany. There is sabotage on the high-divers' ladder, intrigue all over the place and a fight to the death on top of a Ferris Wheel. Starring Anne Baxter and Steve Cochran. In colour.

MISS SADIE THOMPSON: Sadie, as the publicity eagerly points out, is no lady. She is Somerset Maugham's cheerful siren, the tarnished night club entertainer marooned among American Marines, a colourful personality in Technicolor—and Miss Rita Hayworth to boot. Also present: Jose Ferrer.

THE BOY FROM OKLAHOMA: Will Rogers, junior, as the simple law student appointed sheriff, who turns out not to be so simple after all. Ingredients include a shooting contest, a murder, a stage coach ambush and Billy the Kid. Charm by Nancy Olson. In colour.

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about a soldier...*

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There's something about a soldier, *even when he's out of uniform*, that makes him stand out. Something about the way he walks—head up, shoulders back; something about the pride he takes in his personal appearance. On parade or in civvies, he's smart right down to his Kiwi shine.



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