

A Field officer of a Line
Regiment, about the year 1833.
(From the Lawson Collection)

SOLDIER

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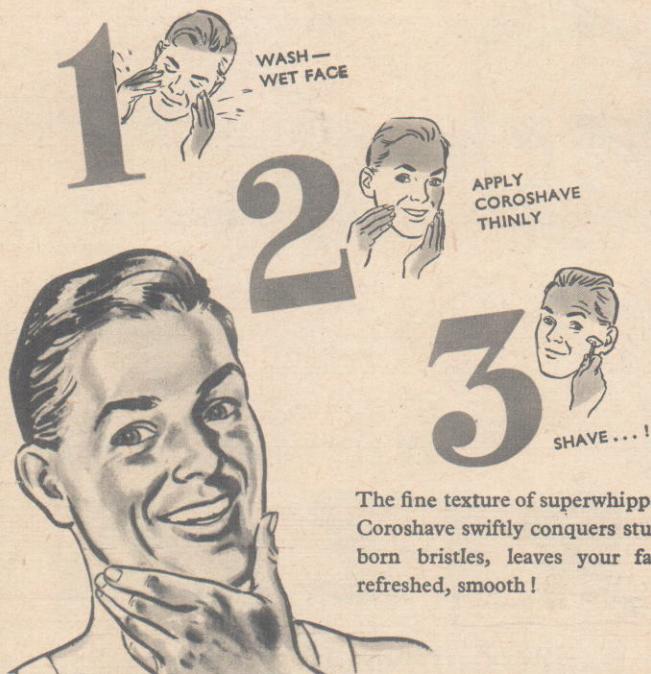


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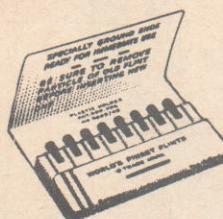
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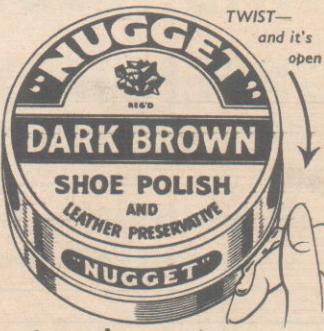
OFF THE SET, he's an outdoor man. He likes his garden, enjoys cricket and riding. And he chooses outdoor shoes that are strong *and* smart. His name is Trevor Howard—and you'll soon be seeing him again in the new Carol Reed film, "An Outcast of the Islands."

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FEBRUARY

SOLDIER

1952

THE BRITISH

ARMY MAGAZINE



SOLDIER visits The KAID'S MEN

"Like the old Indian Army in miniature" is the Sudan Defence Force, in which British officers and NCO's serve. It is a force which General Gordon would have been proud to command

Report by E. S. TURNER; Photographs LESLIE A. LEE



Their training grounds are the parched, stony wastes of Omdurman: two members of a demonstration platoon of the Western Arab Corps.

OUTSIDE the walls of Omdurman, only a stone's throw from the point where the Blue Nile and the White Nile meet (and you really can see the change in hue where the waters join) is the headquarters of the Sudan Defence Force: a force with a million square miles of sand, scrub, swamp, mountain and forest to patrol.

Here British and Sudanese officers who bear the old Turkish ranks of *bimbashi* ("senior" major) and *kaimakam* (lieutenant-colonel) superintend the training of volunteers from the Sudan's martial tribes. Here, on the scorching parade-grounds and battle-courses, is forged a well-disciplined force which is like the old Indian Army in miniature: proud, resourceful, brave and devoted to its officers.

From Omdurman the trained soldiers go out to their stations in the far sprawling provinces with resounding names like Kordofan and Equatoria. Their neighbours range from muffled nomads in the north to stark naked giants in the south.

With them may go British officers and NCO's, men for whom Africa still holds some of the lure it held for their forefathers; men with a certain disdain for the comforts of civilisation and perhaps a craving to play the hunter. All the British officers are volunteers, hand-picked by the Kaid, the British general who commands the Sudan Defence Force and is also commander of British Troops, Sudan. The lowest rank a British officer holds is that of *bimbashi* (it rates a crown and one star).

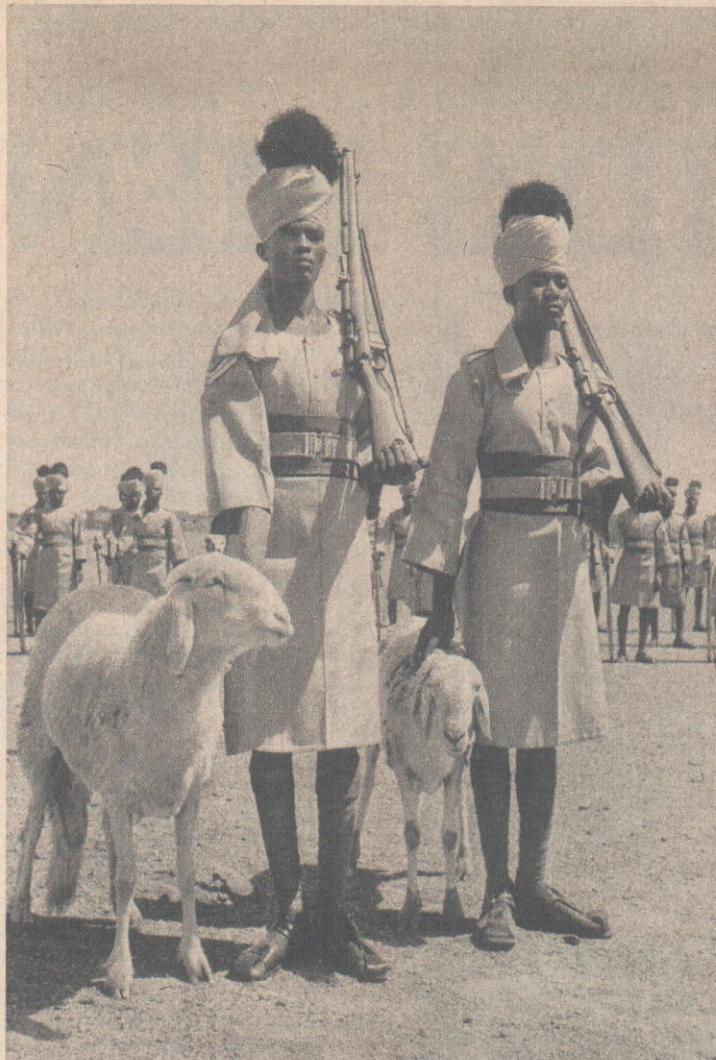
For more than 25 years the four corps of the Sudan Defence Force have been a steady influence in a country which had seen all too much strife. Besides maintaining order, the Force has always lent a skilled hand with constructive tasks ranging from building roads to smoothing out cataracts. In World War Two it harried the Italians to good purpose in East Africa. Its veterans remember with especial pride the exploits of the Force at Keren and at Kufra Oasis.

The four corps are the Camel Corps, formed of two Arab companies and two Nuba companies, an élite formation with many distinctions (but nowadays no camels) to its name; the Eastern Arab Corps, whose tough,

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THE KAID'S MEN (Continued)



With their sheep mascots: men of the 6th Nuba Company of the Camel Corps.



Commanding the School at Omdurman is (to give him his full title) El Kaimakam C. L. Thompson Bey, The Loyals (right), here talking to his second-in-command, Bimbashi Achmed Abdullah Hamid.

wiry hillmen watch the fretful frontiers of Eritrea and Ethiopia; the Western Arab Corps, which ranges into the green Darfur plateau stretching to French Equatorial Africa; and the Equatorial Corps, based on the once slave-ridden and pestilential province where General Gordon took on an all-but impossible task as Governor, on his first visit to the Sudan.

The *bimbashi* who is posted to command the company at Loelli, in Equatoria, must be a man of unusual self-reliance. He may find himself cut off for six months in the year, for the rains make the roads impassable. Happily he is on the route of one of the biggest game migrations in Africa, ideally placed to study the movements of lion, elephant, buffalo, rhinoceros and a variety of beasts whose names are known only to zoo-keepers.

Nearly 1000 miles separate two company headquarters in Equatoria Province: a pretty problem for the *miralai* (colonel) who commands the Equatorial Corps, and who must often sigh for a light aircraft on his establishment. The headquarters of the

Corps is at Torit, only 45 miles from Uganda, and SOLDIER's representatives were assured that if they cared to make the long journey there they would find QMSI S. Harris, of the Army Physical Training Corps, ready to put them through his latest course.

Happily the Sudan in recent years has been a peaceful land to administer (minor upsets are tackled by the Sudan Police, and the Defence Force is there as a reserve). Most of the troubles which have occurred latterly have been on the borders of Eritrea and Abyssinia, whence fugitives from tribal feuds sometimes cross the border and foment trouble, or steal cattle. Sometimes, too, tribesmen cross the frontier from those countries and poach on the Sudan game reserves. Elsewhere in the Sudan the sources of friction are usually the immemorial ones arising from grazing rights and access to wells.

Most of the Sudan Defence Force is made up of Infantry. It also has its own Field Engineers, Artillery Regiment, Corps of Signals and Service Corps. The Force is mainly Arab-speaking,



Kaimakam El Ameen Bey Hummeida, GC. He commands Engineer Troops.



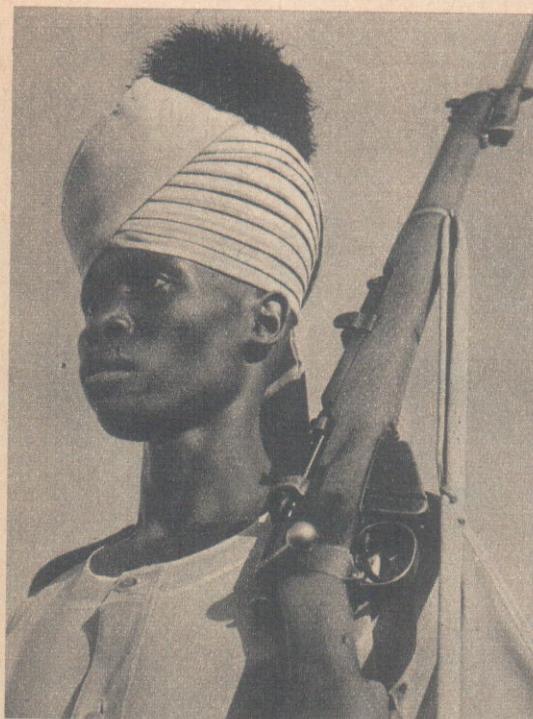
He serves in the Equatorial Corps: Mulazim Awal (Lieutenant) Suleiman Ibrahim.



His star is a star: a bugler of the 6th Nuba Company of the Camel Corps.



Immaculate in starched *jibbahs*; Nuba Infantrymen of the Camel Corps.



Another striking Nuba. The black ostrich feather denotes Camel Corps.

but most Sudanese officers speak and read English with ease. Recently the first Sudanese *lewa* (Brigadier) was appointed: Lewa Ahmed Bey Mohammed, who holds the MBE and the Order of the Nile, Fifth Class. Commissioned ranks held by Sudanese, but not by British officers, are those of *sagh* (a "junior" major), *yuzbashi* (captain), *mula-zim awal* (lieutenant) and *mula-zim tani* (second-lieutenant).

One noteworthy feature of the Sudan Defence Force is that no rations are issued to the men. They pool their pay to buy their own grain, vegetables and meat. If they are in the right kind of country they rely on their rifles for meat. Some of the men are married, and their quarters at Omdurman — mud-walled huts, all but windowless, scrupulously clean inside — abut on the parade ground. If the quarters are inspected by a British officer, the wives first withdraw from sight, according to ancient custom.

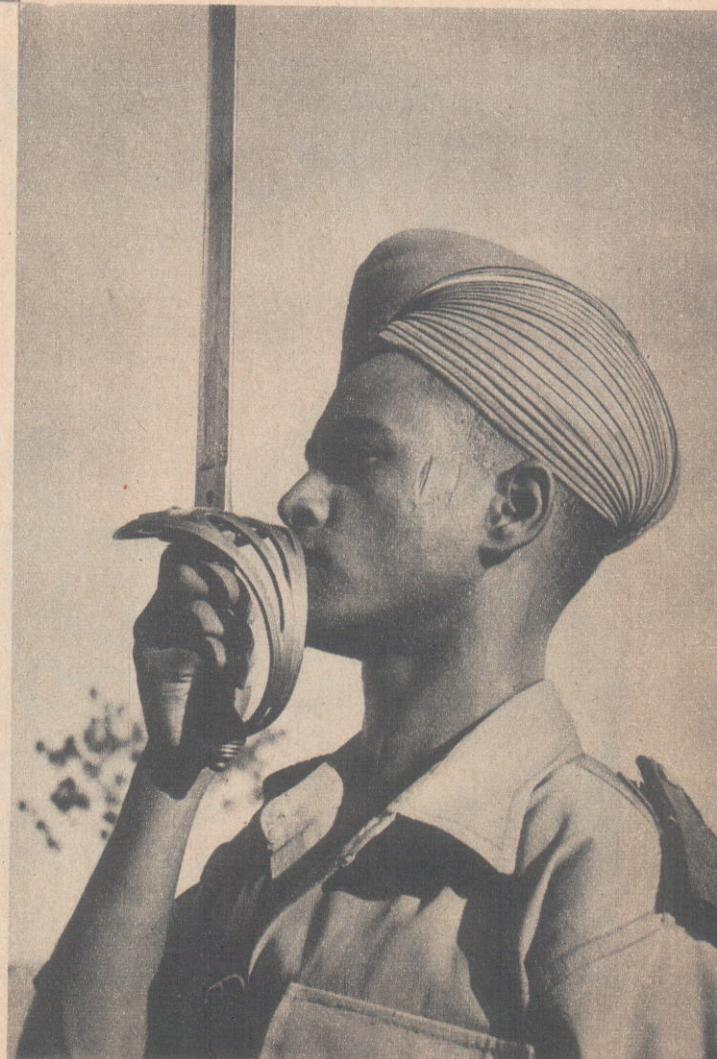
The School at Omdurman, which is commanded by an officer seconded from the Loyal Regiment, Kaimakam C. L. Thompson, teaches an increasing range of activities, from Infantry tactics to military administration, from physical training to the Morse Code.

When SOLDIER looked in, a squad of officer cadets from the

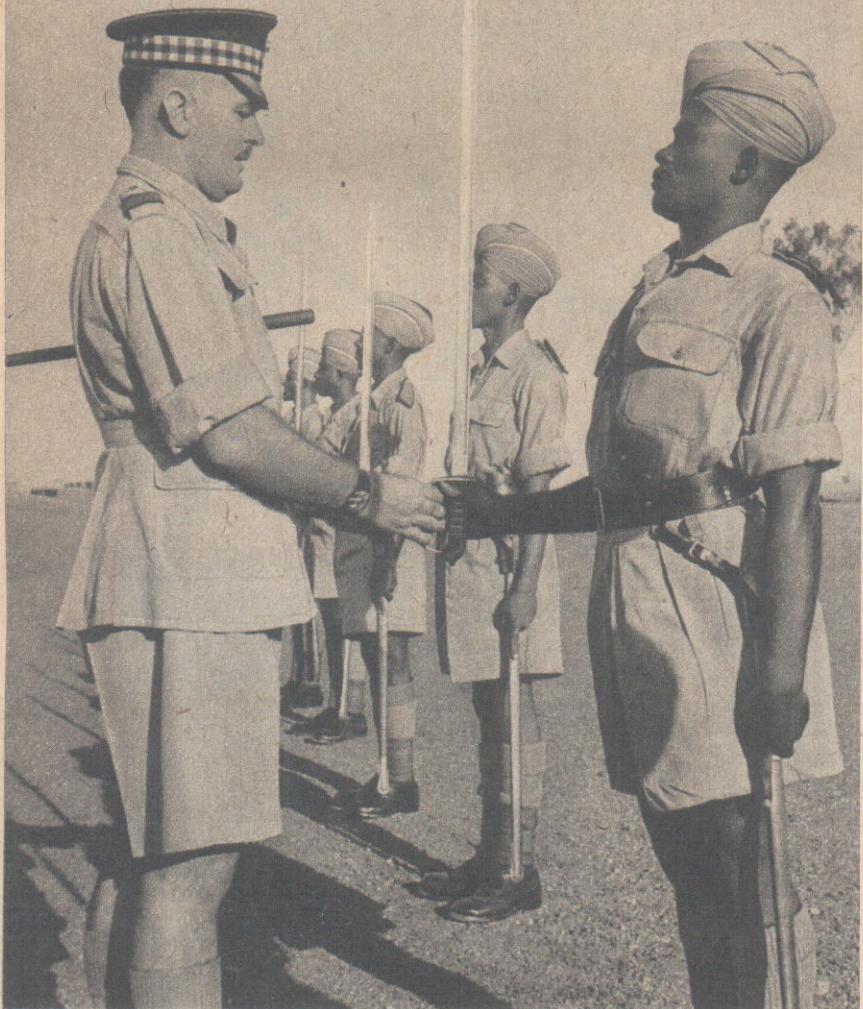
OVER →



There is rarely any need for troops on assault training to be told to "put some life in it." They enjoy doing just that. Below: An officer cadet who may be a *bimbashi* of tomorrow.



THE KAID'S MEN (Continued)



Formerly a Sandhurst instructor, RSM J. Hamer, Scots Guards, has been drilling Sudanese troops for five years at Omdurman.

Military College (commanded by Bimbashi P. F. Chubb, Royal Fusiliers) were being drilled by RSM J. Hamer, Scots Guards. Formerly a Sandhurst instructor, RSM Hamer has been stationed in the Sudan for five years. Not all the instructors are British. There are Sudanese officers and NCO's who have undergone courses at Warminster, Hythe, Aldershot, Manorbie or Chatham, according to their arm.

The Sudan is a land poor in technicians, and the Sudan Defence Force must therefore train its own specialists. At Omdurman boys from the age of 12 upwards are to be found learning the trades of armourer, carpenter, blacksmith, saddler, tailor, driver, fitter and many others. Some gain practical experience in the transport workshops at Omdurman, others in the Ordnance depot at Gordon's Tree. The Signals Wing also trains its own boys to be radio mechanics.

The Sudan's signals network has greatly increased in efficiency during recent years. Shortly before the war communications were by semaphore. Commanding the Signals Wing is a British officer, Kaimakam W. M. Dodd, who also has British NCO's to supervise and teach maintenance. Kaimakam Dodd has one advantage over his opposite numbers in the Royal Corps of Signals: he can buy the most up-to-date and most easily worked equipment in the open market. Today, by virtue of possessing first-class equipment, the Signallers, like the Engineer Troops, are called upon to help the Government on such tasks as well-boring and locust fighting. Except at dawn and sunset, and during *huboobs* (violent dust storms), signals contact is reasonably easy. Supplemented as it is by mobile transmitters, the Signals network is now such that

Left: Sjt. C. Turvey, Royal Signals, adjusting a generator, is one of the technicians of the Signals Wing. Below: Learning the Morse Code: a young Signals trainee. In recent years military communications in the Sudan have greatly improved.



contact can be made with headquarters at Omdurman from almost any point in the Sudan.

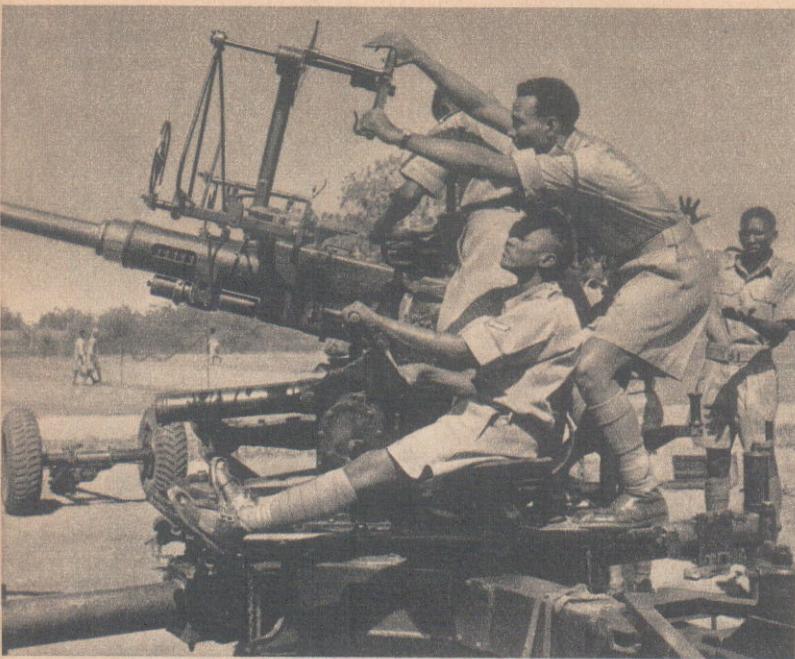
The Sudan Defence Force was formed in 1925, after Egyptian troops were expelled from the Sudan, but its roots reach farther back. The Camel Corps began in 1883; it took part in the Gordon relief expedition and in the reconquest of the Sudan. In the 'thirties, when Cavalry regiments were saying good-bye to their horses, the Camel Corps said an equally regretful good-bye to its camels. Soon the men of the Camel Corps were nearly as adept at traversing rough country on wheels as they were at racing over dangerous rocky country in bare feet. Many of the Nubas grew up with guns in their hands and are fine marksmen.

The Engineer Troops developed from the old Sudanese Sapper Section of the Egyptian Army. As far back as 1912 the first Nuba boys were attached to one of the Sudanese battalions and taught trades and military engineering. In 1927 the Engineer Troops were given the curious task of blowing up the Deng Kurs pyramid, in order to impress the Nuer tribe with the strength of the Government. They accomplished this feat successfully, after experimenting with scale models at Omdurman. In the same year they set to work to improve the course of the cataract near Wadi Halfa, where too many date boats had been coming to grief. They also cleared away rocks in the Nile near Albara.

Usually more humdrum tasks like building roads, block-houses and barracks came their way; but in 1938 they had another novel assignment. A film company arrived at Omdurman to shoot "The Four Feathers," but declared the actual battlefield to be in-

Saddlers learn their trade in the Sudan Defence Force. Here a football is in for repair. The game is played with bare feet.





Gunners of the Garrison Battery throw themselves into Bofors drill with accuracy and zest. Sudanese instructors learn gunnery in Britain.

sufficiently photogenic. In due course the producer found a better site, and it fell to the Engineer Troops to provide the necessary water points. Kaimakam A. J. Knott had the pleasure of appearing for a few seconds on the screen as Kitchener.

More recently, when Rommel was only 70 miles from Alexandria, the Engineer Troops began to build an immense wooden bridge over the Nile at Juba, to serve as a defence route if Egypt fell to the Afrika Korps and a new "River War" became necessary. The projected route was to run from a railhead in the Belgian Congo over the Nile at Juba and thence to Khartoum. The bridge took a year to build, by which time the Afrika Korps was no longer a threat.

The Garrison Battery also had its roots in the Egyptian Army. It must be one of the few Gunner

units descended from Cavalry — in this case, the famous Sudan Horse, which had earlier taken part in the pacification of the Sudan. When the Italians attacked in East Africa in 1940 there were still three horsed squadrons. The horses were withdrawn, the squadrons were converted to howitzers and Bredas, and joined in spirited fashion in the attack on the enemy at Agordat and Keren. Later they were converted to the light anti-aircraft role and defended Tripoli, Castel Benito and the Suez Canal.

In World War Two the Sudan Defence Force was expanded to eight times its normal size. Today, in the event of trouble, it could again be expanded rapidly, and would undoubtedly give a bold account of itself.

It is a force which General Gordon would have been proud to command.

A trainee bricklayer learns how to build an arch. From time to time the Sudan Defence Force tackles constructional jobs for the Government.



Another chapter in the Army's history nears an end. In September of this year a former Italian colony, where British soldiers have kept the peace for ten years, will come under new "management."

THE LAST MEN IN ERITREA

EIGHT thousand feet up on the Eritrean plateau (where newcomers are warned not to try to do things at the double) a British battalion is waiting for the end — the end of Britain's caretaker rule in what was once an Italian colony.

In September of this year Eritrea will be federated with Abyssinia, as an "autonomous unit," under the benevolent eye of the United Nations.

Until that day the 1st Battalion The South Wales Borderers is keeping watch and ward. Its jungle-hatted soldiers are ready to set out at a moment's notice from the Airfield Camp at Asmara to harry any "reformed" *shifta* (bandits) who may be tempted to return to the old life. But in recent months, since a general amnesty was declared, the *shifta* have been quiet. They know that in Asmara Jail a noose awaits the wanton killer.

Still on the alert, too, is the Eritrean Police Field Force. Many ex-Palestine policemen are to be found in its ranks, men with long experience of trailing terrorists. And, holding a watching brief in the air, are the Gunner pilots of 1910 Independent AOP Flight, Royal Air Force (see following article).

So a post-war chapter nears its end. The British Army with its allies entered this country the hard way in 1941, up from the Sudan and through the bloody pass of Keren. Since then it has done much to suppress the post-war disorders which were hampering the country's recovery. These outbreaks, for once in a way, were nothing to do with Communism.

Unhappily, there were — and are — a dozen reasons for becoming a *shifta*. Eritrean troops fought bravely in the Italian Colonial Army and did not like being disarmed by the British; the spirit of adventure urged many of them to take to the hills with a rifle, or to find even better weapons in the Italian arms caches. That was one motive. Another was the desire to further religious feuds; one half of the population are Copts and the other half are Moslems. Besides religious jealousies, there were long-standing family feuds. Preference was being given to the efficient families as opposed to the dynastic, or so the latter complained. Then there was a feeling of resentment among many Eritreans at seeing Italians in the "best jobs." Yet another motive was

that of distaste for a hard and unrewarding life on the land, or mending roads. Finally there was as good a motive as any, plain love of booty.

The South Wales Borderers were sent to Asmara from Khartoum at the beginning of 1950, when *shifta* troubles flared up dangerously. In company with the Royal Berkshires, who were already stationed in Eritrea, they set about cleaning up the bandits — by battalion operations, mobile patrols and flag marches. Sometimes patrols covered 30 to 35 miles a day, often across country, sometimes along roads built during the Italian occupation. Mules were used when possible.

It was tough going. Eritrea has big areas of desert strewn with man-high cactus and camel thorn; the landscape is only slightly less savage than that of Abyssinia. But down in the valleys, where the *shifta* levied toll, the vegetation is often bright and luxuriant. And, needless to say, it is far hotter in the valleys.

The *shifta* themselves were often killers, with all the animal instincts. As in Malaya, it was usually impossible to distinguish a *shifta* from an innocent labourer or shepherd, though the better-organised ones took to going about in bandoliers and semi-uniform. The "innocent" shepherd could, in an instant, snatch a rifle or grenade from under his cotton robes. The local population gave no help to the security forces; they were too well terrorised.

But the Borderers and the Royal Berkshires kept hard at it, and killed or captured the worst of the bandits. In the spring of 1950 the Borderers moved in force into Asmara, where a religious riot in the slum area was threatening to engulf the town. With firmness and good temper, the Borderers suppressed the trouble.

In August of 1950 the Eritrean Police Field Force came into being. Into it were merged members of an earlier "ferret force," and British officers were seconded to

OVER

THE LAST MEN IN ERITREA

(Continued)

serve with it (they wear the badge of a running gazelle against a green background). The Force had some notable successes. On one occasion Assistant Superintendent Alfred Gould (ex-Palestine Police, ex-Malay Police) with a small force tracked a party of *shifta* to a river bed, where they saw twenty camp fires burning. Splitting his force, Gould moved into the attack, just when he judged that the meal was cooked. Seeing the security forces, the *shifta* began to fire in all directions. Gould opened fire with his Bren and soon seven *shifta* were lying dead, while others were injured.

Last summer, with the United Nations decision to federate Eritrea with Abyssinia, the British Administration ordered a general amnesty, so that the new regime might have a peaceful start. More than a thousand *shifta* handed in their arms during this period, or more than ninety per cent of the known offenders. Lest the amnesty be taken as a sign of weakness, it was made clear that "most rigorous action" would be taken against those who flouted its terms. Three *shifta* who went to the scaffold had waylaid a former associate whom they suspected of informing. One man held the victim, another gripped his tongue with pliers, a third cut off the tongue. Next, the victim lost his ears.

To show that the Administration meant business, troops and police were ordered to impound herds of cattle from villages known to have helped *shifta*, and to burn down huts where they had sheltered.

Bandits may give up the fight, but battalion training goes on. Here the Borderers compete on their rifle range near Asmara.



In country like this men of the South Wales Borderers patrolled 30 miles a day, in search of *shifta*.

In September 1951 the Royal Berkshires left for Cyprus, and the South Wales Borderers remained the sole battalion in the territory. The scattered companies moved together and the flag of the Twenty-Fourth of Foot was

flown over the Airfield Camp at Asmara. Now the highways, where escorts had previously been necessary, were declared open, the last one to be freed being that between Asmara and Keren, rich in sites for ambushers.

The railway once more operated unmolested from Asmara to Massawa.

Today, among the men repairing the corkscrew highways, are ex-*shifta* for whom the Administration has found employment. Other former bandits were sent back to their villages, to be watched over by their elders; others again, who were not wanted in their native haunts, were put into camps and given temporary work, against the day when enmities have died down.

And the South Wales Borderers — what do they do now? They have seen all the sights of Eritrea, including the impressive battlefield of Keren; they have exhausted the easily-exhausted delights of Asmara. Those who know the Battalion will not be surprised to learn that they are getting down to some serious rugby, despite the rough ground and the punishing altitude.

When the Battalion was last in Britain it won the Army Rugby Cup four years in succession. During its tour of the Middle East, with all its preoccupations, it maintained its formidable record in sport. In Cyprus and Palestine the rugby team was invincible for two seasons, and in the 1946-47 season had the astonishing record of 411 points for and 20 against. That included a tour of eight games, won by 203 points against 15. Among the victims were the 6th Airborne Division and the Palestine Police.

What the South Wales Borderers would most relish, when their present task is finished, is another chance to bag that Army Rugby Cup.





An Army pilot stampedes the stolen herd, to give the ground forces time to catch up: an artist's impression of an aerial cowboy act in Eritrea.

It's Like Flying Off The Edge of The World...

Eritrea is bad flying country but the Army's Auster pilots hop crags and hope for the best

A herd of cattle had been stolen by *shifta*. Up went a Gunner pilot in his Auster, flying low over the wild countryside in an effort to trace the herd. Soon he spotted the rustlers, who knew that they had been spotted. But what to do about it?

The pilot reported back to the District Officer, who asked

him to roar down over the herd and scatter it, so that the *shifta* would have to waste time rounding up the frightened beasts. In the meantime, security forces would have a chance to move up.

The pilot obeyed with alacrity. "A most enjoyable sortie" he reported afterwards.

That aerial cowboy act was just one of a rich variety of operations which have come the way of the

Royal Artillery pilots of 1910 Independent AOP Flight, Royal Air Force, since they arrived in Eritrea from Tripoli, to do a job formerly attempted by Spitfires and Brigands. The slower aircraft proved more successful. Unofficially the Flight has adapted the Royal Artillery motto to read: "Quo fas et *shifta* ducunt" (whence duty and *shifta*, lead).

Flying Austers from an inhospitable plateau 8000 feet high has its peculiar problems. At that

altitude a light aircraft needs four times its usual run in order to take off, and once the plane is airborne, climbing is tediously slow. Eritrea has no natural landing-fields. Flying off the edge of the plateau towards Massawa and the Red Sea is like flying off the edge of the world.

One of the Flight's assignments last year was dropping amnesty leaflets over 150 villages. As leaflets go, these were large ones, and they had a habit at first of becoming entangled in the tail units. On one day of leaflet dropping, the Flight put in 10 hours 35 minutes of flying time before breakfast.

During the *shifta* operations the pilots went out on reconnaissance flights, sometimes photographing areas in which ground patrols were proposing to operate. They carried police officers as rear observers, and often ferried officers to landing strips near lonely police barracks. They evacuated wounded members of the security forces. They dropped orders and supplies to ground patrols. They helped to round up camels for impounding. They carried out dummy air attacks on troops, and reported on the effectiveness of

OVER



Tricky flying country: an Auster of 1910 Independent AOP Flight over Eritrea. Below: This picture of the monastery of Bezen, on its 8000 feet height, was taken by SOLDIER's cameraman on a sortie from Asmara. The ascent to Bezen is rigorously banned to women.

Flying Off The Edge of The World . . . (Cont'd)



camouflage. And, on top of it all, they ran an aerial "taxi" service as required for high-ranking Army officers and, on one occasion at least, for the United Nations Commissioner, His Excellency Dr. E. Anze Matienzo, who may or may not have been glad to transfer to a camel at the end of the flight.

Spotting bandits from the air, and being unable to take direct offensive action, had its frustrations. The pilots suggested that they be allowed to use grenades or other novelties, but permission was declined.

SOLDIER's representatives were taken on a sortie by Major J. H. Creswell, Royal Artillery, commanding the Flight, and Captain P. M. J. Finucane. The object was to make contact with a patrol of the East Lancashires (a platoon had been attached to the South Wales Borderers). The men were operating in a deep wooded valley, east of Asmara towards the Red Sea, and it was clearly going to be a task of great difficulty to seek them out.

Below was a hair-raising scene, of gloomy abysses and dizzy paths winding along razor ridges, of monasteries perched on preposterous heights, of frightened herds slithering on the slopes like Gadarene swine. As the plane descended it was more disconcerting to look up than to look down. It seemed impossible that an aircraft could ever surmount such a towering wall. After exchanging Very signals with the patrol (nothing more could be done) the aircraft rose slowly to the brighter daylight and keener wind of the plateau. For good measure, the pilots flew over the monastery of Bezen, giddily poised on a height from which all women, indeed, all female creatures, are banned.



IT was a spectacular descent. Serjeant Edwin Webb of the Glider Pilot Regiment was flying Assistant Superintendent John Underhill of the Malaya Police on a reconnaissance trip when a fault developed in their Auster.

Serjeant Webb picked a landing spot by the twisting Enching river. Before they could reach it, the aircraft struck a huge tree, which towered 40 feet above the others. The Auster turned round, hit another tree and slid to the ground.

Serjeant Webb got to work with the Auster's radio, broadcasting their position and saying they would move downstream. Meanwhile, Mr. Underhill was busy taking photographs (*the pictures on this page are from his camera*). Then, armed with emergency rations and a Very light pistol, the two men moved off rapidly in case bandits should be attracted to the spot.

The following morning, their Very light signal was seen from a searching Auster. Then the two men met a Sakai woman and her children. The woman recalled her husband, who had fled, and the two fliers were taken to a Sakai village. The inhabitants, dressed in loin-cloths and carrying blow-pipes with poisoned darts, fed the men on stewed leaves and tapioca root.

The next day the two airmen went to a wider stream, where aircraft dropped them supplies and a wireless set. (Altogether, 73 rescue sorties were flown by Dakotas, Austers and Brigands).

With two Sakai as crew, the men were ferried down the stream on a flimsy raft. They sat in several inches of water — more than a foot when they were passing over rapids. The ten-knot current whirled them round a bend within 50 yards of seven grown elephants and some young ones. Elephants with their young are dangerous, but the Sakai beat on the bamboo and yelled, and the elephants lumbered off. Mr. Underhill missed a picture here: the water on the raft had penetrated his camera.

Four days and a few hours after crashing, the men met a police rescue patrol.

TAIL-PIECE: When Mr. Underhill and Serjeant Webb at last reached a jungle police post, their first night's sleep was disturbed by this tiger, which prowled round the camp. It never prowled again.

Sometimes an Army pilot comes to grief — then his adventures really begin. This crash happened in Malaya

Jungle Crash



Top, left: Assistant Superintendent John Underhill stands by the wrecked aircraft. Gap in the fuselage is where he cut off a roundel, to show to searching aircraft. Above: The pilot, Serjeant Edwin Webb, radios for help. Below: On this flimsy raft, the two airmen rode to safety. The faces of the two Sakai have been blacked out to prevent reprisals by bandits.





Commandos in the Ulu

"You ought to publish an article on the Royal Marine Commandos in Malaya — they're a wonderful mob." So wrote a Regular soldier to this magazine. Here is the article



The galley in the bandstand: these were temporary quarters when the Commandos first took over an operational area in Malaya.

Two Marines live up to their amphibious traditions — on a jungle river in Malaya.

SEVEN hidden men were watching a moonlit pool deep in the Malayan jungle, waiting for Communist terrorists to come and refresh themselves.

From the shadows between the trees a tiger appeared. It went to the water, drank, and then lay down and rested on a spit of sand. Soon afterwards, the tiger's mate appeared, and when she had drunk, the two animals sported together for a few minutes before going off.

The delicate ears of the tigers, and their uncanny sense of presence, had failed to detect the watchers.

The men who had fooled the tigers belonged to 42 Royal Marine Commando. Their parent formation is 3 Commando Brigade, Royal Marines, which (complete with band) is operating alongside the Army in Malaya.

"It was a fine display of discipline," said a Brigade Headquarters officer, describing the incident. "The tigers' skins would have been worth £40 each but the men were after different game. On a later night they caught the Communists they were seeking."

The Royal Marines have made a good bag of Communists since they began operating in Malaya in May 1950. At the time of writing, 40 Commando claims 25 bandit kills, 42 Commando has 44 and 45 Commando has 58. Brigade Headquarters is also pleased to report that it has one kill to its credit. An officer and a warrant officer were passing a village when they were stopped by a policeman who pointed to a large patch of long grass. From it, a bandit stood up and took aim at them, but the warrant officer was quicker on the trigger. These results have not been obtained without casualties to the Royal Marines.

As a formation, 3 Commando Brigade has never served in Britain. Two of its component Commandos, 40 and 42, were in Burma in World War Two; 45 was in Europe. The three came together in Hong-Kong and afterwards saw service in Palestine, Tripolitania and Akaba, then went back to Hong-Kong in 1949.

As the only Royal Marine Commandos in existence except for 41 Independent Commando in

Korea, the three Commandos of the Brigade recruit their men by drawing on Royal Marines carrying out more traditional roles. Among the ranks of the Commandos are frogmen, cliff-climbers, removers of under-water obstacles and crews of landing-craft, who have passed through the Commando school near Plymouth. Occasionally, these men find some outlet for their special talents, but mostly their work is that of Infantry.

When the Marines took over an operational role in Perak, the rapid way in which they built up their camps was a widespread topic of conversation among soldiers. Not all the accommodation had to be built, however. One unit had its headquarters in the Sultan's summer palace (with the cooks temporarily installed under the bandstand). Another troop was stationed in Malaya's great mental hospital at Tanjong Rambutan. They were given a block next to the ward of dangerous women patients.

The Commandos brought with them Royal Navy doctors, schoolmasters, chaplains and sick berth attendants. Inevitably, they use naval terms. An officer's room is his cabir, a jungle kitchen is still a galley, latrines are heads, the ground is the deck, and to go out of camp is to go ashore.

When one of the Commandos said good-bye to the 4th Hussars, with whom it had been co-operating, the ceremony was made as naval as possible. The armoured cars flew a long "paying-off" pennant, which the Royal Marines customarily fly when moving out. The "side" was fully manned, a compliment that the Royal Navy accords a VIP, and a bosun's pipe sounded a farewell.

In their jungle operations, the Commandos have shown the

speed which is essential to success. Only 20 minutes after a terrorist had surrendered, he was leading men of 45 Commando to seek his comrades. Two were killed.

At Christmas, 1950, 40 Commando heard of a bandit attack and marched 30 miles in 26 hours (previous best for the route: 30 hours). They drove off the Communists and killed three. On May Day, 1951, when the Communists had planned to make a show by striking at the Commandos, the tables were reversed and a patrol from 42 Commando killed six bandits and wounded and captured two others.

Two days later the same patrol rushed up a hill, in pursuit of terrorists on the summit. At the top the patrol commander, Lieutenant F. E. Johnson (who later received the Military Cross) asked his sergeant-major: "Any wounded?" The sergeant-major answered, "No, sir," to which Lieutenant Johnson returned, "I am." He had been shot through the chest.

A Marine of 40 Commando was talking to his corporal about snakes while a patrol was taking a rest. Just after the patrol moved off, the Marine turned rapidly to the corporal again and asked: "Shall I fire?" The corporal, thinking the man wanted to kill a snake, answered "Yes" and was astonished, as the sound of the shot died away, to see a uniformed bandit fall dead 50 yards from the path.

Another Marine of the same Commando is reported to have shown his appreciation of the need to be properly dressed at all times by running flat out after a bandit, firing his Sten gun with one hand and holding on his jungle hat with the other. The bandit he was chasing was killed in the action and proved to have a price of 10,000 Malay dollars on his head — but Marines, like soldiers, are not entitled to these rewards.

The distinctive white helmet of the Royal Marines is a familiar sight in Malaya — but not on jungle patrols.



Two troops of 42 Commando shared four kills in one action, and soon afterwards an arm came to light in the area. Both troops laid claim to it. Commented the Commando's correspondent of *The Globe and Laurel*, the Royal Marines' magazine: "We may soon be forced to record halves and even smaller fractions of bandits in the scores."

A Dyak tracker attached to 40 Commando nearly "scored" a Marine one day, according to a letter addressed to "The Adjutant, 40th Commanders," by the Kuala Kangsar Bus Company. It read:

"I wish to inform you that at about 4.00 pm on 10. 1. 51, one of your Dyak trackers boarded a public bus from Ulu Kenas, Kuala Kangsar. On the way the said tracker discharged his rifle, making a bullet hole to the roof of the bus. Two of your Marines were rested on the roof of the bus and one of them had his ammo pouch grazed by a bullet.

"Please advise your men not to travel on the roof of the bus in future for the bus company may be charged for carrying excess passengers."

Some statistics about the wear-and-tear of clothing and equipment in jungle operations are provided by the quartermaster of 45 Commando. In 13 months his men needed 4018 pairs of rubber jungle boots, 5382 pairs of socks, 2805 shirts and 3378 pairs of trousers. In the same period his vehicles had covered 528,649 miles, using nearly 50,000 gallons of petrol.

Any link, however slender, with the sea is welcome to the landlocked Marines — even the sight of a Sunderland flying-boat, on its way to bomb a bandit camp. Great was the jubilation of a party which embarked on a Royal Navy motor launch for a river operation — especially when the men received an issue of duty-free cigarettes. — *From a report by D. H. de T. READE and other sources.*



SOLDIER to Soldier

"Bit of a do today at a place called Fontenoy."

MUCH of the pleasure inspired by the award of the Victoria Cross to Private William Speakman springs from the simple but satisfying circumstance that he is still alive.

All too often, and all too tragically, the decoration is a posthumous one.

There is little to be said, about the award of a Victoria Cross. It is still the supreme reward for supreme courage, and of all the finer attributes of man none rates higher than courage. In a world where too many standards have been lowered, that of the Victoria Cross remains high and by all men envied. This is one thing that cannot be "fiddled." The most battered cynic will fail to read the citation to a VC, told though it often is in conventional phrases, without a quickening inside him. It is an award which stirs woman and child, poet and peasant and philosopher. Even the misguided headline with which a famous newspaper sought to do honour to Private Speakman could not dim the lustre of the occasion (apologies have since been rendered).

It is one thing to win the Victoria Cross, and another to say the right things afterwards. Private Speakman distinguished himself in this field too. It is the war correspondent who talks about "all hell let loose": it is the man on the job who talks of "a fair old go."

IN a leading article inspired by this and other feats of arms, *The Times* saluted "these disciplined, patient (though not uncomplaining), self-deriding, humorously cynical lads" who have served their country so well.

"Never were there such unmartial, unromantic, unheroic heroes. A boy of the Gloucestershire Regiment, broadcasting at Christmas, says simply of the epic battle of his battalion by the Imjin River, "We had a bash and did our best" ... A 'bash' and a 'go'! In some such terms have British fighting men always spoken of great actions in which they have shared — some of them actions as grim and grand as any sung in tremendous verse by Dryden or Macaulay. And if asked how they felt at the time 'in the thick of it' they have usually answered (probably quite truthfully) that

A Minister who takes over the War Office has one inescapable problem. At any given moment, 30,000 of his soldiers — equal to two divisions — are ineffective. They are not ill, or wounded, or in the glass-house. They just happen to be in transit, or "in the pipe-line," as the fashionable phrase goes.

Mr. Winston Churchill made this point in a recent Defence debate. Pipe-line trouble prompted the Government to introduce the new three-year Regular engagement. As it is, a National Serviceman posted to the Far East spends two out of his 24 months in travelling there (apart from any other travelling). There is also the time spent waiting to travel. How much easier, in the good old days, to send a battalion overseas and leave it there till it died of old age!

The only other way to shorten time in the pipe-line is to make more use of air trooping. And that means calling on hundreds of highly-trained able-bodied men to operate the additional aircraft.

A War Minister also discovers, if he does not already know it, that a further block of 250,000 of his soldiers are not immediately available for offensive purposes.

These are the staffs of the Regular military establishments in Britain — training units, depots and so on. Mr. Churchill has now ordered that these units shall acquire "an immediate combatant value." They must be armed, he says, "ready to defend themselves, and not only themselves, in an emergency ... It is a mistake to keep so many thousands of our men in uniform without their playing a direct part in our safety." And he added, in a typical phrase, destined to be much-quoted:

"Our country should suggest to the mind of a potential paratrooper the back of a hedgehog rather than the paunch of a rabbit."

"THE BRITISH SOLDIER IS NO BRAVER THAN OTHER SOLDIERS,



Private William Speakman VC is 24 years of age, six-and-a-half feet tall. His home is at Altrincham, Cheshire. He enlisted as a Regular soldier in 1945 and before that was a member of the Army Cadet Force. After recovering from the wounds he received on 4 November he rejoined his regiment.

— Acknowledgments to BBC Television Newsreel

The Man on Hill 217

AT a brief and simple par-ade in the snow-covered Korean hills, Private William Speakman received the ribbon of the Victoria Cross.

It was the second Victoria Cross to be won in the Korean campaign. The first was awarded to Major Kenneth Muir, who was killed in one of the early engagements of 27th Brigade.

Both VC's were won by men of Scottish regiments. Major Muir belonged to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders; Private Speakman enlisted in the Black Watch, volunteered for Korea and was attached to the King's Own Scottish Borderers. In both instances, the award was gained in a dour defence against overwhelming odds.

The Borderers had been under heavy shell and mortar fire for an hour when, at five o'clock on the morning of 4 November, wave after wave of the enemy advanced against their positions. Then, says the citation:

"Private Speakman, a member of B Company headquarters, learning that the section holding the left shoulder of the company's position had been seriously depleted by casualties, had had its NCO's wounded and was being overrun, decided on his own initiative to drive the enemy off the position and keep them off it. To effect this he collected a large pile of grenades and six men.

"Then, displaying complete disregard of his own safety, he led his party in a series of grenade charges against the enemy, and continued doing so as each wave of enemy reached the crest of the hill. The force and determination of his charges broke up each onslaught and resulted in an ever-mounting pile of enemy dead.

"Having led some ten charges through withering machine-gun and mortar fire, Private Speakman was severely wounded in the leg. Undaunted by his wounds, he continued to lead charge after charge against the enemy and it was only after a direct order from his superior officer that he agreed to pause for a first field-

dressing to be applied to his wounds.

"Having had his wounds bandaged, he immediately rejoined his comrades and led them again and again forward in a series of grenade charges, up to the time of the withdrawal of his company at 9 p.m.

"At the critical moment of the withdrawal, amidst an inferno of enemy machine-gun and mortar fire, as well as grenades, Private Speakman led a final charge to clear the crest of the hill and hold it, whilst the remainder of his company withdrew. Encouraging his gallant, but by now depleted party, he assailed the enemy with showers of grenades and kept him at bay sufficiently long for his company to effect its withdrawal.

"Under the stress and strain of this battle, Private Speakman's outstanding powers of leadership were revealed, and he so dominated the situation that he inspired his comrades to stand firm and fight the enemy to a standstill. His great gallantry and utter contempt for his own personal safety were an inspiration to all his comrades.

"He was, by his heroic actions, personally responsible for causing enormous losses to the enemy, assisting his company to maintain their position for some four hours and saving the lives of many of his comrades when they were forced to withdraw from their position.

"Private Speakman's heroism under intense fire throughout the operation and when painfully wounded was beyond praise and deserving of supreme recognition."

See also *SOLDIER* to *Soldier*, Page 15.

First DSO for National Serviceman

THE first Distinguished Service Order to be awarded to a National Serviceman has been earned by Second-Lieutenant William Purves of the King's Own Scottish Borderers.

It was won in the same action as Private Speakman's Victoria Cross.

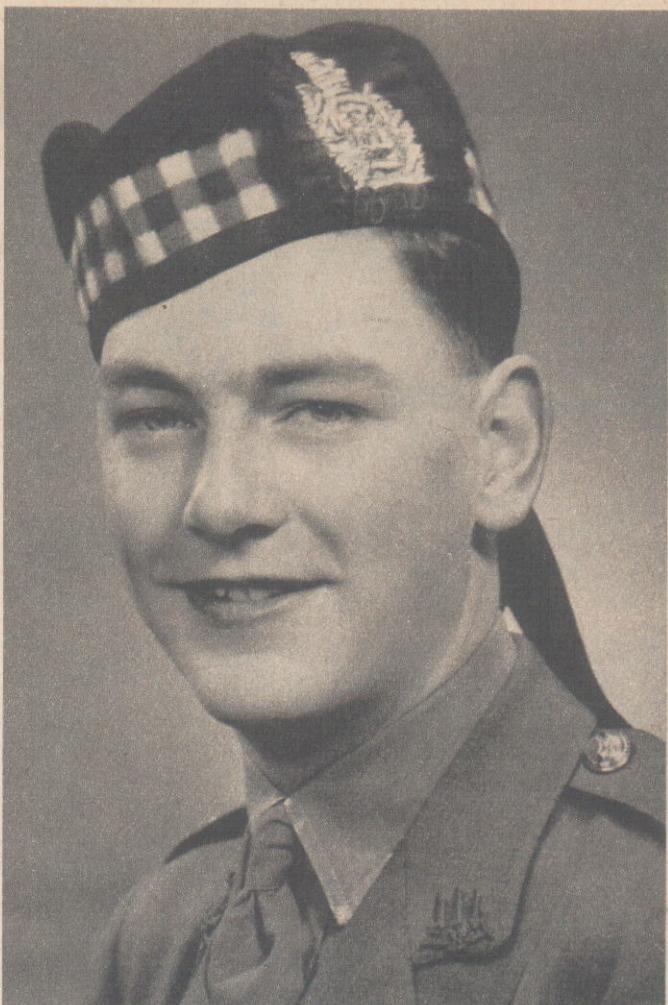
Second-Lieutenant Purves's platoon was on a ridge, cut off, and its position was dominated from an enemy-held point. The platoon was repeatedly attacked, each attack being preceded by intense mortar and artillery fire.

Although in great pain from a wound in the right shoulder, Second-Lieutenant Purves dashed from section to section of his platoon, encouraging them, directing their fire and himself throwing grenades at the enemy.

Nearly ten hours after the engagement started, Second-Lieutenant Purves sent a message through to battalion headquarters, reporting the situation and asking for information. He was ordered to extricate his platoon.

Under the enemy's nose, and under the heaviest mortar-fire, he carried out the move with great skill and coolness, bringing 13 wounded men and all arms and equipment down a precipitous hill.

"The outstanding leadership, bravery and resource of this young officer, together with his sense of responsibility, were an inspiration to all," said the citation. "The stubborn defence of this feature contributed materially in preventing the battalion from being overrun."



Second-Lieutenant William Purves DSO is 19. His home is at Kelso, Scotland, and he worked in a bank before being called up in May, 1950. Commissioned in January 1951, he left for the Far East in the following month. He is one of the youngest men to receive the Distinguished Service Order.

THE LULL WAR

THERE was still a "lull war" in Korea as this issue of *SOLDIER* went to press.

British forward troops were huddling in their foxholes, grateful for their new winter kit which, reports said, was well up to promised standards.

Farther back, the cyclostyled "Korean Base Gazette" had only patrol activity and the repulse of Communist "probing" attacks to report on the ground. In the air things were more lively and from the sea Commando raids and ships' guns were hurting the enemy behind his back. At Panmunjon there were still those eternal truce talks, relieved only by the exchange of prisoner-of-war lists.

Two more units of 1st (Commonwealth) Division have received the United States Presidential citation, the award which was conferred on the Gloucestershire Regiment and 170 Independent Mortar Battery, Royal Artillery.

They are the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment and the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. The citation, which is the highest American unit award, was gained in an action near Kapyong where, said General Van Fleet, the units' outstanding conduct when the Chinese threatened to break through the Eighth Army lines turned defeat into victory.

One of the little units which troops of the Commonwealth Division regard with affection is the composite platoon of 57 Company, RASC, which came into being in Essex in 1950 with all but two of its members Reservists. In Korea, it acts as grocer

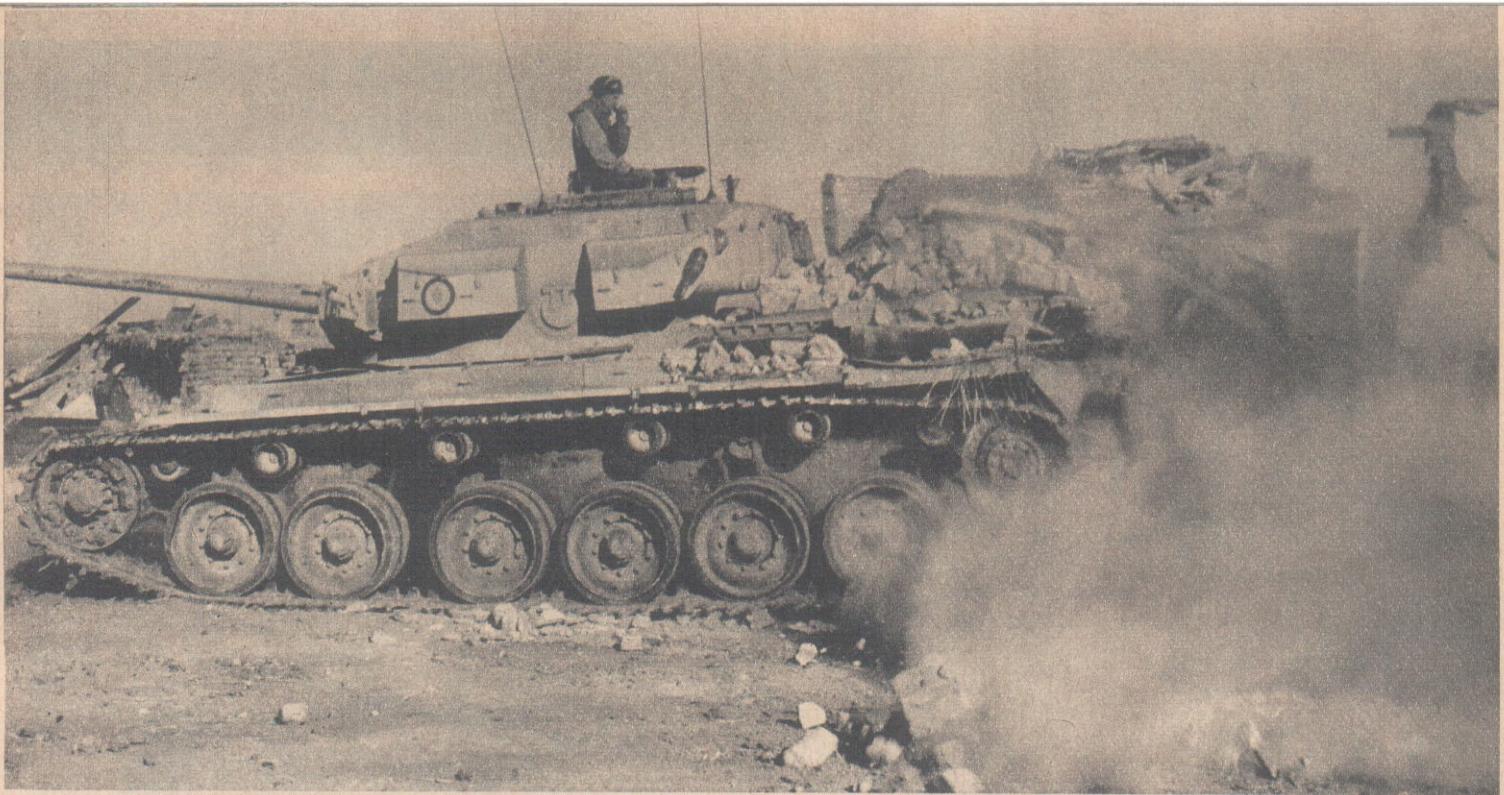
to the Division, and attached to it is a Canadian Supply Point. All the basic items issued by the platoon are in tins, but there is also a supplement of American fresh food, including meat, vegetables, fruit and occasionally fish. The platoon carries a reserve of British compo and American C6 rations — and a two-day supply of rum. Besides its Commonwealth customers, it supplies men of the Korean Service Corps and Korean porters, whose rations include a pound-and-a-half of rice a day, half-a-pound of fresh vegetables (among them radishes and egg-plants), peas, beans, lentils and salted mackerel. The Korean Service Corps men receive ten Korean cigarettes a day.

The platoon has had its moments of frustration. Last April it provided a special issue of turkeys so that the Royal Northumbrian Fusiliers might cele-

brate their regimental day in fitting style. There was a battle on, however, and the turkeys, and the gear for cooking them, were over-run by the Chinese.

Another popular little unit is the seven-man divisional post office which is now at Seoul but which, in the past, has had nearly a score of different locations in Korea. It handles mail for all the countries in the Commonwealth Division. Once, in the uncomfortable days of a retreat at the end of 1950, the only post office vehicle broke down. The men of the unit scorned advice to burn the mails and to climb on other trucks.

Sergeant Norman Phelps, who was in charge, got rid of some of the bags by stopping vehicles, asking officers to which units they belonged and then giving them their unit mail — and getting a receipt for it. One soldier thus stopped even bought a postal order from him. Not a letter was lost, but one bag of letters went off to Britain without being date-stamped. "Our hands were too cold," explains Sergeant Phelps.



Centurion as bulldozer: levelling Egyptian houses to make a safety lane to the Army's water-filtration plant at Suez. Attacks on troops made this necessary.

CANAL Round-Up

Left: One man works, two keep guard: a stage in the building of "Pegasus Avenue" to the Suez water plant. Below: Desert pull-up, near Moascar.

UN-fights, kidnappings, ambushes and boredom: that was life in the Canal Zone. For the soldier, anything that smacked of an active operation was welcome. Just sitting tight, cut off from old haunts and recreations — that was not so good. One thing only reminded the troops of home — appeals to save electricity.

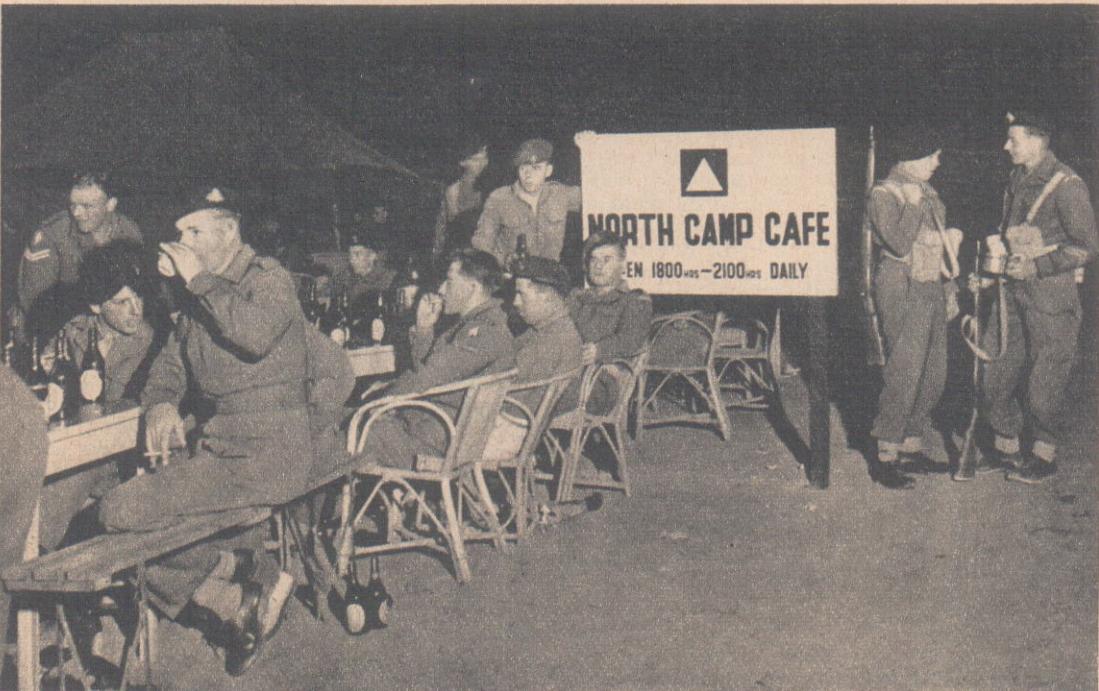
There was so much "mucking in" to do, however, that there was little time to brood. An example of improvisation is pictured on these pages; the North Camp Cafe, built for overflow troops who were crowded out from the usual canteens.

Another example was to be found in the Royal Army Service Corps bakeries, which the civilian bakers were terrorised into leaving. A draft of Army Catering Corps cooks, fresh from home, and volunteers from units of all kinds (many of whom had never been in a bakery before) kept up the supply of loaves.

Girls of the Women's Royal Army Corps served in NAAFI canteens and grocery shops. A WRAC physical training instructor and a driver became a documentation team for families going home. In Port Said, WRAC telephone operators who were moved into Navy House gave their spare time to cleaning, cooking and dhobi-ing for the Royal Navy.

At Moascar, girl red-caps trained to take the places of their male counterparts in the Royal Military Police operations room. Moascar also boasted a WRAC-run pig-sty with three inhabitants.

At the much-attacked water-filtration plant on the outskirts of Suez, six Royal Air Force technicians joined the Royal Engineers





to help keep the water flowing. The water-men were still enjoying two laughs over the building of the famous Pegasus Avenue. The first was at the expense of three men who took shelter from a demolition charge in the very house which was being blown up and emerged dusty but unhurt. The second was provided by an Egyptian newspaper which invented and exploded in its columns a land-mine on which it claimed to have gathered 90 British troops who were working on the road.

This soldier of the East Lancashire Regiment will feel the better for the sixpenny-worth of tea in his water bottle. North Camp Cafe is staffed by volunteer women from Moascar Garrison.

Battery-Sergeant-Major Jim North (complete with revolver) also serves cups of "char." Change was a bit of a problem at first...



Maybe this is not quite how the Royal Navy row a boat ... but the British Army saved many lives in the Po floods just the same.

Po Postscript

For 40 days British troops toiled in the great floods of North Italy

BRITISH Troops Austria; British Troops Berlin; British Troops Egypt — they are all well-known. Not so many have heard of British Troops Rovigo.

It was a modest command which lasted for only 40 days, but in that period it gave a fine account of itself. Rovigo is the market town in Northern Italy which became the headquarters of the flood fighters after the River Po disastrously overflowed its banks late last year. One thousand square miles were submerged, 128,000 people lost their homes, 100 lost their lives.

As soon as the news of the inundations reached Trieste, Major-General Sir John Winterton, commanding British Troops, and Major-General E. B. Sebree, Commanding General, United States Troops, offered immediate military aid and technical assistance to the Chief of Staff of the Italian Armed Forces. The offer was accepted, and British and American Engineers and Infantry Pioneers left at once for Rovigo.

The Royal Engineers took with them collapsible boats, water-purifying plants, bulldozers, sandbags, and other flood control material, such as bridging equipment and explosives. Infantry Pioneers of the Northamptonshire and North Staffordshire Regiments, of the 24th Infantry Brigade, were furnished with motor landing-craft, entrenching tools and other equipment. In all about 200 officers and men were engaged in the operation.

The men in the motor landing-craft rescued more than 300 people from marooned houses in the first three days.

When the immediate task of rescue was over, British soldiers set to work building bridges, roads and railways and conveying supplies of food from flooded stores to dry land.

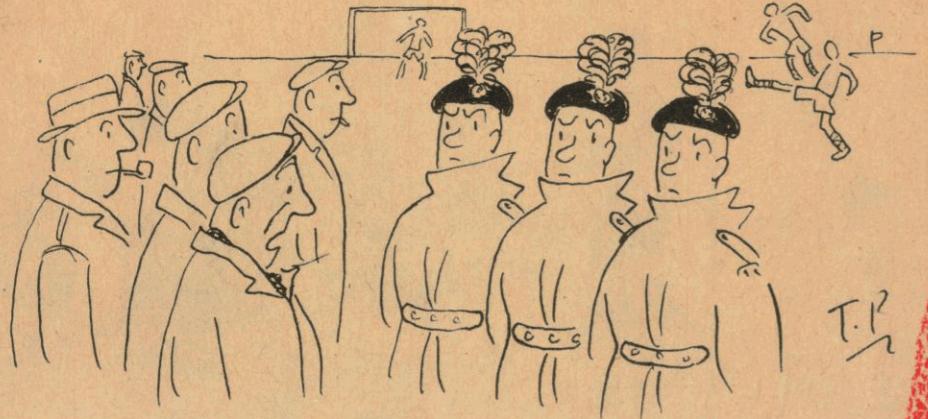
The market town of Rovigo

There were enormous numbers of Italian troops in the town, mainly Engineers and Pioneers. Red Cross organisations from all over Europe set up their headquarters and the flags of a dozen nations fluttered in the keen cold wind.

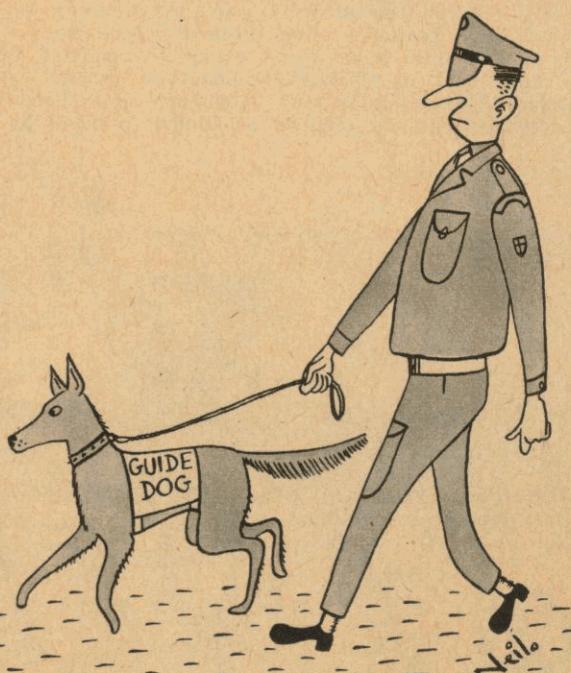
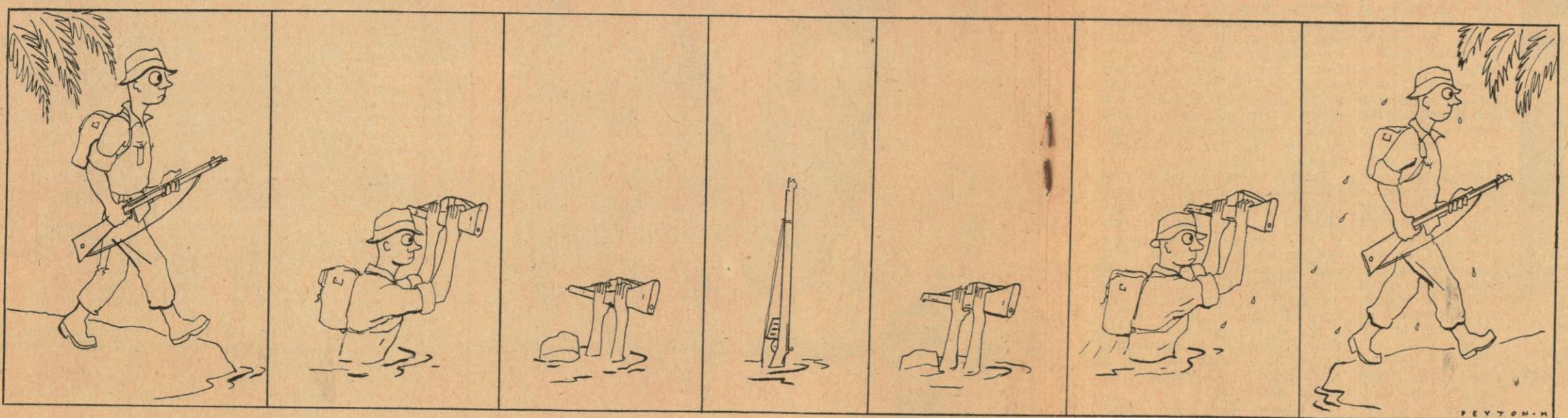
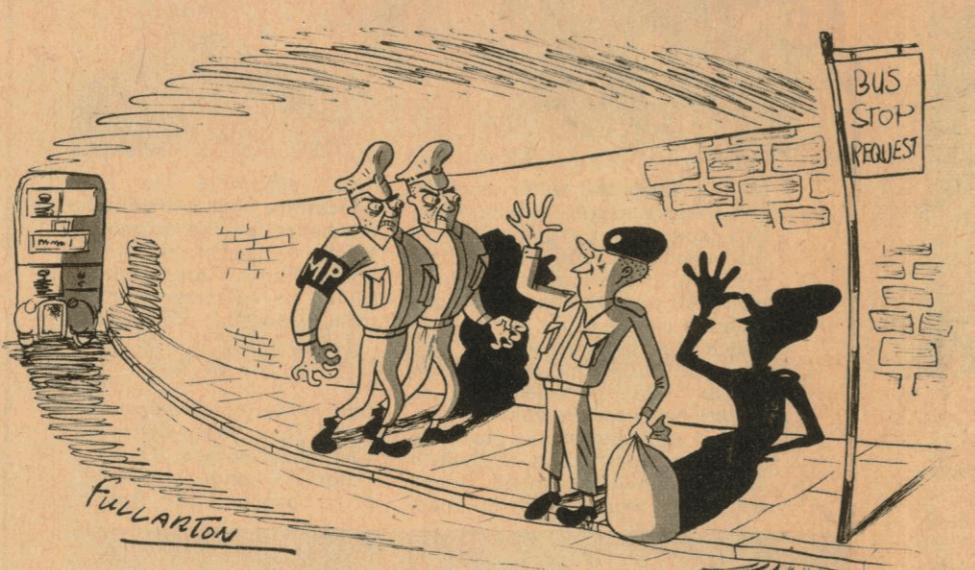
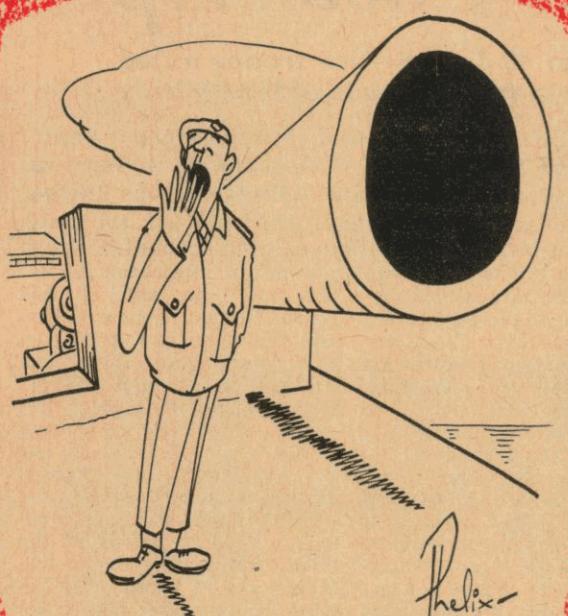
To reach the British Royal Engineers Camp, it was necessary to leave the headquarters in Rovigo for "The Harbour," the name given by the soldiers to the point where the floods reached the town. Then there was a journey of some ten miles across the water to reach what was known to the local peasants as "English Island," a strip of land in the floods some 15 miles long by one mile wide. Then followed a journey of five miles by lorry to the British Bridging Camp where a party of Sappers under Lieut. J. Platt, Royal Engineers, had established a tented camp. There they built pontoon bridges as required.

The Commander of the British contingent was Major G. H. Chambers, Royal Engineers, and Lieut-Col. A. G. H. Brousson, Commander Royal Engineers, BETFOR, directed operations.

From a report by Major D. S. Strachan-Audax, Military Observer.



SOLDIER HUMOUR



The island which Lord Kitchener surveyed in the 'eighties suffers from military overcrowding — but it's a happy station, for all that...

NOT for a long time has the island of Cyprus seen such a rapid turnover of troops as during recent months. Men in red berets, men in green berets, men in blue berets have used the island as a waiting-room on the way to Egypt.

Cyprus thinks well of the British Army, and this feeling is reciprocated. But the problem of military accommodation on the island has become a difficult one. For many years now troops have been housed in a variety of temporary quarters, ranging from a former hospital to a Crusaders' castle, from tented camps to huts built for illegal Jewish immigrants to Palestine.

There is a seven-year project to pull all these scattered units together and rehouse them in a model cantonment at Dhekelia, on the south coast 18 miles west of Famagusta, where terracing of



Many officers have retired to live in Kyrenia, here viewed from the ramparts of the castle.

slopes and planting of trees has already begun. (When the time is ripe, SOLDIER hopes to print a detailed article on the Dhekelia Project). Meanwhile, a large "estate" of married quarters is being built behind and above Famagusta, for those units not scheduled to move to Dhekelia.

The climate of Cyprus is usually — but not always — delightful. Any man of the 16th Independent Parachute Brigade Group (recently in Cyprus) who refers to the island as the "jewel of the Mediterranean" is likely to receive short shrift from his mates. Not long after the parachutists had

set themselves up in tents at Wayne's Keep, near Nicosia, more than four-and-a-half inches of rain fell in three hours. The result: 68 tents washed away in one camp alone. The rain simply swilled the tent pegs out of the shallow soil, then down came the canvas. After that, the underlying rock had to be pierced to take the tent pegs — a tedious process. On manoeuvres, Sappers began to build a Bailey bridge across a dried river bed; at half-time, the river was in full spate.

Rain was one thing. The "Red Devils" were visited also by the red "dust devils" which at times made it

impossible to see more than one-fifth of a camp at one time. In the company office typewriters had to be taken to pieces twice a day for cleaning. It was difficult to persuade the Airborne that this sort of thing was exceptional.

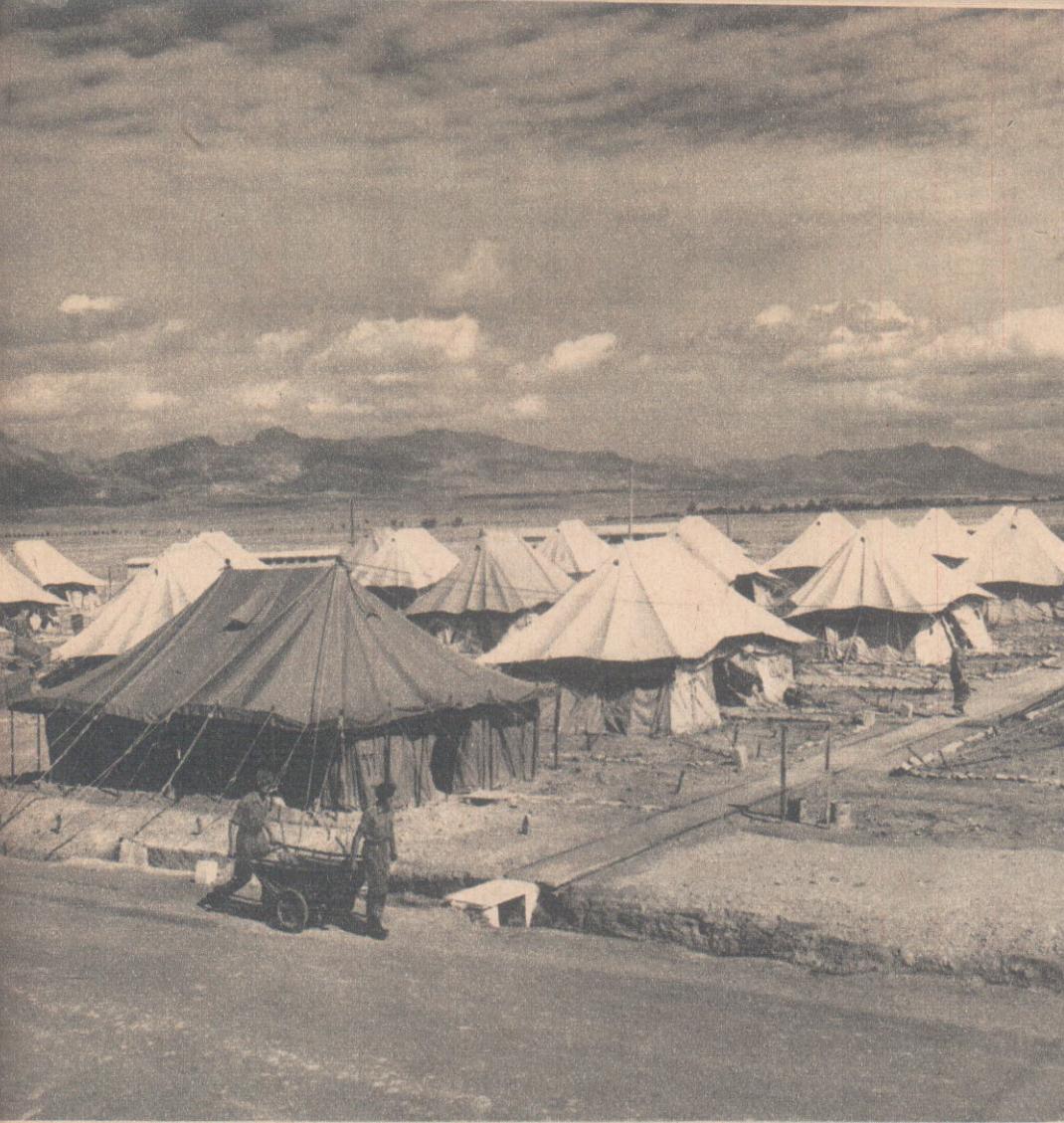
During the parachutists' "occupation" the flag of the Brigade of Guards was flown for the first time from the walls of ancient Kyrenia Castle (which was Cherries to Richard the Lion Heart). Kyrenia, from the ramparts of which the mountains of Turkey can be seen, is not normally tenanted by troops, but the Guards have a persuasive way with them. They even held a gala in the storied walls, and gave a cocktail party on near-by "Snake Island." The sergeants set up their mess in the former execution chamber of the castle.

From a military point of view the island has altered little since the days when the future Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener arrived in the 'eighties. That was only a few years after the island, badly neglected and eroded, was ceded by the Turks. Captain Kitchener undertook the first reliable survey of Cyprus, and laid the foundations of its road system. (Mr. Horace White, Public Information Officer in Nicosia, has one of Kitchener's original maps of the island, dated 1882.)

In those days the British garrison marched every summer from the coastal barracks at



Once a NAAFI holiday camp, Golden Sands is now strictly regimental. The band in the foreground is that of the 1st Battalion The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry (now in Egypt).



Tents at Wayne's Keep — and not a dust devil in sight.

Polymedhia (at the western end of the island) to their mountain camp at Troodos, 5600 feet above sea level, to escape the heat. On occasions they were snowed up there for weeks on end — as were British troops, on leave from Egypt, in the winter of 1949.

Captain Kitchener is credited, not only with improving the quality of the island's roads, but with improving the quality of its dog population; he imported a breed of foxhound, the strain of which is still perceptible. One day in 1881 he was shot at, for no particular reason, in a village called Pissouri.

Between the world wars, the only garrison in Cyprus was a company detached from the battalion at Khartoum. After the riots of 1931 this company was stationed in a former English school at Nicosia, which is now the headquarters of Cyprus District. During World War Two, when German invasion was feared, the island held the equivalent of two divisions. After the war it was much in the news as a reception station for Jews.

In recent years the roads have been widened by the expedient of adding "shoulder" at each side. When drivers pass, each must run the near wheels of his vehicle on to the rough shoulder, which neither likes to do until the last moment. Inexperienced drivers tend to lose control when they find one half of their vehicle bouncing wildly.

What attractions has Cyprus for the soldier — apart from skiing and climbing at Troodos? It has walled towns and ancient, high-perched castles, like St. Hilarion and Bellapais, with associations going back to the Crusaders. The soldier may visit these as a sightseer or he may find himself being marched there as part of his military training. Sea bathing is excellent, and some soldiers have donned masks and web feet and tried their luck at harpooning fish.

Nicosia, the capital, is an agreeable place in which to wander. Its shopping quarter is a bewildering warren. The town is noted for its open-air cabarets, of varying degrees of allure, and its open-air cinemas.

The island itself is not an easy place in which to wander. Public omnibuses are erratically operated, and the adjacent passenger may have a sheep in his lap. The train service, which was usually described as an "Emett Railway," has now been shut down.

Large tracts of Cyprus are as bare and uninviting as that mournful stretch between the Canal Zone and Cairo. To his surprise, the newcomer in Cyprus finds that there are camels on the island. In some areas the landscape is broken only by metal windmills, sucking up water on to the parched earth. But the

OVER



For the first (and probably the last) time, the Brigade of Guards flag flew on the walls of Kyrenia Castle when the 16th Independent Parachute Brigade Group were on the island. Below: Inescapable on the roads of Cyprus are these big roadside bottles, mounted in threes.



THE BUSY ISLAND (Continued)

Government has been pushing ahead with big programmes of tree-planting.

A few miles out of Nicosia, modestly housed, is the Cyprus station of the Forces Broadcasting Service, which entertains not only the Army but, at regular intervals, the Greek, Turkish and even Armenian population. Indeed, this station has done a great deal to build up goodwill for the Army in Cyprus. On one occasion 300 school children packed themselves into the studio

to sing. Soldiers or airmen with an ambition to be announcers are sometimes detached from their units to serve a spell here. The regular staff are far from being mere "disc jockeys"; they create many of their own programmes, and write and act in their own plays.

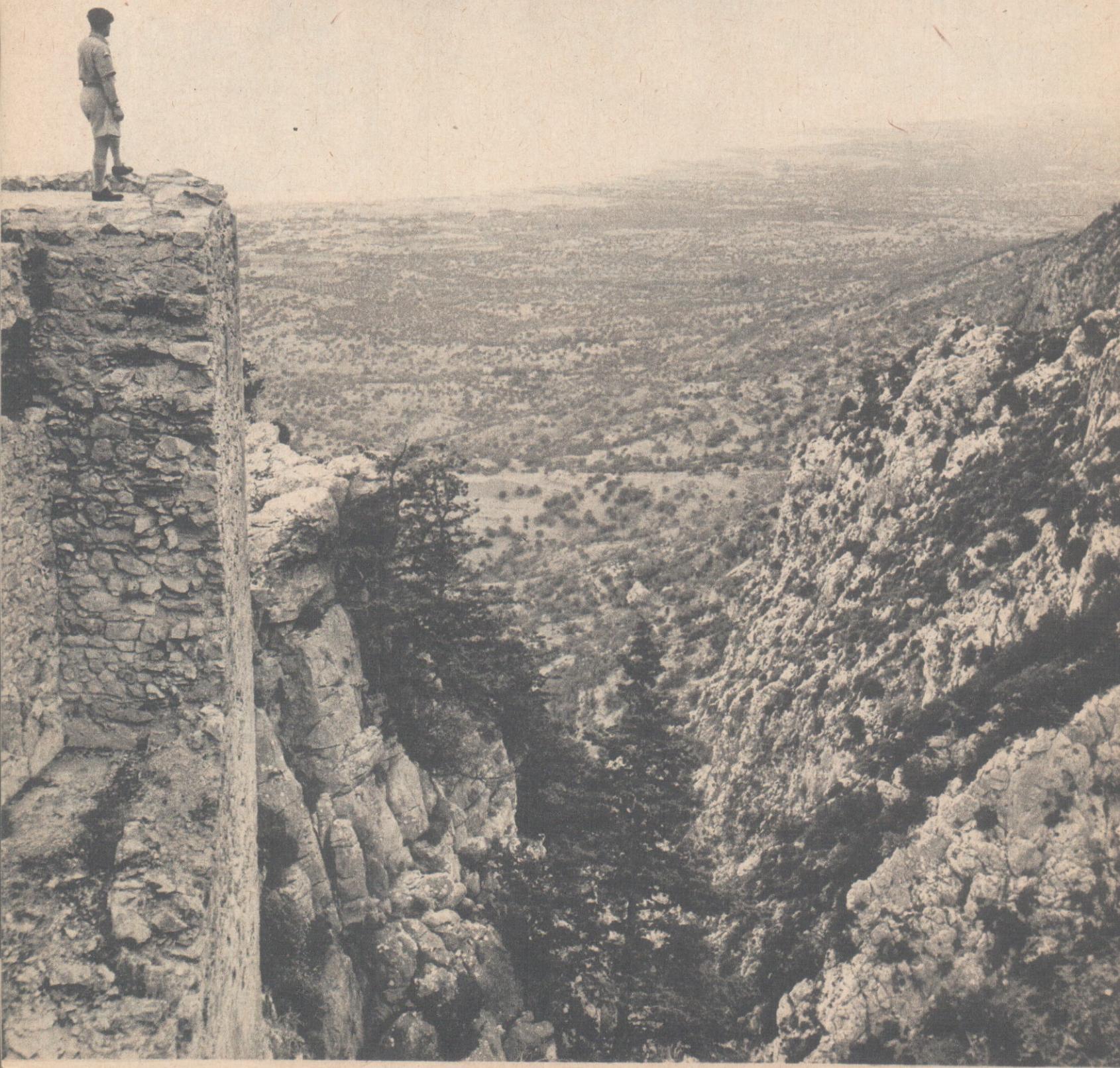
A number of Army officers are choosing Cyprus as an island on

which to retire. One of them, Lieut-General Sir Harold Briggs, had no sooner done so than he was called away to become Director of Operations in Malaya. There is a retired VC in the Kyrenia colony — Brigadier A. Cumming, hero of a bayonet encounter with Japanese just before the fall of Singapore. The attraction of Cyprus may have something to do with the fact that the annual rate of tax on a bachelor's

income of £500 is £18 6s; but an equal attraction is the climate, in spite of "dust devils." It is thanks, in large measure, to the climate that the death-rate in Cyprus is the second-lowest in the world (Holland's is the lowest).

Note: The Cyprus Regiment, which was founded in 1940 was disbanded in 1950. Its pack transport and pioneer units served in France, the Western Desert, Eritrea, Syria, Greece and Crete. The pack companies, in particular, distinguished themselves at Keren and Cassino.

Looking to Kyrenia from the dizzy, ruined castle of St. Hilarion, once the stronghold of the Lusignan kings. To these heights came a royal court to escape the Black Death.





With "air hostesses" to look after them, soldiers now travel to Middle East in chartered aircraft — to save the taxpayer money

Night Stop: IMTARFA

FOR generations, troopships have called at Malta. Now the island is becoming a focal point for aerial troopers.

This development began with a shuttle service from Britain for the Army and the Royal Navy. Then came a feeder service between Malta and North Africa, making Tripolitania and Cyrenaica almost independent of sea transport. New services have since been started. As a result, the saving to the taxpayer is expected to be very considerable.

The aircraft are civilian Vikings, complete with "air hostesses." They are chartered from the firms of Airwork and Hunting Air Travel. In Malta they land and take off at the Royal Air Force field at Luqa, which is also a staging point in the RAF Transport Command's air trooping service to the East. The Vikings cover the journey to Bovingdon, in Hertfordshire, in eight hours.

Soldiers in transit see less of Luqa than they do of the air trooping centre at Imtarfa, six miles away. There they usually spend a night. The centre is in barracks built of Malta stone in 1893, but modernised for their new function. The buildings stand 800 feet above the sea, hard by the walled city of Mdina, once the capital of Malta, where the Knights of St. John rested on their way to the Holy Land.

At Imtarfa, there is a staff of more than a hundred Maltese to look after the passengers. Each family receives separate accommodation. Since the centre opened last August, it has handled 250 transit passengers a day, a figure likely to increase.

Most transit visitors spend their spare time sight-seeing in Valletta or nearby villages. For those who have seen it all before, there are NAAFI canteens, recreation rooms, tennis courts and a football pitch.

(From a report by Captain REX CAREY MC, Army Public Relations.)



The view from Imtarfa trooping centre: In the foreground is the NAAFI; in the background, the ancient city of Mdina.



Punch had a drawing recently of troops filing into an aircraft on which, to their chagrin, the "air hostess" turned out to be a ferocious sergeant-major. On this flight it's another story.



For travelling families, Imtarfa has individual accommodation. Besides homely privacy, there is the advantage of being fed by a prize-winning team of Army Catering Corps cooks.

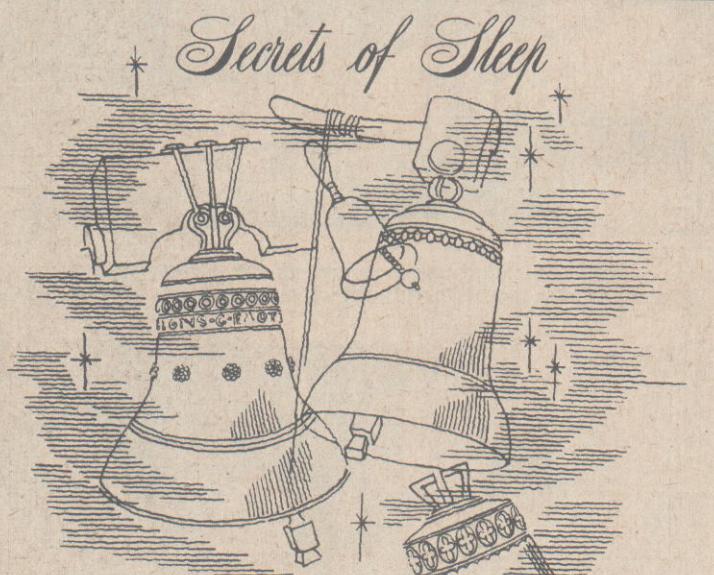


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After a tiring day Ovaltine helps to restore strength and energy. Taken at bedtime it will assist you to enjoy restful, revitalizing sleep.

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Hours...*
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of course!**



If you dream of bells...

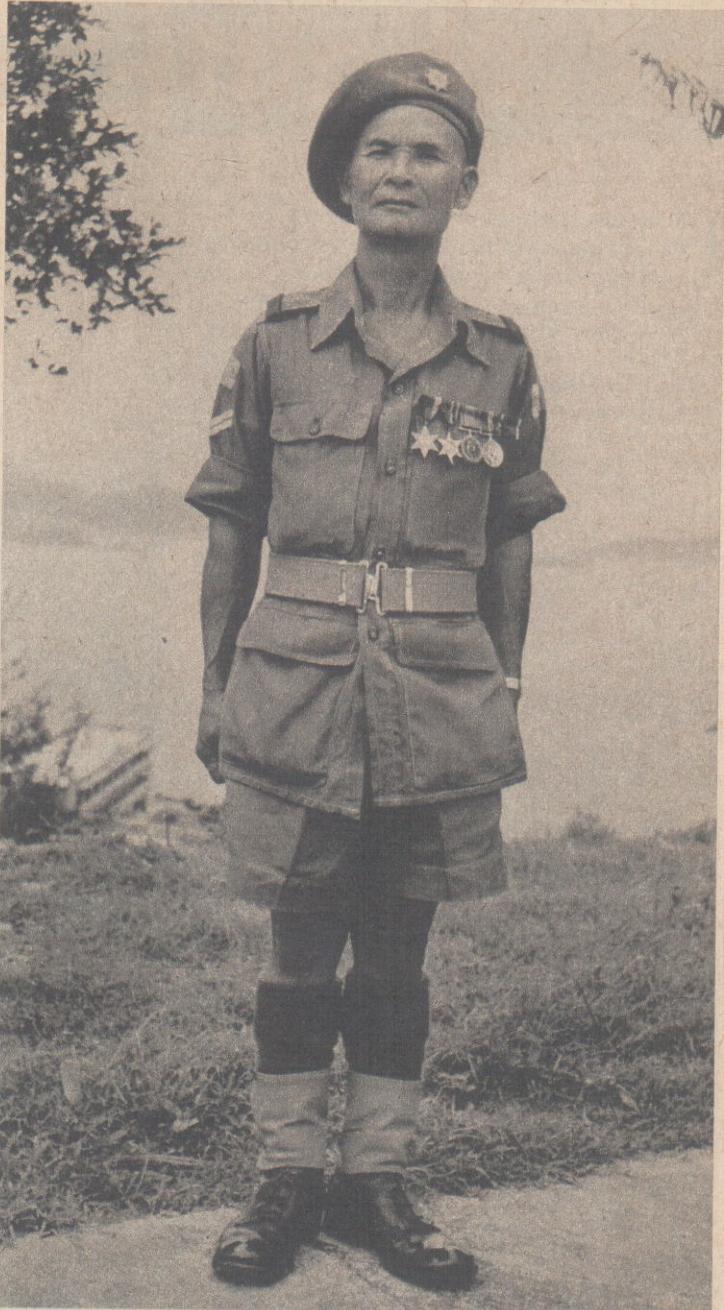
... SAY THE DREAM BOOKS, this is a sign of coming good news. If you are in business, this dream foretells good fortune. If a sailor at sea dreams of hearing the bells, it foretells a prosperous voyage, a safe return and a happy marriage.

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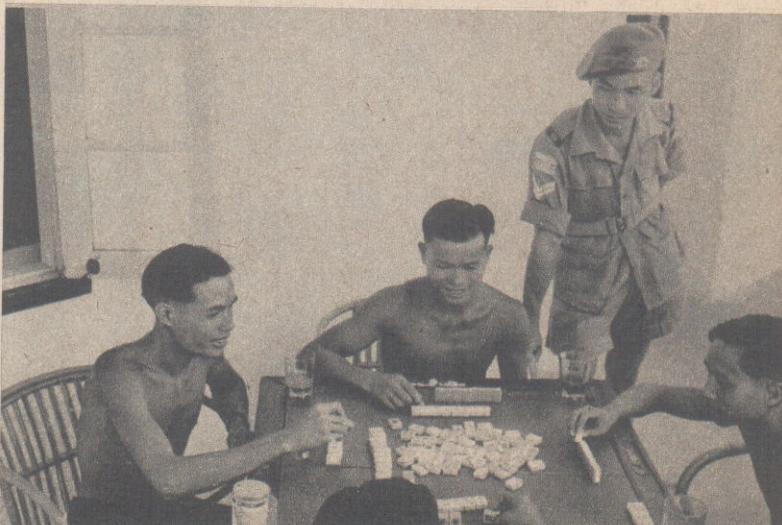
The chocolates of your dreams

DUNCAN — THE SCOTS WORD FOR CHOCOLATE

Soldiers Who



The oldest soldier of them all, Corporal Yeung Muk has more than 25 years service and holds the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. Below: A Mah Jong school in session.



Play Mah Jong

IN Lei Mun barracks, on a tall promontory overlooking one of the entrances to Hong-Kong harbour, young Chinese are training as recruits to the British Army.

They are carrying on a tradition of more than a century of service by Hong-Kong Chinese to the British Army.

Before World War Two, their elders were serving in a number of units which employed locally-recruited soldiers. One was the part-time Hong-Kong Defence Force, which still has a high percentage of Hong-Kong Chinese soldiers, including one officer. Another was the Hong-Kong Chinese Regiment, formed when the Japanese threatened the Colony.

After the fall of Hong-Kong, Chinese from these units found their way to the interior of China and there joined the British Army Aid Group. Many went to India, where they were drafted to the Gloucestershire or Border Regiments, and later they were formed into the Hong-Kong Volunteer Company and served in Burma. Some of these veterans are still serving.

For the young men who join today, all British subjects, conditions are much the same as they are for British recruits. They have the same uniform. Their work is similar, too—drill, weapon training and physical training. The Chinese hold the Hong-Kong inter-regimental basket-ball championship and play good football.

Their pay is lower than that of British soldiers—though they are still well off compared with their civilian relatives. Their rations are different and contain a good proportion of rice, their staple food, and local delicacies.

In their canteens, the Hong-Kong Chinese play their traditional game of Mah Jong, a noisy affair which involves much clattering of counters about the same size as dominoes. They are also taught to play housey-housey. They have a library with both English and Chinese books.

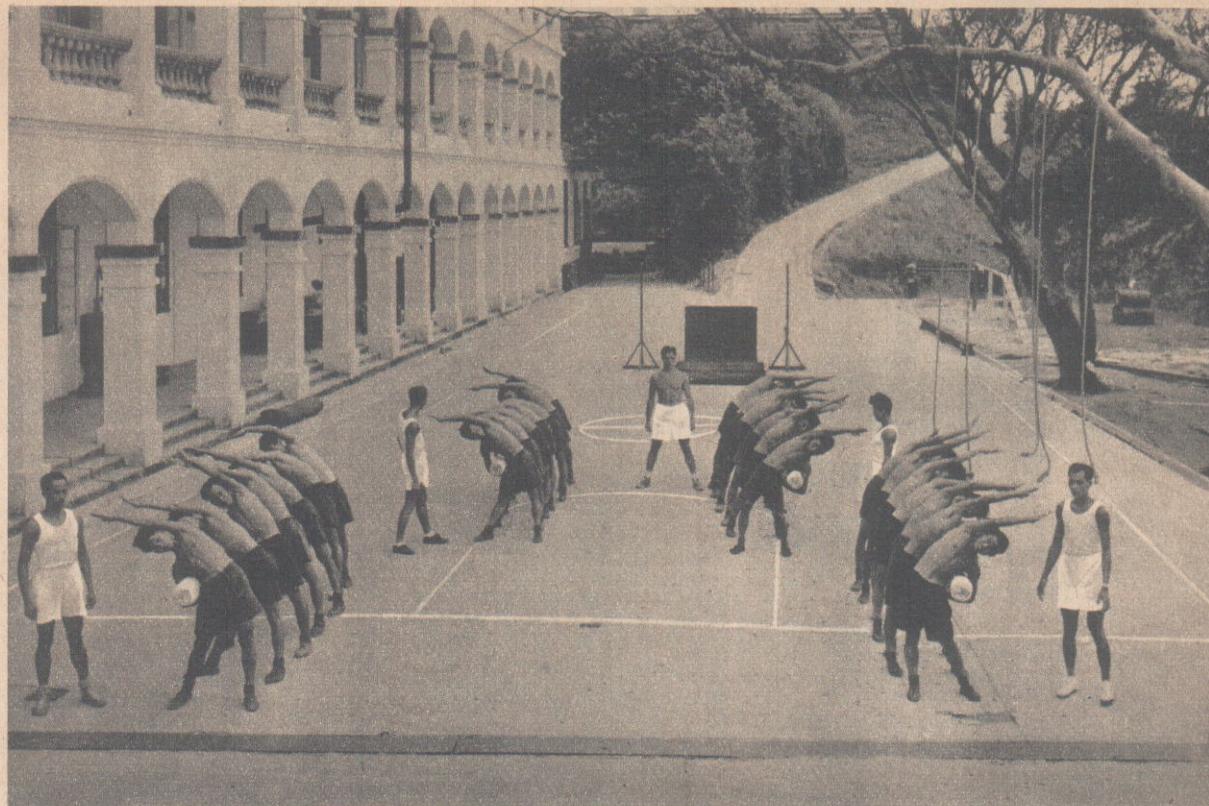
Apart from the officers and a few British sergeants, the permanent staff of the training centre is Chinese, and platoon sergeants

may be of either race. There are Chinese language teachers, interpreters and clerks, but all the British officers and NCO's are expected to have some knowledge of Cantonese.

After four and a half months at Lei Mun, the recruits may choose their jobs. They may join the Royal Artillery to operate searchlights; the Royal Engineers, to dispose of bombs or to drive mechanical equipment; the Royal Signals as linesmen, despatch riders, wireless operators, drivers or fitters; the Royal Army Service Corps as drivers, fitters, water transport crew, firemen, bakers, mule handlers and clerks; the Royal Army Medical Corps as nursing orderlies and ward boys; or the Royal Army Ordnance Corps as checkers and storemen. The men enlist for three years, with the option of extending their service.

—From a report by MAJOR K. C. HARVEY, Army Public Relations.

For more than a century, Hong-Kong has given Chinese recruits to the units of the British garrison—and is still doing so today



Physical training in the open at Lei Mun barracks.



Dinner-time: There's plenty of the traditional rice in the rations.



Left: School-time. Recruits learn English from a Chinese instructor.

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NAT. MUSQUASH COATS	£165	£85
SILVER FOX CAPES	£49	£27
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How Much Do You Know?

1. One of the first centenaries
to be celebrated this year was
that of the death of Louis Braille.
For what was he famous?

2. Subjects for many music-
hall gags, these places do
exist:

- (a) Twitching.
- (b) Nether Wallop.
- (c) Chipping Sodbury.
- (d) Ashby de la Zouche.

In which counties are they?

3. He was a renowned
Quaker and was several times
imprisoned and fined. His
father, who was grieved by
his religious activities, at last
obtained for him some land
in America. There, the young
man founded a Colony. Who
was he? What was the name
of the Colony he founded?

4. With which games do you
associate these words?

- (a) Chukka.
- (b) Birdie.
- (c) Vulnerable.
- (d) Baulk.

5. How much money is
meant by (a) a monkey; (b) a
plum; (c) a pony?

6. The main ingredients of
this dish are the heart, lungs
and liver of a sheep, boiled in
the stomach with suet and
oatmeal. The name of the
dish?

7. Some Mahomedans have
the title "Hadj." What does
it indicate?

8. These clues should lead
you to words ending in "lion."

- (a) Well-dressed lion.
- (b) Brightly-coloured lion.
- (c) Mythical lion who was
the subject of a famous
play and film.

- (d) Horsy lion.
- (e) Horse-driving lion.

9. *Theirs not to make reply,*
Theirs not to reason why
Theirs but to do and die.
Who wrote those lines, and in
which poem?

10. Who wrote (a) "The
Island of Dr. Moreau"; (b)
"Erewhon"; (c) "Poet's Pub";
(d) "The Wooden Horse";
(e) "Sanders of the River"?

11. Which firms originated
these slogans: (a) "You press
the button—we do the rest";
(b) "Prevents that sinking
feeling"; (c) "Worth a guinea
a box"?

12. The area of the City of
London is 153; 677; 13,709;
268,356 acres. Which?

13. How much champagne
does a magnum hold?

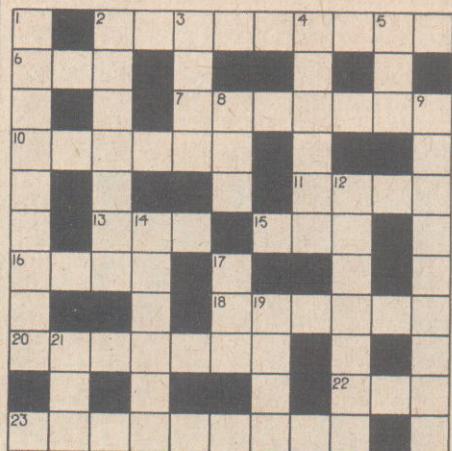
14. The river Isis is better
known by another name in its
lower reaches. What is it?

15. Here's a British film
actress. Who is she?



(Answers on Page 36)

CROSSWORD

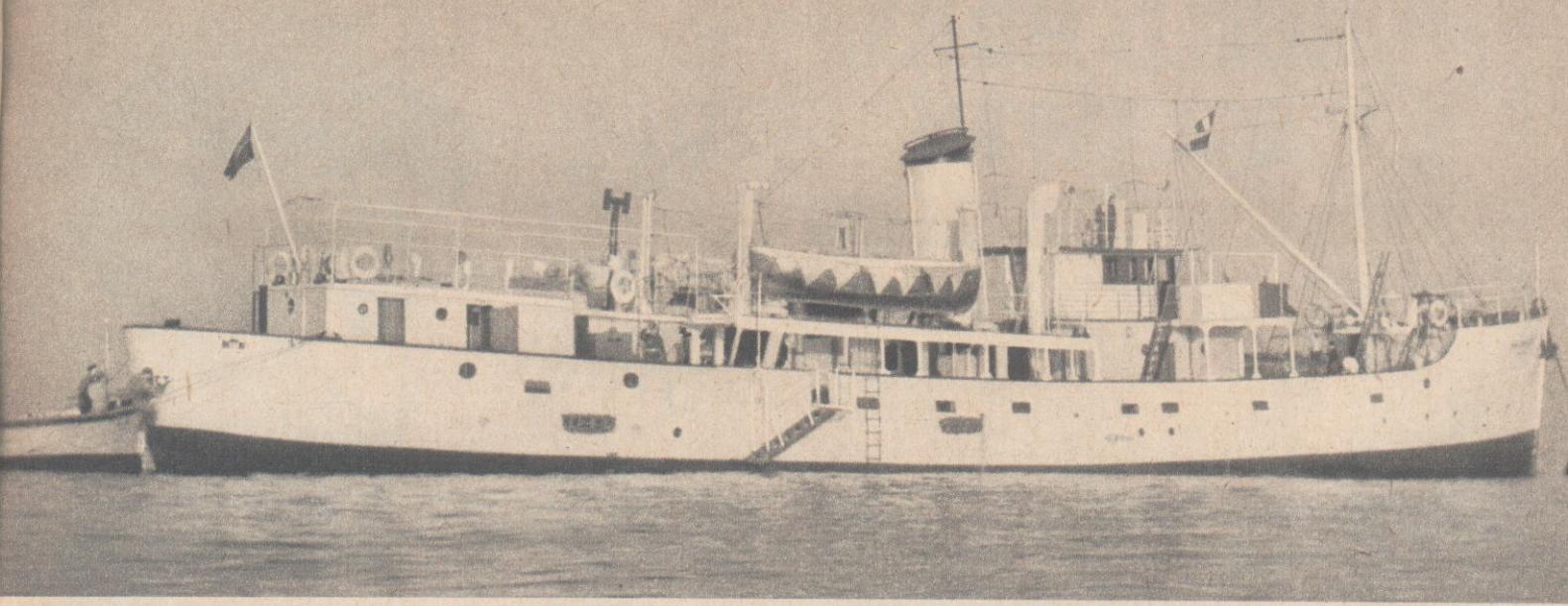


ACROSS: 2. "Epic Lyres" (anag.).
6. May be obtained from the wood or
Caledonia. 7. Mistake on a lower plane
in the end. 10. Deny garbage. 11. Painting
and poetry, for instance. 13. Spoil the start

of 1 down. 15. Split a fuss
and get a social event.
16. Scottish valley. 18.
Sailor despatched—and so
is not here. 20. A French
friend in a confusion of
ants. 22. It might hold
6 across. 23. Friend is
followed by a donkey in
an untruth.

DOWN: 1. "Sara
Grime" (anag.). 2. Sweet
smell. 3. The tide goes
out. 4. Transgression ill,
says the sailor. 5. Horizontal
transgression? 8.
This way is lateral. 9.
Sister Gin is holding out.
12. A girl consumed food.
14. Not vegetable or
mineral. 17. Pale. 19.
They add to the import-
ance of a medal. 21. Beverage
said to be
cheerful.

(Answers on Page 36)



The *Prospect* at anchor off Sheerness. The men in the boat are touching up the name on her stern. (Photographs: W. STIRLING).

The Army Starts a Meat Run

THE Royal Army Service Corps Fleet is nothing if not versatile. To its freighters, landing-ships, target-towing craft and launches, it has now added a new type of craft, a refrigeration ship.

Her name is *Prospect* and her first posting is to the Middle East for three years. She will ply between the "meat stations" — the principal ones are Malta and Cyprus — and the rest of the Middle East, carrying frozen meat and fish.

The *Prospect* started life in Canada. She was launched in Ontario in 1942 and joined the Royal Navy as an "Isles" class trawler, one of the small craft which, among other duties, escorted the Murmansk convoys armed with depth-charges.

Last year she went into a Scottish dockyard for a complete refit and to be converted from coal- to oil-burning. Then her deep forward hold became three refrigeration chambers. Just before Christmas, she joined the Army.

The refrigeration officer, Mr. A. W. Bernard, in his own department. He also works in the ship's engine-room.



The RASC Fleet's latest vessel carries meat, fish and passengers about the Middle East

as cabin carpets. At Sheerness, too, finishing touches were put to the *Prospect's* paint-work and in due course she was ready for a War Office inspection before sailing for Port Said at the beginning of January.

Posted to take command of the RASC Fleet's newest vessel was the master of the Fleet's oldest ship (and incidentally the oldest ship on Lloyd's Register), the 70-year-old coaster, *Marquess of Hartington*. He is Mr. A. C. Clarke, who has been 14 years in the RASC Fleet; he has been stationed in West Africa, Iceland and Orkney as well as at home ports.

Mr. Clarke's new command is small and compact and, to the landsman, presents a bewildering series of vertical ladders to climb. She displaces 482 tons, gross, is 165 feet long and 26 feet in the beam. She cruises at nine knots, but on her trials touched 13. She burns seven-and-a-half tons of fuel oil in a day and carries 94 tons, giving her a range of more than 2500 miles. Her crew totals 19 and she also has "officer accommodation" for ten passengers. The passengers sleep in staterooms, eat and relax in a saloon as compact as the rest of the ship, and have the only sloping stairway on board.

"She is a beautiful little ship," says her master. "She is lively in a rough sea, but she will go through anything."

Equally satisfied with his new ship is her chief engineer, Mr. E. Isaacs. He has served in RASC vessels of all kinds and considers the *Prospect's* triple-expansion steam engine the most reliable afloat.

The *Prospect's* refrigeration chambers will hold 40 tons of meat, which does not seem a great deal at first. However, the Inspector of the RASC Fleet, Major E. J. Robinson (recently transferred to the Royal Electrical and



The master, Mr. A. C. Clarke, checks his azimuth, watched by Major E. J. Robinson, Inspector of the RASC Fleet.

Mechanical Engineers as part of REME's Phase Two) points out that at half a pound a man, 40 tons of meat represents 179,200 rations, enough to keep a small garrison going for some time.

"The *Prospect*," adds Major Robinson, "has the advantage that she draws only about 15 feet and can visit places which cannot take bigger ships. She is intended to serve smaller garrisons, but she could do the run from Cyprus to Port Said, for instance, twice in about a week."

The temperature in the refrigerators can be brought down to ten degrees Fahrenheit, which is low enough to keep meat and fish indefinitely. It is also low enough to put the *Prospect* into the frozen fruit and vegetable trade if necessary. The refrigeration plant is normally powered from the ship's boiler, but there is also an auxiliary diesel motor which would keep it working during boiler-cleaning.

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- 6 Moisten the boot with the rag.
- 7 Finish with a dry cloth and "You could shave in it."

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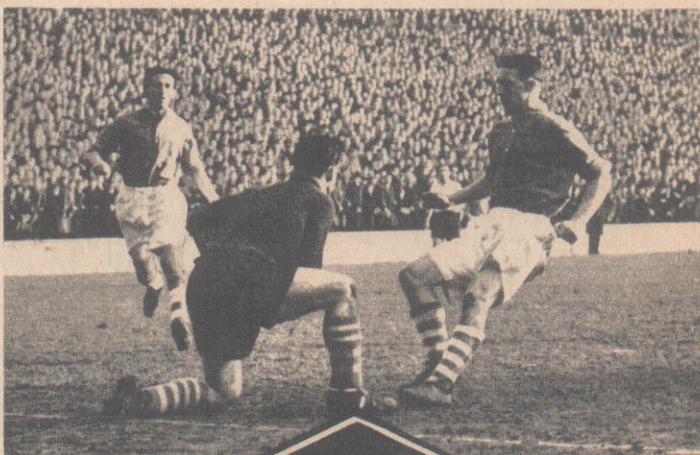
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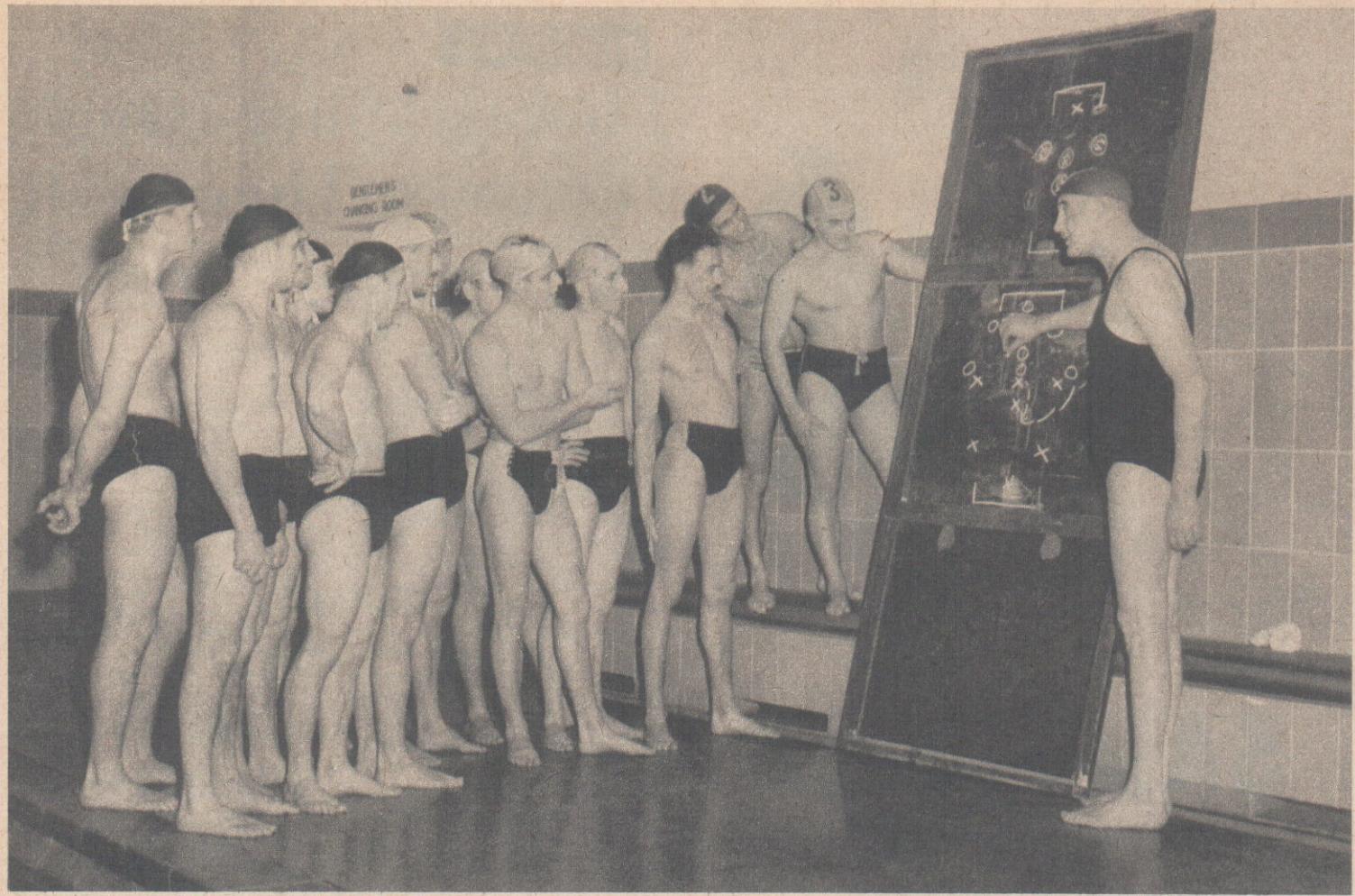
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And Now Water Polo

WATER polo is one of the sports in which British Army teams have always excelled, particularly in Britain. It has also flourished in Egypt and India.

Now it has achieved popularity in Rhine Army where units not only compete against each other but against well-known German teams. Last year the Royal Fusiliers team won the Rhine Army championship and went on to compete in the Army championships at Aldershot.

The man who has been largely responsible for the renewed interest in water polo in Rhine Army is RSM E. Warburton, Grenadier Guards, who played goalkeeper in the Army team for ten successive years from 1926. Today, at the age of 44, he keeps goal for the Rhine Army headquarters team, which he captains, and is in charge of training.

A few weeks after he arrived in Germany last May, RSM Warburton had gathered together some 20 officers and men who had previously played water polo or were good swimmers with ambitions to learn the game. Soon, he had formed two teams and entered the senior one for Rhine Army's championships in July. They were beaten in the semi-final by the winners, Royal Fusiliers team, but they had earlier defeated the 1950 champions — the 1st Royal Tank Regiment — by six goals to nil. Recently RSM Warburton captained the Rhine Army team which defeated 2nd Tactical Air Force, in Berlin and thus won by one point the 1951 swimming championship for Rhine Army.

RSM Warburton's introduction

in matches against Army and civilian teams in Italy.

The Rhine Army headquarters team generally play matches three evenings a week in the heated Army swimming pool at Bad Oeynhausen (see *SOLDIER*, March 1951). As often as possible they are in the water, practising tactical movements worked out previously on a blackboard, and improving their speed and stamina.

"Water polo is one of the most exhausting games in the world," RSM Warburton told *SOLDIER*. "To play it really well requires a

high standard of physical fitness, quick thinking, cunning and a good deal of 'guts.' It is first-class military training as well."

The young recruit, a good swimmer, accepted. Two months later he was the Army's number one goalkeeper, replacing CQMS J. Beswick (now a photographer on Public Relations staff, Rhine Army who still plays in the Rhine Army headquarters team). Later, when posted to the Middle East, RSM Warburton played for Army teams against well-known Egyptian, French, Maltese and Greek sides. He has also played for the Army against most of the famous British civilian teams and kept goal for Berkshire against Wiltshire. At the end of World War Two he was again goalkeeping

RSM Warburton demonstrates the back flip, which can cut the opposing defence wide open.

Plotting the tactics in advance: here RSM E. Warburton, Grenadier Guards, outlines a quick offensive movement before a match against a German team. (Photographs: CQMS J. Beswick, Rhine Army Public Relations).

high standard of physical fitness, quick thinking, cunning and a good deal of 'guts.' It is first-class military training as well."

The best players are generally tall and strongly built but there is nothing to prevent the average man becoming a good player if he has speed and stamina.

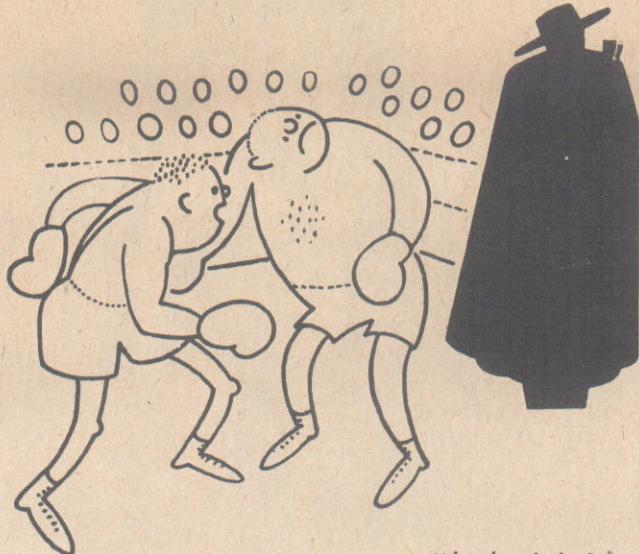
Water polo has been described as the roughest of games. While it is true that fouls can be committed under water a good referee easily spots them.



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"Well set for the future"

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PAGE 32

BOOKSHELF

Photographers Ought to Know Their Drill

NOT every soldier outside the Household Brigade envies the Guardsman his ceremonial duties. Few, however, can watch the Guards on a ceremonial parade without admiration and curiosity.

To the initiated and uninitiated alike, there is much of interest in "The King's Guards, Horse and Foot" (Macdonald, 30s) by Major Henry Legge-Bourke, MP. It contains 60 colour photographs of the Guards on their ceremonial occasions and many more in black and white. Among the latter is one of the present War Minister, Brigadier Antony Head MC, in full-dress on duty as an officer of the King's Life Guard before World War Two.

The author, himself a member of the Royal Horse Guards, provides a detailed guide to such ceremonies as Trooping the Colour and the State opening of Parliament. He also tells of one or two of the things that can go wrong on these occasions. When the Escort to King George V was on its way to the Wembley Exhibition in 1924 the horses had to pass through flood water under a railway bridge. "Unfortunately, tram lines, which included a centre live rail, also ran along the course. As the Escort entered the water the current gave most unexpected shocks to the horses' feet. No escort, it is said, has ever performed more elaborate caracoles than on that occasion."

On another occasion an escort of The Blues was riding down a narrow London street. The boot of one Trooper caught in the sling of a rifleman — and the rifle vanished, dangling, down the street.

Painful things, it appears, can happen to a Household Cavalryman who rides on escort duty without first making sure that his helmet fits properly. His nose may either be fretted by the point of a forward-tilting helmet, or it may have to take the weight of a backward-tilting one by stopping the chin-strap.

For some weeks in the year, the Foot Guards carry out a small Trooping the Colour ceremony at the 48-hour guard-mounting. The first order given by the commanding officer when he joins the parade is to the officers, warrant officers and NCO's. It is: "To your guards, slow march," and dates from the bibulous days of George I, when it was introduced to make sure that the officers were in a fit state to be on parade.

Major Legge-Bourke sympathises with the Foot Guards over the photographers' habit of

taking pictures of the "left form" drill movement on the King's Birthday parade. Inevitably, if a photograph is taken half-way through, the line is a bent one with some men raising their knees high as they mark time, and others still marching round pointing their toes. Such a picture has appeared under the heading, "What's gone wrong with the Guards?" To which the author replies, "Nothing! The photographer didn't know his drill."

Major Legge-Bourke also explains why drummers and drum-majors of the Brigade of Guards never perform tricks like throwing their sticks and staves in the air while marching. "The Brigade," he says, "has always considered such habits to be unmilitary."

Sea Landing — 1917 Version

SOLDIERS who trained with full-sized models for assault landings from the sea in World War Two thought they were pioneering — but it had all been done before.

One unit which trained in this way in World War One was the 1st Battalion The Gloucestershire Regiment. In "Infantry" (Gale and Polden, £2 2s including a case of 15 maps), an account of the Battalion's activities from 1914 to 1918, the late Brigadier-General A. W. Pagan tells the story.

In the summer of 1917, the 1st Division, of which the Gloucesters formed part, was to land between the German lines and Ostend. Because of the shallow, sandy beaches, each of the three brigades was to be carried on a pair of shallow-draught monitors pushing a pontoon 200 yards long and 10 yards wide, with a draught of only 18 inches in front and four-and-a-half feet at the rear. On the pontoons were to be carried guns, motor-machine-gun vehicles, bicycles, loaded hand-carts and spare stores. At the front were to be three tanks and behind them, in a ten-foot gangway between vehicles and stores, the two leading battalions of the brigade.

For security's sake, the Division was sent to train behind barbed wire in a camp near Dunkirk. A replica of the sea-wall was built by the architect of the original and men and tanks practised climbing it, the tanks carrying a block of wood to fill the gap left by an overhanging coping. Unloading practice brought the time needed to clear a brigade from a pair of monitors and a pontoon down to about ten minutes.

The operation, though prepared, did not come off, because the land attacks which were to link up with it were unsuccessful.

Their Flash was This

OF all the "private armies" of World War Two probably none can claim to have been as far-flung as Phantom.

It was this, no doubt, which gave Lieutenant-Colonel R. J. T. Hills the title for his book, "Phantom Was There" (Edward Arnold, 21s). Phantom was, in fact, on every major front of the British Army in the war, except that of Burma.

Phantom started in 1940 as a small "mission" designed to go into Belgium as soon as the Germans did, to keep GHQ in France in touch with what was happening on the Belgian front. It grew to an organisation with patrols which bypassed the "usual channels" with its own wireless network to send back information to higher headquarters from the front line. It swallowed up the "J" Service which was set up by Eighth Army in the Western Desert to glean information by listening in to the wireless conversations of its own tank units.

The founder of Phantom was a reserve captain who was killed in action as Major-General G. F. Hopkinson. Phantom owed much to his forceful personality. He it was who introduced the "night into day" scheme for training men to be independent of the clock. Reveille was at midday, meals were at odd times, barracks were inspected at one in the morning and the men went to bed at four. This scheme was applied to regimental headquarters at Richmond Park, and the Royal Army Service Corps at Hounslow was co-opted to deal with Phantom's ration trucks at inappropriate hours.

In the early days, "Phantom" was a hush-hush word, for long never breathed in public. The men received flashes with a large "P" on them, to be stitched on their shoulders only after embarkation for overseas. There was a security crisis when a large "P"



was found chalked on a garage door. It was intended only to indicate a parking-place.

Among the men who went to make up Phantom were David Niven, the film actor, two Paris taxi-drivers, and a lance-corporal who ran the Phantom pigeon-loft in England (he won prizes with some of the birds), then disappeared to take a mysterious commission. When Phantom next met him, he was a well-decorated lieutenant-colonel who had raised and brought to action 3000 Maquis.

In North-West Europe Phantom operated on American sectors as well as British. Before the fall of Paris, American Infantry set off for an attack, a preceding air assault having been cancelled. A Phantom interception then revealed that the air attack was "on" after all and quick action by the Phantom officer stopped the Infantry from walking into their own bombs.

Unlike most other private armies, Phantom is in existence today. It has been reborn in the Territorial Army, based on Princess Louise's Kensington Regiment.

Was The Lieutenant Mad?

TO the German garrison town of Rehhausen, in the doomed summer of 1944, is posted Lieutenant Strick, the unpolitical soldier, who has just put in three years service on the Eastern Front. On the front-line station he has seen wounded men refused conveyance in favour of crates containing "important military documents." Strick has his own idea what the crates contain... and when he reaches his journey's end he has the recipient arrested. The recipient happens to be his new commanding officer.

That is the not unpromising start of "The Lieutenant Must Be Mad," (Harrap, 12s 6d) a behind-the-scenes novel of the German Army by Hellmut Kirst. The author's approach is satirical and disillusioned, and his story suggests that, by 1944, there was a high degree of corruption in the German home forces.

Lieutenant Strick's action in bringing about his commanding officer's arrest scandalises the military garrison, but delights the Gestapo, ever anxious to show their authority over the Army. A man as fearless and upright as Strick must forthwith be appointed National Socialist Guidance Officer for the garrison. Strick accepts, and begins to lift the lids from many stinking

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Carole Carr: she likes singing to the troops, but sometimes they request the wrong kind of song...

No, You Can't Hear A Duck Lay an Egg!

CALLING All Forces," the British Broadcasting Corporation's programme for men in uniform, is by now an institution. For more than a year it has been broadcast every week. Radio critics rate it as one of the major "hits" of recent times.

Some 200 letters a week come in from Servicemen containing sports questions, requests for songs and "sounds of home."

Choosing those sounds is not easy. There are scores of requests for personal messages from relatives but these are not of general interest and are ruled out. There must be constant originality, to keep the programme fresh. One man asked to hear the church bells from his home town; so did hundreds more. Scores have asked for railway announcements from their local stations, for "Time, gentlemen, please" from their local pubs, for the sound of passengers on the last bus.

Mr. Frank Hooper, who selects the requests, served four years overseas as a Gunner and sympathises with the men who make these requests; but, as a producer, he must look out for original ideas. So the lucky Serviceman is the one who thinks of something first: the waiter calling for "one meat and veg" in the restaurant kitchen, the chorus girls rehearsing at a well-known variety theatre, father getting in the coal, mother sharpening her carving knife on the back step, or a sergeant telling recruits arriving at a station to get into line as they "are in the Army now."

Not all requests received are serious. One man asked for the sound of a duck laying an egg.

Sports questions for Leslie Welch, the "Memory Man," all

Here are some of the reasons why the BBC may have been unable to play your request

go to the BBC's sports section for checking. Usually the writers attach the answers to their letters, and sometimes they are wrong.

Carole Carr, the singer, deals with her own requests, but the producers help her make the selection for each programme. During the first year of the programme, 125 songs were orchestrated and performed on the programme as listeners' requests, and today three out of every four requests can be found in this collection.

Not all the requests are suitable for a girl singer. Examples: "I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now," "I'll Take You Home Tonight," "Kathleen" and "The CRE Song."

Sometimes requests are vague. A soldier who asks for "I Love You" may mean "Would I Love You," "I Love You Because," or any song with "I love you" in the lyric—and there are hundreds.

If the programme is to appeal to everyone, the four songs in each edition must be well balanced. Most requests are for slow, sentimental songs so, for variety, something brighter, less in demand, is picked as well. No one who writes to Miss Carr for a song goes entirely unrewarded. Whether the request is fulfilled or not, she replies enclosing a photograph of herself, letter and picture both signed personally and no nonsense with rubber stamps. In return, she has received quite a collection of snapshots showing her admirers against backgrounds of Army trucks, camps and foreign landscapes.

FILMS COMING YOUR WAY

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

RELUCTANT HEROES

For about a year and a half, this merry piece of nonsense about National Servicemen in the Army has been showing as a play in London (reviewed in SOLDIER, November 1950). Not many soldiers, however, will have had the opportunity to see it—with the exception of those in the War Office, just across the road from the theatre. The film version will make up the deficiency. Ronald Shiner, who was in "Worm's Eye View," the successful farce about the Royal Air Force, wears sergeant's stripes in the lead. He should feel at home in khaki: he was a Regular in the Royal Corps of Signals until he bought himself out. One National Serviceman who serves under him is played by Derek Farr, an ex-Gunner officer, and the author, Colin Morris (who served with 7th Armoured Division in the Western Desert) is in the cast as the traditional junior officer of farce. Leading lady is Christine Nordern (once in ENSA) as a WRAC officer, supported by Betty Impey and Angela Wheatland.



Ronald Shiner as the sergeant in "Reluctant Heroes." He was a Regular in the 'twenties.

Ronald Shiner as the sergeant in "Reluctant Heroes." He was a Regular in the 'twenties.

OUTCAST OF THE ISLANDS

Sultry stuff from the East Indies, adapted from a story by Joseph Conrad. Trevor Howard plays a man who betrays his friends and becomes an outcast. One reason is Kerima who, according to the publicity, is a "smouldering Algerian beauty who has very little to say in the film because her eyes speak for her. They are enormous orbs of compelling power..." Ralph Richardson, Robert Morley and Wendy Hiller are also in the cast.

THE SEA HORNET

"Dames and diving don't mix, but a warm-lipped blonde knew the secret of Barracuda gold," say the posters. The Sea Hornet is a ship which is mysteriously wrecked while carrying treasure. A crooked mate survives, and the dead captain leaves a daughter. Rod Cameron discovers that there is more to rescuing bullion from a wreck than just diving—notably Adele Mara. Jim Davis plays the villain of the piece.



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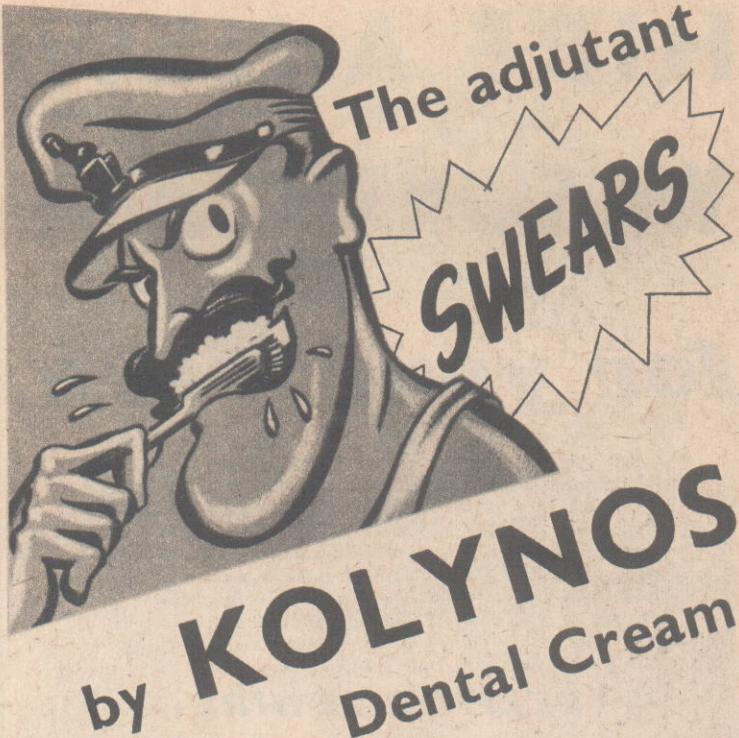
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LETTERS

THREE IDEAS

May I suggest that it would help efficiency throughout the Army if every man on enlistment were issued with a wristlet watch engraved with his regimental number. The cost could be deducted from his pay in small instalments and eventually it would become his own property. No longer could men late on parade plead the excuse of not knowing the time. Such a scheme would involve more men being trained in watch repairing, but this is a useful trade for a man entering civilian life.

I also feel the Army should encourage an additional pension and insurance scheme for long-term Regulars, which would be particularly useful in providing for dependents. If sufficient men subscribed each week I feel insurance firms would offer attractive terms for so large an option.

I feel there is a need for some sort of families' private furniture exchange to help those setting up home or leaving for overseas. How many times do people have to sell up on being posted, and then buy again on returning from abroad? Recently I received only £7 10s from a dealer for a mahogany sideboard, light oak dining-room suite, two easy chairs, a kitchen table and some linoleum, all of which had been in use only a couple of years. I would have preferred taking even less from a "families pool" in the knowledge that these articles would help a newly arrived family in supplementing the normal issue of furniture. — "Battery Serjeant Major" (name and address supplied).

SAILORS BETTER OFF?

I see in your review of the latest volume of Mr. Churchill's memoirs (SOLDIER, October) that the Prime Minister asked why sailors should be granted home leave from the Middle East during the war, but not soldiers. I have often wondered this myself, and have also pondered the following differences in Service life:

(a) why chief petty officers of the Royal Navy and colour-serjeants of the Royal Marines travel second-class in a trooper while equivalent ranks in the Army and Royal Air Force (colour-serjeants, staff-serjeants, quartermaster-serjeants and flight-serjeants) travel as troop deck passengers;

(b) why families of sailors and Royal Marines travel second-class while those of men below the rank of warrant-officer in the Army and Royal Air Force travel third-class on trooperships.

As I have known these anomalies cause a certain amount of discontent, I was interested in a statement given by Mr. Woodrow Wyatt when he was at the War Office: "The entitlement of second-class passage enjoyed by chief petty officers in the Royal Navy and colour-serjeants in the Royal Marines is one of very long standing. I think I should add that though in this particular instance the Royal Navy does have better conditions of service than either the Army or Air Force, there are many other instances where the conditions in

the Navy are not so favourable as those in the other Services."

As a great admirer of the Silent Service I would be the last to decry the few privileges they do get. But after giving much thought and discussion to the matter I am unable to list any of the privileges we in the Army enjoy over them. — CQMS S. Leigh, The Manchester Regiment, Singapore.

★ What does the Royal Navy say?

GREYHOUND COURSE

I am interested in vocational training courses but the Resettlement Bulletin does not include the one I am after — greyhound training. I recall seeing in SOLDIER an article



on resettlement courses which troops can attend before their release. It included the subject I want. How do I apply? — "Warrant Officer," Dewsbury Road Camp, Leeds.

★ The Resettlement Bulletin covers courses arranged by the Government for released soldiers. Mostly these last about six months. The other scheme is run by the Army for Regulars before their release. If the subject cannot be taught by the Army, and if the man can be spared by his unit, a civilian firm is approached and asked to take a soldier pupil for a month. Firms are not paid for this service. Regulars who are interested should apply to their unit education officers or nearest supervising RAEC officer.

Answers

(from Page 28)

How Much Do You Know?

- He devised the Braille system of transcribing print for the blind by means of embossed dots. 2. (a) Devon; (b) Hampshire; (c) Gloucestershire; (d) Leicestershire. 3. William Penn; Pennsylvania. 4. (a) Polo; (b) golf; (c) contract bridge; (d) billiards. 5. (a) £500, (b) £100,000, (c) £25. 6. Haggis. 7. That the bearer has made the pilgrimage to Mecca. 8. (a) Dandelion; (b) Vermilion; (c) Pygmalion; (d) Stallion; (e) Postillion. 9. Tennyson in "The Charge of the Light Brigade." 10. (a) H. G. Wells; (b) Samuel Butler; (c) Eric Linklater; (d) Eric Williams; (e) Edgar Wallace. 11. (a) Kodak; (b) Bovril; (c) Beecham's Pills. 12. 677. 13. Two quarts. 14. The Thames. 15. Lane Morris.

Crossword

ACROSS: 2. Precisely. 6. Ale. 7. Blunder. 10. Refuse. 11. Arts. 13. Mar. 15. Ado. 16. Glen. 18. Absent. 20. Stamina. 22. Tun. 23. Palliase.

DOWN: 1. Marriages. 2. Perfume. 3. Ebbs. 4. Sinbad. 5. Lie. 8. Lee. 9. Resisting. 12. Roseate. 14. Animal. 17. Wan. 19. Bars. 21. Tea.

PALINDROMES

The palindromes in your November quiz bring to mind the following complete sentences which read the same backwards as forwards:

A man, a plan, a canal — Panama,
Sums are not set as a test on Eras-
mus.

Doom, royal panic. I mimic in a
play or mood.

"Deliver," demanded Nemesis,
"emended, named, reviled."

Napoleon is supposed to have
spoken the following sentence "Able
was I ere I saw Elba." But for sheer
simplicity I think this is unequalled:
"Was it a cat I saw?" — Sjt. K. Milne,
Command Pay Office, Malta.

★ Is Napoleon reported to have said
it in English?

TANK-HOWITZER

I have just seen a picture of a
tank in a boys' paper with the cap-
tion: "The Germans were using this
formidable weapon in 1945. It is a
15-inch Howitzer mounted on the
chassis of a Tiger tank." Were these
tanks really used? — Joseph Borth-
wick (ex-RSF), 3 King Street, New-
mains, Wishaw, Lanarkshire.

★ Yes. This picture is of one captur-
ed by the United States Ninth Army
in Western Europe.



ing service started from the date of
joining for duty and not on
attestation, which in some cases was
followed by immediate relegation to
the Reserve. Therefore service in the
Territorial Army Reserve while under-
going a university short course is
not reckonable.

A cousin of mine, released in 1945,
has never claimed his war medals.
How does he go about it? — Sjt. R. A. Dunstone, Taunton, Somerset.

★ He should write to the Under-
Secretary of State, War Office (AG4
Medals), Droitwich, Worcs, giving
full details of his service, number
and unit.

KOREA MEDAL

I say that in order to be awarded
the Korea Medal soldiers must have
actually served in Korea for one day.
My brother argues that they can get
the medal by being on the posted
strength of a unit in Korea. As men
on a troopship can be on a unit's
posted strength, he maintains that a
soldier does not have to set foot
ashore to earn the medal. Would you
settle this argument for us? — R. J.
Tanner, 47 Fairbridge Road, Hollo-
way, London.

★ The rules clearly state
that troops "are eligible
to qualify for the Korea
Medal for one day's service
in Korea on the posted
strength of a unit or
formation." This means
that, except for men posted
for duty on ships of the
Royal Navy (such as
members of the carrier-
borne Ground Liaison Sections),
for whom the
qualification is 28 days
service afloat in ships
engaged in operations off
Korea, it is necessary for
troops to have actually
served on land.

Service in troopships
going to Korea does not
count, even if the men are
on the posted strength
of a unit.

RAMC BADGE

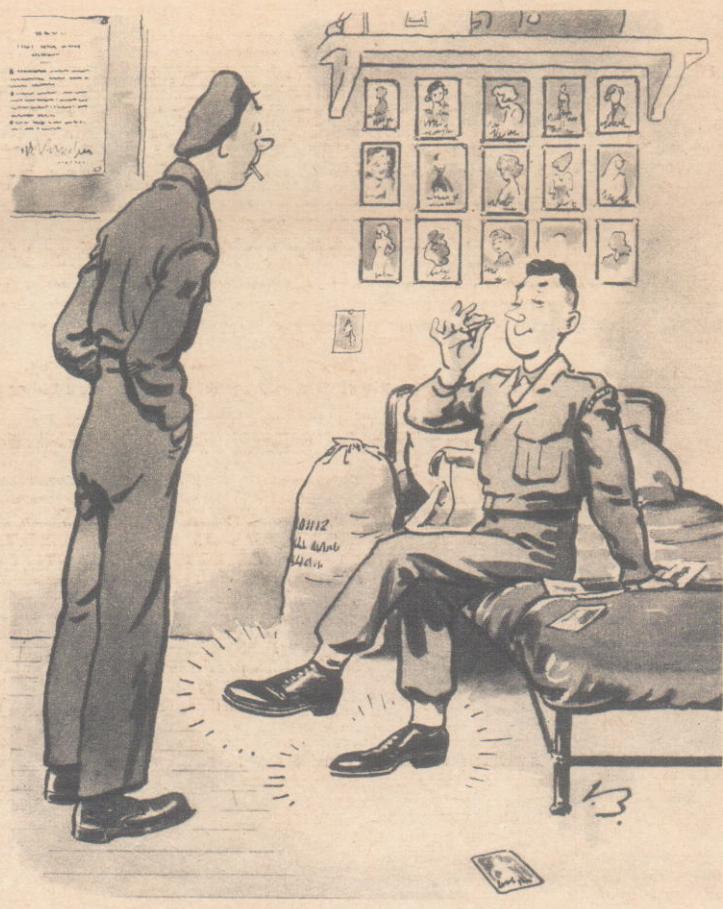
On reading some old issues of
"Navy and Army Illustrated" I
noticed the following (February 1899):
"It is stated that the Queen has
authorised the newly-created Royal
Army Medical Corps to assume a
very striking and appropriate badge."
The illustration shows the present-
day badge but instead of "Royal
Army Medical Corps" on the scroll
is the motto *In Arduis Fidelis* (Faith-
ful in danger). Was this badge ever
issued?

The magazine also announced
(1902) that a well-known motoring
enthusiast was to be entrusted by
the War Office with the enrolment
of a corps of volunteer motorists.
Motor-car owners who were expert
drivers were to rank as officers and
their servants as sergeants. Was this
corps ever enrolled? — Charles V.
Young, 395 Exeter Road, Courtlands
Cross, Exmouth, Devon.

★ Although the Royal Army Medical
Corps was formed in 1898 the badge
was not formally accepted until 1905.
The pattern chosen bore the title of
the corps and this remained until
1951 when the words "Royal Army
Medical Corps" were changed to *In
Arduis Fidelis*. *SOLDIER* has no
knowledge of any previous corps
badge bearing this motto.

The motorists' corps does not
appear to have seen the light of day,
but when the Territorial Army was
formed in 1908 drivers of cars, lor-
ries and other vehicles were invited
to join a special reserve of drivers.
They were mobilised in 1914.

★ The War Medal 1939-45 is awarded
to those who completed 28 days
full-time service between 3 September
1939 and 2 September 1945. Quality-



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SOL. 2/52.

More Letters Overleaf

MORE LETTERS

BENGAL LANCERS

I have seen photographs of Princess Elizabeth (during her Canadian tour) inspecting the Junior Bengal Lancers at Halifax, Nova Scotia. The "lancers" are shown wearing the old-type solar topee with a dark pugree. What is this organisation and what connection, if any, has it with the celebrated Indian Cavalry regiment of that name in which the late Major Yeats-Brown served? — Major George Slater, The Gordon Highlanders Depot, Aberdeen.

★ These lancers belong to a junior riding school, privately owned, which annually gives a musical ride.

THE VOYAGE EAST

I would like to comment on the letter in your October issue on the financial plight of soldiers' wives joining their husbands in the Far East. Prospective travellers are told by the War Office that they are not allowed to take more than £5 out of the country. When they embark they are called on to pay nearly £5 for the month's messing. Instructions to wives do not make it clear that money for messing must be paid before embarkation; nor do they state that wives may bring up to £50 worth of travellers' cheques with them.

But apart from all this, what is wrong with husbands and wives saving up for the voyage? The men know their wives will eventually make the journey. Their own common sense will tell them that such a journey will involve extra expense. As hus-



NEW-STYLE GREATCOAT

THIS picture shows the Army's new greatcoat (right) alongside the present pattern. The new one is better tailored and follows more closely the design of the officer's coat. It has two rows of five buttons up the front instead of four. The lapels of the collar are slightly shorter and turn back in a neater, more military style. The back of the new coat has neater pleats and the two buttons at the bottom are hidden. The wide, untidy pleat in the present coat was designed to allow expansion when (with the belt loosened) the coat was placed over webbing equipment. But troops have rarely worn webbing that way.

It will be some time before the new-model greatcoat is issued.

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bands invariably travel on troopships ahead of the families, they should learn by observation of the needs of the families. Unfortunately, improvident people will never think far enough ahead. They will always badger the PRI and others with hard luck stories at the last minute. — "Q FARELF" (name and address supplied).

GOING ABROAD

When my husband ends his Colour service next year we would like to emigrate to Canada. As he has a few years to serve on the Reserve is it possible to have this Reserve service transferred to Canada? — Mrs. R. Baylis, 57 Mardon Road, Sheldon, Birmingham 26.

On completing my Colour service I hope to settle in British Honduras. Must I stop in Britain in order to serve my seven years on the Reserve or can I transfer it to a volunteer unit in Honduras? — Sgmn. E. J. Jones, Royal Signals, Kingston, Jamaica.

★ Any soldier may emigrate once he has completed his full-time Colour service, provided he acquires his Records office so that his Reserve pay may be cancelled. There is no question of Reserve service being transferred to the country to which he is going; it is cancelled while he is out of Britain. If the man returns home to live before the Reserve period is up, he rejoins the Reserve.

DEATH RAILWAY

I have heard that as a result of the treaty with Japan, compensation is to be paid to prisoners-of-war who worked on the famous "Death Railway." Can you confirm this? — Cpl W. R. French, Gordon Highlanders, Malaya.

★ The position has not changed since last July when the Foreign Secretary stated that under the treaty the United Kingdom was hoping to receive nearly £900,000 from the seizure of Japanese assets. As this sum was too small to distribute to former prisoners-of-war and civilian internees of the Japanese, it had been decided to allot it to selected benevolent organisations linked with the Services and with internees, primarily to meet cases of hardship among prisoners of World War Two and their dependents living in Britain.

The money will be divided between the various organisations representing the three Services and civilian internees. Of the total allocated to the Services, 60 per cent will go to the Royal Navy, Army and RAF for use in proportion to the number of prisoners from each Service in all theatres of war. The remaining 40 per cent will be divided by the Ministry of Pensions between other welfare organisations whose work covers the three Services.

EXERCISE "WAR"

Fresh evidence has been given by recent Army manoeuvres of the astounding indifference to "danger" of both officers and men in spite of the blandishments of umpires, directing staffs and battle simulation teams.

I believe more could be done to prevent unnecessary casualties in war by use of cinema films. Could not the War Office bring to light some of the films of actual battle scenes of World War Two and show them to troops before and after exercises? Perhaps then men who look on manoeuvres as a waste of time would learn the grim facts they will have to face in battle. — "Dunkirk Survivor" (name and address supplied).

LEAVE PROBLEM

During the last six months of my National Service I am entitled to 14 days privilege leave, but owing to the trouble in the Canal Zone all leave has been stopped. When I return to Britain shortly shall I be able to claim this leave, or if the period of service before my release does not allow sufficient time, can I claim any compensation? — "Signalman" (name supplied), Egypt.

★ Privilege leave is not an entitlement and is only admissible during Colour service. The date of a soldier's release may not be put back to allow him to take unexpired leave; nor are pay and allowances given as compensation.

National Servicemen do not normally return to Britain until their release. Thus there is usually not time for them to take privilege leave before they start terminal leave. If there is time, there is no War Office objection to leave being granted, but for administrative reasons a soldier with only about 14 days to serve cannot expect to spend most of them at home. If, on the other hand, he has two months to serve, then an application for leave would be a reasonable request.

OF MICE AND MEN

Is this the tallest story in military history?

Troops besieging the Netherlands town of Aire in 1710 ran short of food. It was grain-producing country, but the enemy had cleared it. However, according to the memoirs of a Captain Robert Parker of the Royal Regiment of Foot in Ireland (later the Royal Irish Regiment), "the soldiers found concealments underground which the mice had laid up for their winter store, and that in such abundance that it was a great relief to us towards the end of the siege. These hoards were from four to six feet underground, and in many of them our men found some pecks of corn."

RASC, please note! — Ex-Sergeant, Perth (name and address supplied).

"WHAT DID YOU DO...?"

We disagree with you that the saying, "What did you do in the Great War, Daddy?" came only from the recruiting posters. It came from a song which started:

"What did you do in the Great War, Daddy?
What did you do, I want to know?
When they asked for men, were you ready then,
To go and fight the foe?"

— Troopers Coffill and Gray, 7th Armoured Division, Germany.

★ To the best of SOLDIER's knowledge, the posters preceded the song.

SHOUTING

I hasten to correct the statement in your article "What's All The Shouting For?" (SOLDIER, November) that no one has yet organised a shouting competition. One was held at a public day at Sandhurst last summer. The Signals Wing (now disbanded) devised an instrument to register the amplitude of the human voice. It was not very popular as civilians do not relish a good shout before an audience. The instrument was gloated over by many drill instructors and I do remember that the highest needle register was made by a Royal Marine.

— Sjt. J. Dickson, Permanent Staff Instructor, 1st Regiment, Honourable Artillery Company (RHA), Armoury House, Finsbury, London.

DOLMAN OR PELISSE?

Recently I bought a sword used in the battle of Lincelles. When did this battle occur and what were the countries involved? Can you also tell me what was the difference between a dolman and a pelisse on Hussar uniforms of the Napoleonic wars? — K. W. Pryor, 28 Jersey Street, Balwyn E8, Victoria, Australia.

★ Lincelles was fought in 1793, and was one of the few battles won by the Duke of York during the Netherlands campaign in the early days of the French Revolutionary Wars. There was little difference between a dolman and a pelisse; both were jackets which hung like capes from Hussars' shoulders.

PUNISHMENT

Can a soldier who accepts his commanding officer's punishment instead of choosing court-martial appeal if the award is, in his opinion, too severe? — "Twelve Interested Gunners" (names and address supplied).

★ No, but after undergoing any punishment, and not before, he can lodge a complaint through his commanding officer to higher authority under Section 43 of the Army Act.

SOLDIER is asked to state that the price of Biroette pens advertised in the December issue at 7s 6d should have been 9s.



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ESTHER WILLIAMS

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