

SOLDIER

THE BRITISH ARMY MAGAZINE

December 1946 Monthly Vol. 2 - No. 15

SIXPENCE

48 PAGES

including
16-Page Christmas
Section



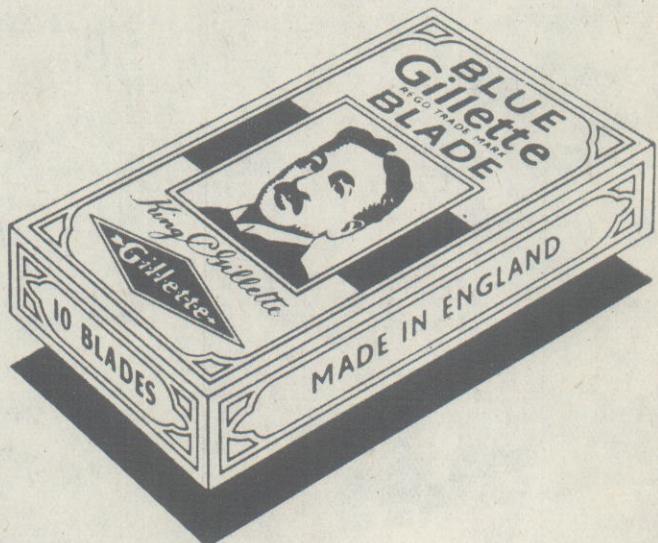
E. S.

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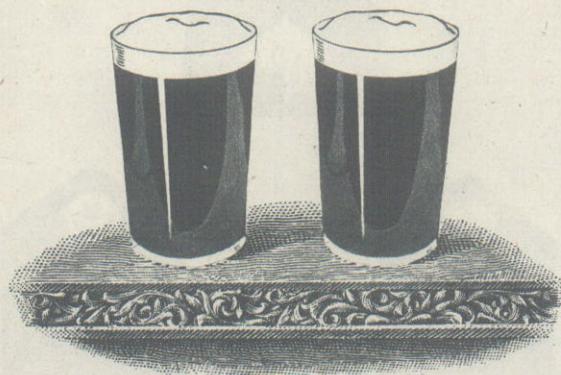
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A SOLDIER Staffwriter spends—

A DAY WITH THE ARMY COMMANDER

AT 0655 precisely fair-haired Cpl. James Roberts of the Durham Light Infantry tapped softly on the bedroom door, opened it and went in with a cup of tea.

"Five to seven, sir," he said to the sleeping figure in bed. "It's a dry morning, but a bit cold."

The man in bed awoke and another day — 7 November 1946 — had begun for Lieut-General Sir Richard Loudon McCreery, KCB, DSO, MC, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, British Army of the Rhine.

Half an hour later the General, dressed in riding breeches and wearing his black Armoured Corps beret, walked down the steps of his home at Kostedt, a few miles from the Rhine Army headquarters town of Bad Oeynhausen. His ADC, Capt. George G. Brown, of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars, and Cpl. Roy Plumtree, RAVC, the General's groom, were waiting for him in the stone courtyard. The General bade them both a cheery "Good morning" and mounted his favourite horse "Perugia", a bright chestnut gelding, while the Corporal held the animal's head. The General was in his element, for this ex-cavalryman and Army polo player is one of the best horsemen in the Army, as the silver trophies on the mantelpiece in his diningroom testify. Riding is his chief hobby, although in the little spare time he has he tends his garden, or tramps the lanes and fields near his home.

For an hour General "Dick" McCreery and his ADC rode by the river, galloped along the bank and trotted back to do some jumping practice near the house. The General encouraged and advised the ADC on how to "lift" his horse over a jump and corrected faults.

At 0830 Master and Pupil returned to the Army Commander's home, handed over their horses to the groom, and discussed the morning's lesson. "Much better today," said the General. "You must learn how to help the horse over jumps and blend in with him." And then, with a sympathetic smile, "It won't be long before you're a good rider."

Twenty minutes later after a quick bath the General was seated at the breakfast table with Capt. Brown. It was a simple meal — tea, fish-cake and bacon, with two slices of bread and

marmalade. They ate slowly and chatted about the garden, discussed the Government inquiry into the Press and commented on the weather. The General believes in talking of work at the right time and place.

At the wheel of his supercharged Mercedes-Benz, with his Aide beside him and his driver, Sjt. M. Lawrence, in the rear seat, the General drove at high speed to his GHQ at the Konigs-hof in Bad Oeynhausen. He always likes to drive himself. There was no pomp or ceremony as he stepped out of his car and walked up the steps of the headquarters building. A red-capped MP saluted smartly, the General smiled, returned the salute and passed through the swing doors to the lift which took him to the second floor. Along the corridor he stopped at the Chief of Staff's office, exchanged pleasantries with the officers there, and went on to his own office in Room 212.

In a moment "Dick" McCreery, the charming host and breakfast table companion, keen horseman, gardener, and motorist, had



0655 hrs precisely: Batman Cpl. James Roberts wakes the Army Commander with a cup of tea.



Army policy, manpower problems, advising local commanders, welfare of troops—these tasks cover the C-in-C's desk with files, keep his telephone buzzing.



A ride before breakfast for fitness. An ex-cavalryman, the General was an Army polo player and won many trophies on horseback.

Continuing A DAY WITH THE ARMY COMMANDER



Over the jumps. Having demonstrated how to do it, the General will give his ADC, himself a cavalryman, a few tips.

become the efficient Army Commander, the man responsible for the British Army of the Rhine. His duties are varied and many, and only a man with the keen administrative brain and sympathetic understanding of General McCreery could carry them out successfully. It is his job to direct the general policy and training of the Army in Germany, to guide his subordinates in their tasks, to supervise the difficult manpower situation, arrange and attend conferences, give advice to his own local commanders on problems of aid to the German population, and to superintend the welfare of the troops. It is his constant task to see that the soldier in Germany enjoys amenities and interests to which he is accustomed at home.

For two hours the Army Commander worked at some of these problems, used the telephone frequently, ploughed through the files heaped up on his desk and issued a list of instructions to his Personal Assistant, Capt. S. M. Abraham, MC, and his ADC. His decisions were made quickly and matters that required more investigation were placed aside for later attention.

Just after mid-day the General put on his Sam Browne and cap, and left with Capt. Abraham for the headquarters of the 1st Bn. The Royal Norfolk Regiment at Neuhaus where he was to present new colours to one of the units under his command. The weather was bad for flying so the General drove his car. Had visibility been good he would have flown in an Auster (he has two at his private airfield at Kostedt) to save time.

The General arrived at Neuhaus just before one o'clock, shook hands with the Commanding Officer of the Norfolks (Lieut-Col. F. P. Barclay, DSO, MC), was introduced to the Bishop of Norwich (Dr. P. M. Herbert), the Assistant Chaplain-General to the Forces, and led the way into the ante-room of the officers' mess, where he spoke with officers of the Battalion and sipped a gin and lime. At lunch he sat facing the old regimental colours which draped the wall and chatted

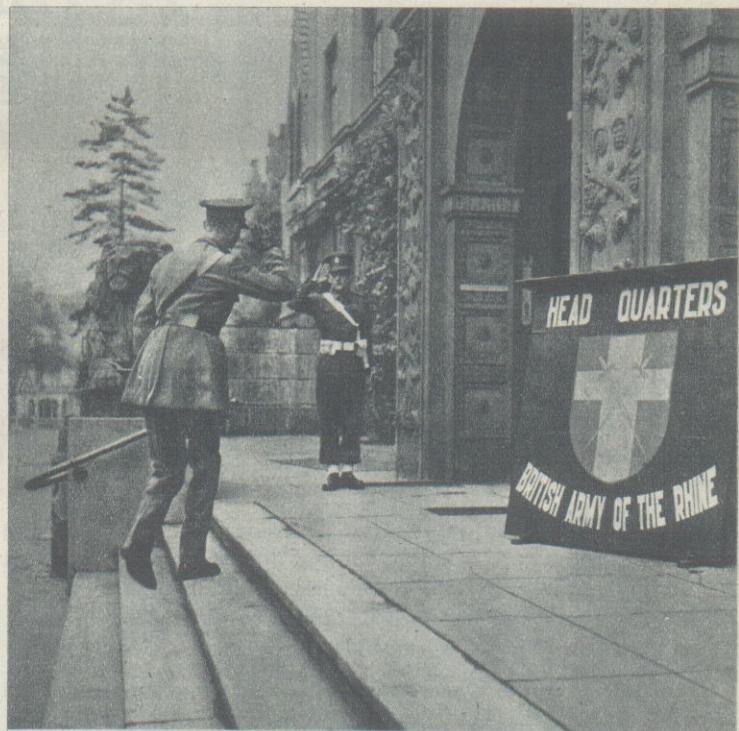
with his neighbours about the future of the Territorial Army, and the history of the 1st Bn. The Royal Norfolk Regt. Conversation flowed easily and naturally, for although the General suffers from more than average shyness even when speaking to a junior officer, his manner, his quick, engaging smile, and the absence of pomposity about him soon produce a cordial atmosphere. After lunch he spoke again with other officers of the Battalion, selecting especially the junior officers, and asking them searching questions about the welfare of their men, and their own particular problems and ideas.

At a quarter-past two the General posed for a photograph with the Battalion officers and returned to the mess while the Battalion prepared for the 250-years-old ceremony of the presentation of the new colours.

At three o'clock the Army Commander drove to the parade ground where the Battalion was formed up in line, and took the General Salute. As he walked along the ranks lined up for his inspection the General cast an expert eye over them, occasionally stopped to speak to a soldier, and at the end congratulated the Commanding Officer on an excellent turn-out. As the ceremony unfolded the General remained on the wooden dais, standing to attention at the salute for several minutes at a time, as lightly clad as the troops he was reviewing, while the spectators shivered in their overcoats in the cold wind.

"In the bitter fighting in the Normandy bridgehead and the break-out you played a very gallant part and Cpl. Bates won the VC," he said. "Indeed, the Royal Norfolk Regt. set a magnificent and unrivalled record in that the Regiment has won five Victoria Crosses in this last World War. You are still in Germany and have a very great duty to perform. Every soldier by his good conduct and by his bearing must help to win the peace."

When the ceremony ended at half-past four the Army Commander returned to the mess and



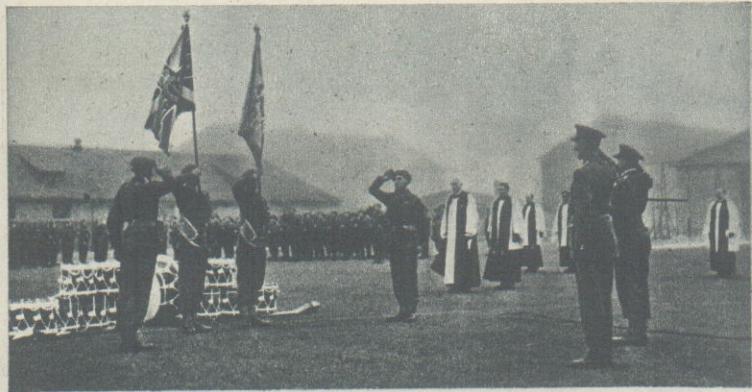
A ride, a bath, breakfast. Now the real work of the day begins. He smiles as he returns the MP's salute, runs an appreciative eye over his turn-out. "He's a stickler for tidiness and smartness," says his batman.



More work for the General. These "Top Secret" files will not gather dust on his desk. "Dick" McCreery is a quick, methodical worker.



"... And get in touch with these people and tell them..." When the General is at his desk, instructions come rapidly to his Personal Assistant, Capt. S. M. Abraham, MC.



"It is a great privilege to me to present these colours today. I recall that it is nearly 40 years ago that you last received new colours when King Edward VII presented them in 1909 at Buckingham Palace."



A simply-phrased lecture, illustrated with a huge coloured map, easy to listen to and understand. But it took several hours of the General's leisure to prepare.

had tea with the Bishop of Norwich and officers of the Battalion before driving to the BAOR Training Centre at Bad Lippspringe. Here for an hour and a half the Army Commander became once more the man who led Ten Corps into battle at Salerno, and conducted the push to within sight of the Po Plains. With the aid of a huge-coloured map and pointer the brilliant tank commander and strategist who led the Eighth Army to final victory, fought all over again the Battle of Italy for officers and NCO's of the Training Centre. It was a simply phrased lecture, but it had taken several hours to prepare the evening before in his study after dinner.

It was half-past seven before the Army Commander had finished his lecture, but his duties for the day were still not over. November 7 is the anniversary day of the Russian Revolution, and the Soviet Military, Repatriation, and Reparation Missions in the British Zone had invited General McCreery and his staff to a dinner party and dance at Bad Salzuflen, some 30 miles away. Just after

eight o'clock General McCreery, now a diplomatic guest of honour drove his car to the Bath Club and was greeted warmly by the Russian General Konovalov and his staff. They shook hands, spoke through an interpreter, and toasted each other and their countries in glasses of vodka. The meal, like all Russian meals on such occasions, was a huge one. General McCreery battled his way through each course and responded to the toasts, himself making a speech in which he urged the necessity of close relationships between Great Britain and the USSR. He danced a waltz and a quick-step, but refused a Russian cigarette for he does not smoke.

At a quarter to eleven he left the Bath Club and drove back to his home.

A very tired man stepped out of a motor car at Kistedt and said goodnight to Sjt. Lawrence, his driver. He walked up two flights of stairs to his bedroom and slept soundly.

E. J. GROVE.

(Photographs by Sjt. G. K. Lauder)

SOLDIER to Soldier

A N ex-regular has written to SOLDIER saying he wants no part in "an Army which has flowers on the table, carpets on the floor and no compulsory this and that."

Once before this soldier wrote to an Army newspaper — Union Jack in Italy — and sighed for the return of the "good old days of peace-time soldiering, the blanco and the buff belts, the sadly missed 'muck in' spirit of the old regulars." That brought the hornets sizzling out of their nests. But, says this unrepentant regular-turned-civilian, "I shall always maintain that strict discipline is necessary to produce the type of regular who saw Dunkirk, the boys who took everything with a smile and came back for more. I shudder when I conjure up a vision of my old drill instructor giving an order and one of the New Army replying, 'Okay sarge.'"

There is a lot of fine confused thinking about this New Army. This much can't be made too clear: that brighter barracks and the slackening of off-duty rules do not mean a soft working life and relaxed on-duty discipline. No one has been more at pains to point this out than Field-Marshal Montgomery. Humorists have been having a good deal of fun — in the pages of SOLDIER as elsewhere — about the New Army, but anyone who thinks he is entering an Army in which route marches are limited to two miles, in which there are cushions on assault courses, in which PT involves nothing more strenuous than the odd game of shove ha'penny, in which NCO's issue requests instead of orders and in which no one is punished without reference to a panel of His Majesty's judges has backed the wrong horse. The recruit of today will find that life has grown no less strenuous (on many nights he won't feel like reading in bed, and on others he won't even sleep in a bed at all); and he will find that even a "democratic" Army imposes a certain fixed pattern of behaviour which must be complied with if the poorer soldier is to be brought to the standard of the keener man. This pattern has been modified through the centuries, as the soldier has changed from an illiterate ruffian to the conscript of today, who may (alas) be illiterate and may conceivably be a ruffian but who is far more likely to be an intelligent, reasonably civilised person. It is no longer necessary to flog and decimate the less tractable types, but any army in which there is not instant obedience to orders, or which is soft spiritually or physically might as well turn on bulldozers to dig its own grave.

Generally speaking, the unit which will stand fast at Dunkirk or slog the enemy at El Alamein is the unit which exacts discipline and at the same time looks after the welfare and basic comforts of its men.



Horseman, desk-worker, practical soldier, lecturer—and now diplomat to round off the day. McCreery's pleasant personality breaks the ice at a Russian party.



Porquerolles panorama: in the castle on the sub-island Napoleon is said to have week-ended.

THE ARMY'S GOLDEN ISLE—

—FOR BAOR's "LOST FAMILY"

THE boatman adjusts the plug points with a pair of shears, then leans down and cranks the engine of his launch. Slowly the craft, laden with British soldiers and NAAFI girls, begins to head out over the restive Mediterranean to the Isle of Porquerolles.

He looks like a Barbary corsair, this boatman (with his pockets full of dead birds); in fact he is ferryman-for-the-day to the British Army, which runs a go-as-you-please rest camp on this rocky Riviera isle.

Porquerolles, one of the three Isles of Gold* off Hyères, was highly thought of by the Emperor Napoleon, when he wished to spend a quiet week-end. It is highly thought of, this winter of 1946, by British Servicemen and girls of British Army Staff, France

who have been lucky enough to qualify for short leave, long leave or even a honeymoon at the Welfare camp there.

Ask the boatman the age of the old forts on Porquerolles, and without a blush he may say "Avant Jesus-Christ." More reliable historians will point to one fort as the work of Admiral Vauban, France's great military engineer, another as the work of Napoleon. There is no doubt who was the author of the more recent (and least picturesque) fortifications: the name is Adolf Hitler.

From their burrows and miniature blockhouses the Germans emerged to surrender to French vessels when the American armies of liberation stormed the Riviera coast. It was known that Porquerolles was heavily sown



The old harbour at Porquerolles — once a retreat from pirates.



This hotel is the Army's rest camp.



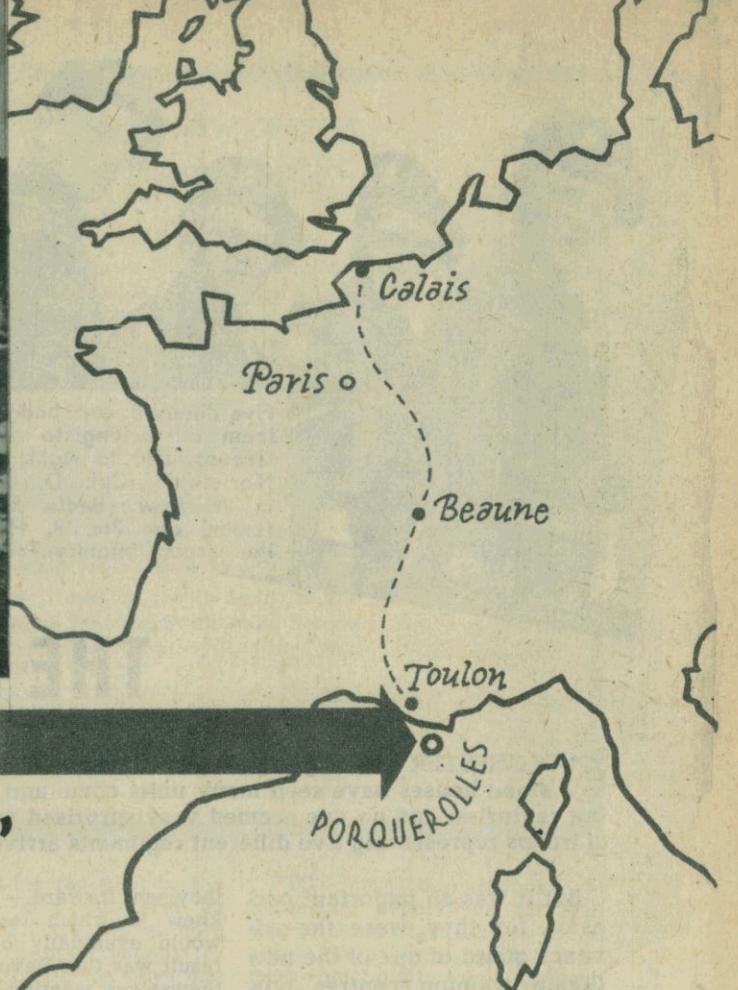
Honeymooners on Porquerolles: Sjt. J. P. Curtis, who is stationed in Paris, with his French bride.

Today Poles from General Anders' Army are encamped on Porquerolles, tidying up after the Germans. The aim is to plant a fresh tree for every one which the Germans felled. The island will certainly not suffer from extending hospitality to the Allies.

* So-called because in certain lights the rock has a golden glint.



Looking seaward from a Vauban fort: left to right — Gunner V. Fahy, Toulon sub-area; Miss Mary Evans, who helps to run the camp; Cpl. J. B. Mullin, ATS Provost; and Corporal of Horse F. J. Forder, from Paris.



KHAKI lorries with a Union Jack painted on the front mudguard still rumble on military errands along the roads of France. The Union Jack long since replaced the red-and-blue Crusader's shield of 21 Army Group, when British troops in France "broke away" to become British Army Staff, France.

Why is the British Army still in France? Ninety-five per cent of the answer is contained in the word Medloc (Mediterranean Lines of Communication). Britain's commitments in Palestine, Greece and other outposts in the Middle East are such that ships cannot be found to carry troops the whole way to and from Britain. They must be routed overland, and the easiest way is through France.

La Crau

Troops homeward bound from MEF dock at Toulon are all too prone to breakdowns, and are liable to enter the port at erratic times. Contrary to cynical belief, the purpose of a transit camp is not to detain as many people as possible for as long as possible to enjoy the scenery and amenities, if any; it is to get them on their way as soon as possible. There is nothing a transit camp desires less than a big build-up of men. But inevitably this sometimes happens. At Calais they face the winter bogey of ships held up by fog and rough Channel seas. And Calais not only handles traffic to and from MEF, but it acts as terminus of the other Medloc route to Villach, Austria, carrying overland traffic for CMF.

From Toulon troops are sent northwards by the new Medloc route up the Rhone Valley, and thence by Amiens to Calais Transit Camp, to await shipment

and British, with a French locomotive. British Army maintenance engineers at either end of the tracks perform prodigies of adaptation, puzzling out and patching up the different heating, lighting, braking and water systems.

And in Paris

Not only beside the Channel and the Mediterranean do you find the British Army in France. Union Jacked staff cars and smart military police jeeps are still a familiar sight on the boulevards of Paris, where BAS France has its HQ. And down at Beaune, in the Burgundy country, the Army has just built a new Medloc meal halt — a single halt to replace the two previous meal stops of Bram and Neuvy Pailloux. Here breakfast, supper or what-have-you can be served in quick time to 2000 man in the 24 hours. From their camp at Neuvy Pailloux British soldiers brought with them "The King's Arms", their own inn of which they were legitimately proud. The signboard was painted by a German prisoner-of-war. At Neuvy Pailloux the townsfolk were sorry to see the Army go; the town contributed at least one bride to Britain.

Their dances will never be quite the same again. But the people of Beaune are proving just as hospitable. And all down the Rhone Valley route the girls at the house windows seem to get a considerable kick out of waving



Portrait while you wait: soldiers at Toulon transit camp find a welcome diversion.



Five different cap badges—but the men wearing them all belong to one of the new Infantry Groups. Left to right: Pte. F. G. Turner (Royal Norfolk), L/Cpl. D. Ludman (Suffolk), L/Cpl. E. W. Row (Bedf. & Herts), Pte. P. Carter (Essex) and Pte. R. Herbert (Northampton) of the Group Infantry Training Centre, Colchester.



"Wake up—you're not in a state of suspended animation yet!"

THE BATTLE OF THE CAP BADGE

COLCHESTER was a garrison town in Roman days. Its old stone houses have seen many units come and go through the centuries, and no one seemed very surprised when parties of troops representing five different regiments arrived recently.

But it was an important occasion for they were the advance guard of one of the new Group training centres now being set up throughout Britain, in the Infantry's biggest re-organisation for 80 years.

The East Anglian Group, as this one may be called — the Groups have not yet received official titles — consists of the Royal Norfolks, the Suffolks, the Bedf. and Herts, the Essex and the Northamptons. The regiments have found their settling in an easier problem than at many ITC's, for Meane Barracks has housed one of the three training centres which Colchester has seen during the war. Down the road is Middlewick, with its 12 rifle ranges, and half an hour in a lorry will bring you to Fingringhoe, where recruits receive their primary instruction in field-firing.

The Three Men

And the regiments? What do they think of this grouping, with its system of "suspended" battalions? They like it, for without it our Infantry regiments would have suffered individual extinction. They were saved by a general, a scientist and an historian, among others.

Behind the battle is the story of two big problems which faced the War Office: the reinforcing of Infantry battalions in action with men of the same regiment; and reducing peacetime Infantry to modern requirements without disbanding regular battalions.

The reinforcement has been a two-war problem. Whenever the call came for more men, behind-the-line holding units never had time to be fussy over the regimental connections of the men

are the treasures of tradition, the fruits of victories; they foster pride.

And this is the view expressed by Mr. Balchin, who was Deputy Scientific Adviser during the war: "There is no doubt that purely from the point of view of fitting men to jobs the regimental system is a nuisance. But for my own part the more I have seen of the Army, the more convinced I have become that the regular soldier is right in insisting that the regimental system has a tremendous moral importance. War is a highly emotional business and the fact is that so many of us who sneer at the Army's belief in simple emotional values are sneering at something we do not understand but which I think we should understand fast enough if ever we found ourselves in battle."

The historian Arthur Bryant

probably knows more about the individual history of our fighting services than any living person. He wrote recently: "The regiment — that sacred and abiding thing — was the parent of all our victories, from the deathless defence of Calais in 1940 to the great battle on the Dutch-German border that broke the back of the Wehrmacht in 1945."

Naturally all Infantry officers were against scrapping the regimental system, but there is one Infantry soldier who bridged the gap between regimental pride and logical requirements. He is Major-General D. N. Wimberley, then Director of Infantry at the War Office. He planned and produced the Group scheme under which the number of Infantry battalions is reduced by introducing the system of suspended

COULD THIS BE THE NEW ARMY?

(Read "SOLDIER to Soldier" on Page Seven)



"Don't you think the new CO is making pay parades a bit too informal?"

animation. The scheme was first discussed at the conference of generals at Camberley last winter when it was explained that owing to the growth of armoured divisions and the recent introduction of airborne units, Infantry would be reduced somewhat in numbers.

In future the Infantry of the line and the Brigade of Guards would be divided into 15 groups of regiments, all with territorial backgrounds, and by having one ITC for each group and by regular battalions taking it in turn to undergo suspended animation both the reinforcement and strength problems would be overcome. All the generals agreed and it was suggested that the light Infantry regiments, with the exception of the HLI, should form one group. On 5 September the colonels of regiments met at Warminster and passed the plan. The cap badge was safe.

How does this affect the recruit? Unlike the pre-war system when a man reporting at a regimental depot was "booked" for Infantry from the start, the conscript recruit today will find that the depot is a Primary Training Centre where he will do his six weeks basic training, and undergo tests to decide the arm of the Service to which he will go. The regular recruit who volunteers for Infantry will go to the PTC of the regiment of his choice.

From PTC the Infantry recruit will go to the Group ITC of the regiment which he has asked, or been selected, to join. The name of that regiment will be written on his attestation papers and will remain his parent regiment during his Army career. But, if he belongs to the Black Watch, and there is no battalion of that regiment in Britain, he may be sent to another regiment of the Highland Group until the Black

Watch come out of suspended animation or he joins a battalion of the Black Watch overseas. Or should he be overseas with his regiment when it goes into suspended animation he will join another regiment within his Group. But always he will be a Black Watch man.

In peacetime he will not move outside that Group unless it is absolutely necessary, say, to reinforce a Group which has a big proportion of its units overseas. Special measures will have to be taken to enable this to be done. In wartime he may have to reinforce another Group, but everything will be done to prevent this. RHU's will be able to accommodate men in Groups and divisions containing battalions of, say, the Royal Warwicks, and Lincolns deficient of men will merely ask for reinforcements of Group F. Provided the RHU has men of that Group the new men will not find themselves fighting under a cap badge they do not know.

There is one important point. Divisions will not be formed on the Group system. There will be no Light Infantry Division.

For officers the situation is much the same, except that the Royal Warrant which prohibits men from being posted in peacetime outside their regiment (this is now being amended so that men may be posted between regiments in a Group but not outside a Group) never affected officers. Before the war it was not unknown for an officer of a North Country regiment to be posted to a West country unit. Today his cross-posting will normally be confined to within his Group.

The outcome of the new plan can be summed up as follows: the soldier will grow to appreciate the comradeship within his Group

THE NEW GROUPS

With locations of ITC's.

- A. Grenadier, Coldstream, Scots, Irish, Welsh Guards; at Pirbright.
- B. Royal Scots, R. Scots Fusiliers, KOSB, Cameronians; at Glencorse.
- C. Queen's, Buffs, Royal Fusiliers, East Surreys, Royal Sussex, QOR West Kent; at Shorncliffe.
- D. King's Own, King's, Lancashire Fusiliers, East Lancs.; at Carlisle. Border, South Lancs., Loyal, Manchester; at Oswestry.
- E. Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, West Yorks, East Yorks, Green Howards, Duke of Wellington's; York and Lancs.; at Catterick.
- F. Warwicks, Lincolns, Leicesters, Sherwood Foresters; at Strensall.
- G. R. Norfolk, Suffolk, Bedfs. and Herts., Essex, Northhamptons; at Colchester.
- H. Devons, Gloucesters, Hampshires, Dorsets, Royal Berks., Wilts.; at Bulford.
- J. Somerset, DCLI, Oxf. and Bucks., KOYLI, KSLI, Durham; at Farnborough.
- K. Cheshire, Worcesters, South Staffs., North Staffs.; at Oswestry.
- L. Royal Welsh Fusiliers, South Wales Borderers, Welch; at Brecon.
- M. Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, R. Ulster Rifles, R. Irish Fusiliers; at Omagh.
- N. Black Watch, HLI, Seaforth, Gordon, Cameron, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders; at Edinburgh.
- O. Middlesex; at Shorncliffe.
- P. KRRC, Rifle Bde.; at Winchester.

as he has in his regiment in the past. *Esprit de corps* will be encouraged at ITC's where there will be a regimental company for each regiment. On the days one of the regiments celebrates a battle-honour (such as Minden Day) there will be ceremonial parades and the men will learn something of each other's history and traditions. Wherever they go within the Group they will never feel themselves looked upon as strangers.

What is the position of Infantry troops within the Airborne Division? All glider regiments are being disbanded as such and the battalions that made up the Air Landing brigades (such as the 1st RUR) will return to the Group. From now on it is expected that Airborne will consist of parachute battalions, each of which will be affiliated to a Group.

The Middlesex remain in a Group of their own because they will be the only machine-gun regiment left. Should they be converted to Infantry they would automatically join Group C.

The War Office now is working on finishing touches to General Wimberley's scheme. The main job is arranging the organisation of the combined ITC's. As during the war regimental ITC's were grouped in two's and three's under one CO it is felt that the new, larger ITC's should work smoothly. In each case the CO will belong to one of the regiments within the group and his second-in-command to another. CO's will be changed every three years and if possible the new ones will be from another regiment within the Group. Present holding battalions will be disbanded and ITC's will hold men awaiting posting, while those awaiting transfer to Reserve will be kept at regimental depots where small regimental depot parties will be stationed. Reserve training battalions will also be disbanded and recruits will go straight to field force units.

PTC's will be stationed in regimental depots and the staff will include instructors of all arms, but at least half of them must belong to the regiment whose depot is linked to the PTC. There will also be small regimental depots to act as holding wings, look after regimental interests in Britain and care for the Colours and other property of battalions in suspended animation.

It is expected that Regular battalions will do from eight to 10 years home service and from 10 to 15 years' foreign service before going into suspended animation, which should last from 10 to 15 years. As battalions may be overseas when they are suspended, a small colour party will return to the depot to place the Colours and property in the care of the Depot party.

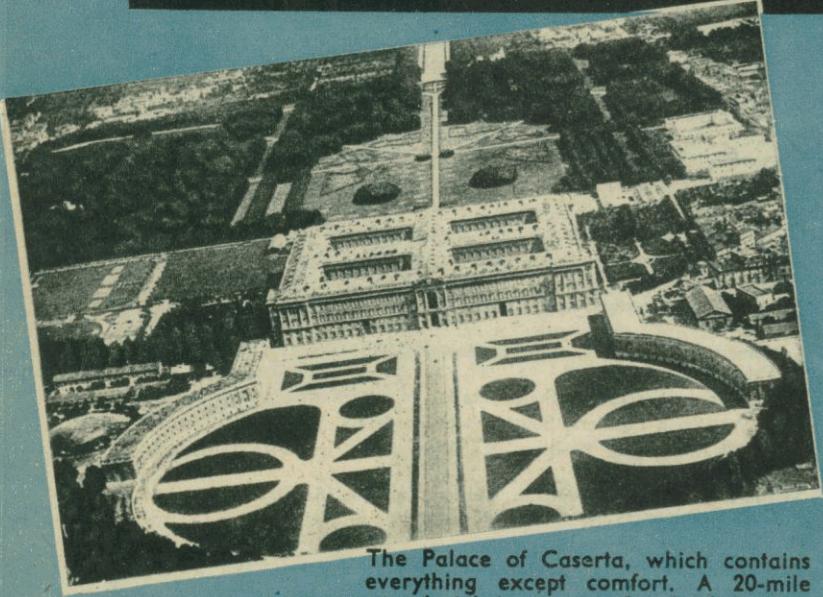
What Names?

Only one task remains. That is for the Groups to be given names and signs. It is not so easy as it sounds, for as one colonel has pointed out "to call the West Country regimental Group the 'South West Group' or 'Great Western Group' makes it sound rather like a bus or train company." These names should be short and to the point so that they can be shouted at sporting events. But whatever the name the spirit of the regiments will live on, for as Arthur Bryant says: "An Infantryman who has to fight always in the place of greatest danger and on whose individual staunchness and resolution to stick it, the entire strategy and effort of the nation depend in the hour of battle, has one thing to sustain him — his personal pride, derived from his membership of his regiment. Anything that weakens in the name of paper 'efficiency' the strength of this allegiance, will weaken England."

PETER LAWRENCE.



Just a Palace the Army



The Palace of Caserta, which contains everything except comfort. A 20-mile aqueduct brings water for the fountains.

"I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls . . ." This military policeman prefers the printed word to the painted ceiling.



"Allied Force"—the flash worn by British and American staffs who co-operated brilliantly at Caserta HQ.



Historic day in the Palace of the Bourbons: Lieut-General Morgan (hands behind back) watches German plenipotentiaries in mufti sign away a million men. The date: 29 April 1945.

Two armies came to the Versailles of Naples and set up their Headquarters in the chambers of the Bourbon Kings (first removing the Queen's gold bath to discourage practical jokers). From this palace went the orders which launched savage blows at the "soft underbelly of the Axis".

THE other day it fell to a British General, the Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean, to unveil a modest plaque in the fabulous palace of Caserta, a Bourbon palace boasting 1200 rooms, 2000 windows, 56 stairways, an opera house and a chapel, which was the focal point of the Allied war effort in the Mediterranean.

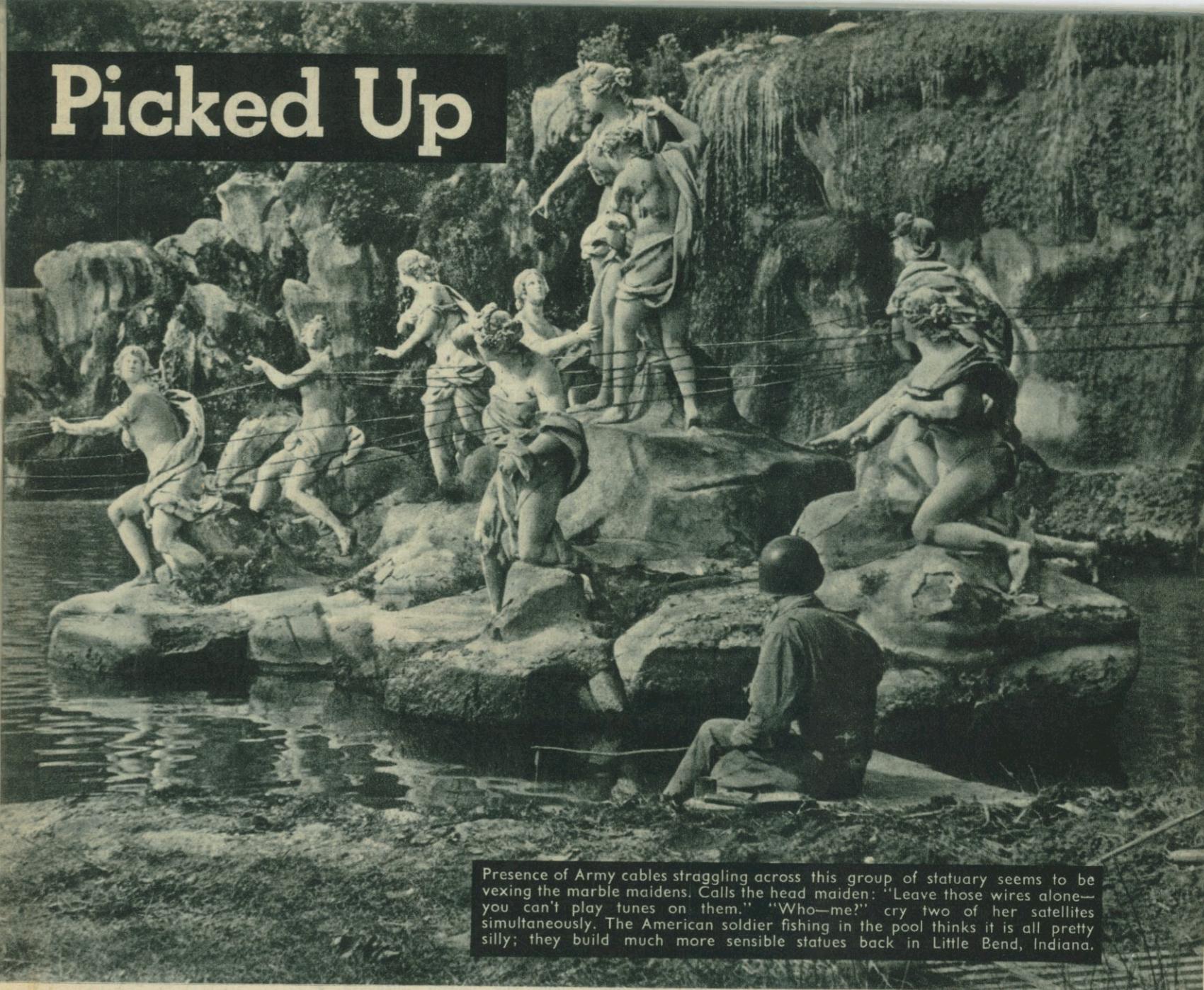
The plaque commemorated the liberation of the palace and town of Caserta by the American Fifth Army.

During the past 38 months, this magnificent building, which has seen so much pageantry and drama in its 175 years, has witnessed fresh and colourful pages of history being written. A host of Allied war chiefs, heads of state and diplomats have lived there or been its brief guests. Every senior headquarters in CMF, except that of Eighth Army, has

been housed there at one time or another. From Caserta went the orders for the campaigns in Central and Northern Italy, the landings in Southern France and the liberation of Greece, naval operations in the Mediterranean, and air blows at the enemy in Central Europe.

King George VI visited Caserta in July 1944. Bearded Greek resistance leaders who were smuggled out of their homeland signed a short-lived agreement there. An Allied leader who paid two visits caused a certain amount of consternation by turning up at an official banquet with a bodyguard of tommy-gunned, a bloodhound and an armed woman secretary. The Greek Government-in-exile called there on its way from Egypt to Athens. French military leaders, Dominion statesmen, a Chinese general, Russian, Brazilian, Polish senior officers — they all came to Caserta. And lastly and most fittingly, on 29 April 1945, two

Picked Up



Presence of Army cables straggling across this group of statuary seems to be vexing the marble maidens. Calls the head maiden: "Leave those wires alone—you can't play tunes on them." "Who—me?" cry two of her satellites simultaneously. The American soldier fishing in the pool thinks it is all pretty silly; they build much more sensible statues back in Little Bend, Indiana.

downcast men in civilian clothes were brought in great secrecy to sign away the surrender of the best part of a million men on behalf of the German C-in-C, South-West Forces and the Supreme Commander, SS Troops.

General Clark's Fifth US Army was the first senior formation to occupy the palace, but as the campaign progressed towards Rome, Field Marshal (then General) Alexander's Allied Armies Italy HQ took over the lease for a few months. After the liberation of the Italian capital, Alexander's staff moved up the Appian Way, and the Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean transferred his Allied Force HQ from Algiers to Caserta in July 1944. With AFHQ, an integrated Anglo-American team created by General Eisenhower in North Africa, arrived C-in-C Mediterranean Naval forces and his staff, HQ MAAF, the British Resident Minister (with Cabinet rank), the US Political Adviser, and UNRRA HQ.

Caserta was ideally suited for its new task. It stands at the foot of low-lying hills, 21 miles inland from Naples, three hours by road

from Rome, close to three aerodromes, three hours' flying from Malta, four from Athens and Algiers. And it could almost absorb this vast army of strategists, diplomats and pen-pushers without aggravating the already difficult housing situation of the Italian population.

It has been called the Versailles of Naples, and has everything an 18th-century palace can be expected to contain except comfort. It was built by the Spanish Bourbon dynasty of the Two Sicilies, partly because they were jealous of the magnificence of the French branch of the family and also because they considered their Naples residence too close to the sea to be comfortable in those insecure days. The legend goes that when the architect reported that the job was done, King Ferdinand of the Big Nose asked him: "Would you be able to build a similar palace?" On being assured that he could, the king ordered his eyes to be put out.

But for the fact that Ferdinand ran short of cash, the palace would have far exceeded its

present homely dimensions. As it is, its massive front, 850 feet long, faces a spacious square and a long straight avenue of giant trees which leads to Naples. Six storeys high, it reaches up 134 feet; and as no lifts have been installed, Allied servicemen who worked on the top floor rarely suffered surprise inspections.

A

striking feature is the gorgeously coloured marble staircase, guarded by two marble lions, representing Victory and Defeat, and looking equally lugubrious. At the head of these stairs are ambassadorial chambers and the throne room, cluttered up with chandeliers, statues and paintings reflecting the peculiar taste of the period: these became officers' messes. AG staffs working in the royal apartments could gaze at ceilings overdecorated with ladies in rude health and equally obese cherubs. The Queen's massive gold bath was removed early to discourage practical jokers. The rest of the palace is hardly decorated at all. Its huge dungeon-like rooms which served as offices proved most difficult to light adequately and impossible to heat. Troops were housed in the stables, and

officers lived in tents and wooden huts in the park.

The grounds are laid out in the same grandiose style. There is a waterfall which necessitated building an aqueduct 20 miles long to bring the necessary amount of water. There is also a fine "English garden", and a lake from which F-M Alexander used to take off by seaplane when he was really in a hurry, and where the troops bathed in the summer.

With the end of hostilities, the huge staffs began to melt. Now only a small staff still remains in the old palace to ensure Allied co-ordination.

Impervious to historical associations, British soldiers who lived and worked at Caserta will remember chiefly the heat, dust and mosquitoes of the summer months and the torrential rains, mud and cold winds of the winter. But they will also recollect with pleasure their happy relations with Americans, with whom they worked and played in close harmony. Friendships were made there which will last always.

PETER LOVEGROVE.

GUARDSMAN INTO POLITICIAN

THE Parliamentary "tipsters" who criticise—in print and out of it—the performance of Ministers and Under-Secretaries have been favourably impressed by the new Financial Secretary to the War Office, Major John Freeman.

But then—as Field-Marshal Montgomery said recently, with a twinkle in his eye—Major Freeman was "properly brought up in 21 Army Group."

Major John Freeman, MBE, ex-Rifle Brigade and MP for Watford, was Brigade Major with 131st Infantry Brigade from D-Day to the day his headquarters reached Hamburg. When the city fell he returned to England to fight another battle: the General Election.

He took back with him vivid memories of the fighting—particularly at Ghent where 300,000 civilians lived in a city occupied by both Germans and British. He remembers, too, the spirit which ran through the victorious 21

Financial Secretary... "properly brought up in 21 Army Group."

They Want The Army to Stay

WITH nearly every town in Britain which still has the Army in its midst petitioning for troops to be removed, Ilfracombe, North Devon, wants the Army to stay. So keen are the townsfolk that the council have asked the War Office to keep the local "garrison"—the Royal Army Pay Corps—in occupation.

They say the Pay Corps is an asset to the town.

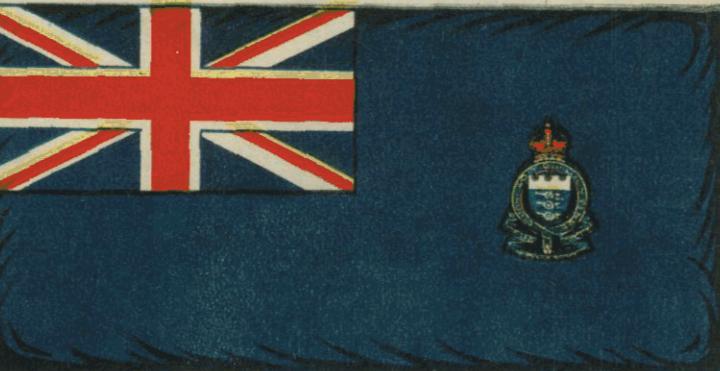
Councillor R. Fairchild said the Corps, which occupied the Ilfracombe Hotel, consisted of 350 people, including 135 civilians. During the past seven years the town had enjoyed great prospe-

rity, whereas before the war business people had to exist through the winter on credit.

Another member, Mr. H. Bryant, went further back than that. He remembered the 1914 war when many hotel proprietors could not even pay their rates.

Only a few members were doubtful about the Army staying, saying that they thought the town should put its house in order and start rehabilitating itself to fight competition.

The suggestion to ask the War Office to let the Pay Corps stay was carried when it was pointed out that the Corps spends over £2000 a week in the town.



The Ordnance Corps have lost their scarlet stripes.

Ordnance Change Their Flag

THE Royal Army Ordnance Corps has a new flag—not to mention new badges, buttons, blazer and tie.

The new-pattern flag, now approved, is dark blue with the Union Jack in the first quarter, and bearing the Corps Badge in heraldic colouring. It replaces the existing dark blue flag with diagonal scarlet stripes.

The existing patterns of badges and buttons were authorised after World War One, when the Corps was honoured by being made "Royal." As the badges include the shield of the Arms of the Board of Ordnance, which clearly identifies the RAOC, it was argued that the retention of the Corps title on the scroll was unnecessary, and that distinction would be added to the general design if the RAOC motto "Sua Tela Tonanti" (To the Thunderer His Weapons) were substituted. The title of the RAOC is also eliminated from the new buttons.

The Arms of the Board of Ordnance were recently "borrowed" by the War Office for their new flash (SOLDIER, October).

does he know of some of the delays in getting decisions and that his headquarters are now known as the Hyndquarters?

Mr. Hynd: The answer to the latter part of the question is "Yes, sir." *

A man complained to the British Legion that he had



lost all his hair while in the Army. The Legion fixed him up with a wig.

Small Talk

MEMO for late Age and Service Groups: the "Britain Can Make It" exhibition contained a specimen bowler hat, labelled "Available Shortly."

Mr. F. E. Strand, the Clerk, complained to the Meopham (Kent) Parish Council that an ex-soldier's gratuity was wrongly delivered to him with his mail.

*

From Hansard: Mr. Gammans: Does the Minister (the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Mr. John Hynd) realise that it is impossible to administer Germany from St. James's Square; and

Unclaimed goods recently auctioned by the London Passenger Transport Board included a drum, a set of drumsticks and an artificial hand.

*

Just Too Bad Department: "In spite of what one would like to say about the grace of the ATS and the WAAF, their thick stockings and battledress do not add to the elegance of the feminine form. Too often these young 'girl soldiers' are at a disadvantage when in competition with daintily shod civilian girls." — La Cité Nouvelle, Brussels.

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We Scoop The Premier

WHEN the Prime Minister on 18 Nov. gave MP's the details of Hitler's plans to invade Britain in 1940—Operation Sealion—he was only telling the same story which appeared exclusively and at considerable length with numerous photographs, drawings, maps and embellishments in colour in SOLDIER on 5 Jan. 1946.

What SOLDIER didn't tell—and what Mr. Attlee did—was the British counter-plan which would have been launched by the codeword "Cromwell".

SOLDIER is flattered to think that the story was worth retelling to HM. Parliament 10 months later and congratulates Mr. Attlee on the excellent Press he received: two columns in The Times, for instance.

A month or so ago the national newspapers were falling over each other to tell the story of Popski's Private Army. That story also appeared in SOLDIER on 11 May 1946.

Oh, yes, SOLDIER finds its way into Fleet Street (and into the House of Commons' Library) but there is an old-fashioned notion among some newspapermen that it is not news unless it is hatched in Fleet Street.

But SOLDIER doesn't mind. Not even when its stories are lifted and headed "Daily—Staff Reporter."



School (for British children) is over, but Schoolmaster Serjeant J. Fielding has his hands full in Lubeck.



Five-year-old Michael O'Brien is helped by the Brigadier's daughter (Miss Van der Heyde).

Things you wouldn't believe unless we told you . . .

In the Prussian Army of 1779 coughing and sneezing in the ranks were crimes . . . Recruits to the Russian Imperial Guard in 1839 were drilled with a glass of water on their heads . . .

Class That Doesn't "SHUN!"

FADE has played a prank on a team of Army Educational serjeants. Instead of presenting them with orderly and earnest students in khaki into whose receptive heads to insinuate knowledge, it has given into their charge the education of a batch of lively young people of both sexes whose ages range up from six.

So when SOLDIER visited them at the Forces Study Centre in Lubeck, it found:

Sjt. Roy Sandbach recording as his only absentee a nine-year-old boy who had hit his thumb with a hammer while making a dolls' house for his sweetheart; Sjt. John Fielding, a qualified woodwork instructor among other things, busily sketching plans for a toy truck one of his pupils had set his heart on making;

Sjt. V. Perkins parking the three-ton truck in which he fetches the pupils to school.

The job of these serjeants is to provide suitable education for children of BAOR families until teachers arrive from Britain to set up schools of at least council-school standard. They are teaching the three R's and history, geography, English grammar and art; the boys are being shown how to handle tools and make toys and small pieces of furniture while the girls are taking enthusiastically to clay modelling.

German teachers help the serjeants out with such subjects as music and art and each day one of the mothers comes to school to watch over the kiddies and take any necessary disciplinary action.

At Iserlohn another centre is run by Mrs. Hartley, wife of a 1st Corps HQ officer, who used to be a school-teacher. She is helped



seekers who always like to see soldiers earning their keep.

The Army requisitioned 80 acres of Belle Vue and seven million Servicemen of the Allied nations have been admitted free in the past seven years. Last Easter Monday Belle Vue admitted the largest crowd—250,000 people—since the resort was opened in the reign of King William IV; a big proportion of these were ex-Servicemen. Belle Vue calls itself the "Showground of the World." It lays on fights, fireworks, speedway racing, rugby, all-in wrestling, sports and athletics. The grounds are now completely de-requisitioned.

Belle Vue needs no "barker" to lure the crowds. In the "barker's" place is ex-RSM Brunt, veteran of two wars, now a commissioner. At the time of the Victory Parade a member of the Burma contingent visiting Belle Vue addressed him: "Hello, Sarn't-Major! Do you remember me? I was with you at Arakan." The speaker was a Gurkha warrior.

Belle Vue, Manchester: it has sore memories for some Servicemen.

High-Speed Launches of the British Army operate this —

ADRIATIC PATROL

THE deck hand who was on watch put his binoculars down on the chart table inside the wheel-house.

"Two-masted schooner on the port bow, about four miles," he shouted.

We were in a high speed launch of the British Army anti-contraband patrol, off the coast of disputed Venezia Giulia.

The British serjeant coxswain at the wheel gave a laconic "OK", glanced at his compass, swung the craft round and opened the throttle.

There was a roar from the 500 hp engines. The bows lifted off the water.

Through the wheel-house window, straight ahead, the outline of a small sailing ship could just be detected against the chalky white hills of the coast. We would soon overhaul her.

One of the crew pointed out our position on the chart. By his finger was a heavy blue line running parallel to the coast. The coast was Yugoslavia.

"Three-mile limit," he shouted. "We can't go beyond that."

Serjeant Kershaw, the coxswain, handed over the wheel to another of the crew, took a reading off the land, made a few calculations and told me we were slightly over four miles off shore.

"We'll catch up with her all right, if she stays on that course," said Kershaw. As he spoke the quarry swung her bows slowly round until she was heading straight for land.

Automatically, we too changed course, and followed her. Through the binoculars I saw

the crew grinning at us from the after-deck. She was wood-built, about 200 tons and carried a deck cargo.

"She's given us the slip," said Kershaw. "We won't get her outside the three-mile limit now."

He ordered the helmsman to return to the patrol course. The launch swung round and headed out to sea again, as the roar of the engines died and she cruised comfortably at 14 knots.

"No use hanging around," said the coxswain. "She'll return to port now and try again in a few days time, if she's got any stuff on board."

It was some months ago that Allied Military Government in Trieste decided that a military coastal patrol must operate in the coastal areas of Venezia Giulia.

Smugglers of tobacco, cigarettes, stolen UNRRA supplies, such as penicillin and cocaine, flour, grain and canned foods, were making a fortune. Political sympathisers and agents crossed to and from Italy and Yugoslavia in fishing vessels or schooners.

A high-speed launch section of 247 Coy. RASC (Motor Boat) was detailed for the job. The six launches of the section were based at Trieste. They were to patrol night and day between Grado

on the Yugoslav coast in the south, and Cap Salvo in the north.

Each launch (top speed 21 knots) has an all-British Army crew of four—a serjeant coxswain, corporal engineer and two deck-hands. All are fully qualified seamen.

Formerly, British Military Police searched the suspected craft for contraband. Political complications and language difficulties, however, made it advisable to replace the "red-caps" with Venezia Giulia international police. These keep in constant touch with police headquarters by the radio with which the launches are equipped.

The Army crew may not board any craft. They sound their sirens by day, and at night shine their headlights on passing vessels, then sail alongside. While the other craft still moves, the police scramble on board.

Cargo, ship's papers, personal papers and possessions of the crew are all carefully checked. Even for those practised at the job, however, a fishing vessel or cargo carrying schooner, is almost impossible to search completely.

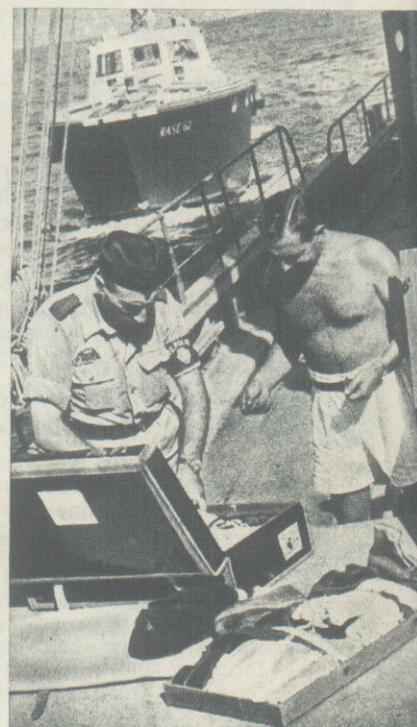
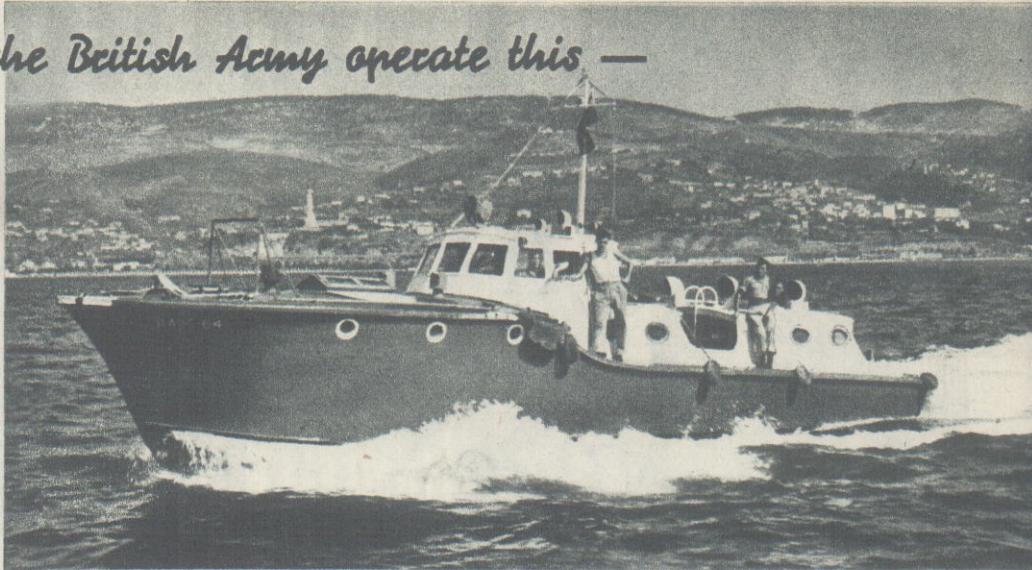
On one occasion, a policeman noticed the odd dimensions of the hold of the vessel he was searching. Examination showed

that she had a false floor above the bilges. The planks were ripped up to disclose a cargo of flour in waterproof sacks between the two floors. The flour had been stolen from a warehouse.

Since the patrol began, many arrests have been made. Nowadays they are much fewer. Efficiency of the patrol, greater risks, smaller profits, have all helped to discourage the racket.

Returning from the patrol in the late afternoon, the

The Army's Diesel launches on anti-contraband control off Venezia Giulia are in radio touch with Police HQ in Trieste.



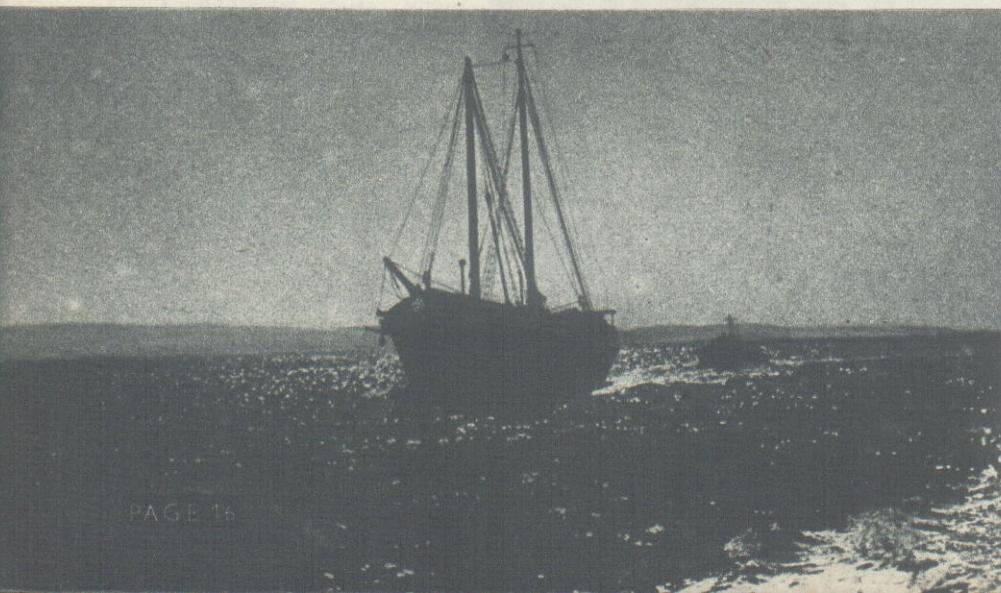
A Yugoslav sailor watches anxiously while a Trieste policeman searches his case. British soldiers do not board suspected vessels.

lookout spotted a sail on the horizon, bound for Italy. The launch zoomed over the calm waters, with the blue ensign of crossed swords, the flag of the WD fleet, fluttering at the masthead.

About a hundred yards off, we saw the suspect was an innocent-looking wood-built schooner of about a 100 tons. Suddenly, she changed course by about 90 degrees. A touch of the throttle and a twist of the helm and we were once again up with her.

Then, with engines hard astern, we came gently alongside and the four policemen scrambled on board. An hour's search revealed no contraband. We returned in the dusk to Trieste. It was a normal day for the patrol, who are authorised to search every type of vessel except trans-oceanic liners.

GEORGE BRUCE.





SOLDIER Wishes a Merry Christmas -



"I think we ought to be in on this, old man."

- to all the units which were first across the Rhine;
- to Englishmen in Scottish regiments, Scotsmen in English regiments and Irishmen in everybody's regiment;
- to the committee which is trying to decide whether to issue soldiers with pyjamas;
- to Headquarters Staffs, Echelons, Military Missions and fire piquets;
- to all units in quarantine, in suspended animation or in Catterick;
- to pin-up girls, gift shop girls, back-room girls, Naafi girls, chorus girls ranking as second lieutenant and girls who darn soldiers' socks;
- to all acting unpaid;
- to all soldiers who have made, who are making or who are about to make divisional signs out of coloured pebbles;
- to editors of wall newspapers, compilers of standing orders, amenders of drill books, organisers of leave rotas, inspectors of work tickets, assessors of barrack-room damages and teachers of mothercraft;
- to the unseen voices, ten times magnified, which call troops from trains at meal halts;
- to the men who lug buckets of tea up and down train corridors;
- to the desk wallahs who think up new ways of reclaiming grease trap fat;
- to Savings officers, Salvage officers, Scripture readers, Forces lecturers, glasshouse commandants and trick cyclists;
- to the manufacturers of Brasso, Bluebell and "Blanco" (see page 32);
- to OC Apes, Gibraltar;
- to fellows who write home and fellows who write letters for fellows who cannot write home;
- to recruits squirting imaginary water at imaginary fires;
- to Pioneers still waiting to be dubbed Royal;
- to all survivors (if any) of the March from Kabul to Kandahar;
- to Colonel Chinstrap, Colonel Blimp, Colonel Mae West and Colonel Shirley Temple;
- to those who decide from time to time whether or not ATS may wear their stockings inside out;
- to all who give and receive directions, directives, and directifs, with or without appendices, addenda and annexures;
- to all sign-writers of 51st (Highland) Division;
- to dentists' orderlies, pay clerks, spud bashers, NCO's in charge of bath books and men who stretch coloured tapes over maps in Information Rooms;
- to sausage-makers, bottlers of beer and fatteners of Christmas swine;
- to the inventors of Mulberry, Fido and the soya link;
- to lancers, hussars, buglers, bombardment units, disinfestation parties, theatre ticket pools, mobile bath units and the RTO at Llanfairfechan;
- to all toilers in rest camps;
- to soldiers who call a wife a wife and those who call her a memsahib; to those who call a reconnaissance a shufti;
- to Errol Flynn and the other liberators of Burma;
- to men who ask questions at ABCA's in an effort to stave off PT;
- to Displaced Persons and Displeased Persons of all nationalities;
- to designers of webbing equipment, improved trouser buttons and atom bombs;
- to anybody who feels slighted at being omitted from the foregoing list;
- to all readers of SOLDIER.



Two notables called Christmas were Gerrard Christmas, "Carver to the Royal Navy and Lords of the Admiralty" (died 1634), and the Rev. Henry Christmas, who wrote poems about capital punishment (died 1868).

FUTILE FACTS
about CHRISTMAS



The church at Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire

CHRISTMAS SERMON

By Rev. Geoffrey Druitt, CBE, CF, Assistant Chaplain-General HQ BAOR.

BRITONS are a freedom-loving race and we are proud of it. Even when you were at school, do you remember singing "Rule Britannia"? And when you bellowed "Britons never, never, NEVER shall be slaves", you probably looked at a Master whom you disliked.

There is no doubt that we are born with the Spirit of Freedom in our hearts. We cannot be really happy about things unless we are able to choose for ourselves. Anyone who tries to take away our birth-right of freedom is in for a bad time.

Of course, we would agree that someone must be in the position to give orders but that someone must be the chap who has the right to give them. We would agree that any show would end up in a hopeless muddle if no one had any authority. We do not take kindly to the chap who tries to boss us about because he feels like it.

But the Spirit of Freedom is not the only Spirit in British hearts. From the beginning of our history this Spirit of Freedom joined hands with the Spirit of Adventure. These two Spirits danced into the hearts and lives of our forefathers causing them to wander over the Seven Seas, took them into many unknown countries — and, in course of time, the great British Commonwealth of Nations was born.

The influence of these two Spirits of Freedom and Adventure has been very obvious in the character of all our great leaders. A recent example we shall never forget was Winston Churchill during the last war. How his fighting speeches thrilled us! Why? Because he was speaking in a way Britons could understand. The rest of the world looked on in amazement, in 1940, and possibly rather pityingly, when we refused to surrender. They could not understand — but we Britons could. The Spirits of

Freedom and Adventure were dancing gaily in Churchill's heart.

On our part, we used our freedom to choose him as our Leader. We recognised his authority and his right to give us our orders. Then we showed that the Spirit of Adventure was still alive in our hearts by following his gallant lead through thick and thin to Victory. That is how these Spirits of Freedom and Adventure work in British hearts — and we're proud of it.

Can we be British in the same way as we face Christmas?

Just over 1900 years ago the Son of God was born Man. The King of Kings was born in a cow-shed because the innkeeper did not recognise His Authority. The people staying at the inn were blind to it too. But some shepherds out in the fields were more observant and less taken up with their own affairs. They were led to that cow-shed and recognising the Authority of the Child, they knelt down and worshipped Him. Wise men from the East also arrived and kneeling before the Baby King, presented royal gifts to Him. They were acknowledging Him as their King of Kings.

The King of Kings who was born into the world at that first Christmas-tide is still alive.

Now this fact must have a special meaning for a race of men which has the Spirits of Freedom and Adventure. Why? Because they can use their freedom to choose Him as their Leader and their love of adventure to fight for Him through thick and thin to Victory.

The Lord Jesus Christ will never use conscription. He voluntarily gave up His position with God the Father in order to become a Man among men. His followers must be free men who have voluntarily entered His Service.

He does not force Himself upon people. They are free to choose sin or salvation. It is a fight to the death — or to the Life! He wants men to be saved from the results of their own sin and weakness. With the help of those who choose Him, Jesus will produce a change of heart and a change of spirit among men. In other words, He can save not only individual men and women but, through them, His Power can spread to bring order out of chaos in the world.

It is a terrific challenge and Christmas brings us face to face with it. The Challenge of Christmas is: —

Dare you recognise the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ Who became Man on Christmas Day?

Or to put it in another way. Dare you follow the Son of God in these days as loyally, as trustingly and as bravely as you followed Winston Churchill in 1940?

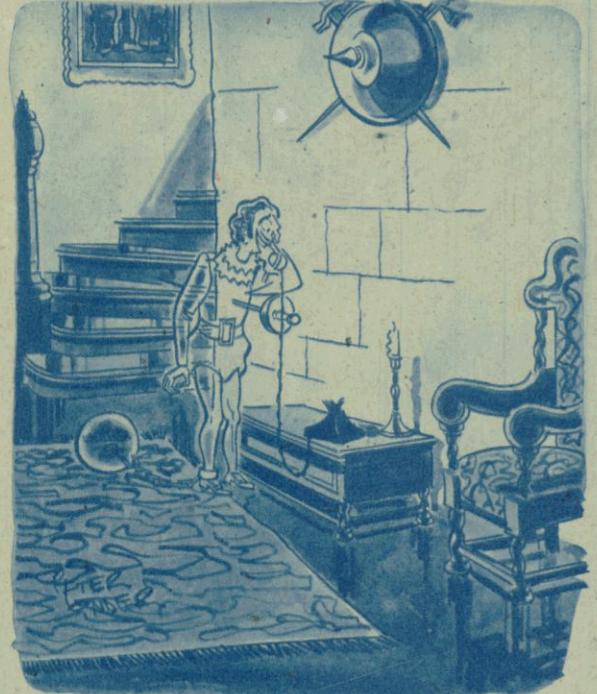
That may sound irreverent but it puts the demands of Christ in a practical way and avoids the danger of us kidding ourselves. The Lord Jesus Christ wants men and women to give Him their absolute trust and loyalty and service. *Only so can they and their world be saved.*

No wonder Heavenly Choirs sang and men rejoiced on that Christmas Day. The Good News of the Birth of Jesus Christ was the greatest blessing mankind has ever received. "And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord And the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God."

In this same sense, reader, may God give you the happiest Christmas of your life.



Christmas snows in England's Lake District; a view of Great Gable, which is preserved by the National Trust.



"Is that Grisly Grange? Well, can I speak to your ghost, please?"

NO MORE
CHRISTMASES
IN UNIFORM

FORCES' GIRLS



Limbering up in the wings with only the stage-staff to watch, Jean Bryden is as graceful as —



— she is doing her acrobatic act in the glare of the footlights.

★ ★ ★
FUTILE FACTS
about CHRISTMAS

There are two Christmas Islands, one in the Indian Ocean and one in the Pacific. Speciality of the former: land-crabs which can bite off a man's finger.



The high medieval hat worn by Sheila Parsons as a herald in the "Woman of History" act is very near some of today's fashions, which proves something or other about women.



An electrician's-eye view of the chorus doing a drill as complicated as that of any squad and singing at the same time.

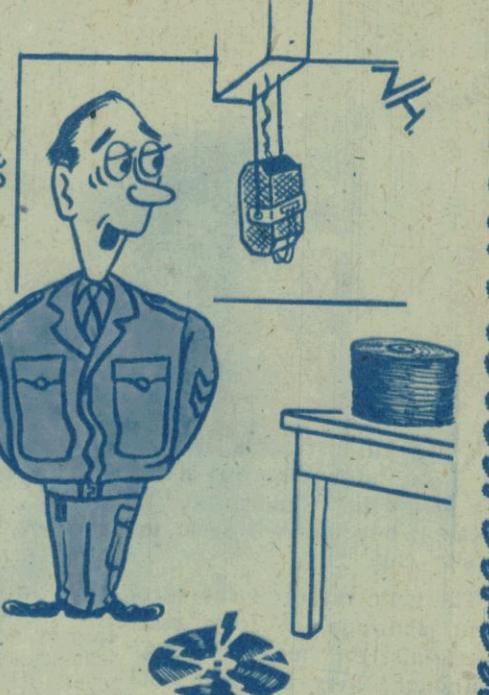
BFN
SILENCE

CO

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"We regret, Sjt. Jones, that we are unable to play the record you requested."

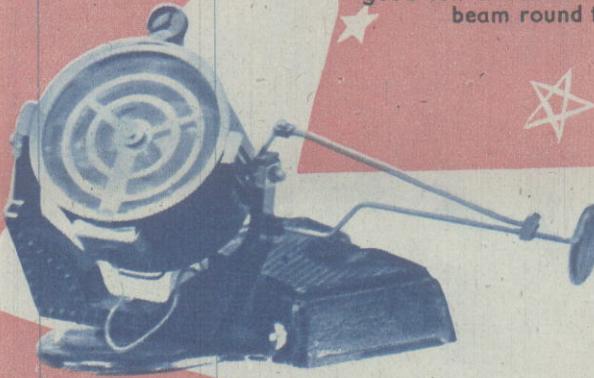
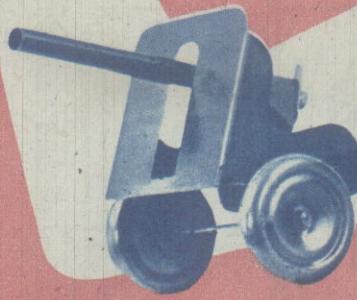
SHOW CIVVY STREET



The comb, the hair and the smile belong to Elsie Crawshaw, ex-WAAF who travelled Europe in Service shows.

It's a pre-war model, but its pellets make a satisfying clang on an empty flower-vase.

This battery-operated searchlight is good fun if someone will chase the beam round the wall.



WHILE reports from America say Junior is now tormenting his sister with such educational toys as the Gamma-Ray Destructor, war and post-war weapon development seem to have left the English nursery pretty cold.

The main reason is the current shortage of toys and materials for making toys. Although there are still not enough to meet demands, there are more toys than last year, but more than three-quarters of the toy-maker's output is earmarked for export. Ideas and blue-prints, like some of those intended for grimmer purposes, are becoming obsolete before they go into production.

Only in a few lines are children getting toys developed from 1939-45 weapons and in these the air-minded child is streets better off than the one with nautical ideas or the very poor third whose passion is the Army.

The would-be soldier, if he wants to be up-to-date, will probably have to be content with a jeep this Christmas. Anyway, it will be a good one because model jeeps, wooden or metal, pull-on-a-string or clockwork, all seem to be as sturdily built as their full-size prototypes. There are also some very good pedal-car jeeps, complete with movable windscreen, spare wheel and jerrican, but like Daddy's new car — if he's got one — they are rather austere and they are a bit hard to sit on.

An American firm is putting scale-model tanks with movable turrets on the market; they are precision-made models of Shermans, Tigers, Churchills and others, costing from 5s 6d to 12s 6d and are very effective for staging battle-scenes, but the tracks don't turn and it is unlikely that there will be many on the market before Christmas.

Toy soldiers will be completely absent from this year's stockings. The reason is that the Government just will not release lead to make toy soldiers for the home market. There are one or two forts available, but they are pre-war models, in design a mixture of the medieval and the Foreign Legion types and not much use to the young man who

wants to reconstruct the West Wall or the Mareth Line. And anyway, what's the use of a fort without soldiers to attack and defend it?

The artillery expert can have a few guns, but they are pre-war models of field, siege and AA design and often of unspecified types. None the less, Daddy, they are better than the ones you had when you were a boy because some not only shoot pellets right across the sitting-room but fire a cap simultaneously, are breech-loading and have ingenious gadgets for fixing bearing and elevation. But if you want a 17-pounder or a 7.2 gun-how, you'll just have to wait.

Another pre-war toy you can have is a searchlight which throws a strong beam from torch-battery juice. It's fun, especially if you can get grandfather to chase the beam round the room.

War toys nearer lifesize are very scarce. There are some tin swords and some of those old theatrical daggers with blades

Pedal-car jeeps are equipped with spare wheels and jerricans, in the appropriate places at the rear.



TOY SOLDIERS ARE FOR EXPORT ONLY

that disappear into the handle, which an imaginative youngster might adapt as Commando knives. There are also a few crude wooden sub-machine guns, but no rifles or nice new things like bazookas, or flame-throwers.

Even in the conjuror's section of a big shop, which should be a certainty for Radar and Atomic tricks, there is nothing of the sort. True, there is an Atomic Rope Trick, but it is just a better way of doing the cut-rope-that-mysteriously-becomes-whole-again business; also, advertised under heading of "Spring Goods" are "Strings of Sausages (Self Locking)", which may have received some inspiration from

the immortal soya link. Most of the new ideas have had to be pigeon-holed because manufacturers simply couldn't get around to making the essential gadgets.

Keeping the war out of the nursery may or may not be a good thing, but it's a little hard on Father when he wants to demonstrate just how things were when he won his 1939-45 Star.

RICHARD ELLEY.

These model soldiers are more fastidiously turned out than ordinary toy soldiers. Pictures here were taken by courtesy of Hamley Brothers, London, where a big display was recently staged.



THE small boy gazed in admiration at the kilted figure in the glass case in the children's store in Regent Street, London, and exclaimed, "Look, toy soldiers."

"No, John. Model soldiers," said his mother.

There is a world of difference. While the toy is mass-produced in factories for children to play with—and break—the model is a work of art, carefully cast in lead from an engraved mould and painted in oils so that every detail down to medal ribbons is accurately recorded.

Models have been made since the 17th century. In Britain today there are about 1000 collectors. It is estimated there are up to 50,000 in the world. Most of them live in France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Sweden and America.

At an exhibition at Hamley Brothers, London, the 51st Highland Division in ceremonial dress was on show; so were Indian troops, Guardsmen, Infantry of the Line in oldtime dress and Commandos and Parachutists of today. These models, which sometimes cost as many pounds as toy soldiers cost pence, are correct in every detail, including officers' and NCOs' ranks.

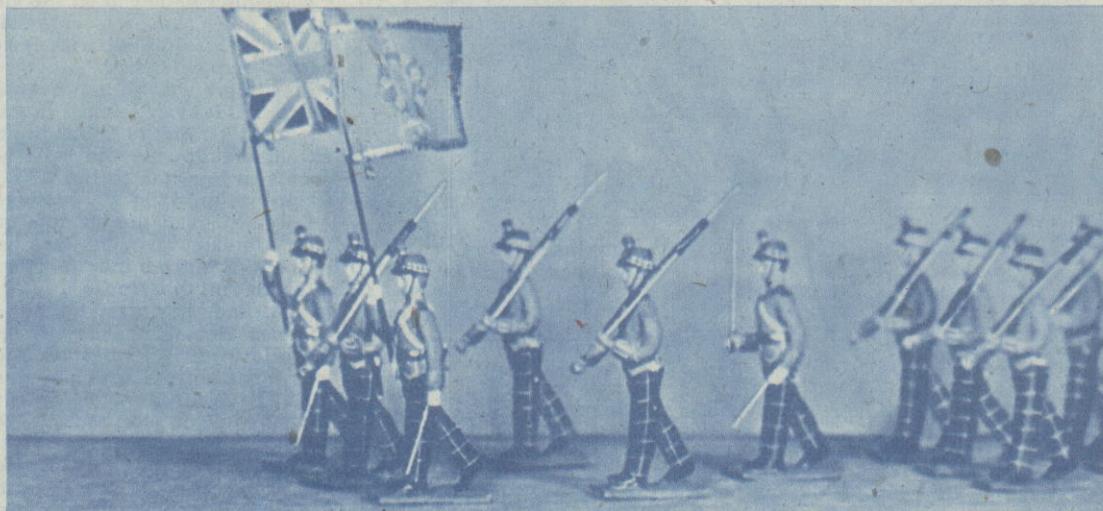
Dioramas of a Combined Operation raid on the French coast, the fighting in the Falaise pocket, and Napoleon's retreat from Moscow were built in large glass cases. For these the models are usually flat and all details are painted in.

The most valuable collection of model soldiers in the world is "stationed" at the Royal United Services Institute museum. It is believed to be worth £10,000.

THESE ARE NOT TOY SOLDIERS



A General Staff mounted on horse-back is much more impressive than a modern Staff mounted on ACV's. Below: The HLI claim to be pretty smart marchers; their leaden replicas are even more precisely in step.



Christmas is mentioned three times in the works of William Shakespeare.

There is nobody called Christmas in "Who's Who".

FUTILE FACTS
about CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS COMES TO A MIXED BATTERY

For 364 days in the year the 999th Mixed Battery was a model of discipline and decorum. But on Christmas Day the battery relaxed just a little...



WHEN the ATS began to go about with mistletoe in their hair and the light of battle in their eyes you knew that Christmas was coming to the 999th Heavy (Mixed) Anti-Aircraft Battery, Royal Artillery.

There was already a "lift" in the air because the guns had fired a couple of days before, and even though no noticeable distress had been caused to the Luftwaffe the fact of firing raised everybody's spirits.

The Quartermaster was especially pleased, as he was now able to attribute the recent breakage of 16 windows and two wash-basins to gun blast and thus avoid levying a charge for barrack-room damages.

Quite a number of persons changed for the better as Christmas approached. For once the BSM visited the site on a purely goodwill mission instead of for the purpose of lighting a fire in a remote corner and timing the arrival of the fire piquet.

Private Jean Smith and Corporal Sally Tubb, who in the ordinary way cultivated exclusively the society of American fliers, were good enough to remain in the camp on their evening off and join in a sing-song in the Naaf.

Lieutenant Rogers, who was wont to make unexpected descents on the Information Room in the evenings, under the impression that it was being used for other purposes than acquiring information, decided to live and let live (for a couple of days anyway).

The Junior Commander ATS had got over her huff. She had selected her six best-looking girls for a special parade, only to see them rejected by the Colonel, who had other standards of pulchritude. He had chosen just the ones you would expect a man to choose. Now, however, the Junior Commander had decided she must live it down, and was organising the Christmas dinner with imagination and efficiency.

Yes, there was an improvement all round. It even seemed that the Major was going to unbend to the extent of allowing the male serjeants to take tea to the ATS on Christmas morning. But the Major knew that even the shadow of a man's footstep over the threshold of an ATS hut led inevitably to a question in the House of Commons, and he was taking no chances. He said that in any case reveille in an ATS barrack-room was a scene from which Hogarth might have shrunk. Nobody knew how he came to possess this knowledge.

Christmas morning saw officers and serjeants of both sexes dutifully carrying buckets of tea into the appropriate barrack-rooms, waking up sleepers who would just as soon have stayed asleep. Everyone tried to be hearty, though there were quite a few who only cursed tradition.

Probably the reason why the ATS enjoyed the dance so much

was that the ATS officers forebore to enquire why half of them were wearing slacks instead of Service dress, and why their hair in many cases was no longer two inches above the collar. Private Polly Jackson expected any moment to be asked, "Jackson, have you been using scent?" But her crime, if noticed (and it was abundantly noticeable) went unpunished. The BSM, who was compéring, laid on what he described as a kiss waltz, saying: "The music will stop, the lights will go out for five seconds, and the gentlemen will do what is expected of them." It happened that Lieutenant Rogers was dancing with Gunner Walter's fiancée, but there wasn't much that Gunner Walter could do about it. (He was a jealous fellow, and didn't like other NCO's urging his fiancée, who was a cookhouse orderly, to get a move on.) It also happened that Private Joan Jenkins was dancing with Captain Richards, who was the only person in the camp who didn't know that Private Joan had a "crush" on him. After that romantic interlude there were party games, which involved a great deal of skylarking, and action songs, including the one which finished:

*"The moon was shining brightly,
"Twas a night that would banish
all sin.
For the bells were ringing the
Old Year Out,
And the New Year in."*

The idea, of course, was to make exaggerated gestures appropriate to each line. It was felt that the Major's interpretation of "sin" was as original as anybody's. To see the battery making a fool of itself collectively was a refreshing sight.

Soon after this the shutter descended on the beer bar and the dance began to die. Three Free French sailors had been invited. They had not lacked partners, though one or two of the girls had found the Provençal technique a bit swift. Lieutenant Rogers, who always took the job of Orderly Officer seriously, thought he would see them safely off the site. It took him twenty minutes, and in the end he had to call out reinforcements.

In the serjeants' mess Christmas night was celebrated longer than anywhere else. Jenks, the batman, swore next day that when organising an early cup of tea from the cookhouse on Boxing Day he saw the male serjeants retrieving their bedding from the static water tank. Apparently they had had a very good party indeed.

All names in the foregoing are fictitious.
ERNEST TURNER.

FUTILE FACTS
about CHRISTMAS



Part of the revelry at the Roman feast of Saturnalia, held in December, consisted of an exchange of clothes by the sexes. This is supposed to account for girls playing Principal Boy in pantomime.

Soldiers' Christmases —

The DRIEST

AMES Ellaway, aged 89, has to think back a long way because he was only 27 when he spent Christmas in the Nubian Desert.

Sixty-two years is a long time and details are inclined to slip into the oblivion of an old man's mind. But he can never forget it completely, because it was the driest Christmas he ever spent.

He was in the Royal Berkshires but volunteered for the Camel Transport Corps, and it was with a company of the Corps — part of Sir Herbert Stewart's force — that he found himself, as corporal of the rearguard, trudging across the barren desert on Christmas Day 1884.

Away ahead was Abuklea, and Abuklea meant water, and as it turned out, a bloody battle. And beyond Abuklea was Khartoum where a man with grey hair which got whiter as the days passed was holding out against the siege. But Gordon was assassinated before the relief force got to him. James just remembers the lack of water — fancy Christmas without a drink! — and the taste of sand in the bully, which was their Christmas fare, the steady trek of the camels, and the sweat. It rolled from under the helmet, down the scorched cheeks and soaked into his red tunic. His shirt under his heavy pack was one sodden mass and the heat quivered above the barren sand.

There should have been snow instead of sand and a crisp frost in place of this sultry air. He remembered telling Lieut. Godfrey so. Godfrey died at Abuklea.

"Yes, that was my worst Christmas," said James. "I was glad when later Lord Wolseley ordered us back home."

The "WETTEST"

HE Christmas of 1879 is often in the thoughts of Fred Hardiman, born in 1858. It was spent at Pinetown, a day's march from Durban. This was at the end of a very long trek after the glorious but expensive battle of Rorke's Drift.

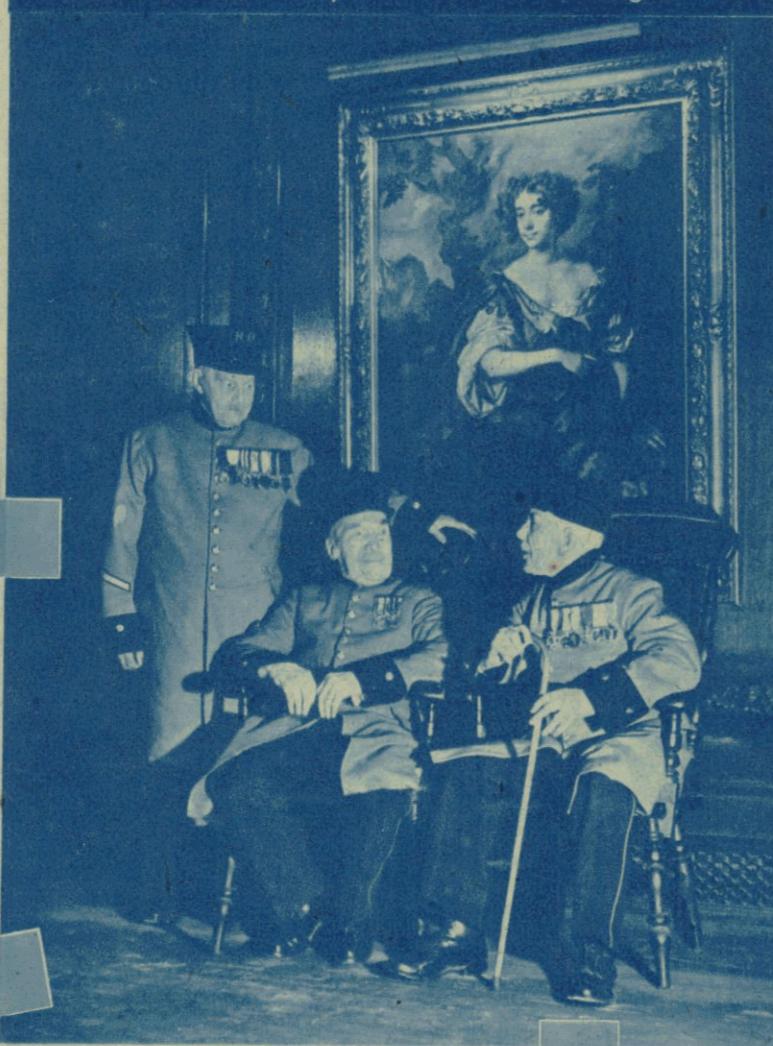
After months of Zulu hunting in the veldt they had come to Pietermaritzburg where the population had turned out to cheer the South Wales Borderers and to present them with a springbok to replace their lost goat. After Pietermaritzburg Pinetown was just a one-eyed place, a dozen houses round the railhead from Durban, but to the troops it was heaven. They went under canvas and built themselves a canteen of timber. It was 200 feet long, and 50 men went down to the railhead to fetch the beer. They hadn't been paid for two years and the colonel ordered a daily pay parade. "We could have as much as we wanted — even £5 — but there was nothing to spend it on except beer," said Fred. Only one day did they go without pay. That was Christmas Day when everyone except the cooks and sentries had a rest.

At dinner — both beef and mutton — the officers came to see them and the sergeants waited on them. The colonel arrived and they drank his health. "We could afford to for we had a barrel of beer to every table," said Fred. "That beer lasted us days. I have never seen so much in all my life. And good beer you got in those days, too."

After dinner they all rested in their tents and had the most peaceful time they had had for months. No, they did not even have to do PT on Boxing Day, or turn out to see the sergeants play the officers at football. The colonel said everyone was to rest, and rest they did.

When the SWB's left to enshir at Durban for Gibraltar Fred stayed behind. He joined Sir Garnet Wolseley's staff as a fatigue man and did not return to the depot at Brecon until 1886.

These Three Chelsea Pensioners Recall The Christmases They Have Never Forgotten



The ODDEST

UT then Sjt. Jimmy Delpiano has had an unusual life. He was born in Camberwell in 1869, went to school at Brighton — Fred Archer, the jockey, was a school pal — crossed to France at the age of ten, ran away from home to come back to England to join the Royal Sussex, and after his Army service returned to Paris to become a salesman in a perfumery.

When war broke out in 1914 he tried to get back to Chichester to join his old regiment. Failing to get a sea passage he joined the French Foreign Legion instead. That was how he came to spend the oddest Christmas — in 1914 at Chemin-des-Dames on the Somme.

There were about 150 Englishmen in the Legion. Like himself they had been working in France. And they were given permission to hold a picnic in an old barn on Christmas evening. The post had arrived and there were parcels from their old firms and from the people at home. To the noise of shells and the rattle of machine-gun fire they undid their parcels and pooled their gifts — tinned foods, candles, matches, all the things that are useful in the front line. And the front line was not 200 yards away.

"We had a good feed but there was only water to drink," said Jimmy. "We had a lot of fun sorting out the gifts. I wanted a candle badly and another chap wanted sardines so I swapped two sardines for one candle. At eight o'clock we crept out of the barn to go back to the line for stand-to and patrols, carrying our sardines and candles. The French thought us daft."

Delpiano did not stay long with the Legion. After winning the Croix de Guerre he decided that the daily pay of a ha'penny was not much when the British Army was paying a shilling. So he got authority to return to Southampton, whence he dashed to Chichester, exchanged his French uniform for khaki, and within a few hours was on his way back to France — as Corporal Delpiano of the Royal Sussex Regiment.

Strenuous & Otherwise

"THE MEN WILL BUILD SNOW FORTS" said the C.O. —

Recruit's Christmas, 1877

FIELD-MARSHAL Sir William Robertson, father of Lieut-Gen. Sir Brian Robertson, BAOR's Chief of Staff, joined the Army as a private in the 16th (Queen's) Lancers and had his first military duty, as a stable-guard, on Christmas Day, 1877.

"The casks containing the beer (for the Christmas dinner) were brought some time before to the barrack-room where the dinner was to be held," he wrote, "and were there placed under charge of a man who could be depended upon to see that they were not broached before the appointed hour. Had this happened, as it sometimes did, rather awkward incidents might have occurred when the officers visited the room just previous to the dinner ... If any individual did contrive to start his festivities too early, efforts were made to keep him in the background until the officers had left."

"It was the practice to see that all members of the troop who were absent on duty should be specially well cared for, and in my case the dinner brought to the stable consisted of a huge plateful of miscellaneous food — beef, goose, ham, vegetables, plum-pudding, blancmange — plus a basin of beer, a packet of tobacco, and a new clay pipe!"

snow-shoes from within, then parapets and mounted amid closed in. Twice they were showers of snowballs and then repulsed by volleys from the defenders in hand-to-hand fighting in which a good few got bruised. Some of the garrison tried to hold out in the fort, but the flag was finally hauled down amid great cheering.



SOLDIER's artist reconstructs the scene: the assault on a snow fort by British Infantry in Canada almost a hundred years ago. A good time was had by all.

SOLDIER Reviewer to SOLDIER Editor
Suggestions for Christmas Number:
How about letting me review the books I want
instead of the books you want?

Not without grave misgivings, the Editor acceded to this request from the Reviewer, who at once plunged headlong into the literary underworld —

- Where Reviewers Fear to Tread!

CANNIBAL

"I Ate Human Flesh."

THIS confession — presumably it was a confession and not a boast — on the cover of "Personal Adventure Stories" (Merrett, London) intrigued me even more than did the rival heading "American Girls' Legs Saved My Life"; even more than the cover drawing which showed a Cuban bandit stubbing out his cigar on one of the less public parts of a woman's anatomy.

I claim to be a connoisseur of confessions by cannibals; involuntary cannibals, that is. What always strikes me is the apparent innocence of explorers who, sitting down to dine with head-hunters and such, fail to ask for a menu beforehand.

Consider the case of Mr. Charles (Cannibal) Miller, described as "noted cameraman, world explorer and author." Whether he always calls himself Cannibal I do not know; if he does it must cause a lot of embarrassment when he applies for a ration book on his periodic returns to civilisation. But perhaps Cannibal is just a piece of whimsy on the part of Mr. Miller's editor.

Mr. Charles (Cannibal) Miller, or Mr. Charles Miller as he then was, was touring Borneo by canoe, and entered the village of Lepu Tepu in the territory of the Punan Dyaks, "the wickedest of all Dyak tribes." The people of Lepu Tepu were starving, and the rajah, anxious to find a good omen, decided he had found one in the person of Mr. Charles Miller. It was a good thing he decided that Mr. Miller was merely a good omen and not a good meal. Anyway, he said he would send out some of his men to hunt for some meat.

"I tried to get a glimpse of the men starting out on the hunt," says Mr. Miller, "but all I saw was a group of warriors in their Sunday best and in their midst an old man. I couldn't for the world of me figure out what such an old man was to do in a hunt and of all things stripped naked. Maybe another *njaho* or omen?"

You or I, having nasty suspicious minds, might have jumped to an unpleasant conclusion. Mr. Miller did go so far as to enquire from his gun-carrier what was afoot, but the man merely grinned and said everything would be all right. The hunting party would not return empty-handed.

It didn't.

After sniffing "the welcome odour of cooking," Mr. Miller was invited to sit down and eat.

"It was a spongy sort of mixture, somewhat soapy and sweet in flavour. But it was tender and at that moment tasted pretty good to me. I cleaned up my plate."

Rows and rows of skulls stared down at Mr. Miller during this meal, but still the penny did not drop.

Making polite conversation, the rajah mentioned that if only the Government would not take away his people as slaves he would gladly guarantee that they would not "return to the pleasure of their forefathers and eat the flesh of men."

It was at this point, says Mr. Miller, that a "horrible fear" suddenly stabbed him. Confirmation was not long in coming. He did what any right-thinking man would have done — he dashed out and was sick in the forest.

"I had eaten my first dinner of human flesh and devoutly hoped

it would be my last."

And that is how Mr. Charles Miller became Mr. Charles (Cannibal) Miller. If only he had been a more suspecting man he would have nibbled at the salad and left the main course alone; though that would never have made a story for "Personal Adventure."

There is a picture of Mr. Miller; also a picture of the kind of old man he accidentally ate.

IT'S EASIER TO WORK

IT is hard to speak too highly of the public spirit of men like Mr. Bernard Ward who writes a 120-page book showing me how to "Scoop The Pools Again!" (Cherry Tree), when he might have spent his time cleaning up on his own account.

I am as nimble a mathematician as ever worked a water-cooled slide rule, but some of Mr. Ward's chapters frighten me. Here are typical chapter headings:

How To Find The Number Of Lines Necessary To Cover Any Permutation On Long List Pools;
Conditional Permutations On Points And Results Pools;
Interchanging Selections: How To Calculate The Lines Necessary To Cover.

Think of a number. Mr. Heinz's number will do — 57. Open Mr. Ward's book at page 57 and this is the kind of gripping prose which meets the eye:

NO BANKER PERMS

Six teams permuted from 7	7 lines	3/6
Six teams permuted from 8	28 lines	14/-
Six teams permuted from 9	82 lines	42/-
Six teams permuted from 10	210 lines	105/-

Only once did I fill in a football coupon. I carried it round with me for two days until I could find somebody to lend me a stamp, then for another day until I could find a letter box. Eventually it came back to me stamped "Too Late." It was probably a winning entry; I didn't dare to check up. Mr. Ward's book does not persuade me to try again. No, I am going to attempt something simpler, like designing a blue-print for a spiral staircase.

IN THE GROOVE

IF you are one of those persons who have never heard of the Herman Ork (orchestra to you); if you have never even attended a jam session with Jelly Roll Morton, Django Rheindhart and the Miff Mole Molers; if, furthermore, you cannot distinguish between the Love Sick Blues, the Lonesome Weary Blues, Do Dirty Blues, Weary Money Blues, Hangman Blues and Street Walker Blues, then you ought to read "Jazzology" (Portnall Press) and smarten your ideas up.

Here is one example of what you are missing — a verse from "Double-Crossin' Papa," who was probably an old flame of Pistole Packin' Momma:

*Double-crossin' Papa, you can't double-cross me.
You can't have your cake and eat it you see.
You said you was at a lodge meetin' last week;
I was with my other Papa with a new technique.
If that's the way you want it, that's the way it'll be,
I'm broad-minded, it's OK with me.*

It's cute, isn't it? Like a breath of wind from a stopped-up drain. Personally I'm going out to sing some old-fashioned carols.

FUTILE FACTS
about CHRISTMAS

The biggest howl of protest when Cromwell's Government forbade the observance of Christmas went up from the tallow-chandlers. They said the ban would reduce the consumption of brawn, and so their sales of mustard would go down.



SOLDIERS's Sgt. R. C. Scott, detailed to write about Army ghosts, decided he could get the information more easily if he became a ghost himself. As evidence he produces this ghost photograph of himself taken by S/Sgt. D. O'Neill. But you know what serjeants are ...

Shropshire men who rose against William the Conqueror but later made it up with William and is said to have had no peace of mind thereafter. Whenever England is in real danger Wild Eric and his band ride out from the Shropshire lead mines. The last time they were seen was just before the Crimean War, so apparently Eric never considered the issue of the later wars in doubt.

Early in the 1800's a serjeant of the Coldstream Guards murdered his wife and threw her headless body into the canal. Her ghost was seen by several sentries at Wellington Barracks. There was so much alarm, that an official inquiry was held and some of the sentries made statements on oath before a magistrate. One Guardsman said he heard a voice call out, "Bring me a light." Another swore that he saw a woman minus head rise from the ground in front of his sentry-box.

There is the strange case of the vagrant Army drummer of Tedworth who, when arrested on a charge of stealing, had his drum confiscated by the magistrate. While in jail he said: "The man who took my drum away shall never have peace till it is

the animal and shattered on the wall. The "bear" walked on unharmed and the sentry fell in a fit. Nobody else saw it. The man died of shock a few days later.

Today a passage in Peel Castle is walled up so that the ghostly Black Dog may never prowl again. In the old days the sentries believed that the dog was the Devil and that if they wished to avoid harm they must never walk around alone. One drunken sentry laughed at the superstition and wandered off without a companion. The Black Dog was seen to follow him. His companions shouted a warning. Soon they heard terrible cries and rushing down some steps found their comrade in great distress. He had been struck dumb and died three days later with his secret.

There are many versions of the Angels of Mons and the Ghost Gunner of Loos and it is very difficult to find people who are supposed to have been eyewitnesses, but there is more evidence about another World War One ghost story. Cheriton Grange, near Folkestone, was used to billet Canadian troops in 1915 and although Canadians are not by nature spook-minded every man refused to stay an-

THE ARMY'S OWN GHOSTS

THE traditional ghosts of Britain are mainly civilians—unhappy ladies and the villainous squires' sons who did 'em wrong. But there are quite a few Army ghosts too.

Most Army apparitions originated during the period between the Cromwellian Wars and the early nineteenth century. There are few stories of ghosts functioning in barracks and depots in the twentieth century. That could mean that people are more sceptical these days, or that the world has become so undesirable that no ghost would want to re-visit it.

In the ancient village of Kineton in Warwickshire you may still find a rustic who remembers hearing of the ghosts of Edgehill. In the spring of 1642, some two or three months after that great battle, the good folk of the village were startled one night by groanings, battle cries and the sound of drums. The brave few who left their beds looked over the moor and saw soldiers with the King's standard and soldiers with the Parliamentary colours going at it hammer and tongs as if the issue hadn't already been decided weeks back. A magistrate and a parson saw the "battle." King

Charles was so impressed that he sent down three of his officers who saw a second performance a few nights later and recognised some of the Cavaliers who had been killed at Edgehill. Clergy tried to quieten the dead who wouldn't lie down, but the "battle" continued at intervals. The local folk believed that the dead were unable to rest because the battle of Edgehill had taken place on the Sabbath. Fine story for the Lord's Day Observance Society!

An old house at St. Albans is said to have been haunted by the clatter of horses' hooves and the clash of swords on armour. It stood over the site of the Battle of St. Albans, fought in the Wars of the Roses, but when it was pulled down noises were still heard on the site. At Woodmanton, in Wiltshire, a small valley is supposed to be haunted by the sound of tramping feet and the occasional appearance of headless horses. According to local tradition, a great battle was fought here between the invading Romans and the gentlemen who first inhabited these islands. Wild Eric led a band of

returned." Nor did the magistrate have any peace. Every night when he settled down in bed the drum beat an unearthly tattoo till daybreak. When the drummer was sentenced to transportation on a charge of witchcraft the drum was silenced. The magistrate forgot all about it and kept the drum in his house. Some years later the ghostly tattoos started all over again. The drummer had returned to this country...

One of Cromwell's soldiers, a Warwickshire man, asked that his skull should not be buried with him. For many years it was used as a drinking vessel but the local vicar felt that this wasn't quite the thing and told the sexton to dig a special grave for it. The sexton, for some reason, started work at twilight and although the soil was soft broke his spade. When he came back with another spade there were such strange rumblings from the ground and so many weird noises in the churchyard that he ran for his life, swearing that it was the skull of the Devil.

Ghosts are not always in the shape of human beings. In 1816 a sentry on guard at the Tower of London saw a large bear walking up a flight of steps in the gloaming. He lunged at it with his bayonet which went through

other night in the house after a ghost had wandered in and out of their rooms. Nobody would take over the house after 1918 and reluctantly the owners had it pulled down. A local man wandering among the debris saw an old woman wearing a black cape standing at the entrance to a cellar and called to her that the place was unsafe. She vanished immediately...

Three members of a tank crew which operated at Knightsbridge in the Western Desert claim to have seen a ghost quad (a gun tractor which carries crew and stores) when they re-visited the scene of the battle. Although there were no other people in that part of the desert they saw the quad moving slowly towards them over a hill. It vanished as suddenly, and all three tankmen discount the idea of a mirage.

Poltergeists are said to have been troublesome to the members of the Allied Military Mission who took over a house at Iserlohn in Westphalia in the winter of 1945-46. One of the secretaries was persistently thrown out of bed and although the bedroom door was always locked it kept slamming. Someone discovered that years before a murder had taken place in that room.



"What about a spot of that marvellous sense of direction you developed in the Western Desert?"

Try These After a Pint

Pumpernickel

Divide the party into two teams. In turn one member of each team answers questions from his opposite number in the other team, but he substitutes "Pumpernickel" (or any other word the party agrees on) for one word, or rather word-sound, in his answers—thus: *What do you think of Army rates of pay?*—Well, it's a pumpernickel living. *Are you keeping well?*—No, I can't pumpernickel the cold. *What did you do on leave?*—I went to the zoo and saw the pumpernickels. *Answer:* Bare, bear. If, after three questions, the questioner guesses the word-sound, it's a point to his team.

Noses

The party splits up into two lines, kneeling facing each other. On the floor in front of the first man in each line is a match-box cover standing on end. When the word is given the two end men pick up the match-box covers on their noses and pass them from nose to nose down the line. If one is dropped or touched by hand, it goes back to the head of the line and starts down again. Winning team is the first to get its match-box on the nose of its last man.

Before and Behind

Teams stand lined up opposite each other. A chair on which are twice as many small objects as team-members stands beside the first man in each team. Each object is passed from hand to hand down the team in front of the players and back to the first man and the chair behind the players.

Rules are that no player shall have more than one object in one hand at a time; if any object is dropped, the dropper picks it up and takes it to the chair to start on its round again. Winners are the first team to get their collection back on the chair.

Oddments

Who in the party can—
Throwing playing-cards one at a time, get most of a pack in a waste-paper basket on the other side of the room?

In a given time, pick up most matches and put them on top of a bottle, touching them only with two other match-sticks, held one in each hand?

Roll a coin so that it stops nearest a mark in the centre of the table?

Think up most words in one category (animals, motor-cars, clothes, etc.) in a minute?

"Oh stop worrying! No one will notice."

FUTILE FACTS
about CHRISTMAS

In 1918 Christmas cigars had to be made of tobacco because of the paper shortage.

Spotting the Bogus

Under each of the headings below masquerades a fictitious entry. See if you can spot it:

Appointments

Master of the King's Flight
Hereditary Lord High Admiral of the Wash
Master in Lunacy
Warden of the Romney Marshes

Regiments

The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers
The Glamorgan Yeomanry
The Scottish Horse
The Barsetshire Yeomanry (Queen's Own)

Magazines

Fur and Feather
Horse and Hound
Rod and Line
Wife and Home

Banks

The British Linen Bank
The Westminster Bank
The Royal Bank of Scotland
The Royal Caledonian Bank

Football Teams

Huddersfield Town
Newcastle United
Stockport City
Swindon Town

Orders of Chivalry

The Most Noble Order of the Garter
The Most Ancient and Noble Order of the Thistle
The Most Illustrious Order of the Leek
The Most Exalted Order of the Star of India

Whiskies

White Horse
Red Hackle
Brown Nectar
Black and White

Societies

Tail-Waggers Club
Anti-Vegetarian League
British Goat Society
Woman's Mission to Women.

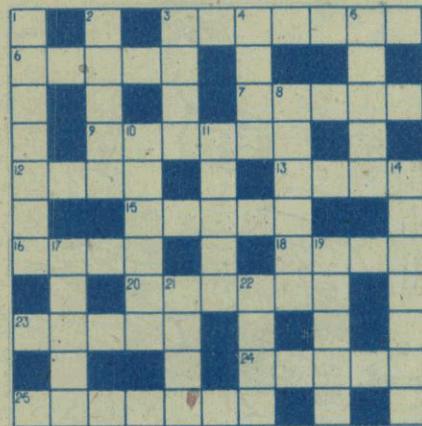
(Answers on Page 43)

CROSSWORD

DOWN:

- The important part.
- A club makes this town.
- The shakes.
- Piece of land where the Crusaders fought.
- More aged fruit makes wine.
- The strait may have straightened.
- The appleman.
- Seven is an interesting number of them.
- Spare it to dash about the country.
- Scottish isle.
- Town to eat.
- Low-high for tide.
- Does she dine upside down?

(Solution on Page 43)



ACROSS: 3. Add peat to get modification. — 6. Not the past tense of sling. — 7. It's not rude to call a man's face this. — 9. Odd. — 12. Shoot a line for a river. — 13. Bertram loses his sheep. — 15. Time. — 16. Far, near or middle. — 18. Evan's river? — 20. Attacks. — 23. Noisy idler. — 24. Good ones are worth action. — 25. Bit with a camera.

(Solution on Page 43)

Games

How Much Do You Know?

- The Americans have a state called Arkansas, but they pronounce it in an unexpected fashion. How?
- In which countries are these towns: Moulmein, Patras, Aleppo, Pretoria, Entebbe, Bérréba?
- Anagrams:
AWA' THEN, SACKS—
a Canadian province;
APES FLOP FEET—
something sticky;
REAL GUN CART—
shape.
- If a man wangles all his relatives into jobs in the same firm, what is he guilty of?
- Who weren't afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?
- An artichoke is a kind of—
dandelion, sunflower, rosehip, cabbage?
- The play "Blithe Spirit" is named from a poem to what by whom?
- What have these races in common: Jews, Phoenicians, Arabs, Assyrians, Arameans?
- If you heard these signature tunes on the radio, who would be conducting the band: Bugle Call Rag, Here's To The Next Time, When Day Is Done, On The Air?
- The late A. Hitler is believed to have married his girl-friend

just before he died. What was her name?

Who: Kept on walking? Said, "We are not amused"? Ran naked and dripping down the road shouting "Eureka!"?

2. In which countries are these towns: Moulmein, Patras, Aleppo, Pretoria, Entebbe, Bérréba?

12. Anagrams:

AWA' THEN, SACKS—
a Canadian province;

APES FLOP FEET—
something sticky;

REAL GUN CART—
shape.

13. Which is the higher rank, Rear-Admiral or Vice-Admiral?

14. Who holds the land speed record and at what speed?

15. At whom or what did Peeping Tom peep?

16. Find the lady in each of these sentences:

To make chocolate truffle, mix marzipan, gelatine and cocoa.

"Petrol! Petrol!" gasped the footsore motorist.

I'm going to stand on this tall hill and enjoy the panorama my own way.

(Answers on Page 43)



THIS MONTH'S PROBLEM PICTURE

For nearly a year this photograph has been lying in the Chief Sub-Editor's "pending" tray, and he still hasn't puzzled out how five girls can have six pairs of legs. Perhaps you can help him?

CORNY BUT CLEAN

A woman took a bear to the cinema to see "Gone With The Wind".

"Pretty silly, isn't it — taking a bear to see 'Gone With The Wind'?" asked a man sitting beside her.

"Yes, I know," said the woman, "but he couldn't get on with the book."

* * *

A man went into a public-house and asked for two whiskies. He drank one and poured the other into his breast pocket.

He asked for two more whiskies, and once again drank one and poured the other in his pocket.

* * *

The man walked up the wall, across the ceiling, down the wall to the bar, drank a pint, walked up the wall, across the ceiling, down the wall and out.

"That's peculiar, isn't it?" said a customer.

"Yes," said the barmaid. "He never does say good-night."

* * *

A Commando on Christmas home leave spent a long evening at the "local" with some friends. They showed him a quick way home across the fields, forgetting there was a bull loose.

The bull attacked, not recognising the beret. The Commando gripped it by the horns, lugged the beast this way and that way about the field until it was able to break free and bolt.

"Pity, I had those last two drinks," mused the Commando. "I ought to have got that chap off his bike."

* * *

"Any cigarettes, mister?"

A page to bring you back to earth — ALL ABOUT BLANCO!

THIS is a story which begins in 1875. A young man named John Needham Pickering, who was a Volunteer — a Territorial of his day — decided that there could be some improvement on the raw pipeclay which soldiers used for whitening their accoutrements.

He put up a suggestion to his superiors in the family firm of Joseph Pickering and Sons Ltd, which for 50 years had been manufacturing polishes of various sorts, and "Blanco" was born.

Precisely how "Blanco" differed from the old pipeclay it is not possible to say, because Messrs. Pickering, understandably, are chary about saying exactly what "Blanco" is and how it is processed. The Army, as was its habit, looked on this new-fangled stuff with suspicion. "Blanco"-versus-pipeclay arguments went on in canteens, barrack-rooms and CO's offices and for ten or fifteen years the progress of the new product was slow; but in time "Blanco" came to whiten nearly all the buckskin equipment the Army then wore.

Having conquered the Army, "Blanco" got a big boost in the early 1900's when white shoes and boots became fashionable street wear and it settled down to a steady market among sporting men and women as cricket and tennis became more popular. Civilian demands soon outstripped those of the Army and that was how things stayed, except in war-time.

About 1900 the Army went into khaki and khaki "Blanco" was added to the white. In 1908 the Army took to web equipment and five years later "Blanco" was officially approved as the Army's web cleaner. Since then other colours for web equipment, ranging from yellow-khaki to green, have been added to the range. Demands for colours fluctuate and Pickering's are not able to say definitely which colour is most popular.

During World War Two, No. 3, the mud-coloured khaki-green shade, sold the biggest quantities, but now peace has come back units are demanding brighter colours and even white.



YELLOW



YELLOW-KHAKI



WHITE



KHAKI-GREEN



KHAKI-DRAB



VERY DRAB



DRABBER

the same labour shortages as other manufacturers.

They refute any suggestion that labour which could more usefully have been employed elsewhere was used to make "Blanco". Never, during the war years, were more than 60 people directly engaged in making "Blanco", and most of them were girls under 18 and "non-mobile" married women. Making "Blanco" is not a highly-skilled job, but blending colours, pressing blocks, experimenting for improvements and

dends would apparently have been pretty small.

"Blanco", say the makers, restores the original colour of webbing or gives it a new colour and keeps it smart and serviceable without scrubbing, which often rots or destroys the material. They report that the only unauthorised use for "Blanco" of which they have heard was in the cavalry, where it did duty as a preventive and cure for saddle-sores.

In the controversy which rages round "Blanco's" use in the Army and attains the eminence of questions in the House of Commons, Pickering's say its value as a dressing for webbing is rarely at issue and add, a little austere: "Even where it is, the source will probably be found amongst the naturally untidy who, as civilians, wear eggstains on the waistcoat. The excessive use of "Blanco" to the detriment of military and vocational training is, of course, to be deprecated, but used to a reasonable extent "Blanco" should be no more of a bugbear to the soldier than are normal domestic practices he undertakes in the interests of his personal appearance."

Like Henry Ford, who liked funny stories about his Tin Lizzie because they were good publicity, Pickering's are always delighted to hear new stories about "Blanco". The one they like best is the one about the Guardsman who lost his unit in North Africa and wandered in the desert for days without food or drink. Eventually he was found by a patrol and gasped "Water! Water!" They handed him a water-bottle and he croaked "At last — at last I can 'Blanco' my webbing."



— and an unsentimental poem about Christmas

SONNET WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON

To a popular leader much to be congratulated on the avoidance of a strike at Christmas.

I know you. You will hail the huge release,
Saying the sheathing of a thousand swords,
In silence and injustice, well accords
With Christmas bells. And you will gild with grease
The papers, the employers, the police,
And vomit up the void your windy words
To your New Christ; who bears no whip of cords
For them that traffic in the doves of peace.
The feast of friends, the candle-fruited tree,
I have not failed to honour, and I say
It would be better for such men as we,
And we be nearer Bethlehem, if we lay
Shot dead on scarlet snows-for liberty,
Dead in the daylight upon Christmas Day.

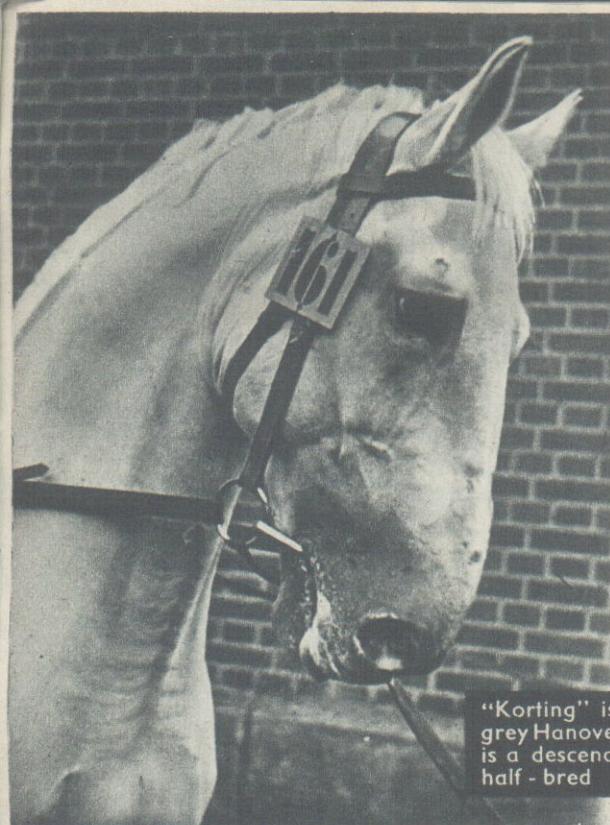
G. K. CHESTERTON.

throughout the Army men spent an excessive amount of time on their webbing."

Demands fluctuated, according to whether the bulk of the Army was fighting or in training, but production fluctuated for other reasons. After the air raids on Sheffield in 1940, Pickering's Albion Works were deprived of their power supply and forced to stop production for nine weeks, just when demands were at their highest. There was a chronic shortage of materials during the war years and Pickering's suffered

incorporating substitutes when there are shortages all need the expert's touch. The word "Blanco", by the way, is a registered trademark and refers only to the products of the firm.

Pickering's also deny that they made vast profits out of their war-time production: "The effect is rather the reverse," they say. "Plant and machinery are worn out and taxation takes all the extra profits." So if there was ever any truth in the barrack-room suggestions that CO's had shares in "Blanco", their divi-



"Korting" is one of the few grey Hanoverian stallions and is a descendant of an English half-bred Cleveland Bay.

THE STALLIONS

WHEN a Military Government officer entered the town of Celle hard on the heels of advancing Infantry just before the war ended he went straight to the Hanoverian Landstud hoping to find at least some of the famous Hanoverian stallions in the 17th century stables.

But all he found was disorder and signs that the Landstud had been rapidly evacuated. The stallions had been dispersed throughout Northern Germany.

The culmination of Control Commission's search for the lost stallions was reached recently when 350 of them were on show at the Celle Landstud — together with two old State Coaches used more than a century ago by British Royalty when they visited Germany. These coaches are 150 years old and bear on one side the Royal Coat-of-Arms and on the other the crest of Hanover. They were last used officially by King Ernst August of Hanover in 1835, after which they were preserved at Herrenhausen Palace, where the Kings of Hanover lived. Just before the war they were presented to the Landstud and kept as show-pieces in Celle's Museum. Even during the war the coaches were washed and greased every week, and every Monday the coachmen's uniforms of red and gold were taken down and brushed.

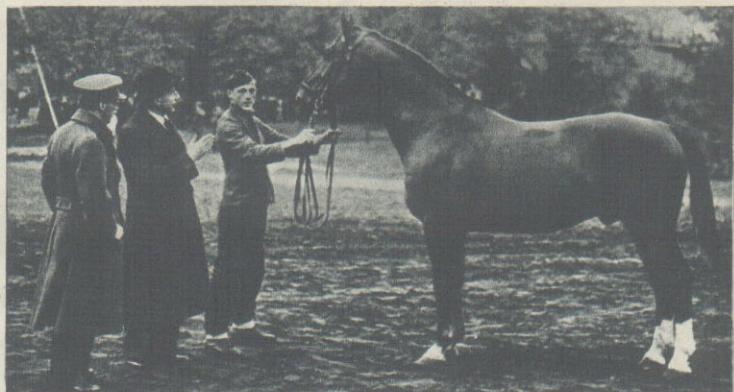
The Hanoverian stallions themselves — even-tempered, fine-muscled horses with a quick turn of speed and good jumping powers (they also make good farm horses) — are a link with the days when England and Hanover were closely related, politically and through the royal families. The Stud was founded in Celle in 1735 by a Cabinet Order of King George the Second of England, with a stock of 14 stallions. Within a few years the number

had grown to 110. It was from the Celle Stud that many of the horses were drawn for service in the German Army. The Seven Years War and the Napoleonic Wars brought about a decrease in stock and a lowering in quality, but these were gradually built up again and by 1861 the number was more than 200.

A "National" Winner

The first Hanoverian stallions were put into stud in 1840, but they were light in build, so a number of English horses were shipped across the Channel to improve the strain; among them was "The Colonel", a Grand National winner. It was from such as "The Colonel" that the present-day stallions inherited their fine hunting prowess. Most of the English horses were Cleveland Bays, the old Yorkshire coach horses, Norfolk Trotters, and Hackneys.

Today, German horse-breeders and the staff of the Landstud (many of them have been stable hands for 30 years and more), are building up a new strain of Hanoverian stallions to serve the agricultural region of North-West Germany where there is a grave shortage of farm horses. There will be none to export for a long time.



Above: Dr. Georg Steinkopff, manager of the Landstud, shows off "Abendsport", an 11-year-old Hanoverian stallion. Below: Uniformed stable "boys", some of whom are 70 years old, now take instructions from British officers of the CCG.



OF HANOVER

Carefully preserved during two wars with Britain, the 150-year-old Gala Coach used by British Royalty when they visited Germany is drawn by six Hanoverian stallions. Note the British Coat-of-Arms.



THE BOOK

STORIES printed on these two pages are adapted from "The Campaign In Burma" by Lieut-Col. Frank Owen, OBE (Stationery Office, 2s). It is a journalist's account of the campaign, written with neither literary frills nor technical distractions, and the result is an official history with the pace of an adventure story.

As editor of the newspaper "SEAC", Owen was in a unique position to gather first-hand material for his book. Besides having access to information that passed through his Calcutta office, he was able, because of his adequate staff, to spend a great deal of time in personal visits to commanders in the field and to front-line troops.

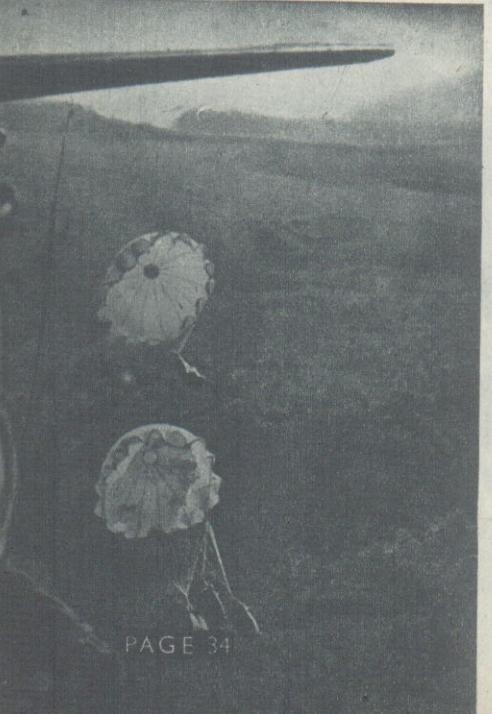
His book brings the spotlight a little more on the still insufficiently appreciated work of the 14th Army and its collaborators; it also provides a balanced picture valuable to men who, in the depths of the jungle, had little time to study what was happening outside their own sectors of the campaign.

R.L.E.

ALAMEIN OF ASIA



Above: Roads marked on the map "jeepable in fine weather" had to become vital L of C in the torrential monsoons. They collapsed under tanks and heavy trucks, but still 14th Army ploughed on. Below: "Rations away!" Whole divisions were fed and supplied from the air.



AS Alamein was the tide-mark of the struggle for Egypt, so Kohima was the tide-mark of the struggle for India. There a garrison of 3500 men withstood the efforts of 15,000 Japanese for 16 days and nights.

When they were cut off, the garrison of Kohima held a ridge less than a mile long, on the crest of which are a number of hillocks and on either side of which are commanding heights, which the Japanese held.

The enemy was well dug in round the town and from the higher ground could lay both the garrison and the relieving column from the north under harassing fire. He also delivered frontal infantry attacks against the garrison, attacks which were repelled only after ferocious fighting in which Indian sappers blasted the Japanese out of the huts they had occupied. Some of the intruders hid in a brick oven and were not forced out until troops smashed the iron doors open and lobbed in grenades.

Side By Side

The garrison was hemmed in a tightening ring, with the enemy attacking from all points. So close were the two sides that a Japanese infantryman deepening his dug-out shot a shovelful of soil into a British trench. The two sides divided the District Commissioner's garden between them. The Japanese held his bungalow and to take it the British drove a tank up to the front door and pumped shells into it. At times the lines of his tennis-court, still distinguishable after several days of slaughter, divided the two sides.

Allied pilots flew through a storm of enemy shells and bullets to drop supplies on the shrinking target; they dropped water, for the only supply was 30 yards from the Jap lines and men had to dodge sniper fire over bare ground to get to and from it; and they dropped waterproof sheets to serve as catchment ponds for the monsoon rain.

For a fortnight the garrison had no respite and no more than a couple of hours' sleep on end. Numbers of wounded were piling up and resources for handling them were short, so a British doctor organised raids, with his staff and some sappers, on supplies in ruined hospitals in Jap hands. They brought back priceless materials. The medical orderlies, three-quarters of them Indians, could crawl through No Man's Land only at dawn and dusk, when it was hard to distinguish them, and both sides fired on them impartially.

The wounded had to be laid in pits without proper cover, under systematic enemy mortar fire. Wounded men were being re-wounded three or four times. The Advanced Dressing Station had three or four hits, two in one day, and in its shambles the doctor who organised the medicine-raids handled close on 600 casualties, amputating with a knife that, he said, "towards the end became rather like a hack-saw."

The garrison was gradually forced into a tiny area which became famous as Summerhouse Hill. The men lay always under the bombardment of the batteries on the slopes above the town. Five times one village changed hands and so costly were the daylight assaults to the Japs that they left day-time to the guns and only put in Infantry by night.

Meanwhile the British 2nd Division, hastily called up from India, was battling to the rescue. It had tried to get to Kohima before the Japanese, but only the 4th Battalion Royal West Kents,

the leading battalion of the first Brigade, 161, got through to join the garrison. The rest of the Brigade was surrounded and cut off a few miles down the road.

Guns And Tanks

It was not easy to deploy guns or tanks on either side of the valley road that runs from the Dimapur railhead to Kohima; it has slopes of 45 degrees on each side. But Cameron Highlanders, backed by Grant tanks and mountain batteries, broke through the Jap road blocks and linked up with 161 Brigade.

On the 15th day of the siege, reinforcements crawled into the garrison by a gully; Camerons and Worcesters, with tanks, artillery and engineers, broke through the Japanese road-blocks and bunker positions to let ambulances through under fire. Finally, the next day, Royal Berkshires marched into Kohima and raised the siege.

Major-General John Grover, Commander of 2 Div. who had fought at Hill 60 in World War One, said of Kohima that it reminded him of "a dirty corner of the Somme, and was worse."

Then 2 Div. set about clearing the enemy from the surrounding hills. There was still plenty of fight left in the Jap and the battle of Kohima was by no means over. For another month it raged, a stand-up slogging match which cost the enemy 4000 dead, and then the Japanese attempt to invade India was over, broken on Kohima ridge.

BATTLE OF THE ADMIN BOX



"Then why is he only in the 14th Army, while our Jim is in the 1st?" — from "SEAC".

THE British offensive of January 1944 in the Arakan had come to a stop and the Japanese had taken the initiative. 7th Indian Division was cut off and its headquarters were being attacked.

Major-General Frank Messervy, the commander, was woken by an outburst of shouts and walked round the camp in pyjamas, trying to find out what was happening. The camp was in confusion and it was very dark.

Suddenly the Japs, with a cheer that Messervy likened to an Arsenal goal cheer, attacked the quarters of the Signals, who, with a company of Indian Engineers, were acting as Div. HQ Defence Force. The enemy attacked in a waist-high mist, which partly concealed them, but they pierced only the outer fringes of the position.

They brought their mortars into play and soon the General Staff office was in flames, all

the wires were cut and 7 Div's communications with the outside world were confined to a single wireless link with IV Corps Admin. Box. Messervy decided to move his headquarters to a place from which he could better control his division.

Forming his staff into small parties, he led them through sniper-infested jungle to his Divisional Admin. Box, four miles away, while the Signalmen held on to Div. HQ. Four times the Japs rushed them, but the Signals held firm; their last wireless message ended with a voice saying "put a pick through the set." Then they set out to rejoin their General.

8000 Cut Off

In the Admin. Box were about 8000 admin. troops, Pioneers, Sappers, muleteers, native road-builders, ordnance and medical units and two battalions of Infantry (Royal West Yorks and Gurkhas), about a dozen assorted artillery batteries and two tank squadrons; later they were joined by a battalion of KOSB and one of Punjabis. The Brigades of the Division formed their own boxes; with ciphers compromised and wires cut, communications were kept going with a few wireless sets over which orders were given in guarded language, with local jokes the Japs could be trusted not to grasp, and the use of French which, a brigadier admitted, "would have stumped the French, let alone the Japanese."

The Admin. Box was set in a cupped area of dried-up paddy-fields about a mile square, with a solitary mound in the middle. The whole area was dominated by a ring of hills none of which was commanded by 7 Div. because there was not the strength available.

In that bowl, under the guns of the enemy on the hills, British and Indian soldiers fought on in clouds of smoke that rose as ammunition and petrol dumps blew up. Four times the stocks of ammunition got dangerously low, but the airdrop supply system, developed in Wingate's first expedition, brought food for the guns as well as for the men and fuel for the tanks.

Every part of the Box was

vulnerable to fire and a glimmer of light attracted a hail of bullets. Wounded were operated on within a hundred yards of the spot where they had fallen. "One patient practically fell on my table," said a doctor.

Prisoners As Screens

An enemy assault captured a hillock on which three field ambulances had established a medical dressing station. The yellow men rushed, howling, into the wards and cut down doctors, orderlies and patients. When a counter-attack was delivered, they forced their prisoners forward with bound hands, as moving screens against tank machine-gun fire, while they sat themselves in fox-holes and laughed. They lined up six doctors and killed them with a bullet in the ear; they shot and bayoneted every man of the medical staff they could find; they refused dressings to the wounded and water to the dying.

The West Yorks were able to rescue a few survivors after a counter-attack. Later, a detachment of the Yorkshiremen commanded by RSM. Maloney detected a party of Japanese moving along a *chaung* and in 15 minutes killed 45 of them in an area of 40 square yards, with grenades. Loot they were carrying showed they were the killers of the wounded.

That same *chaung*, later known as Blood Alley, was a pre-arranged Jap forming-up position and since the presence of British troops there was not in Jap Operations orders, troops continued to arrive there and be wiped out by RSM. Maloney and his men.

"Ascot Car Park"

A curious feature of the siege was the immunity of a mass of transport — "an Ascot car park", Messervy called it — in the Box and 100 pontoon-carrying vehicles abandoned at the foot of the hills held by the Japs. The enemy had orders that transport was to be preserved to carry them to Calcutta when the British were destroyed and they stuck rigidly to those orders and never fired on the vehicles.

While the battle was raging, other Divisions were marching southward to the rescue and 20 days after the siege had started the men of 7 Div. turned to pursue their besiegers. The Japanese attack had failed because 7 Div., like 5 Div. besieged beside them, had stood and fought when the Japs had expected them to run and had been victualled from the air when the Japs expected them to collapse from lack of supplies.



Above: In a wet, wild, almost roadless country, monsoon-swollen chaungs (streams) were among the hazards facing 14th Army. Below: Japanese prisoners were often exhausted and starving, always ashamed of capture and afraid of ill-treatment. Given a mug of tea and a packet of biscuits, they thawed visibly.



The Corporal, the Bombardier and the Flight-Lieutenant, returning from the wars to the dying seaport of Wells, decided to carve out a new job for themselves. They decided the answer was —



One of the "old hands" at Wells displays a healthy catch of whelks. London hotels take a big proportion of current hauls.



The grin of prosperity. Whelks? I just can't help catching them, says this expert.

"WHELK, name given to a large number of marine gastropod molluscs with solid spiral shells and in particular to the members of the genus *Buccinum* in which the common whelk (*buccinum undatum*) is placed. It is a carnivore, eating both living animals and carrion, especially other molluscs e.g. clams and scallops." — *Encyclopaedia Britannica*

WELLS - next - the - Sea (Norfolk) offers holidaymakers the delights of an old-world seaport with creek-lined marshes and pine-bounded sands unrivalled on the East Coast.

But to its sons and daughters Wells has little to offer, for times are bad. The Port of Wells still has its harbourmaster, Lloyds' agent and port pilot, but no cargo boat has moored up to the grass-grown quayside since November 1945. There is almost no other industry in the town, though there are jobs galore on outlying farms, but then farm work isn't everybody's cup of tea.

Wanted Action

It didn't appeal to ex-Cpl. Ronnie Brown of the RAC, and he discovered that his old school pals, the Money brothers (Raymond, a former Lance-Bombardier, and Laurence, released from the RAF as a Flt-Lieut.) were not any keener on that kind of resettlement. Talking things over they found that they wanted a job which would combine adventure with a reasonable return for their labours. The problem: Where to find it?



Old Bill Grimes, who has been whelking for 40 years, shows ex-Cpl. Ronnie Brown of the Eighth Army how to fix a whelk pot.



Ex-Cpl. Brown and George Money inspect their boat. The "Tony" was one of the "little craft" of Dunkirk.



Whelking by headlight: the captives are boiled in a copper before being sent to the London market.

Watching the whelk-boats chugging up the channel from the North Sea one summer's day ex-Desert Rat Ronnie Brown had the big idea. "Whelking is booming," he said. "There's room for us in the business. Why can't we get into it?"

The Money brothers explained why. For one thing none of them understood the technique of whelking and they were unacquainted with the market. They had no equipment. None of them had handled fishing boats.

Nevertheless they were all keen, and when they met mahogany-faced Bill Grimes, who had served in both world wars with the Navy and the Mercantile Marine, their minds were made up. Said Bill: "I've been whelking 40 years. I'll put you through the ropes but you'll need about a thousand pounds for equipment before you can start."

They hadn't got that much money but when George Money promised to join them as a partner they went ahead buying whelk-pots, thigh-boots, buoys, anchors and cables. Under the experienced eye of Bill Grimes they negotiated for the yawl "Tony" which had been lying on the marsh since her return from the Dunkirk evacuation of 1940. They got her fairly cheap for it was considered almost impossible to get her afloat.

The weather-beaten sages sitting on the quayside in the noon-day sun shook their heads. "You'll never move her," they said. "Wait till the high tides of autumn or it'll take 50 men to do the job."

But Brown and the Money brothers had not been in the Services for nothing. They set to work with planks and ropes and slid the one-and-a-half tons of the "Tony" into the muddy

waters of the channel while the cynics gaped.

They cleaned up the "Tony", overhauled her 23 hp engine and set to work fitting headlamps for use in the early morning. The next job was the whelk shed, for preparing whelks for the market is as important as catching them. It meant installing a copper to boil the whelks so that they would remain fresh for the London hotels which are the main buyers of the Wells catches.

Bill Grimes showed them how to lay the whelk-pots with 35 pots to each cable, and cork buoys and anchors attached. He demonstrated how to bait the pots with fish offal (two shillings a stone) and "gilly" crabs. He fathered them, cursed them and nursed them till they felt they had been whelking all their lives. They were ready for operations.

Up At Dawn

The demand for whelks grew. The whelk, which had once flourished around most of Britain's coast, now seemed to have concentrated off Wells. With cod fishing resuming on its pre-war scale and whelks in urgent demand for bait, the crew of the "Tony" knew that their livelihood was assured even when the seasonal demands of the hotels and snackbars slackened off.

It wasn't pleasant at first turning out of bed in the early morning to chug out of the channel with the high tide. It took a long time to get used to the idea of bouncing about in the North Sea when the sky and clouds merged in a blanket of grey, but it satisfied their craving for adventure and a job that was "different". And with whelks fetching about 22s. a bag they got a reasonable return for their labours.

R. C. SCOTT.



Incoming tide: on this flat coast the whelk boats are almost the only shipping left.



If you had been a soldier in 1914

... You would probably be enduring mud, frostbite and vermin in the Flanders trenches, with, as likely as not, no canteens and no small comforts to greet you when you came out of the line.

The urgent need for organised comforts for the "Contemptibles" caused the War Office to call on the Canteen and Mess Co-operative Society — the first of the co-operative canteen organisations — to combine with the best of the commercial contractors and provide an efficient canteen service for the Forces overseas. The resulting Expeditionary Force Canteens, almost identical in function with the Expeditionary Force Institutes organised by Naafi in the recent war — quickly became the universal provider in all theatres of war, establishing thousands of canteens, together with rest-houses, clubs, breweries, mineral water factories, cinemas and theatres.

The success of the venture proved the need for a permanent canteen service, and resulted in the formation of NAAFI in 1921 as the official canteen organisation for H.M. Forces.

NAAFI

The official canteen organisation for H.M. Forces in War and Peace
Naafi still needs female staff for canteens at Home. Write to: Staff Manager, Naafi, Ruxley Towers, Claygate, Esher, Surrey, England

What's your 'line' when you get your ticket?

Perhaps you haven't decided yet — but, whatever luck Civvy Street may bring, you'll be all the better off with some Savings behind you.

Ask your Unit Savings Officer for details of the B.A.O.R. Savings Scheme and how you can help it and yourself by saving in the Post Office Savings Bank or National Savings Certificates.

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You would be interested in some of the letters we receive from Service men and women praising Germolene.

Here is a Gunner writing for himself and his mates — just "to show my appreciation of Germolene, which is so marvellously quick in healing the cuts and abrasions which one suffers whilst doing maintenance work on the guns. We are a small detachment here, and we all club together and buy a large tin of Germolene between us. It certainly is an excellent dressing. We have never had any serious case of blood poisoning, thanks to its rapid healing properties."



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THERE'S ALWAYS**

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IT WAS A TOUGH YEAR IN SPORT

By *Archie Quick*

THE year AD 1946 will go down in sporting history as a black year for Great Britain. Defeat after defeat was inflicted upon us by foreigners in every field of sport.

The same thing happened at the end of World War One. In the Twenties we had the Carpentiers crushing our Becketts and Wells, we had the Pattersons and Tildens triumphing at Wimbledon, we had Warwick Armstrong and his merry men, Gregory, Macdonald, Macartney and the rest of them, over-lording us at Lords, we had the Sarazens and Hagens driving and putting us out of our own golf championships.

It seems that we, who taught the world to play, were much too busy teaching the world to work and fight.

It has consistently been the French who have caned their old masters. Racehorses Caracalla II, Chanteur II, Basileus, Priam II, Sayani, Souverain, Marsyas II; lawn tennis players Petra, Pelizza, Bernard—even Borotra and Brugnon at 50 years of age; men and women swimmers; professional footballers and scullers; boxers Medina, Walzach, Famechan. All have come, seen and conquered. As a salve, Henry Cotton and Maureen Ruttle won French golf championships in France; and Airborne proved himself a King of Stayers, although France has half a dozen and we have but one.

Let's start from the first day of January when McGibbon got a goal for Southampton against Chelsea in four and three-fifth seconds and Bradman hit a century against Australian Services just to show the shape of things to come. Professional football then was in the hands of Commanding Officers, Frank Soo was being sold by Stoke for £5000 to Leicester where he was to stay only a few weeks before moving on to Luton. Soo was really the cause of the present transfer troubles.

England's first Soccer team of the year contained six players

who still retained the Selectors' confidence in November—Swift, Scott, Hardwick, Franklin, Wright and Lawton. And here I must say I consider fair-haired little Billy Wright the outstanding Soccer star of 1946. Portsmouth lost the FA Cup after holding it a record seven years, being defeated by Birmingham, and Ted Robbins, Welsh FA Secretary and most lovable character in football, passed over.

Amateur Novelty

England's 2-0 win over Belgium at Wembley was notable for a record-breaking 44th national appearance by one Stanley Matthews, who was to cause quite a spot of bother later on. Scotland beat the Kiwis at Rugby, but could only draw at Soccer with Belgium. Then, just as a novelty, we had Arsenal amateur forward, Dr. Kevin O'Flanagan, playing for Ireland under both football codes on successive Saturdays. Jimmy Joel bought the racehorse Court Martial for £30,000.

An unknown Manchester business man, Mendel Showman, created a first-class surprise by winning the Amateur Billiards Championship at the first attempt; he almost pulled off a double, but was beaten in the snooker event by a young Exeter clerk named Pulman, who has since made century breaks as a professional. Sweden declared their crack middle-distance runner, Gunnar Haegg, a professional and so deprived Sydney Wooderson of a chance to prove his superiority. Haydn Davies and Wales defeated England by a try at Twickenham.

March 9 was a tragic day in English sport, for at the Bolton-Stoke League match at Burnden Park there was a disaster that resulted in 40 deaths and hundreds of injuries. Precautions in crowd control followed on all grounds. By the inspiration of her captain, Heaton, and his kicking, England defeated Scotland at Twickenham by 12-8, and a day or so later Medina threw away the bantam-weight championship of Europe by fouling Jackie Paterson, who thereby won his sixth major title.

Bleddyn Williams rocketed to stardom in the Wales-Scotland Rugger match, and ex-Petty Officer Tommy Weston won the Lincoln on Langton Abbot. The



Five men airborne: a fine action shot from Manchester when England beat Wales 3-0.

jockey was later to win the 2000 Guineas on Happy Knight and score in the Cambridgeshire again with Langton Abbot. Fred Rimell's jockeyship was the talk of the jumping season.

Lovely Cottage won the Grand National, and Scotland set 135,000 Hampden-crazy by beating England by a Delaney goal. This was the game in which Len Shackleton failed miserably, but later went to Newcastle for £13,000. A greyhound was bought for £3000 in this boom year of dogs and speedway, and Lester Finch achieved an ambition by leading Barnet to victory in the Amateur Cup and thus winning all the medals there were for him in football.

Charlton Athletic began a great fight to land the Cup and League. They fell between two stools, losing to Derby in a Wembley Final that was probably the most exciting event of the year, and failing to Birmingham and Aston

Villa in one of the most thrilling League finishes of all time. Charlton and Derby were level in the Final after 90 minutes, Bert Turner having put through his own goal, and then equalised within 30 seconds. Charlton cracked in extra time and lost 4-1. In the League, leadership see-sawed between three teams, and Birmingham did not win until the last day of the season, Charlton having then played nine matches in 15 days.

Pat Floyd won his fourth amateur heavyweight championship at 35 years of age—17 years after his first. Just then a lawn tennis shadow was thrown by the uninterrupted success of Jack Harper, rated sixth in Australia, but good enough to carry all before him here. He was a straw in a wind which eventually became a hayrick in a gale. The Indian cricketers lost their first match of the season at Worcester, but later



The happy grins as Airborne was led in after winning the Derby were to be repeated on St. Leger day.

welded into quite a good side, with Merchant one of the world's greatest bats.

Britain were humiliated in Paris when France won all the matches in the Davis Cup tie, and then we settled down to cricket. It was a season which confirmed Denis Compton as the world's pre-eminent batsman, proved Ikin and Evans to be future England's indispensables, and pushed Bedser into a lime-light for which he was not yet ready. He did so well against the Indians he could not be left out. Two Indians, Sarwate and Banerjee, scored 249 for the last wicket against Surrey, and gallant Freddie Mills, taking part in what was to prove the first of three courageous but hopeless battles, was knocked out by world cruiser champion Lesnevich. France beat England's Soccer best 2-1 in Paris. Then Woodcock was beaten by Mauriello in New York in the darkest week of the sporting year.

Newcastle signed a centre-half named Brennan, who was to prove the keystone of their success. Roderick lost to Walzach, and an Irishman, Bruen, won our Amateur Golf Championship. Still there was always Airborne to win the Derby and Oxford had taken the Boat Race!

Compton's hundreds and double centuries flowed from his immaculate bat, but later he was to have a spell of five innings for nine runs — ill luck that was broken by a century innings that

should have ended first ball! The French monopolised the Ascot Royal Meeting, but we had a heartening win in the first Test by 10 wickets, Bedser taking seven for 49 and four for 96.

The Snooker Championship Final, brilliantly stage-managed, drew thousands and gave Joe Davis another inevitable win. After 20 years without defeat he has now retired from the championship. Monday News won the Dog Derby before excited thousands, and then, at Wimbleton four American women obliterated us from the women's singles semi-finals, Petra won the men's title and Americans Kramer and Brown, Australians Brown and Pails and Czech Drobny completed our discomfiture. Salt was later rubbed in the wound by Borotra and Brugnon.

A Frenchman won the Diamond Sculls at Henley, a Swiss eight took the Grand, two Argentinians the Wyfolds, and only a couple of Leander men saved our face by keeping Danes away from the Goblets. Sam Snead, an American, "came from behind" to win the Open Golf Championship, with South Africa and Australia second and third and America fourth. What a month! We didn't do too badly on the running track, thanks chiefly to two West Indians, Macdonald Bailey and Wint. However, shy Sydney Wooderson, our cinder path hero of the

season, moving up to three miles won for us at the British Games in record time, kept a Dutchman away from the AAA title, won against France, and then at two miles beat all Europe at Oslo. I think he must be deemed the Athlete of the Year. I must mention also Alan Paterson, Scottish schoolboy, who high-jumped 6ft 7ins, and Jack Archer, who, after winning a European sprint championship, broke his leg in a county Rugby game. Tommy Price set the myriads of speedway fans roaring by taking the individual title unexpectedly from champions Kitchen, Johnson and Parker.

Dropped Last Man

Hollies, of Warwickshire, was the only bowler to get 10 wickets in an innings. England was deprived of victory in the Second Test when Paul Gibb dropped the last man in — 15 minutes from time. Woodcock beat Renet to become first Englishman to hold the European Heavyweight Championship. Strange, when you remember Wells, Beckett, Harvey, Petersen. Frenchmen intruded again at Goodwood; Benny Lynch, ill-starred flyweight, died after a chequered career; Yorkshire won the cricket championship for the fourth time in succession and 22nd time in all, after a rare fight with Lancashire and Middlesex; and Dodds left Blackpool for Shamrock Rovers, transfer-free, £750 down and £20

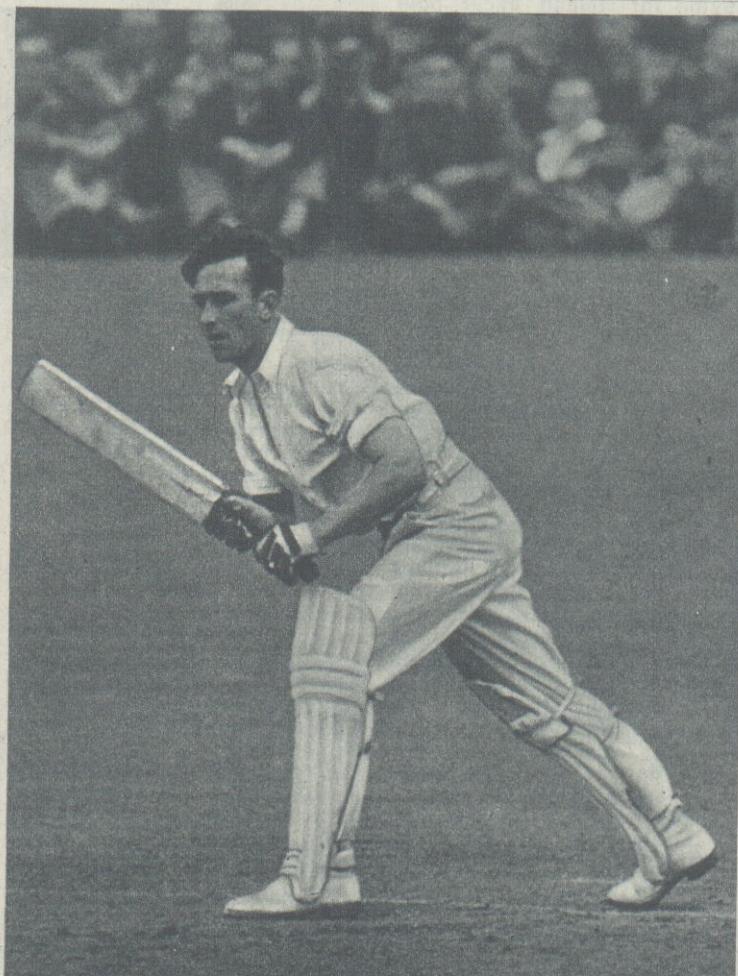
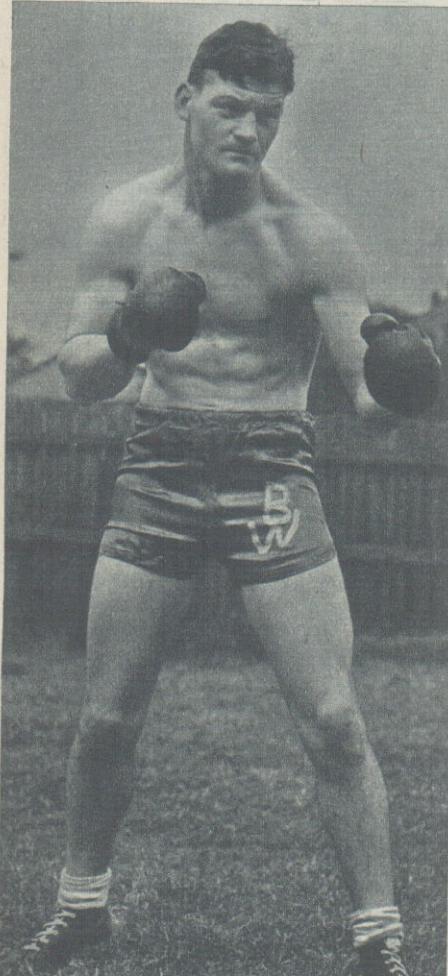
a week to start off a football season fated to be one of acrimony and controversy. Dodds later returned to Everton.

The Players' Union have been at loggerheads with the League over wages, transfer fees have reached astronomical heights, Matthews has dictated to his club and won the day. He said he wouldn't play in the reserves — and didn't — which is bad for football. Chelsea spent thousands of pounds on players, mighty Arsenal sank in the slough of despond and players asked for transfers, all the time wanting extra money and expecting houses. And getting them!

Ronnie James failed in his world lightweight title bid against Ike Williams, negro holder, and Hawthorne beat Thompson in an epic battle on a rainy night in Liverpool for the right to meet James. Woodcock knocked out Lesnevich and a giant American, Joe Baksi, did the same to Mills in a fight that should never have taken place. Airborne took the St. Leger, and Joe Louis, having disposed of Billy Conn in eight rounds, stopped Mauriello, Bruce's conqueror, in one. Walker Bert Cousens covered 2600 miles in 1000 hours.

Airborne was at last beaten by a French horse in the King George VI Stakes, and another Frenchman won the Cesarewitch. Cricket got going Down Under with England not so impressive at first but getting in a good win over Victoria, strongest State. And, just to finish on a bright note, Jackie Paterson knocked himself out against Medina.

Bruce Woodcock beat Renet and became the first Englishman to hold the European Heavyweight Championship... The cricket season confirmed Denis Compton as the world's first batsman... Sydney Wooderson showed a clean pair of heels to runners from all over Europe.





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In War or Peace—
the 'FOOT-SLOGGERS'
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Dogged, tenacious, adaptable—the P.B.I. still constitute the backbone of our land fighting forces. If, in the best Army tradition, they can generally contrive to find something to swear *at*, they are unswervingly loyal to the things they swear *by*—Kolynos, for example, the cleansing and refreshing tooth paste.

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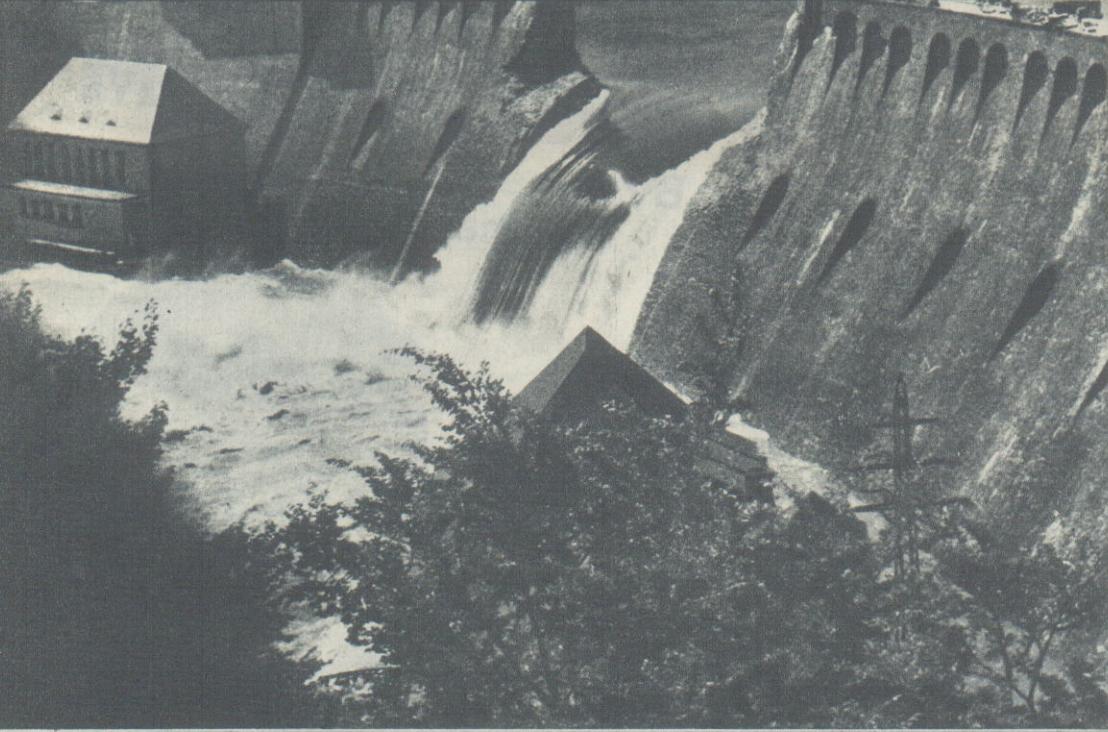


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A GERMAN RISKED A CONCENTRATION CAMP TO TAKE THIS PICTURE



WING-COMMANDER G. P. Gibson won the VC for the daring bombing attack he and his men made on the Mohne Dam when, despite heavy ack-ack fire, 1500-lb mines were dropped. Two hours later a German civilian truck-driver was sent to the spot to help collect some of the hundreds of dead cattle drowned as the water swept over nearby fields.

Troops and police guarded the area as the German authorities tried to impose a "security black-out" on the damage to the power-stations

that supplied factories and towns — though they could hardly suppress news of the devastation by flood-water to the Ruhr valley.

The truck-driver had a camera with him and, though he knew it meant the concentration camp and perhaps death if he were caught, he was determined to get a picture of the damage. A companion in the truck shielded him from the police as the truck-driver knelt and took this photograph between his legs.

Two hours after the famous Mohne Dam was burst this photograph was taken under the eyes of the Gestapo, preserving for all times a record of one of the war's greatest feats.

AND TALKING OF PHOTOGRAPHS

NEVER was there such a craze for taking photographs. Never was so much good film wasted. Why is this? Partly because the modern camera is apt to be a complex instrument and too many soldiers operating these new contraptions do not take the trouble to understand them.

Still, every so often somebody does take a good photograph: a photograph with depth, definition, contrast, good composition and an arresting subject.

If you have succeeded in taking such a picture, why not send it to us?

SOLDIER will pay at professional rates for all photographs published. If the response is good, it is hoped to run a regular photographic competition in these pages.

Answers

(from Pages 30-31)

SPOTTING THE BOGUS

1. Warden of the Romney Marshes; 2. Barsetshire Yeomanry;
3. Rod and Line; 4. Royal Caledonian Bank; 5. Stockport City;
6. Most Illustrious Order of the Leek; 7. Brown Nectar; 8. Anti-Vegetarian League.

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW?

1. Arkansaw. 2. Burma; Greece; Syria; South Africa; Uganda; British Somaliland. 3. £1 per 100 cc.
4. Nepotism. 5. The Three Little Pigs. 6. Sunflower. 7. A skylark; Shelley. 8. They are all Semitic (i. e. all supposed to be descended from Shem). 9. Harry Roy; Henry Hall; Ambrose; Carroll Gibbons.
10. Eva Braun. 11. Felix the Cat; Queen Victoria; Archimedes. 12. Saskatchewan; toffee-apples; rectangular. 13. Vice-Admiral. 14. John Cobb; 368 mph. 15. Lady Godiva. 16. Angela; Olga; Amy.

FILM TIMES

Forever Amber; Angel on My Shoulder; The Bride Wore Boots; Caesar and Cleopatra.

CROSSWORD

- ACROSS: 3. Adapted. 6. Slang. 7. Ruddy. 9. Uneven. 12. Nile. 13. Bert. 15. White. 16. East. 18. Neva. 20. Onsets. 23. Drone. 24. Ideas. 25. Snapped.
- DOWN: 1. Essence. 2. Cabul. 3. Ague. 4. Acre. 5. Elder. 8. Unbent. 10. Newton. 11. Veils. 14. Traipse. 17. Arran. 19. Essen. 21. Neap. 22. Enid.

COUNSEL FOR THE DEFENCE

SOLDIER gives the floor to the Army Kinema Corporation and NAAFI, to give their official answers to queries and criticisms raised recently in readers' letters.

AKC

- A civilian organisation authorised by the Army Council, with the QMG as president, set up to provide cinema entertainment for the Army.
- It gets no financial help, must be self-supporting, takes no profits, hands any that might be made to Army Welfare.
- Prices of admission to AKC cinemas are decided by War Office and not AKC.
- Length of programmes is governed by the Cinema Exhibitors Association and the Kinematograph Renters' Society, which decree single-feature programmes.



Here's an ATS Girl reading **SOLDIER**. What's unusual in that? Only that she was one of the "exhibits" in last month's Lord Mayor's Show.

NAAFI

- Policy is to show shorts with each feature; shortage of raw film material at present makes this difficult, but things are improving.
- Repeated showings of old feature films in the past were due to troop movements and shortage of films from renters; since the take-over from ENSA and AKS, programmes compare with West-End shows.
- Between 1939 and 1945 films were supplied free by renters; today renters make a percentage charge for films, as in England, hence increased admission prices.
- The Corporation welcomes criticism.
- A flat rebate of six percent of turnover—not profit—of each canteen is returned to unit for PRI or PSI funds, whether canteen pays its way or not.
- Rebates from clubs and canteens not serving particular units are handed over to Command HQ in UK, Area or District commanders overseas, to be shared among units.
- If rebate was cut out and prices reduced, there would be little or no income for unit funds or provision of Service amenities.
- If rebate was paid to individuals, clerical work would be colossal and complicated and each man's share would be negligible.
- Surplus profit is paid, in agreement with the Army Council and Air Council, to Army and RAF benevolent funds (R. Navy has special accounts) and on providing entertainment, sports gear, newspapers, clubs and other amenities.
- Little profit is carried forward (only £818 in 1944); there is not likely to be any considerable sum for disposal when final profits for war years are worked out.
- NAAFI has nothing to hide, likes to answer queries and deal with well-founded complaints.

“Only a scratch”
may turn to something worse

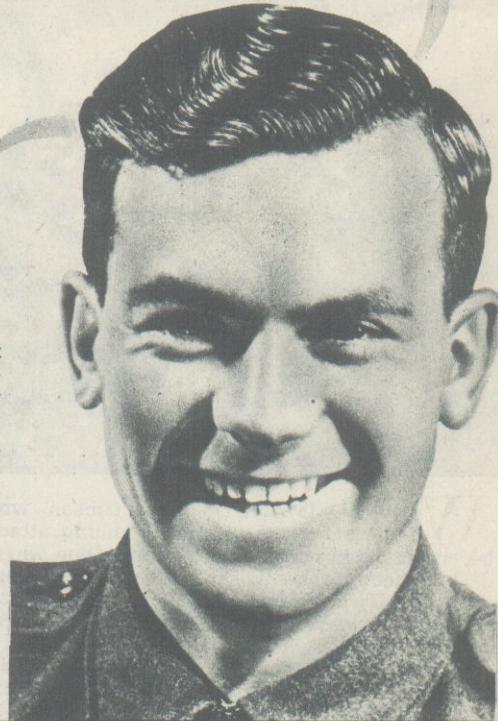


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ICS

LETTERS



CAR OF ONE'S OWN

Having read that married families in BAOR are allowed private cars I would like to know if this is permissible for single soldiers. If the answer is yes, what regulations cover the shipment of private vehicles



from Britain or the purchase of a vehicle from German civilians?

Could surplus stocks of motor cycles be sold off for personal use and Volkswagen produced for sale to BAOR men? — **Sjt. H. Eames, 48 Movement Control.**

★ Both families and individual soldiers are permitted to ship private cars from UK. GRO 2822/46 as amended by GRO 2844/46 gives full details. Arrangements are being made to permit members of the British Forces buying cars from Germans; to prevent Black Market transactions

payment will be by sterling cheque. Volkswagen will be available for purchase in limited numbers and bids have been called for. The price will be £160, again payable by sterling cheque. Third party insurance will be obligatory.

SIGNING ON

I joined the TA on a four-year engagement in 1936 and was mobilised on 1 Sept. 1939. When my release group came up I signed on for a year. If I decide to make the Army my career, is my seven years service counted as pensionable service and can I qualify to complete 22 years for a pension? — **Sjt. A. Santley, 248 Provost Coy., BTB.**

★ Previous Colour, embodied or mobilised service reckons for increase of pay, long service and good conduct pay, under the present pay code, subject to the Royal Warrant. Previous service on a non-regular engagement will not reckon as service towards regular engagements. Previous Colour, embodied or mobilised service will, however, reckon for service pension.

The normal period with the regular Army is five years with the Colours and seven with the reserve. Age: 17½ to 30 years. There are also short-service engagements for three or four years.

LEAVE PROBLEM

Does the 19 days privilege leave count as part of the six months period between leaves? If I went on leave on 31 July 1946 would my next leave start on

31 January 1947? — **Sgt. F. G. Talbot, 53 (W) Div. Signal Regt.**

★ The 19 days BAOR privilege leave counts as part of the interval. You cannot, however, claim the right to go on any particular day. You are entitled to two periods of leave in twelve months; the interval between any two periods of leave must be four months or over. Six months is the average interval.

TOUGH ON PETS

There are a lot of pets in the Army but has anyone ever thought of asking NAAFI to sell powder and biscuits for dogs? In some units if a dog gets ill and does not like doing tricks, its master may order it a beating or the poor beast may get done in—and all



the time a "Bob Martin's" powder would do it the world of good. — **Cpl. Spence, 2 RSF.**

★ NAAFI says that supplies of "Bob Martin's" are on order and Cpl. Spence should keep in touch with the manager of his Families' Shop or Bulk Issue Store.

WHY RELEASE HAS SLOWED DOWN

AS SOLDIER went to Press the Prime Minister made a statement on release from the Services. He said that by the end of 1946 the total strength was likely to be 1,385,000 and not 1,200,000 as hoped.

The reason for the higher number of men retained in the Forces and the slower rate of release is quite simple. Progress in the work of concluding Peace Treaties and establishing normal conditions in the world has been much slower and more difficult than we had a right to expect when our plans were drawn up at the beginning of the year."

Mr. Attlee said we were now able to withdraw from Indonesia, but Palestine was a continuing strain on our forces. In Austria we had not been able to begin considering a Peace Treaty; in Venezia Giulia we were pledged to stay till the frontier dispute was settled; and in Greece successive governments had asked us to stay to maintain order.

"We are calling up as many young men as possible in order that they may in due course, take the place of men who have seen a long period of service. In particular, a stricter standard is being applied in granting deferments

than was applied during the war. By the end of 1946 all men under 30 will have been called or will be in process of being called up, except those who cannot be spared if essential production, such as coal-mining, agriculture and building is to be maintained.

"It has been suggested that the disparity in the Age and Service Groups being released from the three services is a departure from the Release Scheme and a breach of faith. That is not so. It was recognised when the scheme was prepared, and it was so stated at the time, that release would have to proceed at different rates in the three services to take account of their different structures and roles.

"It would be no remedy to transfer men from the Navy to the Army or the Airforce. By the time those to be transferred were identified, replaced where necessary, brought back to this country, re-trained and sent abroad again, most of them would be due for

release. In any case, such transfers could not materially affect the rate of release in the other services unless carried out on a scale so large as to disorganise the Navy.

"The Government came to the conclusion that the rate of release for the first half of 1947 is the maximum which can be accepted. We believe we can keep to this programme which is calculated to release in 1947 all men called up before 1 January 1944.

"By the end of this year we shall have released about 4,300,000 men and women out of 5,100,000 serving in the Forces on V-E Day. In handling this immense problem the Government have never gone back on any programme of release which has been promulgated for the men and women of the Armed Forces."

The Minister of Labour's estimates (6 Nov 46) were: January — part 46; February — part 47; March — part 48; April-June — part 48, 49, part 50.

GERMANS AT CINEMAS

On the subject of German civilians being allowed into theatres and cinemas your ATS correspondents write that it could not be expected that English women should sit with German civilians. Why not?

It strikes me that it can be no hardship for any English girl to take her place in limited German company for two hours. — **Lieut. S. F. Hills MC, 24 T Force Detachment.**

★ Many letters—most of them not printable—were received on similar lines.

MANNERS MAKYTH . . .

My girl friend and I went to the Hamburg State Opera House. Sitting behind us was a British family who seemed to think that the Opera is a public picnic place. They had brought bottles of mineral waters and sandwiches. My girl friend said, "Do you always picnic in the theatre in England?" — **Sjt. J. Bult, HQ Hamburg District.**

TO END ARGUMENT?

To end all this nonsense from correspondents who pretend that their units are the only ones "entitled" to be addressed as gentlemen, please publish this extract from a letter written by Daniel Defoe in 1722:

"I have observ'd that the Employment of a Soldier is counted Honourable! they are all call'd Gentlemen, and indeed, to have served the King or the Country in which we live, to have carry'd Arms under such a General, or borne a Commission under our Prince; I think these do entitle a Man to the Denomination of a Gentleman, as well as Birthright. Families raised by the Sword, are in all Countries, and have been in all Ages, allowed to be Gentlemen." — **Sapper B. Johnson.**

BOOKSHOPS

Now that the Army has settled down to a long term of occupation and families have arrived I consider a gap would be filled if bookshops were established in BAOR. True, unit libraries do exist, but I feel there is a need for a commercial firm to set up branches in each of the main towns on the same system that exists in Britain. — **Tpr. A. H. Charlesworth, Royal Dragoons.**

★ There is certainly a need for bookshops in BAOR. Commercial firms have been invited to establish them, but so far, no firm has been convinced that it would be a paying proposition.

SHIRTS

Why cannot the private soldier be issued with shirts made of material similar to that issued to the RAF? — **Sjt. J. Morgan, 931 GT Coy., RASC.**

SOLDIER

THE BRITISH ARMY MAGAZINE

December

1946



Produced in Germany by:
No 1 British Army News-
paper Unit, BAOR.

Editor: Hamburg 348196.

Editor-in-chief:
c/o AWS 3, The War
Office, 60 Eaton Square,
London SW 1.

Advertisement offices:
30 Fleet Street,
London EC 4
Tel: Central 2786-7-8.

MORE LETTERS

POLISH PLAIN

I was on a 200-mile run homeward in a lorry with five other men. The day was hot. My driver was wet outside but dry inside. I promised the men they could stop for a cup of tea at the first canteen.

Four of us, including driver, had no canteen passes as they were at Div. HQ for prolongation. The lady in charge of the canteen let two lucky pass-holders in, refusing the other four. I tried to explain the position, but got the answer: "Once I was told to leave the canteen by your people at —, so I promised to do the same to all your people." — 2/Lieut. N. Chruszcz, Polish Forces.

★ Regulations are specific that Allied personnel must possess a canteen pass. Complaints about conduct of canteen employees should be forwarded to HQ of the appropriate Corps District.

ADOPT DP? No

I want to adopt a Lithuanian boy who is now in a DP Camp.

He has no home or relatives. I have been working alongside him for three months and know him very well. He is 19 and of excellent character, and is very keen to go to England. Can you help me? — Spr. E. A. Kettle, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire.

★ Owing to the number of aliens in Britain the regulations are very strict. In the Commons (November 1945) the Home Secretary, speaking on the admission of distressed persons from Europe laid down that males must be under 18 and have no relatives abroad, but relatives in Britain willing to take them into the household. The Lithuanian is over the age laid down and is not a relative of yours. Nor, under British law, can you adopt him.

SOAP FACTS

Almost as much soap as is wanted can be obtained from nearly all NAAFI's and canteens. We are told that it is forbidden to send soap home. What, then, is to be done with all this surplus? Families at home are badly in need of a little more soap. — L/Cpl. R. Hill, CSD Branch, HQ 30 Corp.

★ NAAFI state that sales are made at the rate of three-quarters of a tablet per man per week. Supplies are made to units by BIS's to the extent of half a tablet per man per week. Additional supplies are sent to NAAFI Institutes at the rate of one quarter of a tablet per man per week.

COMING BACK?

I have been released four months and am thinking of joining up again. Is it



"I am thinking of coming back again..."

possible to return to my previous unit without delay? What are the necessary

steps to take? — J. B. Harding, Whitbread Avenue, Bedford (ex-131 DID, BAOR).

★ If you were a regular, apply to RASC Records, Ore Place, Hastings, to continue service on your current engagement. If a non-regular, apply to the nearest recruiting office—but whichever way you join you will be subject to normal regulations on postings. You cannot claim to serve in any particular branch of the RASC or theatre.

PRESS GANG

For the past few days I have been encountering irate members of my old section, 36 High-Speed Sect, waving copies of SOLDIER. Reason—your article: "Press Gang of Nuremberg" (October). The Golden Arrow which you showed was our "old faithful" which we



"...waving copies of SOLDIER..."

brought from Normandy to Regensburg the hard way but in your article you mention that 43 H/S section were there in the early days of the trial. We can assure you that 36 H/S section were there a month before the opening, putting up the station.

Later we were joined by others but it was not until March that 36 H/S section left, handing over to a newly arrived section, 43 H/S. — Sjt. G. P. Davies, 14 High-Speed Wireless Trp., 3 Sqdn, 1 HQ Signals Regt.

NO RIBBON

Can you inform me if Servicemen other than Maltese who served in Malta during the "second siege" (June 1940 to May 1943) are permitted to wear the ribbon of the George Cross on their right shoulder? — "Curious", 1 Eng. Trng Est.

★ We can find no authority for this.

NEW PAY CODE

Surely this new system of pay is unfair to C 3 tradesmen. Before, we got the same as a trained Infantryman, but now we get less. After three years we remain one-star soldiers. — "Sgmn", 130 Bde.

CIVVY STREET JOB

I deferred for 12 months with a view to making the Army my career, but have now decided to return to civil life. Is my old employer obliged to take me back? — L/Cpl. G. Blundell, 1st Bn. Middlesex Regt.

★ Not if you volunteered to defer your release.

HOME VIA BELGIUM

(1) If my leave pass is made out for Britain may I spend the first part in Belgium? (2) May I travel from there to England with my Belgian fiancée? (3) If (2) is possible do I have to pay my fare to England? — Pte. E. Honeybun, 22 Heavy Workshops Coy.

★ (1 and 2) No. (3). Privilege leave must be taken wholly in the UK or wholly on the Continent. If you take it in the UK and your fiancée wishes to go there too, she must travel under normal civilian regulations, paying her own fare.

MARRYING IN BELGIUM

I want to marry a Belgian girl in Belgium on my next leave. Can you tell me the formalities my fiancée and I must complete before marriage is possible? — Tpr. R. Whitburn, Royal Horse Guards.

★ Full details for the last time: If under 21 you must have the written consent of your parents or guardian. You must inform your CO of the intended marriage and complete a "Notice of marriage" in duplicate, copies of which are available from chaplains. (Failure to give this notice will render you liable to disciplinary action.) After completing the "Notice of marriage" and not before, make formal application to the civil or religious authorities; no marriage can be performed until the "Notice of marriage" has been approved by HQ BAOR and endorsed to that effect.

Here are notes on Belgian marriage laws: Woman must not marry under age of 15; if under 21, she must have consent of her parents; marriages are performed before the "Echevin de l'état civil" in the commune where one of the parties resides; two witnesses (over 21 and who know the parties) must attend; publication of the intended marriage has to be made by notice on the door of the "maison commune" in the area where each party resides on a Sunday at least ten days before the wedding. In making arrangements the following must be

produced: certificate of birth, a document entitled "certificat d'habitation à produire pour mariage"; certificate of parental consent if parents not to be present at marriage (not applicable in soldier's case if



he is over 21 years; applicable in all cases for Belgian girls); death, divorce or annulment of marriage certificate if there has been a prior marriage; death certificate showing impossibility of parental consent in cases where party is under 21 and the parents are dead; a translation must be provided of all English documents, and must be certified correct by a British officer.

BRINGING HER HOME

I am married to a Belgian girl whom I wish to bring home. Will she have to pay duty on her clothes and wedding presents, and how much baggage and money will she be allowed to bring? — Dvr. J. Freemantle, 721 Coy. RASC (GHQ Car).

★ (1) If your wife is being brought home by the Army she will be allowed 4 cwt. of luggage and 1 cwt. for each child; (2) If she is travelling as a private citizen then she will be able to arrange for the shipping company to move what luggage she needs; (3) She will have to pay purchase tax and customs duty on wedding presents and any other new articles such as clothes which have not been worn; (4) She will be allowed to bring 1000 Belgian francs and £20 sterling under British law.

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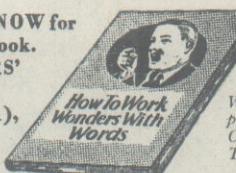
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