

SOLDIER

THE BRITISH ARMY MAGAZINE

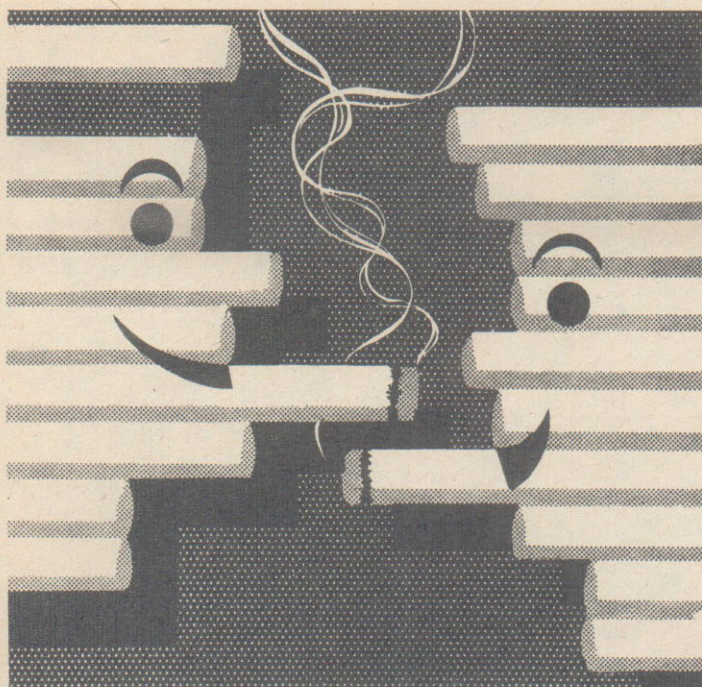
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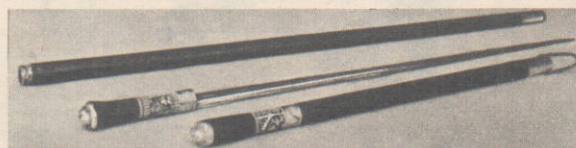
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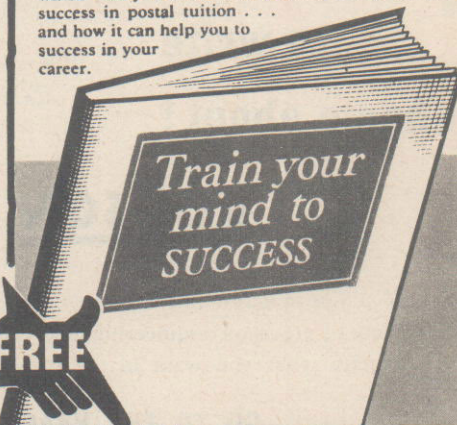
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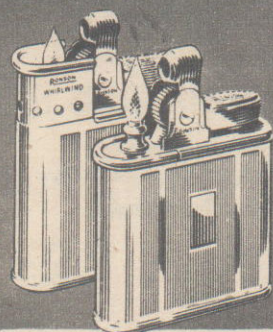
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SUBJECT(S) OF INTEREST

HARDER TO WIN — AND WHY

SO many things have been devalued down the generations that it is refreshing to find something which, for the last hundred years, has steadily grown in worth and distinction: the Victoria Cross.

Whether he likes it or not, the man who wins the Victoria Cross is a public figure, in uniform or out. Some of us can marry, give children in marriage and die without getting our names in the papers; the VC winner cannot.

Of the Victoria Cross, Sir John Fortescue, the Army historian, writes: "Many a man has earned it who for want of witnesses has never received it; and men have received it in one campaign for deeds that would have passed unnoticed in another and greater. Such accidents are inevitable; but none the less a man who wears the Victoria Cross is now justly sure of the respect and admiration of his fellows; and the decoration is perhaps the most coveted in the world."

Men are no braver than they were a century ago, but the scale of modern war gives more men a chance of revealing their bravery. Had the Victoria Cross been awarded as freely in the world wars as in the Indian Mutiny the award would have lost its unique prestige. This rarity value has been heightened by the introduction, since 1856, of numerous other military awards, many of which also

SOLDIER to Soldier

call for a high degree of valour. Only the man with the most exceptional claim now gains the highest award.

An article about the Victoria Cross in this issue tells how, in certain circumstances, officers, NCOs and privates used to select

their own recipients for the honour, a practice which seems to have died out completely, though the Royal Warrant still authorises it. There is something to be said, both for and against, such a course.

Today the Victoria Cross is publicly regarded as an individual decoration, not a group decoration. Though Lieutenant-Colonel J. P. Carne VC was quick to say that his award should be regarded as a tribute to the Glosters in general, the Cross is, officially, his and will go down to history as such.

The Americans solve this problem of honouring bravery in the mass by awarding a Presidential Citation which is shared by the whole unit, each man wearing the appropriate emblem. It will be recalled that the Glosters and "C" Troop, 170 Independent Mortar Battery, Royal Artillery were awarded this Citation, and wear a rectangle of ribbon on their sleeves in token.

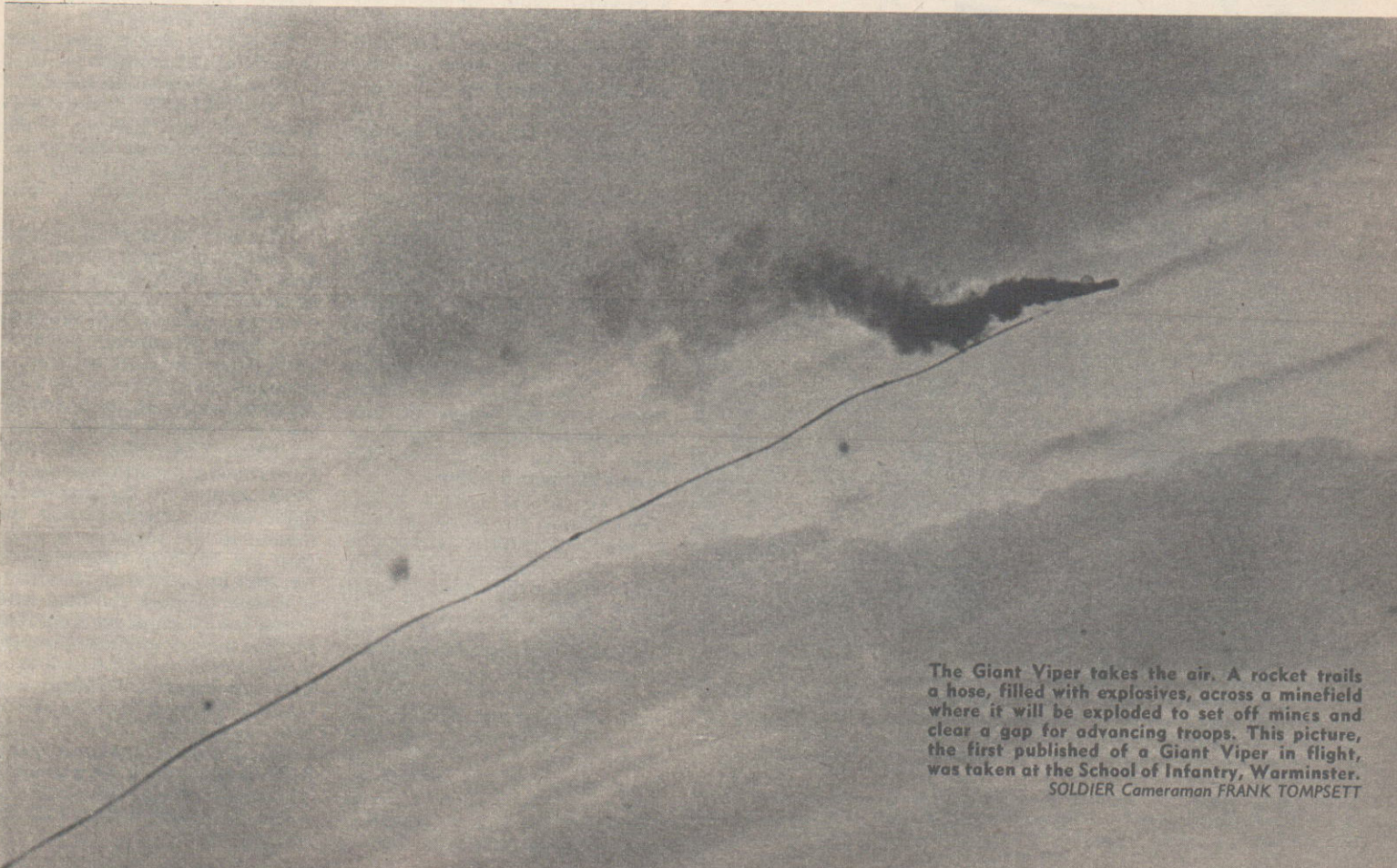
Foreign decorations apart, collective honours awarded to British regiments have usually taken

the form of dress distinctions (like the Glosters' fore-and-aft badges, in memory of an earlier stand) or additions to the regimental title (for example, "Royal").

IT is good that the Army should be represented, if only modestly, on the Antarctic expeditions which have now begun, just as it was good that the ascent of Everest should have been organised by a soldier.

Polar exploration calls for almost every military quality there is: fitness, courage, doggedness, resilience, initiative; a capacity to withstand extreme discomfort and boredom; ability to live in closest contact with others without creating irritation; and strength to cut oneself off from kith and kin. In the ultimate crisis, it may call for the kind of self-sacrifice displayed by Captain Lawrence Oates, who walked out to his death when he became a drag on his comrades.

There is, of course, more to **OVER**



The Giant Viper takes the air. A rocket trails a hose, filled with explosives, across a minefield where it will be exploded to set off mines and clear a gap for advancing troops. This picture, the first published of a Giant Viper in flight, was taken at the School of Infantry, Warminster.

SOLDIER Cameraman FRANK TOMPSETT

this business of Polar exploration than a display of courage. The Polar wastes are becoming strategic areas. They are a military as well as a scientific challenge. Already America has made tremendous progress in the art of living amid total desolation.

Today's Polar wanderer at least knows what is going on in the outer world—unlike members of an earlier expedition who returned to "civilisation" to find that it had been in flames for two years.

IN the year just ended, NAAFI completed its programme of building new Service clubs in major garrison towns.

No post-war project, perhaps, has done more to civilise the soldier's background, and thereby raise his status in the community than this chain of twelve clubs. They are furnished as good hotels and ships are furnished; they are places to which a soldier can be proud to invite a guest.

Inevitably, the clubs have been costly to build, and many a soldier may complete his tour of service without setting foot in one of them. But few, if any, would advance that as a reason for not building any clubs at all. NAAFI ought to be congratulated on a bold policy imaginatively carried out in difficult times. With luck, more cash may be found some day to extend the chain.

IN stress of war—and sometimes in peace—the Army must improvise, using every ingenuity and device.

One or two arresting examples have been quoted recently in *REME Magazine*. First there was the story of a light aid detachment which machined itself a large cogged wheel for a lathe from a spare man-hole cover. This encouraged a reader to recall occasions when new piston rings for tank engines were obtained by stealing drain pipes of appropriate diameter



"They dumped us in the middle of Salisbury Plain with a map and told us to find our own way home—and here I am."



"Let battle commence"—modern version. The Gordon Highlander on left appears to be carrying a flame-thrower; in fact, it projects a green dye for identification of Cypriot rioters. Note also baton slung on the left wrist.

from the streets of Tripoli and slicing off circlets for further machining. The same writer recalled bulldozing off the surface of a tarmac road in Italy and boiling it down in 40-gallon petrol drums in order to brew up a substitute mixture for waterproofing tanks for the Volturno crossing. In each instance, a sharp look-out had to be kept for the police—civil and military!

In Italy, as the new history of the Royal Army Service Corps recalls, a substitute for hydraulic brake fluid was concocted from a captured supply of castor oil, mixed with industrial alcohol.

Damaged aircraft have been kept aloft before now with the aid of chewing gum. Ammunition fuzes have been protected by toy balloons and similar devices. Readers of *SOLDIER* must know many comparable examples of timely enterprise—legal or otherwise—which have kept the war machine running. Let's hear about them!

SINCE everyone is ready to laugh at the ways of Whitehall, Lord Windlesham got a good reception for his story of the War Office brigadier who, exasperated by his daily diet of files, stuffed the more tedious of them under his carpet and nailed it down.

A 95-year-old soldier, Brigadier-General J. E. Edmonds, pointed out shortly afterwards that when he joined the War Office in 1899 the same story was going the rounds.

There are, of course, much simpler and more effective ways of getting rid of unwanted files. Air Commodore P. Huskinson, who served at the Ministry of Aircraft Production under Lord Beaverbrook, tells in his autobiography how all efforts to organise a bomb-testing range had been frustrated by contributors to a gigantic file which

"bulged with the harvest of its wandering through every department I had ever heard of . . . There was enough discouragement in its dog-eared minutes to have stifled, you would have thought, the most passionate aspiration of the human heart." The Air Commodore took this "sinister accumulation" to Lord Beaverbrook, who flicked through a page or two, and then sent for a henchman called "Troubles" Elliott. This undaunted functionary simply tossed the file in the waste-paper basket. The bomb-testing range was then "laid on."

There is, or was, a department in the War Office which included in its duties "search for lost files." For all *SOLDIER* knows it may spend its time looking under carpets, or even in waste-paper baskets. No doubt it could tell some strange tales, if it were allowed.

Files are worse than a joke, however; they are a necessity, until someone thinks of a better system. The ordinary soldier never sees a file nor is he expected to concoct a minute, which is one of the privileges of being a private soldier. Yet most of the decisions which affect his welfare start as modest entries in a file. The War Office and all other Government departments would be in chaos if all decisions were made on the telephone and entrusted to the memory of men who are liable to be posted or run over by buses at any moment. It is easy to mock the man who "must have it on paper," but that method may save time in the end; it may even be quicker than calling conferences, which can waste more time than the circulating of files.

All of which does not mean that every file now circulating is strictly necessary, or would be instantly missed if nailed under a carpet.

A SOLDIER HEADS FOR THE POLE

TWO YEARS AGO WARRANT OFFICER DESMOND HOMARD, OF REME, CAME BACK FROM THE ARCTIC. NOW HE IS OFF AGAIN—TO THE SOUTH POLE.



ABOUT this time two years from now Warrant Officer Desmond Homard, of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, expects to be crossing the South Pole.

He will then become the second serving soldier to have reached it (the first was Captain Lawrence Oates, of the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons, who sacrificed his life for his comrades on the ill-fated Scott Expedition of 1912).

He will also become the only British soldier to have explored both Arctic and Antarctic. In August, 1954, he returned to Britain after spending 12 months with the British North Greenland Expedition, 600 miles from the North Pole. It was because of the experience he gained on this expedition that he was chosen from a number of soldier volunteers to join the Trans-Antarctic Expedition as assistant mechanical transport officer.

When his Antarctic journey is over he will have a strong claim to have seen more of the world than any other soldier. His war and peace service took him to France, North Africa, Middle East, Austria, Sicily, Hong-Kong, Japan and Germany.

Warrant Officer Homard is the only soldier member of the Trans - Antarctic Expedition which aims to cross the vast expanse of snow-covered, ice-locked land, as large as Europe and Australia together, from the Weddell Sea to the Ross Sea. The Expedition will travel nearly

2000 miles, of which only 50 miles have been traversed by man before. Their route will take them through regions which

The coastline of the Weddell Sea. On top of the 80-ft. ice-cliffs the Expedition will erect its first camp.

have never been viewed from the air.

The advance party, of which Mr. Homard is a member, will enter the Weddell Sea this month and set up a base on the 80-ft. ice-

cliffs in Vahsel Bay. Here, eight men, including Mr. Homard, will spend the first year making scientific investigations and inland reconnaissances and preparing for the main party which arrives early in 1957 under the leadership of Dr. Vivian Fuchs. After establishing an advance camp 300 miles inland in the direction of the South Pole, both parties will set off together on the long trek over the ice-cap to the Ross Sea, passing immediately over the Pole where, by the time they reach it, a United States camp will already have been set up by air.

Meanwhile a party of New Zealanders, led by Sir Edmund Hillary, conqueror of Everest, will establish a base at McMurdo Sound in the Ross Sea and build a camp about 300 miles inland on the way to the Pole. They will set off to meet Dr. Fuchs' team which by then will have crossed the Pole and be making its way to the Ross Sea. Thus, the main party will need to be self-supporting for about 1200 miles.

The aim of the Expedition, apart from accomplishing a journey which has never before been made, is to conduct scientific, topographical and geological surveys which may be of great assistance to shipping and aviation in the Southern hemisphere. One result of the investigations may be the linking up of Australasia and South America in 25 years' time by direct air routes across the South Pole.

Members of the Expedition will also test special food and cold-weather clothing. Every 20 or 30 miles the team will sound the depths of the ice-cap to test the theory that Antarctica is two continents, divided by a sea joining the Weddell Sea and the Ross Sea. This was the theory that Shackleton sought to prove in 1914.

High on the list of key men in the Expedition, Warrant Officer

OVER



Warrant Officer Desmond Homard, REME, in three guises: left, trying out the nylon-fur and gaberdine clothing he will wear in the Antarctic; centre, while on the North Greenland Expedition; and right, at Buckingham Palace last year when he received the Polar Medal.



continuing

TO THE POLE

Homard will be mainly responsible for keeping the mechanical vehicles—four American Sno-Cats, four ex-British Army Weasels and two tractors—on the move. If these fail, the whole Expedition, which is also taking dog teams for use in emergency, could founder.

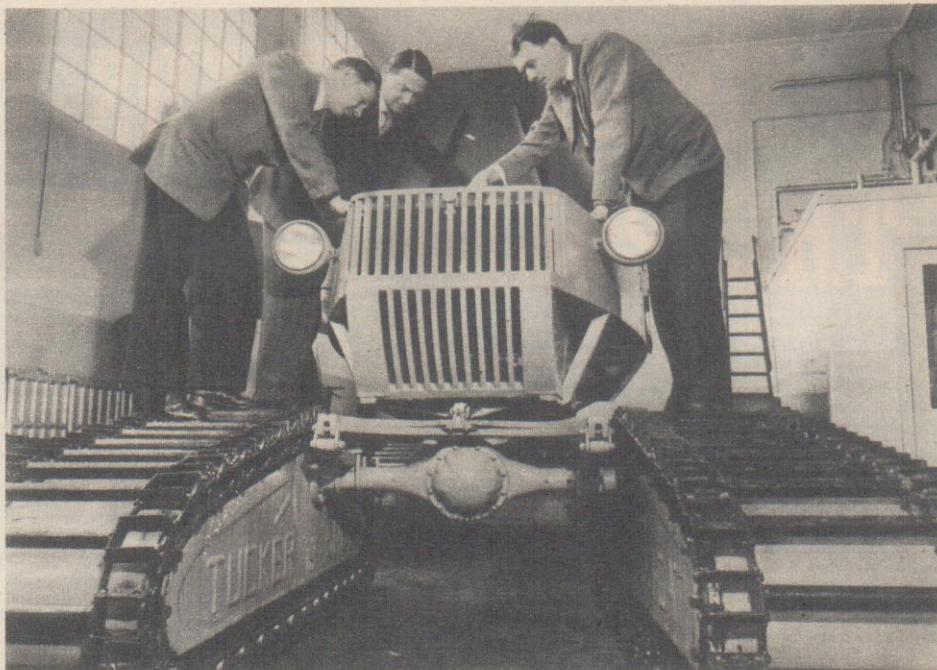
Weather conditions are expected to be more difficult than in the Arctic. There, the lowest temperatures recorded are about minus 50 degrees Fahrenheit; in the Antarctic they go down as low as minus 90, the lowest on earth, and winds sometimes reach 200 miles an hour. But snow conditions should be easier and the Sno-Cats should give a better performance than any other vehicles previously used.

The Sno-Cat, which can comfortably seat 14 men (without stores) in a specially insulated cabin, has four tracked pontoons, each with separate suspension. Each pontoon can be turned through nearly 90 degrees, which gives the vehicle great flexibility. Because its tracks are

30 inches wide as compared with the 20 inches of the Weasel it will be able to ride over soft snow more easily. Track pressure per square inch is only .75 lbs. compared with the 1.6 lbs. of the Weasel. Unlike the Weasel, the Sno-Cat can continue running minus one or two tracks.

In the first year, when the advance party will live in the base at Vahsel Bay, Mr. Homard will have a heated garage in which to do his repairs. It will be a different story on the journey across the Pole. Minor repairs will have to be done in the open and in gloved hands. Every few miles all vehicles will have to be checked for signs of damage to suspension, tracks and springs. Engines will be tested each day. If there are major repairs to be done holes will have to be cut or blasted out of the ice and snow to make temporary workshops. All members of the Expedition will take turns in driving.

Mr. Homard admits that he hates cold weather, but he finds the challenge of the great white spaces irresistible. He is 34 and married, and already has 19 years Army service. He joined the Army Apprentices School at Chesham at the age of 15, and was transferred from the Royal Army Ordnance Corps to the



Members of the Expedition examine one of the four Sno-Cats they will be taking with them. The Sno-Cat can carry 14 men and has four separate tracked pontoons, each of which can be turned through 90 degrees. Only the front pontoons are visible here.



Dr. Vivian Fuchs, the leader of the Expedition, was a major on Field-Marshal Montgomery's staff.

Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1942. In September 1939 he went to France with a light aid detachment of 4th Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment, but was recalled after two months when it was discovered he was under 18. Then he served as a fitter with No. 5 Coast Defence Maintenance Unit in Middle East and later went to Sicily and Italy, finally ending up in Austria. It was in Austria, at the Mountain Warfare School in Schmelz that he was bitten by the snow bug.

The leader of the expedition, Dr. Fuchs, was adjutant of the Cambridgeshire Regiment (Territorial Army) before the war and went to West Africa in 1939 as a Staff officer. After passing through Staff College he joined 2nd Army Staff in France and was a major at Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery's headquarters at Luneburg when the war ended. From 1947 to 1950 he was leader of the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey.

Another member of the Expedition, Mr. David Pratt, was a Sapper officer in World War Two. He landed with assault engineers in Normandy on D-Day and was later a garrison engineer in Rhine Army.

The Army is not playing as large a part in the Trans-Antarctic Expedition as it did in the British North Greenland Expedition. Apart from lending Mr. Homard, it is donating only a few 12-foot bridge sections which will be used for crossing crevasses.

The Royal Air Force is providing aircraft to be used for reconnaissance in advance of the land party and will be lending two pilots and two ground crew.

E. J. GROVE



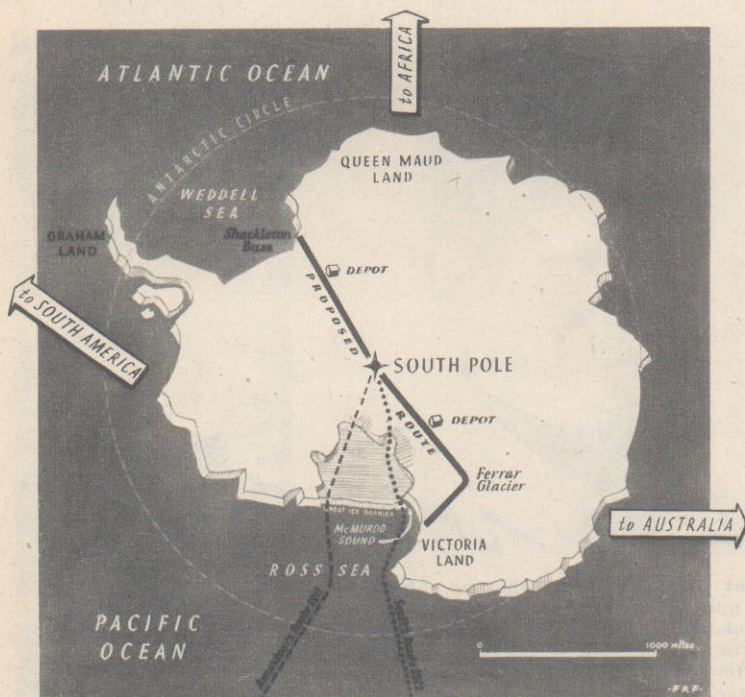
Now travelling to the Weddell Sea: Major G. Watson, REME (left) and Sergeant C. LeFeuvre, Royal Signals.

TWO MORE FOR THE ANTARCTIC

FOR the next 15 months an officer of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and a sergeant of the Royal Corps of Signals will also be stationed well inside the Antarctic Circle.

They are Major George Watson, an electronics engineer, and Sergeant Charles Le Feuvre, of 3 Training Regiment, Royal Signals, Catterick. They have been chosen by the Army to take part in the Royal Society's Geophysical Year Antarctic Expedition and are already on their way to the Weddell Sea as part of the advance party. There they will help to set up a research station in the Vahsel Bay area and probably adjacent to the Trans-Antarctic Expedition's base. They will stay there until relieved by the main party of 18 scientists in April 1957.

The Royal Society's station will be only one of 22 international geophysical stations to be set up in the Antarctic over the next two years. Among the countries taking part are America, Russia and France.



The Expedition will cross Antarctica from the Weddell Sea to the Ross Sea—a trek of 2000 miles.

EVEN IN AN AUSTERITY AGE THE SOLDIER STILL PATRONISES THE SILVERSMITH. THIS MONTH THE ROYAL ACADEMY HOUSES AN EXHIBITION OF REGIMENTAL TREASURES

'SAY IT IN SILVER'

FOR hundreds of years the British Army has been solidifying its traditions in silver.

At home, or on far stations, the mess tables of old regiments groan, on guest nights, under a weight of heroic tableaux, statuettes and columns. From candelabra to ashtrays, all is silver. Even the after-dinner port may trundle round the table in a silver cart.

This month, at the Royal Academy, the public will have a chance to see some impressive examples of silver lent by regiments in Southern and Eastern Commands. The display is being organised by the Soldiers', Sailors and Airmen's Families Association.

Today tastes in regimental silver are changing. It is rare for messes now to order those huge, symbolic centre-

pieces and giant candelabra (though a sergeants' mess in an airborne unit recently bought a centre-piece for £800). The Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Company, which makes most of the Army's regimental silver, says that some units have melted down candelabra to be made into more modern ornaments or into cutlery.

A popular type of centre-piece today is a scale model of a vehicle or weapon, or a column cut on classic lines surmounted by a soldier in battle-dress.

The rising cost of silver partly accounts for the more austere styles, though sergeants' messes still seem to have money to spend. Gold pieces, which were sometimes ordered by the wealthier regiments before the war, are never purchased today. No regiment can afford them.

The vogue for regimental silver is almost as old as the Army itself and dates back to the days when officers, who mostly had private incomes, took their own silverware into the Army. Officers retiring or marrying were expected to

OVER →

His left arm severed, Lieutenant Latham of the Buffs grapples with a French hussar for the King's Colour at Albuhera. Latham was found on the battlefield, half his face cut away, trampled, pierced by lances—but with the Colour under his tunic. This fine centre-piece in the officers' mess of the Buffs' Depot commemorates his deed.



SILVER *continued*

donate a gift of silver to the mess (this happens in many regiments today, but is not compulsory). Royalty and high commanders who dined and wined in the mess also marked their visits by gifts.

In these and other ways, regiments soon began to build up sizeable accumulations of silver, to which were added items looted in overseas campaigns. India and China were particularly happy hunting-grounds. The 14/20th Hussars still display in their officers' mess a silver chamber-pot which they captured from the baggage of the King of Spain after the Battle of Vittoria.

Much of the silverware "won" in those early campaigns was melted down and made into gravy-boats, port-wine carriers, tureens and tankards.

Until World War One, British regiments usually took their silverware with them on campaigns and some of it, inevitably, was lost to the enemy. Even in 1914 some units set up their silver in France.

When World War Two broke out regiments in Britain put their mess silver in banks or vaults. Other regiments, serving abroad, were not so lucky. The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry lost all their silver in Singapore. Before being over-

This gold ram's head, seized in the Royal Palace at Kumasi, is now in the Royal Artillery Mess at Woolwich.



A splendid silver elephant, the work of Indian craftsmen, was presented to the 17/21st Lancers by the officers to commemorate an 11-years tour in India.



One guess should suffice to identify the regiment which boasts Robin Hood and Maid Marian in silver among its table-ware: the 1st Battalion The Sherwood Foresters.

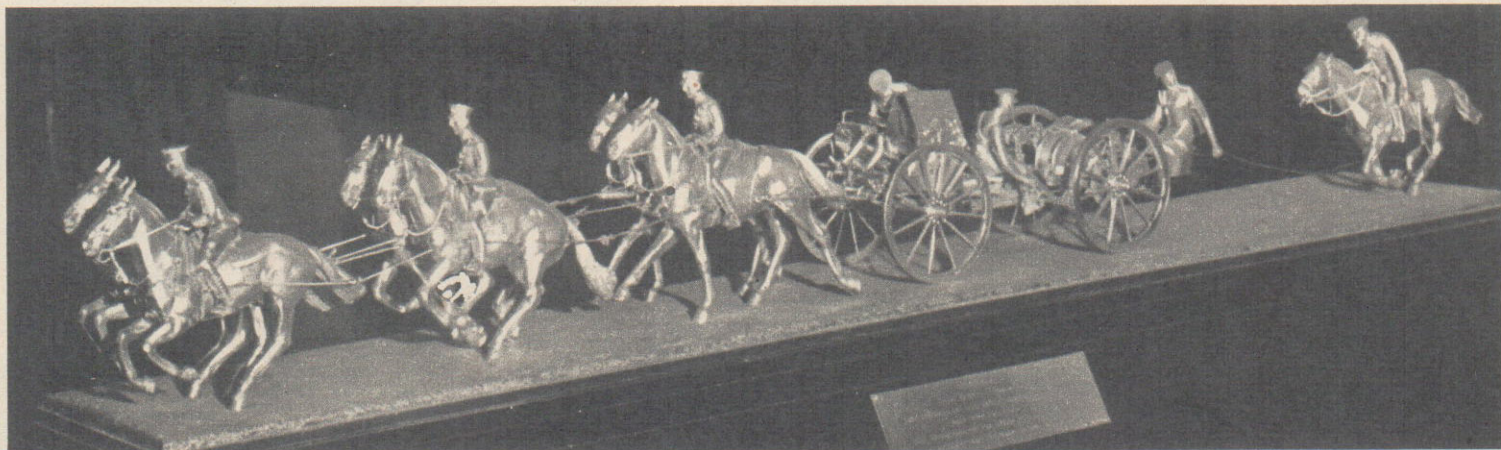


run by the Japanese, they buried it in the hope of recovering it after the war. But in 1945, when they went back, the silver had disappeared. The Regiment is now building up a new collection.

The Royal Irish Fusiliers had to leave all their silver with a bank in Guernsey in August, 1939. Soon after the Germans occupied the island, the commander ordered the entire collection to be sent to his headquarters. When the bank manager protested the Germans returned to him all except "a few articles for domestic use." These included 463 Georgian silver knives, forks and spoons, 30 crested coffee and tea pots and a gold and be-jewelled snuff box. They have never been recovered.

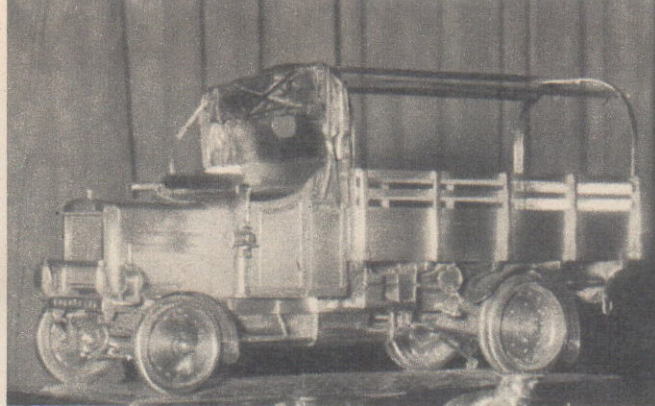
Some regiments have so much silver that they display only a fraction of it, leaving the rest in vaults rather than pay heavy insurance bills. Probably the richest and biggest collection is that owned by the Royal Artillery Mess at Woolwich. It contains over 250 items (each set of cutlery counting as one item). An outstanding piece is the palm tree

A spirited reconstruction of a horse-drawn cable wagon in the Headquarters Mess of the Royal Signals.





Craftsmen of the Goldsmiths' and Silver-smiths' Company at work on striking new centre-pieces for (left) the 7th Gurkha Rifles and (above) the 1st Royal Tank Regiment.



A silver lorry at the RASC Depot and (top, right) two Royal Signals display riders in a "double jimmy."



candelabrum presented by King William IV in 1833 which is always placed in front of the president on guest nights. It cost £1000 in 1833, about a quarter of its value today. In the same mess is the Schuler column, which breaks down into 94 pieces. In 1875 it was oxydised to save labour in cleaning, but later the protective covering was removed.

When second battalions are disbanded or placed in suspended animation their silver generally goes to the first battalion. Some finds its way into regimental museums or is taken over by Territorial Army units. Unwanted pieces are eventually sold at public auctions.

The Royal United Services Institution in London has a large collection of silver which belonged to disbanded units. It includes a massive centre-piece depicting a boat being rowed up the Nile during the expedition of 1885. This was the gift of Lord Wolseley to the Royal Irish Regiment, whose own boat, transporting them from Sarras to Delbeh, completed the journey in the shortest time.

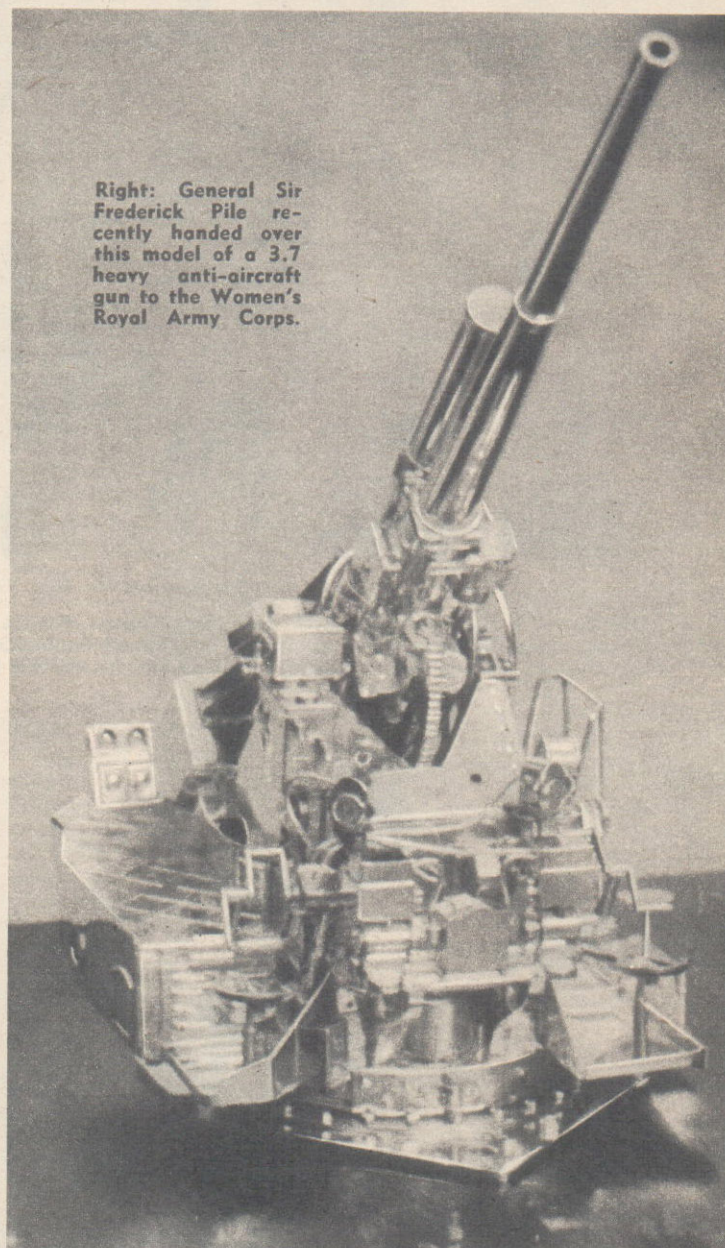
Although the style of regimental silver is changing, the method of fashioning it has altered little. A wax model is made of the item and this is cut into convenient shapes which are then made into plaster casts. From each cast a white metal impression is taken and this is the foundation on which the final silver model is built. Most models are hollow, the silver skin being one-eighth of an inch thick.

When the silver cast is completed it is handed over to the chasers who, with tiny hammers, punches and files, engrave the details of the design. Some of the chasing tools are several hundred years old.

Sometimes the regiments submit drawings and photographs to guide the craftsmen, but more often the firm's own artists and photographers are called in to produce the designs from which the models are made.

Postscript: A retiring quartermaster with an odd sense of humour recently ordered a model of a silver fiddle, to be placed in front of his successors on guest nights.

On a guest night the Royal Artillery Mess at Woolwich is a scene of old-fashioned splendour, with silver models displayed in rich profusion.



Right: General Sir Frederick Pile recently handed over this model of a 3.7 heavy anti-aircraft gun to the Women's Royal Army Corps.

A novelty in silver: the lower buttons read "Whisky," "Sherry," "Gin" and so on. The top buttons each represent numbers. Thus anyone ordering two gins presses the gin button and the No. 2 button. A major presented this labour-saving device to the officers of The Buffs' Depot in the 'nineties.





Queen Victoria presents the first Victoria Crosses in Hyde Park in 1857.

At the Battle of the Alma, in the Crimean War, Captain R. J. Lindsay (later Lord Wantage) stands firm with shot-torn Colours of the Scots Fusilier Guards and restores order. For this, and subsequent gallantry at Inkerman, he received the Victoria Cross.



'FOR

Today a simple

THE Victoria Cross, Britain's highest award for bravery in war, is 100 years old this month.

It is the Sovereign's personal award and the most highly treasured of all military decorations. It is the greatest honour a person can win and takes precedence over all other orders, decorations and distinctions, military or civilian.

Generals and private soldiers are equally eligible for the honour. Civilians can win it and so can women. The medal itself can never be forfeited.

But the Victoria Cross was not always so highly prized. Little more than half a century ago it occupied only ninth place in the list of British orders and decorations.

When it was first proposed to issue a medal to honour acts of outstanding bravery by all ranks of the Services, the idea met a barrage of ridicule and criticism. British soldiers, said the generals, were always brave so it was unnecessary to issue a medal to encourage them. Every soldier ought to be satisfied with the honour of serving his Queen and country. In Parliament, too, the proposal was criticised. Even after the first awards were presented by the Queen herself "old officers continued to sneer," records Sir John Fortescue.

But the rank and file of the Services and the general public welcomed the idea. So did *The Times*. "Curiously enough," said that newspaper, "the distinguished chiefs who maintained



Two more winners: Sergeant (later Major-General) Luke O'Connor, Royal Welch Fusiliers, though wounded, supports the Queen's Colour at the Alma. Right: Captain (later General Sir) Dighton Probyn, 2nd Punjab Cavalry, cuts down a mutineer at Agra.

VALOUR'

bronze cross outranks all the orders of chivalry

that the practice of bestowing decorations on soldiers or inferior officers was vicious and useless are precisely those whose breasts are covered with stars and crosses."

Up to 1854 only two decorations could be won for bravery—and these were often wrongly awarded for long service and meritorious conduct. They were the Order of the Bath, for high-ranking officers, and the Distinguished Conduct in the Field Medal, for sergeants. Junior officers and soldiers under the rank of sergeant, no matter how gallant, had to be content with campaign medals.

The Royal Warrant, published on 29 January, 1856, laid down that the Victoria Cross could be won only for "a signal act of valour or devotion" in the presence of the enemy. All members of the Services were eligible and "neither rank, nor long service, nor wounds, nor any other circumstances save the merit of conspicuous bravery shall be held a claim to the honour." All non-commissioned officers and men who won it were to be entitled to

a pension of £10 a year and £5 for each bar.

The pension has remained unchanged throughout the years. Applications for increasing it have been turned down on the grounds that bravery cannot be measured in cash. As recently as 1952 Sir (then Mr.) Winston Churchill told the House of Commons: "It is quite true that the pecuniary rewards attaching to the grant of the Victoria Cross have no relation to the fame of the deed for which it was awarded and the actual assessment would be very difficult to make." However, today the annuity can be increased to £75 and officers are eligible if in great need. The next-of-kin of posthumous VCs receive £50.

One clause in the original warrant which still exists, but which has rarely been invoked, permitted units in which all had shown great bravery to select men by secret ballot and recommend them for the award. There have been eleven instances, involving 33 officers and men, in which Victoria Cross winners were chosen by their comrades.

Of these, 19 were awarded for gallantry at Lucknow in the Indian Mutiny. The last instance was in the South African War when an officer, a sergeant, a gunner and a driver of "Q" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery received the award by selection.

The Sovereign has always reserved the right to cancel the award, together with the pension—and to restore it. The original warrant ordained that "to preserve pure this honourable distinction" the award could be withdrawn and the man's name struck from the Victoria Cross register if he was convicted of "treason, cowardice, felony, or any infamous crime. . . ." In 1931 the offences for which the decoration could be forfeited were omitted. Eight Victoria Cross winners have forfeited the honour, the last one in 1908. One soldier lost his for bigamy and six others for theft. In 1908 it was ruled that those who forfeited the award could retain the actual medal.

The Victoria Cross Register, which is kept in the War Office, contains a letter written by Lord

Stamfordham, King George V's Private Secretary, on 26 July, 1920 which says: "The King feels so strongly that, no matter the crime committed by anyone on whom the Victoria Cross has been conferred, the decoration should not be forfeited. Even were a VC to be sentenced to be hanged for murder, he should be allowed to wear the Victoria Cross on the scaffold."

Until 1920 the Victoria Cross was worn suspended from a blue ribbon for the Royal Navy and from a red ribbon for the Army. Since then the ribbon has been red for all Services.

Originally, only members of the Royal Navy and the Army were eligible to win the Victoria Cross. In 1858 civilian volunteers who fought with the Regular Army in the Indian Mutiny became eligible. Since then civilians serving with the Forces have always been eligible to win the decoration, and four have done so. Three were magistrates of the Bengal Civil Service, who helped suppress the Mutiny, and the fourth was a

FOR VALOUR continued

Bengal clergyman who won it in the Afghan War in 1879.

Women first became eligible in 1920—but no woman has ever won the Cross.

The first posthumous awards were made in 1902. Previously, those who died performing an act of gallantry deserving the Victoria Cross had their names published in the *London Gazette* as men who would have won the award had they lived.

Not all Victoria Crosses have been won "in the presence of the enemy." In 1858 an amendment to the Royal Warrant ruled that it could be won for acts of bravery by which life or property were saved. Private T. O'Hea, of the Rifle Brigade, won the Cross for putting out a fire in an ammunition train in Canada in 1866. A surgeon and four private soldiers of the South Wales Borderers won it for saving their companions marooned on the Little Andaman Island in 1867. In 1881, however, the clause was rescinded and since then it has been the rule that the Victoria Cross can be won only in the presence of the enemy.

No recommendation is so carefully investigated as that for the Victoria Cross. Often a lesser decoration is awarded; on rare occasions a man recommended for a lower award has been granted the Victoria Cross. The DCM awarded to Company-Sergeant-Major Peter Wright, Coldstream Guards, for gallan-

try at Salerno was replaced by the Victoria Cross on the instructions of King George VI.

Victoria Cross winners have one common characteristic besides valour—they are notoriously shy. Several times attempts have been made to form a Victoria Cross Association, but each time the eligible members have rejected the idea.

The occasions on which large numbers of Victoria Cross winners have assembled together are very few. In June 1920 more than 200 attended a garden party given by King George V at Buckingham Palace and in 1929 at the House of Lords 321—then almost all the living recipients—were present at a dinner given by the Prince of Wales. At the Coronation in 1952 a special stand was erected outside Buckingham Palace for VC winners.

An inter-Services working party is now making arrangements for celebrating the centenary this summer. Plans may include an open-air ceremony in Hyde Park, scene of the first presentations of the decoration by Queen Victoria on 26 June, 1857.

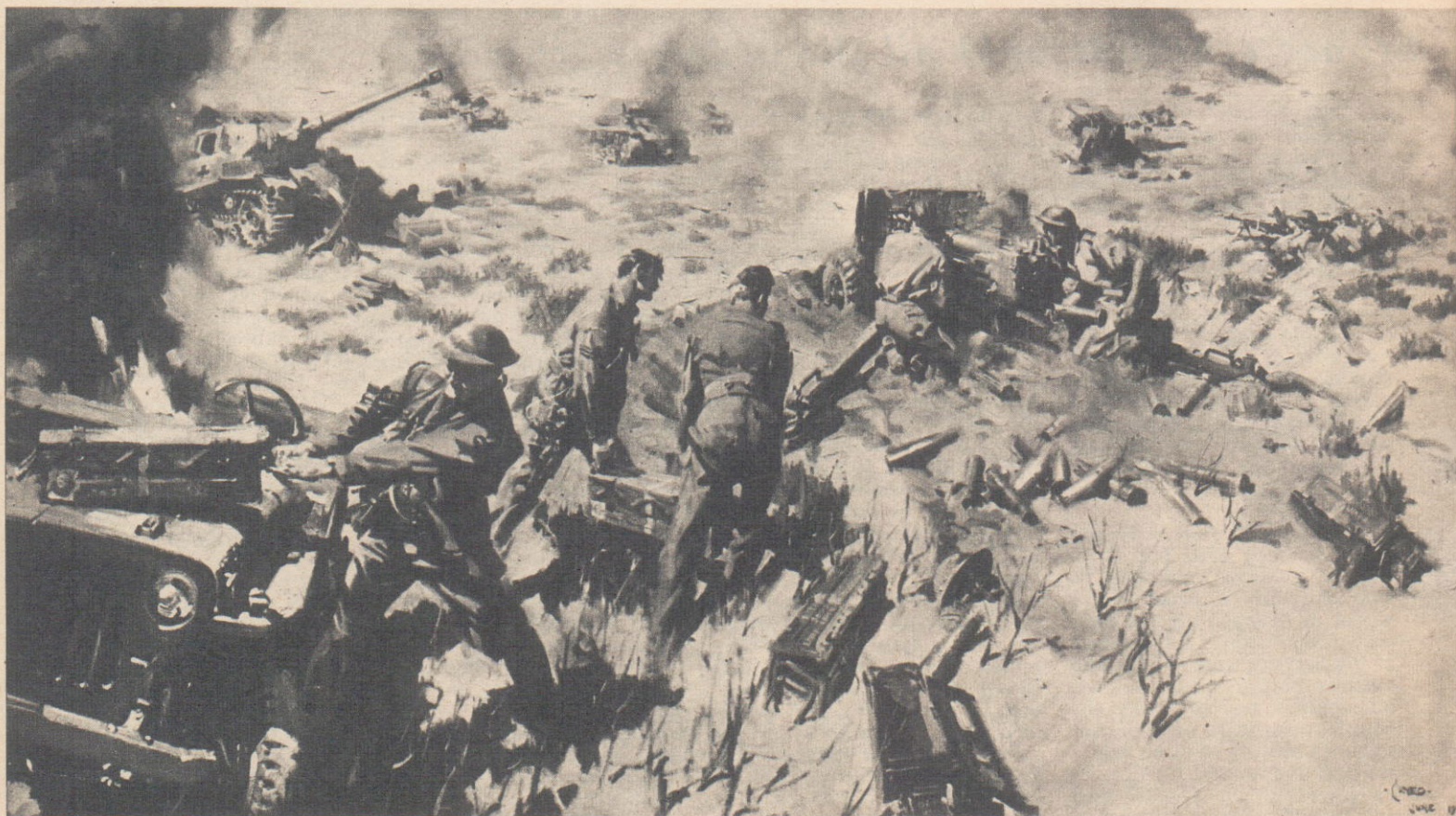
E. J. GROVE

**The battle pictures reproduced on pages 12-13 were formerly housed in the Victoria Cross Gallery at Wantage, Berkshire. Lord Wantage VC presented 45 paintings to the gallery. They are now dispersed.*



Captain Paul Bennett (later the magistrate at Marlborough Street, London) leads men of the Worcesters on a 500-yards charge on the Somme front, in the Kaiser's war. In this action Captain Bennett won the VC.

Terence Cuneo's picture of the action at "Snipe," El Alamein. On left, Lieut-Colonel V. B. Turner, who was awarded the VC, unloads ammunition from a blazing jeep. On the left of gun is Sergeant C. V. Callistan MM, who was recommended for the VC, and was granted the DCM. The Rifle Brigade own the original of this picture. Lieut-Colonel Turner's brother, 2nd Lieut. A. B. Turner, Royal Berkshires, also won the VC—in 1916.



VCS IN THE FAMILY

How many fathers and sons have won the Victoria Cross? Who was the youngest winner? Here are the answers to many a barrack-room argument

THE Victoria Cross has been awarded to 1344 individuals, but there have been 1347 awards altogether, since three men won it twice.

The total of 1347 includes the Cross awarded to the American Unknown Warrior of World War One—an award which was not gazetted.

The Cross has been awarded posthumously 290 times. Of the 182 awards in World War Two, 83 were posthumous.

There are believed to be about 320 living holders of the Victoria Cross. The oldest of them is probably Major the Earl of Dunmore VC, DSO, who won the award in 1897 when serving as Lieutenant Viscount Fincastle on the North-West Frontier.

The Victoria Cross has been won by 867 officers and men of the British Army (37 of them while serving with Indian regiments). This figure includes awards to men serving in the Royal Flying Corps, which was an Army commitment. The total won by the Royal Navy (including the Royal Marines) is 117.

The Victoria Cross was won more often in World War One (633 times) than in any other war and precisely the same number of times (182) in the Indian

Mutiny as in World War Two.

The first man to win the award was Lieutenant C. D. Lucas, Royal Navy, for bravery in the Baltic on 21 June, 1854.

The first soldiers to win it were Lieutenant-Colonel E. W. D. Bell, 23rd Foot (now the Royal Welch Fusiliers), Sergeant J. McKechnie, Scots Fusilier Guards and Private W. Reynolds, Scots Fusilier Guards for bravery in the Battle of the Alma.

The first airman to win it was Second-Lieutenant W. B. Rhodes-Moorhouse, Royal Flying Corps (26 April, 1915).

The first winners of the Victoria Cross in both world wars were Royal Navy officers.

The Victoria Cross has been won only twice in Britain: by Lieutenant W. Leefe Robinson, of the Worcestershire Regiment and Royal Flying Corps, who shot down a Zeppelin over Hertfordshire in 1916; and by Flight-Lieutenant J. B. Nicholson,

Royal Air Force, who remained in his blazing aircraft during a dogfight over Southampton in August 1940 and, although badly wounded, shot down an enemy fighter before baling out.

The Cross has been won by an American in the Canadian Army, a Russian-born Canadian soldier, a German (at Balaclava) and two Danes serving in the British Army.

The biggest number of Victoria Crosses awarded to one regiment in one action is seven: a lieutenant, a corporal and five private soldiers of the South Wales Borderers were selected by their comrades for the award after Rorke's Drift in 1879.

In the Gallipoli landings in 1915, the Lancashire Fusiliers won "six VCs before breakfast."

The youngest recipient of the Victoria Cross was Boy John Travers Cornwell, Royal Navy, who was 16 at the Battle of Jutland in 1916.

The Victoria Cross has been won by father and son on three occasions: by Lieutenant F. S. (later Field-Marshal Earl) Roberts, Bengal Artillery in 1858 and his son Lieutenant the Hon.

F. H. S. Roberts, King's Royal Rifle Corps, in 1899; by Captain W. N. Congreve, Rifle Brigade, in 1899 and his son Brevet-Major W. La T. Congreve DSO, MC, Rifle Brigade in 1916; and by Major C. J. S. Gough, Bengal European Cavalry, in 1858 and his son Brevet-Major J. E. Gough, Rifle Brigade, in Somaliland in 1903. Both Goughs and Major W. La T. Congreve became generals.

It has been won by four pairs of brothers: Major C. J. S. Gough and Lieutenant H. H. Gough, Bengal European Cavalry, in 1858; Major R. W. Sartorius, Bengal Cavalry in 1874 and Captain E. H. Sartorius, East Lancashire Regiment, in 1879; Lieutenant-Commander G. N. Bradford, Royal Navy, in 1918 and Lieutenant R. B. Bradford, Durham Light Infantry in 1916; and Second-Lieutenant A. B. Turner, Royal Berkshire Regiment, in 1915 and Lieut-Colonel V. B. Turner, Rifle Brigade, in 1942.

It has been won by a man on his father's recommendation. Lieutenant H. M. Havelock begged his father, Major-General Sir Henry Havelock, not to put his name forward for the award; the General yielded to the plea, then decided that in fairness his son's name ought to be submitted.

THE THREE WHO WON IT TWICE:

Over a century, only three men have won bars to their Victoria Crosses. They are (below, left) Captain C. H. Upham, New Zealand Military Forces, in 1941 and 1942; (centre) Captain N. G. Chavasse MC, Royal Army Medical Corps, in 1916 and 1917; (right) Surgeon-Captain (later Lieutenant-Colonel) A. Martin-Leake, South African Constabulary and Royal Army Medical Corps, in 1902 and 1914. Of these three, only Captain Upham is living.



WHERE THE VCS WENT

SOLDIER has compiled the following analysis of Victoria Cross winners from a War Office list. It is important to remember these points:

When a man was attached or seconded to another unit, his parent unit has been credited with the award.

Thus, with three exceptions, awards to members of the Royal Flying Corps are added to the totals of the regiments from which the winners were seconded.

Awards to medical officers before World War One are credited to the regiments with which they were serving, unless they belonged to the Army Medical Service or Corps.

Several regiments claim higher totals than are entered against their names in this list. For example, the Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) claim nine awards, deriving three from the London Regiment (see separate entry) which it helped to absorb. Other regiments have similarly inherited awards won by the London Regiment.

The VC credited to the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force was won by Lieutenant-Colonel C. H. M. Doughty-Wylie, originally commissioned into the Royal Welch Fusiliers.

The General List officers who won the VC were: Captain J. B. McCudden DSO, MC, Royal Flying Corps, and Major Anders Lassen MC, a Dane in the Commandos.

BRITISH ARMY CORPS & REGIMENTS

Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders	..	16
Army Airborne Corps	..	1
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt.	9	
Berkshire Yeomanry (absorbed by R.A.)	1	
Black Watch	..	15
Border Regiment	..	10
Bufs (Royal East Kent Regiment)	..	4
Cameronians	..	13
Cameron Highlanders	..	4
Cheshire Regiment	..	2
Coldstream Guards	..	12
Connaught Rangers (disbanded 1922)	..	5
County of London Yeomanry (absorbed by Royal Signals)	..	2
Devonshire Regiment	..	3
Dorsetshire Regiment	..	1
Dragoon Guards:		
1st King's	..	1
2nd, The Queen's Bays	..	4
4/7th Royal (including 4th Royal Irish, 1)	1	
5th Royal Inniskilling (including 6th Royal Inniskilling Dragoons, 1)	..	2
Dragoons:		
1st, The Royal	..	1
2nd, The Royal Scots Greys	..	2
Royal Dublin Fusiliers (disbanded 1922)	3	
Royal Engineers	..	38
Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry	..	7
Duke of Wellington's Regiment	..	9
Durham Light Infantry	..	11
East Lancashire Regiment	..	7
East Surrey Regiment	..	9
East Yorkshire Regiment	..	5
Essex Regiment	..	6
General List	..	2
Gloucestershire Regiment	..	6
Gordon Highlanders	..	18
Green Howards	..	16



For her pluck in a cholera epidemic in 1869, Mrs. Webber D. Harris was presented with a gold facsimile of the Victoria Cross by the officers of the 104th Bengal Fusiliers. Queen Victoria sanctioned the facsimile, which is now in the Royal United Service Institution.

Grenadier Guards	..	13
Highland Light Infantry	..	13
Hussars:		
4th Queen's Own (as 4th Light Dragoons)	..	1
7th Queen's Own	..	2
8th King's Royal Irish	..	5
10th Royal (Prince of Wales's Own)	..	2
11th (Prince Albert's Own)	..	1
13/18th Royal (Queen Mary's Own) (including 13th Light Dragoons, 1)	..	2
14/20th King's (including 14th Light Dragoons, 1)	..	2
15/19th The King's Royal	..	2
Imperial Yeomanry	..	1
Irish Guards	..	6
King's Own Royal Regiment	..	9
King's Own Scottish Borderers	..	5
King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry	..	8
King's Regiment (Liverpool)	..	9
King's Royal Rifle Corps	..	21
King's Shropshire Light Infantry	..	8
Lancashire Fusiliers	..	18
Lancers:		
9th Queen's Royal	..	14
16/5th The Queen's Royal	..	3
17/21st	..	9
Leinster Regiment (disbanded 1922)	..	4
London Regiment:		
1/5th (now Rifle Brigade)	..	1
1/22nd, 2/22nd and 24th (now the Queen's Royal Regiment)	..	3
2/14th (now Gordon Highlanders)	..	2
9th (now King's Royal Rifle Corps)	..	1
1/4th and 2/8th (now Royal Artillery)	2	
Loyal Regiment	..	5
Machine Gun Corps (disbanded)	..	4
Manchester Regiment	..	14
Mediterranean Expeditionary Force	..	1
Middlesex Regiment	..	11
Monmouthshire Regiment	..	1
Northamptonshire Regiment	..	7
North Irish Horse	..	1
North Staffordshire Regiment	..	5

Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire L.I.	6
Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey)	6
Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regt.	6
Rifle Brigade	27
Royal Army Medical Corps	18
Royal Army Service Corps (including Military Train, 4; Land Transport Corps, 1; and Commissariat and Transport Dept., 1)	7
Royal Army Chaplains Dept.	3
Royal Armoured Corps	3
Royal Artillery (including Field, 17; Garrison, 1; Horse, 12; and Honourable Artillery Company, 2)	48
Royal Berkshire Regiment	6
Royal Flying Corps	3
Royal Fusiliers	19
Royal Hampshire Regiment	9
Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers	7
Royal Irish Fusiliers	2
Royal Irish Regiment (disbanded 1922)	4
Royal Leicestershire Regiment	4
Royal Lincolnshire Regiment	7
Royal Munster Fusiliers (disbanded 1922)	3
Royal Norfolk Regiment	6
Royal Northumberland Fusiliers	10
Royal Scots	7
Royal Scots Fusiliers	6
Royal Sussex Regiment.. . . .	5
Royal Tank Corps	1
Royal Ulster Rifles (including Royal Irish Rifles, 7)	7
Royal Welch Fusiliers	13
Royal Warwickshire Regiment.. . . .	5
Scots Guards (including Scots Fusilier Guards, 3)	9
Scottish Horse	1
Seaforth Highlanders	18
Sherwood Foresters	14
Somerset Light Infantry	5
South Lancashire Regiment	5
South Staffordshire Regiment	6
South Wales Borderers	22
Suffolk Regiment	2
Welch Regiment.. . . .	6
Welsh Guards	2
West Yorkshire Regiment	7
Wiltshire Regiment	2
Worcestershire Regiment	8
York and Lancaster Regiment	13
ROYAL NAVY (including Royal Marines, 2; Royal Marine Artillery, 4; Royal Marine Light Infantry, 4)	117
ROYAL AIR FORCE (excluding R.F.C.)	28
AUSTRALIA (Army, 84; Air Force, 3)	87
CANADA (Army, 76; Navy, 1; Air Force 2)	79
FIJI (Military Force)	1
GURKHA RIFLES	14
INDIA:	
Army (including British officers and men in Indian regiments, 37).. . . .	131
Navy	1
Civilians	4
NEW ZEALAND (Army, 19; Air Force, 3)	22
SOUTH AFRICA (Military Forces, 28; Air Force, 1)	29
WEST INDIES REGT. (disbanded)	3
Unknown Soldier, United States	



In the Union Jack Club, London, the names of all Victoria Cross winners are inscribed on a roll of honour.

THERE'S NO SHORTAGE OF CRIMEA BRONZE

A VICTORIA CROSS costs only about £2 to make, and the value of the metal is less than a shilling. That does not stop collectors offering as much as a couple of hundred pounds for a Victoria Cross in an auction room.

The Cross has always been made from the bronze of Russian guns captured in the Crimea, except for a period during World War One, when the metal of captured Chinese guns was used. An ample stock of the Russian metal, melted into ingots, is held by the Royal Army Ordnance Corps, which issues it as needed. If stocks were to run low, the War Office could always call on the many local councils which have offered their old Russian guns from public parks or war memorials.

It is generally believed that the Prince Consort was responsible for the design of the Victoria Cross. *The Times* was positively rude on the subject. In 1856 it said: "Than the Cross of Valour nothing can be more plain and homely, not to say coarse-looking. . . Even with all the care and skill which distinguishes Mr.

Hancock (the manufacturer), the whole Cross is, after all, poor-looking and mean in the extreme. The merit of the design, we believe, is due to the same illustrious individual who once invented a hat."

Lord Panmure suggested as an inscription for the Cross "For the Brave." This was rejected by Queen Victoria, who proposed "For Valour."

Unlike most other medals, the Victoria Cross is not stamped out from a die; each one is separately made by skilled craftsmen of the firm of silversmiths who have always made them—Messrs. Hancocks and Company, of London. The processes they use are the same as those employed 100 years ago.

Two moulds with hardened

surfaces to give a smooth finish to the medal are placed in an iron case made in closely-fitting halves, with a channel for the liquid bronze to flow through. The bronze is melted in crucibles of clay or plumbago in draught furnaces at a temperature of

Victoria Crosses are still made from the bronze of Russian cannon captured in the Crimea. The ingots, one of which is shown here, are issued by Ordnance.



DVC, said Queen

QUEEN VICTORIA suggested that winners of the Victoria Cross should use the letters DVC (meaning Decorated with the Victoria Cross) or BVC (Bearer of the Victoria Cross) after their names.

She wrote: "KG means a Knight of the Garter, CB a Companion of the Bath, MP a Member of Parliament . . . No one could be called a VC, which means a Vice-Chancellor at present."

The Queen's objection was logical—but ineffective.

2000 degrees Fahrenheit and is poured into the moulds and left to cool and harden. The temperature of the molten bronze must be correct; if it is too hot it will burn the mould, if too cold it will not flow evenly.

The bar, decorated with laurel leaves, is cast separately. It bears a "V" on which the Cross hangs (Queen Victoria's own suggestion).

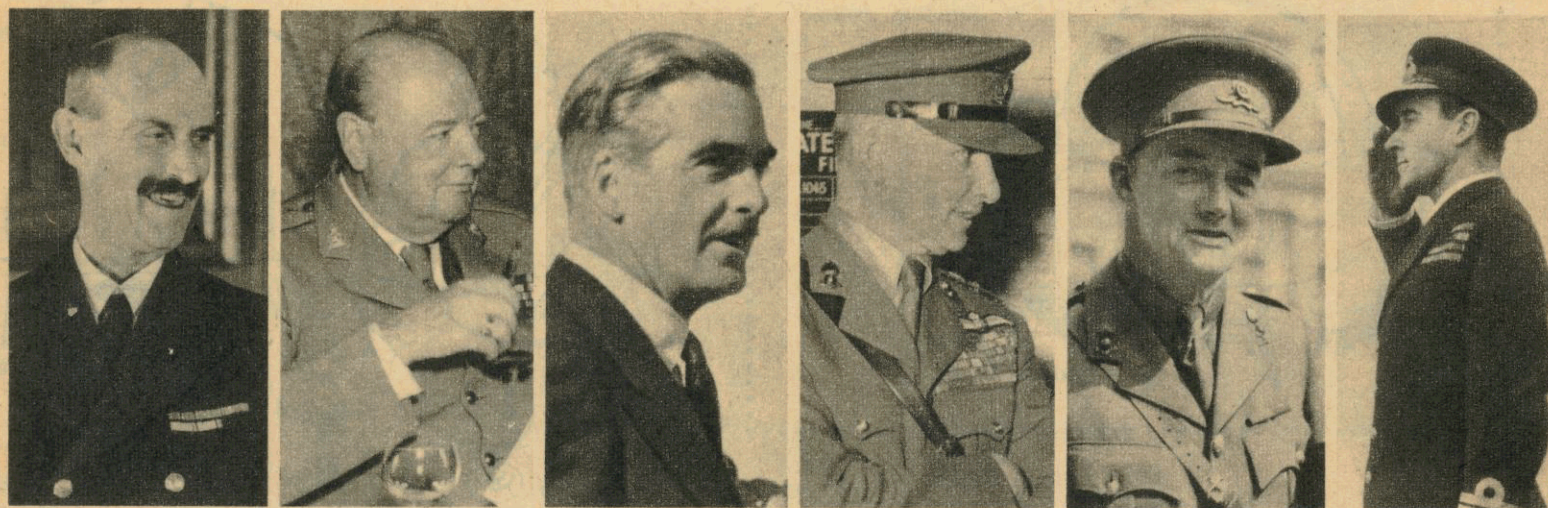
Then the chaser sets about giving the medal and bar a perfect finish, bringing the letters into sharp relief and engraving the tufts of hair on the lion's tail and mane. Finally, he places the firm's secret mark on the Cross so that forgeries can be easily detected. Some dealers, even recently, have been tricked with spurious Victoria Crosses.

The Cross and bar are burned a uniform dark-brown tone with acids. Then the completed medal, weighing less than an ounce, is sent for approval to the War Office. If it passes muster, the medal is returned for the rank, name and regiment of the recipient to be engraved on the bar and the date of the deed for which it was won to be engraved on the back of the Cross.

*The Victoria Cross reproduced on *SOLDIER's* cover was lent by courtesy of Mr. G. L. Hancock Dore, of Messrs. Hancocks and Company.

THE PROUD

COMPANY OF COLONELS



THE KING

King Haakon of Norway.

THE OLD SOLDIER

Sir Winston Churchill.

THE STATESMAN

Sir Anthony Eden,

THE AIR MARSHAL

Lord Tedder.

THE INDUSTRIALIST

Lord Nuffield.

THE ADMIRAL

THE ADMIRAL

Earl Mountbatten

battles all over again, to obtain for their regiments battle honours which may have been overlooked. When a regiment proudly displays a new button or hackle, or flies a new Colour, the innovation has probably meant hard work by the colonel.

The colonel may give much time to distressed ex-members of the regiment, or to the families of men serving overseas. He is always on call to present prizes (some given by himself) at regimental sports days, to welcome battalions returning from overseas, or to attend re-unions and ceremonial parades. To all this the War Office contributes a modest allowance of railway warrants and travelling expenses. Otherwise the colonel is paid nothing.

Once it was not so. From the early days of the Standing Army it was the custom for the colonel of a regiment to collect money for the clothing and equipment of his men and be responsible for fitting them out. Anything he could save was his reward. In addition he could, at times with official sanction, collect allowances and pay for non-existent soldiers. It was not always a profitable office. In two years in the 1790s, while the colonel of the 4th Dragoons was pocketing a profit of £4597, the colonel of the 7th Dragoons had to stump up £983. Few colonels actually served with their regiments. Command devolved on the lieutenant-colonel.

Some colonels dressed their regiments in their family liveries; many regiments wore their colonels' crests. One made his private soldiers wear ruffles on the sleeves and bosoms of their shirts. Another gave his regiment black facings, with little black flags, because he was in mourning for his mother at the time the regiment was raised. In 1751, official dress regulations put an end to such idiosyncrasies.

Financially, the colonel was

harder to dislodge. Until after Waterloo, the award of a colonelcy was the only way of paying a general who was not in an appointment, and when he retired the regiment yielded his pension. It was not until after the Crimea that the "clothing colonel" went out of circulation, and provision of clothing was taken over by the Government. Later in the century, colonels of regiments were receiving a regular income of £1000 a year—more in the Guards. They did not lose this until senior officers' pensions were raised.

Today, any retired Regular Army officer of the substantive rank of lieutenant-colonel or above, or serving Regular officer of the substantive rank of colonel or above, may become colonel of a regiment. Large regiments and corps, like the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, appoint a number of colonels-commandant (the Gunners have 25) and they take it in turns to carry out the duties for a year. In addition, the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers each have a

kind of "top-colonel" known respectively as the Master-Gunner of St. James's Park and the Chief Royal Engineer.

Most colonels and colonels-commandant have served in the regiments or corps to which they are appointed. In some instances they achieved fame in other walks of life after leaving their regiments. One of these is Sir Winston Churchill, Colonel of the 4th Queen's Own Hussars.

Younger regiments and corps, which have not had time to produce officers of sufficient seniority, and corps which do not have a normal establishment of Regular officers (like the Intelligence Corps) have to "import" their colonels and colonels-commandant. For this reason, distinguished generals are likely to have several colonelcies. Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery, for instance, is Colonel-Commandant of the Army Physical Training Corps.

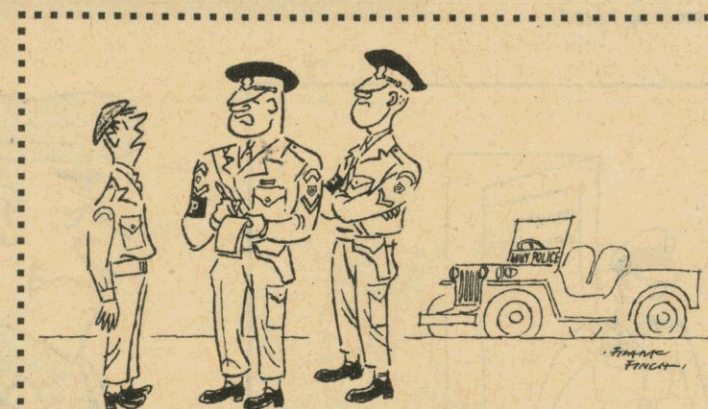
In the Territorial Army, an honorary colonel may be appointed to a unit commanded by a lieutenant-colonel (a colonel in

the case of the Royal Army Medical Corps). His duties are mainly local and include help with recruiting. For this reason, the rank qualification (lieutenant-colonel or its equivalent or above) is often waived so that influential people may be appointed. Many peers and lords lieutenant are honorary colonels and so are certain local government dignitaries by virtue of their office.

The Royal Artillery, Territorial Army list of honorary colonels—the longest—is headed by the Duke of Gloucester, the Lord Mayor of London, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh and the Lord Mayor of Bristol. The Duchess of Kent is on the list, and so are Lord Nuffield, Sir Winston Churchill, the King of Norway, Admiral Earl Mountbatten of Burma and Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Tedder.

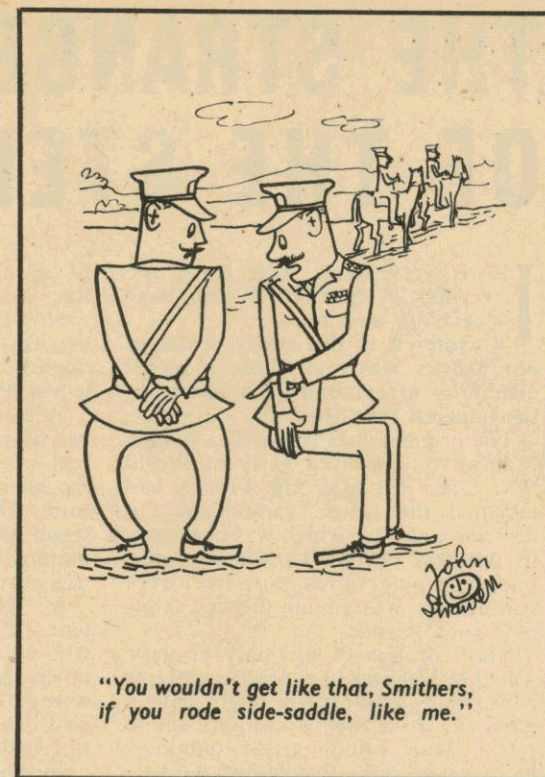
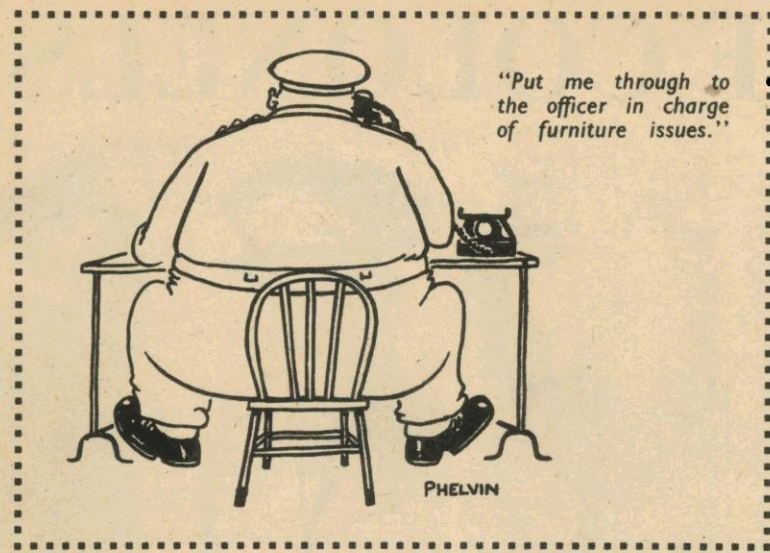
Sir Winston Churchill is also honorary colonel of a number of Infantry units, including the 4/5th (Cinque Ports) Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment. It is the custom for the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, which Sir Winston has been since 1941, to hold this appointment. Sir Anthony Eden, who served in the King's Royal Rifle Corps in World War One, is one of that Regiment's honorary colonels.

Honorary colonels may also be appointed to Army Emergency Reserve units. They are usually officers who have given distinguished service in the type of work the unit is designed to do, and leaders of the profession from which the unit is principally drawn. Honorary colonels of the Army Emergency Reserve are a small body at present, but a growing one. Lieutenant-Commander G. C. H. Hamilton, RNVR, who carried a corps commander ashore on D-Day, is now an honorary colonel of a Royal Army Service Corps water transport group.

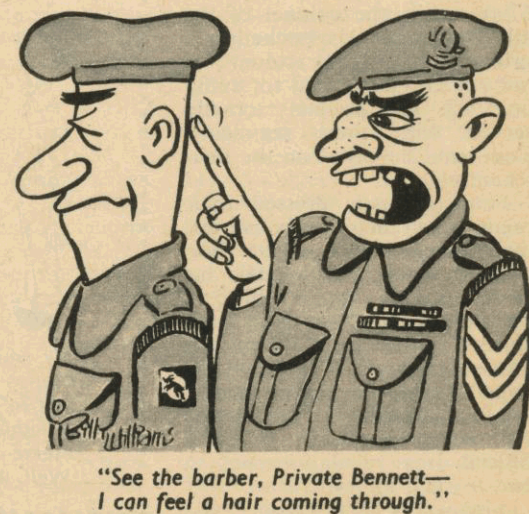
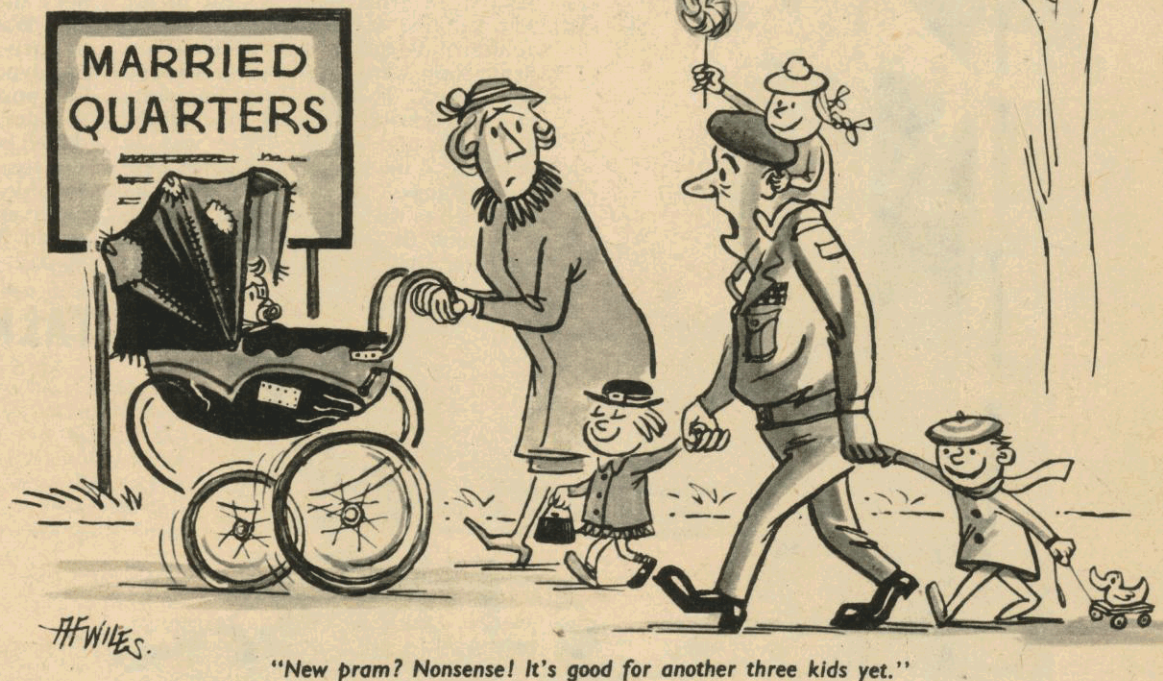
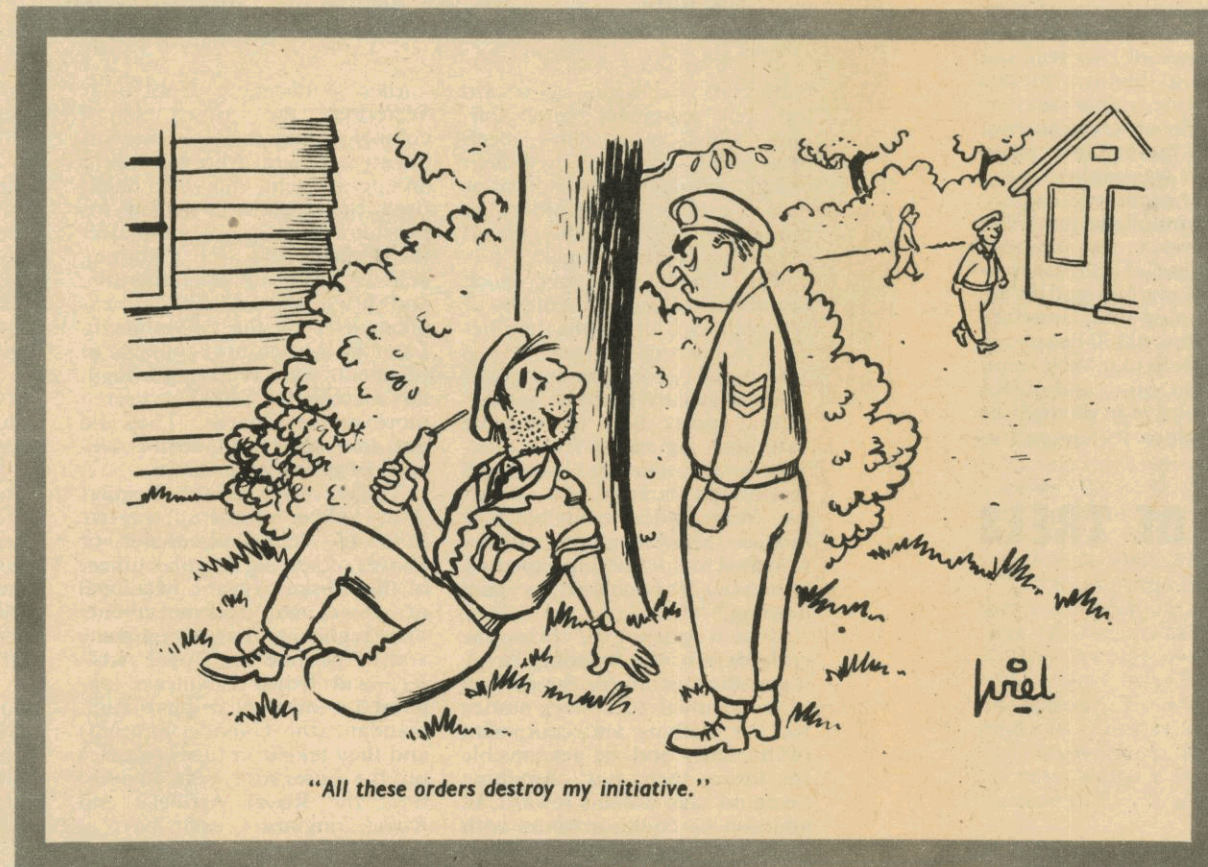
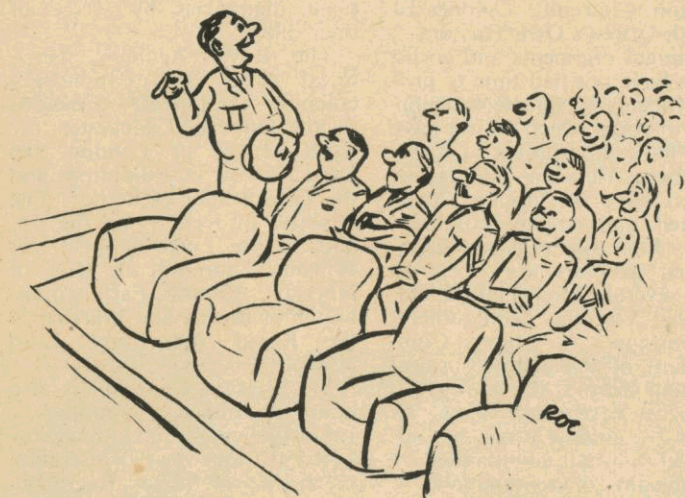


"My unit is Number Six Seven Column comma Mobile Defence Corps comma brackets on Queen Charlotte's Own Light Infantry brackets off comma brackets on The Heart of Midlothian Fencibles brackets off comma Army Emergency Reserve—"

"Well, we'll let you off this time, but don't do it again."



Soldier HUMOUR



On the Western Front in World War One the Army called in Royal Academicians to design and decorate a new kind of observation post

.....

THE STRANGE STORY OF THE STEEL TREE

IT is very likely that there are readers of **SOLDIER** who have served in steel trees.

Interest in this crafty device of our fathers was revived by a recent exhibition of camouflage paintings at the Imperial War Museum.

The original steel tree was a French brainwave, conceived early in World War One, just after the French had invented the word "camouflage" to describe a science which was beginning to progress beyond variegated painting. The observation post tree, as it was known, was among the first fruits of the new science.

The tree was of use only in static war. The idea was to pick out a real tree from which an observer might have a good view over enemy positions, and to replace it by a dummy one containing an observer and a telephonist. To help the builders of the dummy, it was preferable to pick a tree which had had its head and branches blown off.

First an artist went as near to the selected tree as he could, and made colour drawings. Royal Academicians in uniform were among those selected for the task. Then the Royal Engineers built, in sections, a steel tube of the right size and shape. There was an entrance at the bottom and inside were ladder-rungs. At the top were an observation slit and a seat and footrest.

Around the steel column was fixed an outer shell of thin iron beaten out

to resemble the bark of the original tree.

Now the artist took over. He painted the iron "bark" the right colours and duplicated the splintered top of the tree in wood and paint.

When all was ready, the dummy was assembled by night just behind the real tree. A base-plate was dug into the earth, and the steel column hinged to it. The real tree served to take the strain of a block and tackle, while the dummy was lifted into position, then it was uprooted.

In "The Art of Camouflage," Lieutenant-Colonel C. H. R. Chesney DSO, who was a World War One camouflage officer, says the observation post trees were so realistic that "you could walk past one at a distance of two feet and not realise it was a dummy till you tapped it." The same author says he believes not a single observation post tree was discovered by the Germans to be a dummy until it was captured, and not a single casualty occurred in one.

A War Office camouflage pamphlet of early 1918, however, was cautious in advocating the use of the observation post tree. Making and putting up the device, it pointed out, involved skilled labour which could ill be spared. The tree was not likely to make a comfortable observation post, and if the observer could not leave in daylight he would have to endure its discomfort all day.

-AND TALKING OF TREES

A model of an observation post tree in the Imperial War Museum.

WHAT STARTED THIS JOKE?

ONE of the jokes that cartoonists refuse to let die is that of the soldier camouflaged as a tree.

A variation on the theme is submitted to **SOLDIER** every week. Sometimes a dog is sniffing at the base of the "tree"; sometimes the "trees" are watching a girl bathing; sometimes the "tree" has sergeant's stripes on it.

Now how did this joke start? Is it as old as "Macbeth"? (Remember that old gag about Birnam Wood marching to Dunsinane?) Or had it a more substantial basis?

Hands up any soldier who has ever served as a tree!

TOL

IT STANDS FOR TRUCIAL OMAN LEVIES, A FORCE WHICH A HANDFUL OF BRITONS HAVE SHAPED FROM WILD BEDOUIN TRIBESMEN—AND HAVE LED IN ACTION

OIL intrigues in the Middle East have brought a ripple of excitement to a handful of British officers and non-commissioned officers in Arabia.

They are the men who have formed a disciplined force, called the Trucial Oman Levies, out of wild tribesmen—a force which, besides keeping the peace in disputed oases, has power to arrest the occasional gun-runner, pearl smuggler and slaver.

The trouble started with a territorial dispute between Saudi Arabia on the one hand and the British-protected Trucial Sheikdom of Abu Dhabi and the Independent Sultanate of Muscat on the other. The bone of contention was the Buraimi Oasis area—about 700 square miles, strategically situated between the three territories and a considerable trade centre. It was not for these reasons, however, that the Saudis laid claim to the area, but because there may be oil underneath. Before the oil boom, nobody in Arabia worried much about defining frontiers.

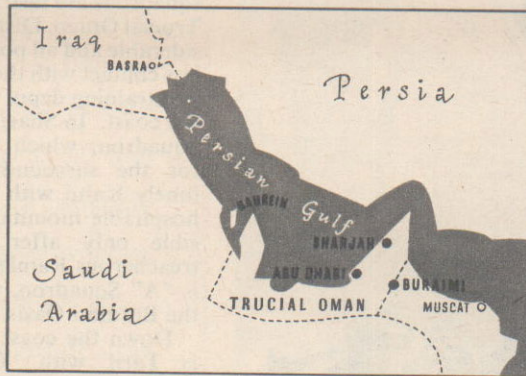
In view of this quarrel, and certain political developments, a small force was created in 1951, composed of local tribesmen with a nucleus of Aden Protectorate Levies brought in from Aden. Today that force is the Trucial Oman Levies (TOL), commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel E. F. Johnson MC, of the South Lancashire Regiment.

The Levies did not start as a unit administered by the British Army. The force was founded by the Foreign Office through the agency of a civilian, Mr. H. M. Hankin-Turvin, formerly with the Arab Legion. Later Regular British Army officers took over the training and immediate running of the Levies, though administration remained in the hands of the Foreign Office.

Slowly the Levies began to take shape. From a collection of ill-disciplined but proud tribesmen emerged an efficient and soldierly force. Ten British officers and eight men are now attached to the Levies as instructors.

The roles of the Levies are diverse. Primarily the force is an Infantry one and its task is to stop violation of boundaries and to stabilise the Trucial Coast as a whole. It is also a police force and recently caught a slaver attempting to sell five women. He is now serving a four-year jail sentence. Another side of the police work deals with emigration and immigration.

Desert rescue is carried out by the Levies when necessary. Much of the force's work is done in



Descendant of a proud warrior-tribe, the Beni Kitaab, is this bearded Arab. Below: Another warrior from the desert.



RSM Moh'Dahmed is the last of the nucleus of Aden Protectorate Levies to serve with the Force. Photographs: Corporal W. Walker.



At Tarif, on the torrid Persian Gulf, Captain Tony Steggles, RA, shows how to dismantle a Bren gun.



conjunction with the British Political Agent who lives at Dubai, and the Levies provide his escort when he journeys across the desert to outlying areas.

The Levies have grown considerably since 1951. There are now some 513 men on strength, drawn from Bedouin tribes of the Trucial Coast. All are volunteers and serve a two-year engagement. Many re-engage. Recruits, who receive 80 Indian rupees a month, do an eight weeks' basic course which includes drill and weapon training. All instruction is in Arabic and no attempt is made to teach them English. British officers learn Arabic instead.

The Force has a boys' training platoon, containing about 30 boys aged between 10 and 14. In 18 months they are taught to read and write Arabic in the Levies' own school, and are trained as fitters, wireless operators and so on to form a pool of future NCOs.

The present operational signallers are also young boys who have had only a short course in wireless telegraphy. Unable to read or write Arabic, they have been taught the English alphabet with the Morse equivalent of each letter. Thus they can send and receive messages in English without understanding a word they transmit. Security is one hundred per cent.

OVER



Up go the rifles as off-duty Levies let off steam in a spontaneous dance. They are wearing their "civvies" which include bandoliers at the waist.



TOL continued

Since the main work of the Levies is to keep a watch on strategic areas and routes, the squadrons are distributed all over Trucial Oman. Distances are considerable and all posts are in wireless contact with the headquarters and training depot at Sharjah, on the coast. In Sharjah, too, is "B" Squadron, which is responsible for the surrounding area. At lonely Kahil with its jagged, inhospitable mountains and accessible only after crossing the treacherous Ramlet (sea of sand) is "A" Squadron, which watches the Buraimi Oasis.

Down the coast from Sharjah is Tarif with "C" Squadron, where continuation training is done. The squadron is entirely dependent for its water on the oil company which has its field drilling base there. All water is distilled from the sea.

Motor transport is a continual problem. There is not a made-up road in Trucial Oman and the normal life of a new truck is six to eight months. Complete engine changes often have to be made out in the desert.

The climate in Trucial Oman is severe. From May to October, temperatures above 115° F. are normal and humidity often exceeds 90 per cent. To compensate for the climate, all British ranks receive additional daily pay on top of the local overseas allowance of 1s 5d a day. This inducement allowance, as it is called, varies from eleven shillings a day for a colonel to three shillings a day for sergeant and below.—*Report by Lieutenant M. Type, Military Observer.*

WHEN Buraimi Oasis blew into the news as the subject of one of the biggest bribes ever spurned, the Levies were going quietly about their duties. A few weeks later they supported the forces of the Ruler of Abu Dhabi and the Sultan of Muscat in expelling the Saudi Arabian force from the disputed region of the oasis.

Theirs was a two-pronged attack. One prong went for a police post and arrived by night. In the glare of headlights the men saw the Saudis hiding behind petrol barrels, but as the vehicles came nearer the Saudis came out with rifles at the high port. One of the British officers (who later sent an account of the action home), drove his Land Rover up to the office where Major Norman Smith, second-in-command of the Levies, grappled with the head of the police post, while the man's clerk tried to escape with a tin box. The box was recovered—it contained half a million rupees and secret despatches. By headlight and spotlight the Levies soon succeeded in rounding up the Saudis.

The second prong of the attack was directed at Hamasa, one of the two biggest villages in the area. It was delayed by bad going, but soon occupied the four houses which had been selected as the primary target. Then the attackers were pinned down by heavy fire from strongpoints all around.

Meanwhile, after the successful attack on the police post, Lieutenant-Colonel Johnson sent an officer to find an attack route for the reserve squadron. This officer came under fire wherever he moved, and fire was particularly strong from a tower which covered the approaches to Hamasa. Up came Captain Peter Clayton with some Levies and, to quote a witness, "this tower was dealt with in very skilful fashion by Clayton's small party and may well have been a decisive stage of the battle." Hamasa finally surrendered about 9.30 that evening.

Two days later the Foreign Office reported that the situation in Buraimi was quiet, the Saudi Arabian troops had been embarked and arrangements were made for their repatriation. There were two dead and three wounded among the forces of the Ruler and the Levies. Two men of the Saudi Arabian force had been wounded.

All the wireless operators of the Trucial Oman Levies are boys varying in age from 10 to 15. Many are unable to read or write Arabic or English, yet can send and receive morse messages at high speed. Note how Ali Salem wears his earphones over his headdress.

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Chairman, H.M. Forces Savings Committee

To: All Serving in Her Majesty's Forces

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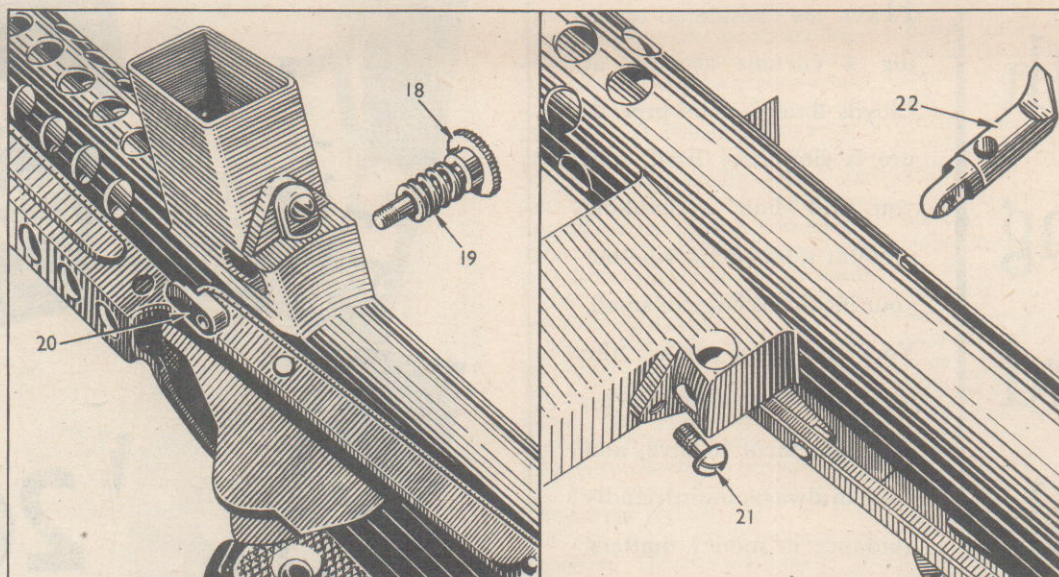
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TWO REAL-LIFE STORIES OF THE WAR ARE ADAPTED FOR THE SCREEN

Should a Film Producer Take Such Liberties?

ANY resemblance to living characters is purely coincidental," runs a small-type line among the credits which precede "Cockleshell Heroes." Yet the film is presented as a tribute to the Royal Marines who carried out that most audacious raid on Bordeaux, during the late war.

Tribute or not, a film has to be a popular success. That usually means that liberties must be taken with the characters. Hence the cautious disclaimer.

If too great liberties are taken with the characters, a tribute becomes a travesty.

In "The Dam Busters" there was no pretence that the characters were fictitious. Wing-Commander Gibson was called Wing-Commander Gibson and "Bomber" Harris was called "Bomber" Harris. The film came as near a straight portrayal of a wartime operation as was possible.

To many, it will seem a pity that the same course could not have been adopted with "Cockleshell Heroes." The wartime raid was led by Major (now Colonel) H. G. Hasler DSO, Royal Marines; but the film raid is led by "Major Stringer," and any resemblance between the two—if it exists—must indeed be coincidental.

First, what *did* happen?

December 1942 five Eskimo-type canoes were unloaded from a British submarine off the Gironde estuary and the two-man Marine crews faced the formidable task of paddling 75 miles up-river, undetected, to Bordeaux, there to attack shipping with limpet mines. This was Operation Frankton, planned by Combined Operations. "In boldness of conception, in skill of execution, and in prolonged ten-

sity of danger it is perhaps the most thrilling of all the minor episodes of the war," says Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, in "The Marines Were There." Two craft were lost in the tide race off the estuary, the occupants of one being towed inshore and there left to their own resources. Another canoe lost formation and vanished. The crew of *Catfish* and *Crayfish* paddled by night and hid ashore by day, until they reached Bordeaux, where they caused gratifying damage. The four men then sank their canoes and made contact with the French Resistance—but only Major Hasler and Marine W. E. Sparks DSM reached home.

In this film, produced in Britain for an American company, the part of Major Stringer is played by Jose Ferrer, who makes a not very convincing Royal Marines officer. Trevor Howard is his administration officer, Captain Thompson, a hard-bitten, uncompromising, semi-mutinuous Regular, who deplores the whole affair. He

deeply distrusts men who volunteer for hazardous operations, he deplores Major Stringer's un-military ways, and rebukes him for addressing the men as "gentlemen" even though some of them may be gentlemen. Any spirited Marines major would have put this glowering captain under arrest after five minutes.

One of Major Stringer's ideas for assessing his men's resourcefulness is to dress them in German uniform and drop them out of an aircraft in the north of England, with orders to report back to Portsmouth in 48 hours. This episode, not unexpectedly, develops into broad farce. Canoe training begins, but the men are not giving their best. "They need an iron hand and plenty of square-bashing," says Captain Thompson; "I want to develop their initiative," says Major Stringer. The two officers have a show-down—and Major Stringer decides that perhaps a little more discipline would do no harm. There is a visible improvement, but on the eve of the

operation the Marines have their inevitable rough-house with the Navy in a bar. And Captain Thompson, to show that he can be unconventional, too, stands guard outside the house of one of his men who has gone inside, not before time, to beat up the lodger.

The scenes of the raid itself are splendidly done and a fine suspense is built up. (Colonel Hasler and Marine Sparks were technical advisers.) Artistically, it is a pity that the dead have to be resurrected in the last scene to march, ghostly faced, down the road with the survivors.

The fact that an American company should wish to pay tribute to a British exploit makes it seem uncharitable to criticise. But the cinemagoer seeing a reconstruction of a war exploit like this has a right to ask: Was the commanding officer really like that? Did he clash all the time with his second-in-command? Did the men do this, that and the other thing—or didn't they?



"Don't worry, sir, only 70 miles to go." That's Trevor Howard in the rear seat.

The Man Who Won ALL The Medals

ON this side of the Atlantic the name Audie Murphy did not—until recently—mean very much. A few film fans knew him as an actor in Wild West films.

But in the United States Audie Murphy is a national hero. In World War Two he won every decoration for bravery that the United States could award a soldier. It was a unique feat.

In addition to the North Africa, Sicily, Italy and France campaign medals, he had gained, at the age of 19, the following medals for gallantry: The Congressional Medal of Honour, the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star (twice), the Legion of Merit, the Purple Heart (three times), the Bronze Star (twice), the European Theatre Medal with seven battle stars, the French Legion of Honour and the Croix-de-Guerre.

Now Audie Murphy's story has been filmed under the title "To Hell and Back" and Murphy plays himself.

Murphy joined the Infantry as a last resort after being turned down by the Navy, the Marines and the paratroops. He went to North Africa with 3rd Infantry Division, US Army, and was soon in action in Sicily, where he won his first award. His battalion crossed the Volturno, landed at Anzio and fought its way to Rome. Then came the landings in Southern France and the drive to the German border.

Here Audie Murphy, newly-commissioned in the field from sergeant, won the Congressional Medal of Honour (America's highest award for gallantry). When his company came under fire from a German counter-attack by Infantry and tanks, Murphy sent all his men back under cover of a wood and, alone, called down artillery fire on the enemy until they were only 100 yards away. Most of the enemy tanks were knocked out but the German Infantry continued to advance. Leaping on to a blazing American tank, he machine-gunned the advancing Germans until all had been killed or wounded. A few minutes after he left the tank it blew up. Murphy escaped with a slight wound.



Audie Murphy, with his medals up, including the Congressional Medal of Honour suspended from his neck. He won them all before he was 20.



Just another load for the RASC: a landing craft being taken from Antwerp to the Rhine for the assault crossing.

NOBODY ATE HIS BELT

THEY always deliver the goods," wrote Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery of the Royal Army Service Corps drivers in one of his famous Orders of the Day.

The sentence will serve to summarise the achievement of the whole Corps during World War Two. Transport, food and petrol were, and are, the responsibilities of the Corps. Few veterans of the war can point to occasions when deliveries failed through any fault of the Corps. If the transport was far from luxurious, the rations included soya links and the petrol arrived in leaky containers—well, there were good reasons.

How it was accomplished is told in "The Story of the Royal Army Service Corps, 1939-45" (Bell, 45s), a work of many authors. It is a big book (720 pages) but it has to tell the tale of an organisation which at times was 300,000 strong, fed eight million people, ran 200,000 vehicles and operated in every theatre.

Like most of the Army, the Corps was still desperately building its strength when war broke out. As late as 1937, one company had to borrow drivers and vehicles from 11 others to appear on an exercise at something like war establishment.

The "phoney war" was not phoney for the service which had to keep the British Expeditionary Force supplied, and when it turned into a shooting war, the Corps was soon facing formidable difficulties. When the Germans had broken through, the British Expeditionary Force was cut off from its bases. The Corps could "only do its best" says the

How the war-time Royal Army Service Corps fed, fuelled and carried the Army

history. Petrol and supply officers went foraging to good effect. One supply officer discovered stocks of food in an abandoned NAAFI and drew on them. Two years later, in the midst of a Western Desert campaign, he received a NAAFI bill for several thousand pounds.

Even in captivity, members of the Corps went on with supply work. In Changi prisoner-of-war camp, Singapore, they controlled the rations provided by the Japanese, supplemented them by purchase, vegetable gardens and a piggery, and produced a cookery book to help the prisoners' messes.

In places the Corps was issuing as many as 50 different ration-scales at a time. It was carrying live sheep across the seas for Indian units and starting market-gardens to provide fresh fruit and vegetables. In its fight for better cooking, it gave birth to the Army Catering Corps.

"My men can eat their belts, but I must have gas," the late General George S. Patton is reported to have said. No British (or, as far as SOLDIER knows, American) troops were reduced to stewing their webbing, but the petrol did turn up. The much-cursed four-gallon "flimsies" leaked away about a third of their contents, but for all that did a fine job as a stop-gap in the days before jerricans. The reasons for using them, instead of returnable containers, are convincingly set out.

The Corps delivered huge quantities of petrol in the various theatres. This history avoids dull figures, but it does point out that an armoured division consumed 1000 loads of petrol in advancing 500 miles.

The transport side of the Corps learned many new tricks, including air despatch and manning amphibians. Some lessons were learned the hard way. One motor transport company, suddenly turned over to animal transport, made the mistake of putting donkeys of all sizes and both sexes into the same corral,

thus starting a major battle.

One thing nobody had foreseen was the large number of vehicles which would be needed to carry water to the troops in the Western Desert, and special companies were hurriedly formed for this purpose. "As a transport load," says the history, "water easily gave more worry and anxiety than any other."

The Corps had many jobs not "in the book." One platoon took to skis to collect air-drop supplies. A DUKW company turned over to air-sea rescue and also co-operated with Field Security in rounding up escaped prisoners, enemy agents and refugees on the Italian coast. Another company provided smoke-screens at Cassino. A target-towing craft of the RASC Fleet was found to be doing an unexpected but efficient job of sweeping in an unknown mine-field. The crew of a DUKW which surprisingly survived detonating a mine off the Normandy beaches was rewarded by an admiral with a bottle of whisky.

The Corps gained an impressive number of awards. One went to a driver who saved his passengers' lives when they ran into direct enemy fire by putting his car into reverse and driving backwards at 30 miles an hour for half a mile. Another driver took his car to within 15 yards of an enemy two-pounder anti-tank gun and engaged it with his rifle. Under the cover of his fire the column following his vehicle was able to move on. In Normandy, on D-Day a transport officer of an airborne field ambulance, with only four men to help, forced 63 Germans to surrender so that he might obtain transport for wounded. Four non-commissioned officers won the Distinguished Flying Medal. And many decorations were earned when members of the Corps took up their rifles and went into action as Infantry.

GC Who Tricked the Japs

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL MAHMOOD KHAN DURRANI is the only living Indian to have won the George Cross. It was awarded after World War Two for his outstanding courage, loyalty and fortitude as a prisoner in Japanese hands. Their brutal treatment left such deep scars on his body and mind that only with difficulty was he able to complete his narrative, told with great detail in "The Sixth Column" (Cassell, 21s).

When Malaya fell, Lieutenant-Colonel Durrani was a captain serving in the India States Forces. He hid in the jungle for three months, until he was betrayed into Japanese hands and sent to a prisoner-of-war camp at Singapore, where he pitted his wits against the Japanese and the traitor Indian National Army, then being formed. Learning that the Japanese had a scheme for sending agitators and saboteurs to India, Durrani cunningly infiltrated himself into their organisation and ensured that the "fifth columnists" they chose for spy training should be loyal Indians. The first batch of twelve were carried by submarine to India, where they at once made contact with the British and gave the game away. Finding that they had been double-crossed, the Japanese tortured and starved Durrani, then sentenced him to death. His life was spared for the sake of the information he steadfastly refused to give.

The author, who received his George Cross from Field-Marshal Lord Wavell, is quite unable to forgive the Japanese for their bestial cruelties. He also has one or two hard things to say about the behaviour of the British in the early days of the war. But he is convinced that "it was the robust faith of the English people that gave them the strength, stamina and endurance to achieve victory."

His own contribution to the success of the Allied cause could hardly be described as negligible.

**I DON'T KNOW WHY
I NEVER SAW IT**



but for years my standard of living

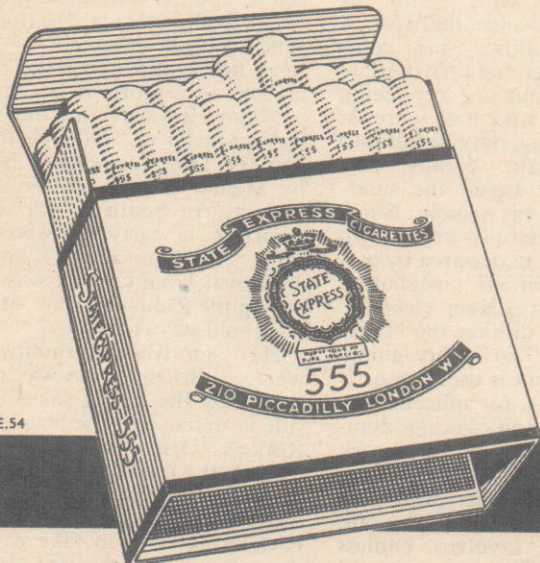
had been going up, and my tastes had changed accordingly,

yet my smoking habits remained where they were . . . then I saw

the absurdity of a few pennies standing between me and

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Gave Up £100,000 to Join

SCIION of a rich family which included an earl, three generals (one of them Deputy Adjutant-General), a bishop, a judge and a Member of Parliament, Henry Bell renounced a fortune of £100,000 and estates worth many times that sum, to join the Army as a private.

Unlike some gentlemen-rankers, Henry Bell did not join up to escape the law. He was not in debt, he had not quarrelled with his family, nor had he been crossed in love. For a reason then known only to himself and one other man he cut himself off entirely from his family, refusing their offer to buy him out or purchase a commission.

The colourful story of his life in the 84th (York and Lancaster) Regiment, based on family records, is told by Bell's maternal grandson, Brian Stuart, in "Harry Bell" (Richard Bell, 14s).

In 1854 Corporal Bell and 12 men went to Plymouth as a fatigue party to help load baggage for the Middlesex Regiment bound for the Crimea. The Middlesex chose to regard the attachment as permanent and took Corporal Bell and his party to the Crimea, where they were abandoned to fend for themselves. Fortunately Corporal Bell met his cousin, Colonel George Bell, commanding an Infantry battalion, who took over the party and promoted Bell to sergeant. In that rank he took part

in the Battle of the Alma, saw the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava and fought at Sebastopol. When recommended for a commission, he deliberately exposed himself to fire.

In the Indian Mutiny, Bell (by this time married) pleaded, successfully, with his commanding officer not to be recommended for the Victoria Cross after killing four mutineers single-handed with his sword in the rescue of an Englishwoman at Sitapur. Once he frustrated an attempted mutiny of natives by creeping out at night and pouring water down the touch-holes of their guns. For his gallantry he was promoted regimental sergeant-major.

After 29 years' service Bell died, an impoverished pensioner, in an Islington slum. Two generals helped to carry his coffin to Highgate cemetery.

The secret which led Harry Bell to renounce his inheritance was discovered 80 years later by one of his grandsons. Exasperatingly, it is not revealed by the author, who is saving it up for a later volume.



"IN—two—three,
OUT—two—three."

Commanders, not Committee Men

AFTER three years of it you find yourself beginning to go mad," wrote a brigade commander in Malaya to the man who was to be his successor.

"As a Sapper," replied the successor, "I have the advantage of being mad already."

The man who set off to fight the terrorists on this cheerful note was Brigadier M. C. A. Henniker, CBE, DSO, MC, and he has produced a very readable account of three years in the history of 63 Gurkha Infantry Brigade in "Red Shadow Over Malaya" (Blackwood, 18s).

Under his command served, among others, Yorkshiremen to whom the terrorists' food-lifts, abductions, murders and blackmail were comparable "to what goes on in hell, Hull and Halifax"; Fijians, many of whom could fire a Bren-gun as though it were a pistol; and Gurkhas who adopted a baby elephant and a tiger-cub. Between them they supplied him with plenty of anecdotes, gay and otherwise. A subaltern mollified his commanding officer for arriving late at a rendezvous by producing three bandits who had surrendered on the way, only to fall into disfavour again because the prisoners had stolen the sandwich lunch in his vehicle. Some Sappers successfully kept down bandit activity in one area by preparing a harmless installation labelled "Z-Ray. Keep clear."

The author dislikes the "committee system" in campaigning. Committee work is useful experience, he thinks, for officers who will become top-ranking commanders and may need to work with a civil power. "But only a handful of officers can ever reach those heights. Successful committee work involves endless compromise. We must train our officers as commanders, not as committee men."

An Idea Born on the Imphal Plain

ON a summer day in 1944 a young British officer lay wounded on the Imphal Plain. "It was raining heavily, we were being shelled and I was not enjoying life."

He was jerked out of his self-pity by the arrival of an American civilian, armed only with cigarettes, rye whisky and a sense of humour. The newcomer was an ambulance driver.

"This indomitable American Field Service became a legend throughout the British 14th Army," writes that same young officer, Tim Carew, in a foreword to his novel "Man For Man" (Constable, 12s 6d). His story is by way of a tribute to the American ambulance men.

The members of the Field Service who figure in this novel join it for the kind of reason men join the Foreign Legion, after their own armed services have refused to take them. And they do a fine job for a hard-pressed British battalion on Latrine Hill.

The fact that the book is a tribute does not mean that it is dull or mealy-mouthed. It makes a taut, spirited tale, with lively soldiers' dialogue.

For novelists in search of colourful settings, there is much good material in the "savage wars" of last century.

James Kinross goes to Algeria in 1845, when the Arabs were rising against the 15-year-old French rule, to stage "The Phantom Baton" (Murray, 10s 6d).

Colonel Boucard, a veteran of Napoleon's Grand Army, overtaken in the promotion race, sets off on what proves to be his last expedition into the hills. With him go the major who consults his dead mother in his dreams, the captain who is an unfrocked priest, another captain trying to forget a dead bride, the Intelligence officer haunted by the Arab he has tortured. They meet disaster in a glorious last stand.

Major Howard Rumbold, central character of "The Splendour and the Dust" (Jarrolds, 12s 6d) by Henry Gibbs, arrives inadvertently in South Africa while escorting a party of wives to India. The time is 1879, and in his Royal kraal Cetewayo is preparing the Zulus for war. Major Rumbold stays to fight.

He survives Isandhlwana, where a British force was massacred by the Zulus, takes up a rifle in defence of the hospital at Rorke's Drift, and helps to destroy the *impis* at Ulundi.

He marries a Boer girl and turns farmer, but in 1881 he is back in uniform to take part in the battle of Majuba Hill. In the intervals of his love-life, Major Rumbold does see history.



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EDDIE THE BATMAN TELLS ALL

IT was a sad day when Private Eddie Harwood learned that they were determined to make him a corporal.

"I am very upset about this because I have done CB and field punishment and two trips to the glass house but I have always kept myself respectable and never took a stripe."

Eddie, of course, is a professional private. He tells the highly comical story of his military career in "It Don't Cost You a Penny" (Max Parish, 9s 6d). The book is sub-titled "The Memoirs of a Batman." But Eddie is, in fact, the brain-child of 62-year-old Major Edward Rhodes-Wood.

Eddie professes to have joined up before World War One at Woolwich. "Proper ignorant I was in them days," he says, and instances the time when he felt stomach pains before parade. His mates kindly diagnosed his complaint for him, with the result that when the orderly sergeant asked Eddie what was ailing him, he replied, "I am pregnant, sergeant, and it don't half hurt."

In World War Two Eddie found himself in the Pioneer Corps, and began to be a batman in earnest. At first he was nervous of colonels and brigadiers, but "when you have seen them with no uniform on but only in their little short shirt with their teeth in a cup you know they are not so big as they make out."

Eddie later found himself employed as batman to a party of nurses in North Africa, taking them early morning tea ("Put it on the box beside the bed, Eddie."

This Romance Went Wrong

WOULD you smuggle yourself behind the Iron Curtain to look for your missing wife?

Christopher Portway did, as he tells in "Journey to Dana" (Kimber, 16s). The story begins in Normandy, where the author, an Infantry NCO, was captured by the Germans. Escaping twice (once from a 900-mile death march) he reached a Czech village, where he fell in love with Dana, a farmer's daughter whom, after the war, he married.

The couple settled down to married life in Essex, and the author joined the Territorial Army and earned a commission. Then Dana went back to Czechoslovakia to see her parents. She wrote to him—then silence.

The author decided to crash the Iron Curtain to find her. Not unexpectedly he landed in prison, where eventually Dana came to beg her freedom. That same afternoon he was taken to a courtroom and divorced. Then they turned him loose in a forest and pointed towards Germany.

Such was one soldier's romance.

Eddie as a Pioneer—
from the
dust jacket
of "It Don't
Cost You
a Penny."



Just like being at home it was." His brief career as a corporal occurred when he was posted to a "Foring Legion" of Pioneers,

none of whom spoke English.

Eddie is always loyal to the Pioneers—"Soldiers what can work as well as fight."

He tells one story of a company of men who, after Dunkirk, mocked their monocled major by parading with "monocles" in their eyes. The major took it quietly for a while, then flipped his eye-glass in the air and caught it again in his eye, saying, "Now let me see you do that."

Come, come, Eddie, your memory's failing. That didn't happen after Dunkirk, it was after Mons—or was it Balaclava?

WITH THE LION RAMPANT

WAITING for his battalion to attack Hill 113 in Normandy, Lieutenant Robert Woolcombe confided to the sergeant at his side "an irrelevant desire to live on a farm and write books." He was certain he would be killed.

But death, in all its forms, passed him by. His company lost more than 50 per cent of its men, his battalion nine officers in winning that hill and beating back ten counter-attacks.

Hill 113 was a turning point of the Normandy fighting for the Scots of the Lowland Brigade of 15th Scottish Division. Wool-

combe's battalion belonged to it.

Today, the Division's memorial hewn from Caen stone looks across the valley of the Odon to Hill 113. Woolcombe's own testimony to the gallantry of those Scots is "Lion Rampant," (Chatto and Windus, 12s 6d). A human, lively account, given authenticity by characters skilfully drawn, it is as graphic as anything that has yet appeared in book form of this particular phase.

Contact with the Americans and the Maquis, the grim winter of 1944, entry into Belgium and floods in Holland—all this is vividly brought back to life.

Tearing a Strip off Sir Winston

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL came unscathed through the Battle of Omdurman, but he did not get home unscathed.

He was travelling with a friend who had a sword-cut in his arm and a doctor decided the wound needed a skin graft. No anaesthetic was available, but Lieutenant Churchill pulled up his sleeve.

"You've heard of a man being flayed alive?" asked the doctor. "Well, this is what it feels like." He cut a piece of skin and flesh about the size of a shilling from inside the forearm, making a scar which Sir Winston still bears.

"It was an ordeal that Winston never wanted to repeat. But he managed to hold on without even a groan," writes John Marsh in "The Young Winston Churchill" (Evans, 10s 6d).

The book is an account of the eventful first 26 years of Sir Winston's life, written for the younger reader. It begins with young Churchill's experiences at his first school (where he clashed with a bullying headmaster) and covers his campaigns in Cuba, India, the Sudan and South Africa.

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SEK KONG FAMILIES' VILLAGE
(Church of Scotland)
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The whiteness of this girl's teeth is here being measured. The "whiteness-meter" showed that they were shades whiter after one brushing with Macleans.

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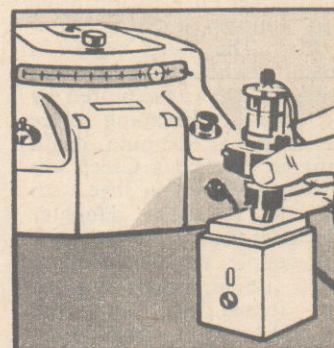
AFTER one brushing with Macleans your teeth are $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 degrees whiter. That is a scientific fact. It was proved in every single case after hundreds of tests with a spectro-photometer, or "whiteness-meter".

Dental authorities agree that to avoid

decay teeth must be really *clean*. Brushed regularly with Macleans (you'll love its clean, fresh flavour!) they'll be cleaner, whiter, healthier — and your gums will be firmer, too. Millions are proving for themselves that Maclean-white teeth are healthy teeth.



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your teeth today?**



To measure the whiteness of human teeth, a solid block of pure magnesium oxide was used as a standard of whiteness. The spectro-photometer was then set to this standard and the degree of whiteness of the teeth measured on the scale shown above.

HOW'S THIS FOR GYM?

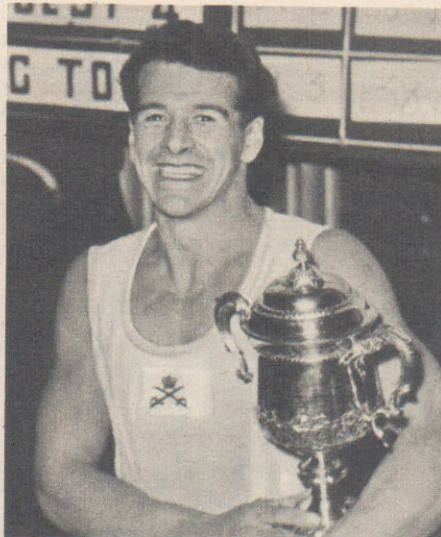
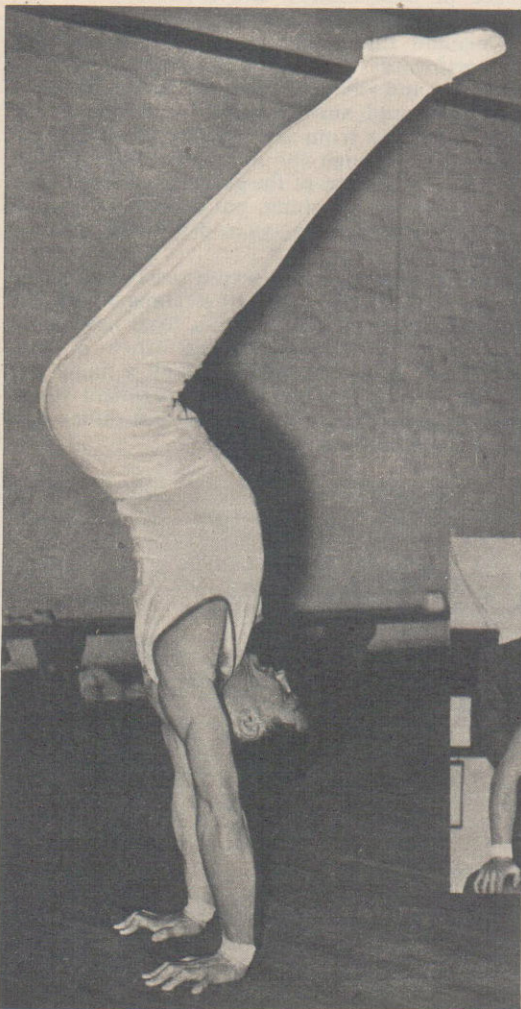
Bird man is P. Starling (London) seen in a "high straddle" on the rings.

(Photographs: SOLDIER cameramen A. C. BLUNDELL and F. TOMPSETT)

PROUD of their prowess, members of the Army Physical Training Corps recently invited the London Gymnastic Club to a friendly gymnastic competition at the Army Physical Training School, Aldershot. The Corps team won by 418.3 points to 392.1.

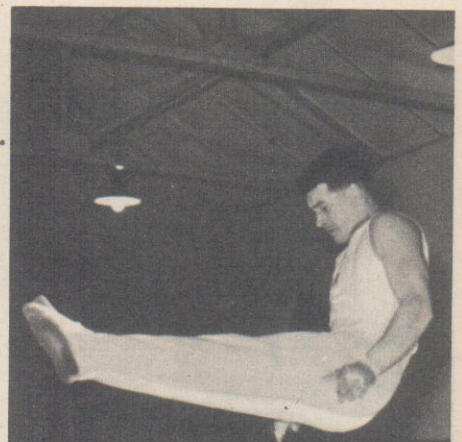
Highest scorer was Staff-Sergeant Instructor W. Stuart, England's reigning gymnastics champion and a "probable" for this year's Olympic Games. He scored 115.8 points. Next-best was P. Starling of the London Club, an international performer, with 106.4 points.

This exercise, called the "goofus" hand-stand, is demonstrated by Sergeant Instructor R. H. Gradley.



Staff-Sergeant Instructor W. Stuart, England champion and Olympic "probable." He led the Army team to victory.

Cleanly over the bar goes Staff-Sergeant Instructor Stuart in a difficult rear vault.



The Army team were all APTC instructors. Left to right: (back row) SSI G. L. Moon, CSMI J. Webb (technical adviser), SSI Stuart, SSI T. P. Norris; (front row) SI Gradley, SI J. Scrivener and CSMI T. Slaven.



Past the old village church of Tilsworth, in Bedfordshire, goes a marching column.
Led by the drums, a company passes the ancient market cross at Leighton Buzzard.



FLAG-MARCH in their own Counties

IT was 17 years since the 1st Battalion The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment had been to their home counties as a body.

In that time, the Battalion had shown the flag, and their teeth, in a good many countries in the Middle and Far East. At the end of 1954, settling in at Tidworth after travelling from Egypt, they determined that their regimental counties—home to seven out of eight of the men—should see the Battalion.

A heavy training programme occupied the summer, but at last the chance came: an exercise in road movement and kindred tasks. The Battalion arranged it to take place in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, and planned displays to attract recruits.

From around Luton, in the south, four columns moved northwards by different ways, marching through towns and villages, riding the longer distances between. The band and the corps of drums had a busy time motoring from one column to another to play the troops through the more important places.

Winter rain took some of the glitter and some of the spectators from the marching, but ceremonial guard-mounting and evening displays in drill-halls attracted the townspeople.

In Bedford, which had not seen a recruiting march for 50 years, the week came to a climax with the laying-up of Colours. There, too, a local newspaper summed up the Battalion's feelings when it commented: "There is still something about a name like 'The Bedfords' which is lacking in a regiment where the common interest is not home ties but rather skill in some science or technique."

On the outskirts of Welwyn Garden City, a column sets out for Hertford.



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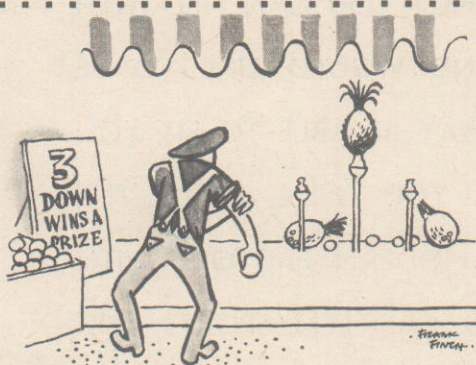
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LETTERS

"STEADY THE BUFFS"

The question "How did the expression 'Steady the Buffs' originate?" (Letters, November) always arises during lectures on regimental history to recruits at New Infantry Barracks, Canterbury.

This is the version as we know it here: during an advance in the Peninsular War the marching column was headed by the Buffs. The Cavalry screen, sent well forward to cover the advance, was provided by the Queen's Bays (2nd Dragoon Guards). The Buffs inadvertently overtook this Cavalry screen and pushed on ahead. When this came to the notice of the commander of the column, an aide-de-camp was sent to the commanding officer of the Buffs with a message which ran "Steady the Buffs and let the Bays come through."

I cannot claim that this is authentic but it is the version commonly accepted at this depot and, I believe, throughout the Regiment.—**Lieutenant M. P. St F. Dracopoli, Depot Subaltern, The Buffs.**

HOME FROM TRIPOLI

My husband and I were greatly interested in the account of Sapper Taylor's journey (**SOLDIER**, November). In December 1951 we and our two young children left Tripoli on a motor-cycle combination and spent Christmas with relatives in England. We travelled through Ben Gardene, Medénine, Sousse, Sfax to Tunis, crossed to Marseilles after a wait of three days, then continued to Lyons. Because of a hitch our motor-cycle combination had to be sent on to Paris by goods train. From Paris via Abbeville and Dunkirk we reached Dover six days before Christmas; the complete journey had taken us nearly a fortnight. We had proved the sceptics in Tripoli to be wrong. Today, we would make the same journey all over again given the opportunity.—**Mrs. Elsie Tillbrook, 11 Gorton Grove, Little Hulton, Walkden, near Manchester.**

★**Mrs. Tillbrook's husband, Corporal Tillbrook, is serving with 1st Infantry Division in the Middle East.**

NO PAY?

"It pays to advertise," so the slogan goes. I was interested to read in a pamphlet (issued by an Infantry regiment) the paragraph headed "Pay." This states: "In the Army you do not pay for your lodgings, food or clothes. You could, in fact, live without drawing any pay at all." I was amazed.

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

Anonymous or insufficiently addressed letters are not published.

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

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

To be a clean and smart soldier, a recruit needs blacking, renovator, metal polish, a couple of dusters, tooth paste, shaving soap and brush, and toilet soap. These items are the absolute minimum. Where does he get them?

I like to read worth-while Army pamphlets or leaflets, but not when they distort the picture. More thought should be given to these things, otherwise the music-hall comedians will offer as famous last words "You do not need any pay in the Army."—**WO II S. C. Barr, Royal Military Police, 100 Queen Street, Hemel Hempstead.**

ON TOWN COUNCIL

Aldershot is not unique in having Army officers serving on its town council (**SOLDIER**, October).

When the British Army occupied India all military stations had their cantonment boards, the local equivalent of town councils, with a larger proportion of military officers—sometimes Royal Navy and Royal Air Force officers—than the Aldershot Council now has. The station commander usually was the president, a civilian was the cantonment magistrate (equivalent to our town clerk) and the garrison engineer usually was the cantonment engineer. Officers commanding the British and Indian military hospitals were medical officers of the board, which was made up of six Service members and a similar number of Indian civilians. The latter were elected in the same way as councillors in Great Britain.—**J. H. S. Locke, 1 Grosvenor Gardens, London, N.10.**



GENERALS' SONS SERVING IN KOREA

TWO young officers serving in Korea with the 1st Battalion The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders are following in the footsteps of their fathers, both of whom started their Army careers in this Regiment and later became generals. They are: Captain Neil Wimberley (left) of Nairn, and Lieutenant James Barber of Edinburgh.

Captain Wimberley joined the Camerons in 1945 and has been

Adjutant of the 1st Battalion since June 1955. His father, Major General D. N. Wimberley, is now Colonel of the Regiment. He commanded the 51st Highland Division in Africa and Sicily in World War Two.

Lieutenant Barber commands the mortar platoon of the Battalion. His father is Lieutenant-General Sir Colin Barber, who led 15th Scottish Division in North-West Europe and later went to Scottish Command.



"George" (otherwise Amin Abdullah), now a messenger with the Irish Guards in the Canal Zone, has served the Brigade of Guards, off and on, for more than 40 years. He claims to remember all their officers and sergeants—and some of their fathers, too. Here he chats with Sergeant W. Nevin, who has been in the Irish Guards for nearly 30 years and who first met "George" on the first of his three tours in Egypt.

EARLY CADETS

Having had ten years service as an Army Cadet officer since my "demob" in 1945 I was most interested in your article "The Fourth Line" (November).

I feel it should be mentioned that at the very same time those early public school units of the Officers' Training Corps were being formed a pioneer was at work on similar lines in East London. Miss Octavia Hill formed her Southwark Company in 1860 in order to introduce boys from poor homes to the virtues of order, cleanliness, team work and self-reliance. Her company exists today with an unbroken history.

Today's boys often find conditions of life which hardly encourage honesty or industry. Lack of religious belief deprives them of that moral balance which often belonged to their fathers and grandfathers. Our task in the Army Cadet Force (along with the home, the school and churches) is to help the lads in the most formative period of their lives. We chaplains consider it a privilege to help on the moral and religious side and annual camp gives still greater opportunities. Some of us are officers as well as chaplains and the opportunities are even greater.—**Philip Wright, Major and Hon. C.F., Essex Army Cadet Force.**

The Frimley and Camberley Cadet Corps (SOLDIER, November) has had as members for some years the grand-children of former cadets. On many occasions at special parades, such as the Service of Remembrance, we have had three generations of cadets assembled together.—**Miss G. M. Reynolds, hon. sec., Frimley and Camberley Cadet Corps.**

CANADIAN QUERY

Can any reader tell me if the badge of the Manchester Regiment, similar to the one in the barracks at Newcastle, Jamaica (SOLDIER, May), is still on the bank in Tanglin Barracks, Singapore? I am one of the Canadians who enlisted in this famous regiment in 1938 and served in its ranks throughout the war. I am keenly interested in its activities.

I was introduced to SOLDIER while serving with the 3rd Canadian Horse Artillery north of Pinal bridge on the Imjin in Korea.—**Sergeant W. E. O'Hara, Royal Canadian Artillery, Pictou Camp, Ontario, Canada.**

EXAMINATIONS

Kent County Council have washed out the much-criticised examination for 11-year-olds. Will this affect the Army's attitude to examinations?

Many senior ranks in the Army, who display good work in the classroom, are rendered helpless by the atmosphere of the examination centre. This, I understand, was also true of Sir Winston Churchill, who is reputed to have handed in an examination paper consisting of "a blot, a smudge and a

pair of brackets."—"Warrant Officer" (name and address supplied).

WHITE CHEVRONS

The smartest NCOs are not necessarily those most heavily lathered with whitewash (SOLDIER, November). Clothing regulations lay down that "rank badges and chevrons will be provided in khaki embroidery on a khaki background," with certain exceptions. I understand there is soon to be an issue of "white embroidery on a khaki background." How long will it take for some bright spark to invent a method of turning the white into khaki or, for that matter, red, blue, green or black?

Again, there must be a large number of warrant officers and senior NCOs improperly dressed by wearing metal badges of rank. Now that the battle for white chevrons has been won, might it not be a good thing to make brass, or anodised metal, a general issue?—"Rainbow" (name and address supplied).

FRENCH MEDAL

La Croix du Combattant (Letters, June) was created by the French decree of 24 August, 1930, and is granted to those who have the combatants' card. Soldiers and those who, although not belonging to a combatant unit, may have been subject to dangers or rendered service similar to those of combatants, could receive the combatants' card and, consequently, the Combatants' Cross.—**Charles V. Young, 395 Exeter Road, Courtlands Cross, Exmouth, Devon.**

The ribbon of La Croix du Combattant is of pale blue with seven thin red vertical stripes. Judging by his letter, I would say that Sergeant H. M. Phillips would not have qualified for the medal.—**W. G. Cole, H.M. Treasury, Whitehall.**

The French military authorities state that the Croix du Combattant is awarded by the Ministère des Anciens Combattants et Victimes de la Guerre only to those persons who already hold the carte du combattant (certificate of active service). In accordance with a decree published in 1949 "those wishing to benefit (i.e., foreigners) must have fought under the French flag or Colours, or under the authority of a French or qualified allied command, during operations in which French Forces have taken part."

"SPADES—AND SPEED"

The Dinkum Digger (SOLDIER, November) is described as a caterpillar-tractor with a bucket attachment, yet it is mounted upon a wheeled tractor and not a crawler. "Caterpillar" is the trade name of an American firm and should not be applied indiscriminately to any crawler tractor.—**P. Holdrup, 24 Hinton Way, Great Shelford, Cambridgeshire.**

MORE LETTERS OVERLEAF

In This Year's Olympic Games BRITAIN DEPENDS ON SKI SOLDIERS

THE first British team to compete in the Olympic Games cross-country ski championships may be made up entirely of soldiers.

Thirteen of them—ranging from major to lance-corporal—are among the 22 probables from whom the final team of 12 will be selected for the 1956 Olympic ski contests at Cortina, Italy, this month. Of the other nine, six are Territorials who learned to ski while in the Army.

It is not surprising that the Army should be so well represented. Since the war thousands of soldiers stationed in Austria, Trieste and Germany have been taught to ski as part of their training or at leave centres. They have been able to spend more time on skis than most civilians.

The British team will be captained by a Gunner—Captain J. Spencer, of 433 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment. He was British cross-country and winter pentathlon ski champion in 1953 and the Army's best all-rounder in 1955. Also certain of a place in the team is another Gunner—Lieutenant J. A. G. Moore, of 44 Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, the present national and Army cross-country champion. Others well in the running for selection include Lieutenant R. Reep, Dorsets; Major D. S. Graham, Royal Artillery; Lieutenant A. Fielder, Royal Horse Artillery; Lance-Corporal R. Wallace, Cameron Highlanders; Bombardier K. Thompson, Royal Artillery, and Sergeant-Instructor W. R. Heague, Army Physical Training Corps.

On the short list for the downhill and slalom ski races, which were held in France at the end of last month, were Lieutenant C. R. Mackintosh, Scots Guards, the Army downhill champion, and Trooper M. Hanley, Royal Armoured Corps.

Soldiers have represented Britain in every Olympic Games in the past 50 years and this year

more than ever are expected to take part.

Lieutenant-Colonel Frank Weldon, Royal Horse Artillery, has already been appointed captain of the British Horse Trials team (SOLDIER, December, 1955) and Staff-Sergeant Instructor N. Stuart, Army Physical Training Corps, has been chosen to compete in the gymnastic contests (see page 33).

In the athletic events, which take place in Australia, Corporal Geoffrey Schmidt, a physical training instructor with 5 Training Battalion, REME, who is Army pole vault champion, has an excellent chance of being chosen. So, too, has Private R. B. Henderson, REME, the inter-Services 440 yards champion.

In the Pentathlon contest three "hopefuls" are Corporal-of-Horse F. G. Walker, Household Cavalry; Company Sergeant-Major Instructor G. R. Norman, APTC, and Lieutenant R. A. King, Royal Signals. In hockey, boxing, cycling and football the Army may also be represented.

Soldiers first took part in the Olympic Games (then known as the Athenian Games) in 1906. Two years later, Lieutenant W. Halswelle, Highland Light Infantry, won the 400 metres.

A famous Army athlete to win an Olympic title—the 400 metres hurdles in 1928—was Lieutenant Lord Burghley, of the Grenadier Guards. Lieutenant G. L. Rampling, Royal Artillery, was one of the four runners in the 1600 metres relay which was won by Britain in 1936.

In 1920 there were three soldiers in Britain's amateur soccer team: Sergeant-Major (now Lieutenant-Colonel) H. M. Prince, RAMC, who was captain of the eleven, Lieutenant K. E. Hegan, RASC, and Captain F. W. H. Nicholas, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment.

Captain B. G. (now General Sir Brian) Horrocks, Middlesex Regiment, was in Britain's pentathlon team in 1924.

The first Army boxers to compete in the Olympics were Corporal E. Scott, Royal Military Police, who reached the final of the light-heavyweight division in 1948, and Sergeant Jack Gardner, Grenadier Guards (later British heavyweight champion) who was beaten in the third round. Lance-Corporal T. Gooding, REME, boxed for Britain in the 1952 Games.

One of the best known of the Army's Olympic contestants is Lieutenant-Colonel Harry Llewellyn, who won the Horse Jumping competitions in 1952 and gained Britain's only gold medal that year.



Captain J. Spencer, RA, the Army's best all-round skier, will skipper the British cross-country team.

MORE LETTERS

CAMPAIGN MEDALS

Surely an award of the General Service Medal, with Eritrea clasp, would be more appropriate to commemorate the *shifia* troubles of 1946-47 (Letters, October).

Likewise the troubles in the Canal Zone during 1951-54, and perhaps, eventually, those in Cyprus, should be commemorated by the award of suitable clasps to this medal, the purpose of which surely is to mark those military operations which cannot specifically be described as campaigns, but which are directed against terrorism and artificially-inspired civilian unrest. —"Ally Sloper" (name and address supplied).

NO REFUND

I am being allowed to purchase my discharge. It is costing me £100, plus my fare to England. I have heard that some of this money will be refunded on certain conditions for good character. Will I be allowed to retain certain articles of my kit?—"Band NCO" (name and address supplied).

★No portion of the purchase price is refundable for good conduct. The items of kit which can be retained are listed in A.C.I. 515/53.

EMIGRATING

After completing 22 years in the Army I intend emigrating to New Zealand to join the New Zealand Air Force. What effect will emigration have on payment of my Army pension? If I decide to commute in order to buy a house in New Zealand can I do so?—"Never Too Old" (name and address supplied).

★This reader can draw his pension from the Social Security Department in Wellington, New Zealand. He may apply to commute it through his agent or the Army Pensions Office, Stanmore, Middlesex. Commutation for house purchase may be allowed if he can provide evidence of property available.

"CAPITALISTS"

The pay of a private soldier in the Army Service Corps in 1914 was 1s. 2d. per day, but on the outbreak of war 6s. per day was offered to specially-enlisted men for Motor Transport units. Certain tradesmen in the Royal Engineers, my old Corps, were also paid 6s. on special enlistments. —Squadron-Leader A. J. Green, RAF (Retd), 8 Pound Avenue, Old Stevenage, Hertfordshire.

I remember the specialists at 6s. per day! If some of those "bloated capitalists" got into a pontoon or crown-and-

anchor school they played the very devil with the bank.—W. F. Wood (late RASC), British Legion Club, Ripley, Woking, Surrey.

★In answer to a query SOLDIER stated (Letters, November) that pay of a private soldier in the Army Service Corps in 1914 was 1s. 2d. daily. Our correspondent made no mention of specialists.

WAR CASUALTIES

What were the casualties suffered in World War Two by the Army and the Royal Air Force?—C. Fittal, MM, Church Lane, Great Missenden.

★The figures, according to the Statistical Digest of the War (1951) are: Army, 144,079 killed and 239,575 wounded; Royal Air Force, 69,606 killed, 22,839 wounded.

NO RETURN

Having served in the ranks for 17 years and as a war emergency commissioned officer for four years, I sought unsuccessfully to re-enlist on a short-service commission. I feel now that I may be reasonably well qualified for a quartermaster's commission in the Infantry or for one of the ex-Regular appointments recently offered. I believe, to officers of the Territorial Army.

If all else were unavailing, would I be permitted to return to the ranks? I am anxious to get back. I am 43 years of age.—"Lieut. AER" (name and address supplied).

★Emergency commissioned officers are no longer eligible to return to the Regular Army on short-service commissions. All short-service commissions as quartermasters are given to serving warrant officers. It is considered that to allow ex-officers to return to the Army from civil life would lessen prospects of promotion. From time to time vacancies for quartermasters on consolidated rates of pay occur in the Territorial Army. This officer can apply for re-enlistment into the ranks of the Regular Army on a Type "S" engagement.

NILE-SIDE CLUB

We certainly did say good-bye with regret to Khartoum's Nile-side NAAFI club (SOLDIER, November). It closed in a blaze of glory with a cabaret and dance, at which I was master-of-ceremonies. The whole of the entertainment was arranged extremely well by Miss Christine Cowper, of the Women's Voluntary Services. I certainly missed the club after it closed and a lot of my pals did too.—Corporal E. Eaves, 1st Battalion Royal Fusiliers, School of Infantry, Hythe.

coming your way

O'Brien and Peggy Lee. In colour.

JOE MACBETH: American gangster film, from an original plot by William Shakespeare. As Lady Macbeth invited King Duncan to her home, so that he might be murdered and her husband made King, so Lily Macbeth arranges the demise of "King Pin" Duca for her husband's benefit. Like Lady M., Lily M. loses her reason. As the ghost of Banquo appeared to Macbeth, so the ghost of a gangster Banky appears to Joe Macbeth. With Paul Douglas, Ruth Roman, Bonar Colleano—but no witches.

THE RAWHIDE YEARS: Stern-wheelers steam again for another story of gamblers, murderers and singers on the Ol' Mississippi. Tony Curtis plays a gambler's apprentice who decides to go straight and spends most of the film trying to prove himself innocent of murder. Colleen Miller is the lady in the case and Rick Harper plays a happy-go-lucky bandit. In colour.

TO HELL AND BACK: The story of Audie Murphy, who won all the medals the American Army could give him (see page 27).

FILMS

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

STORM OVER THE NILE: Another screen version of A. E. W. Mason's famous novel, "The Four Feathers." Anthony Steel plays the young officer who, having entered the Army at the insistence of his father, a general, resigns his commission when his regiment is ordered to the Sudan on active service. Though his reason is that he feels he lacks the necessary qualifications, three of his brother officers and his fiancée each send him a white feather. He thereupon sets off for the Sudan as a civilian and there, in disguise, earns the right to return the feathers. Also starring: Laurence Harvey, James Robertson Justice and Mary Ure. In colour.

PETE KELLY'S BLUES: America of the Prohibition days. Hot jazz is played in smoky speakeasies, where champagne is manufactured in the back room and home-made gin comes out of the tea-urn. Gangsters move into the jazz world to work a "protection" racket and bullets fly. With Jack Webb, Janet Leigh, Edmond



"Bang goes another shoulder strap."

BROKEN SERVICE

I am serving on a 22-year engagement, which began in 1935 but was broken between February, 1946 and October, 1949. Can I claim a free discharge?—"BSM" (name and address supplied).

★No. Service for purpose of fixing the rate is from the beginning of the current engagement, namely October 1949. Consequently, this warrant officer will have to serve until 1965 before he becomes eligible for a free discharge.

WIVES' MONEY

Among Army wives in married quarters abroad one occasionally hears the age-old cry "I have no money." On enquiring why, one invariably finds that the erring husband hands over only a negligible amount. Is there any order whereby the wife must be paid the marriage allowance and the qualifying allotment?—"Frustrated" (name and address supplied).

★There is no order compelling a serving soldier overseas to hand over allowances to his wife. If a wife is not receiving from her husband the cash to which she thinks she is entitled she is at liberty to approach his commanding officer.

CADET COMMISSIONS

Posted to the Army Emergency Reserve on completion of my National Service, I served with the Army Cadet Force.

Is it correct that after completing a year of his part-time National Service liability with the Territorial Army, a soldier may be considered for a commission?—C. P. Coley, 44 Walsall Road, Perry Barr, Birmingham.

★A National Serviceman doing his part-time service with the Army Cadet Force is not eligible for a direct commission; he would have to enlist in a Territorial unit. His commanding officer can recommend him. He would then have to be recommended by a War Office Selection Board and, if under 26 years of age, complete a special 15-day course.

"WARTS"

The term "warts" (Letters, August) was applied not to newly-joined officers but to the wearers of only one star, namely lieutenants prior to 1897. Captains wore two stars and second-lieutenants none. At the time of the alteration of rank badges, the lone star was inherited by second-lieutenants, though still occasionally used, through custom, by lieutenants as well. The epithet for midshipmen was "snotties" because of the three buttons worn on the cuff, apocryphally claimed to have been placed there so as to discourage the wiping of the nose on the sleeve.—Lieutenant-Colonel J. E. Hume (ret'd), Gransden, Parabola Road, Cheltenham.

★In several books of naval reminiscence midshipmen are also described as "warts."

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E.F.B., Birmingham, 27

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