

SOLDIER

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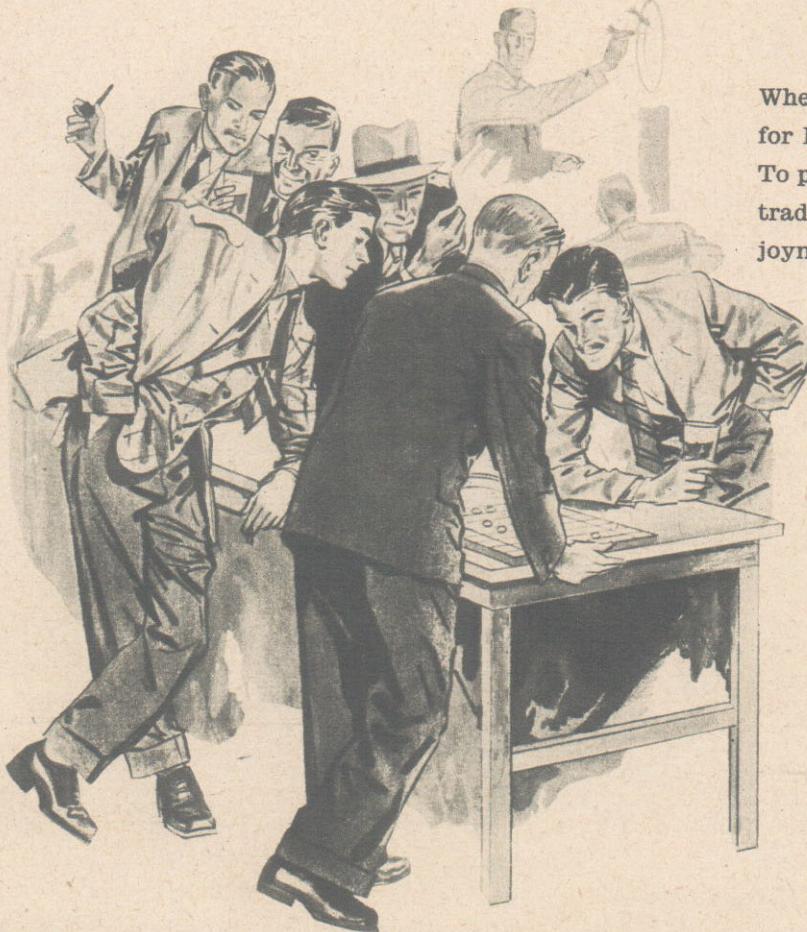
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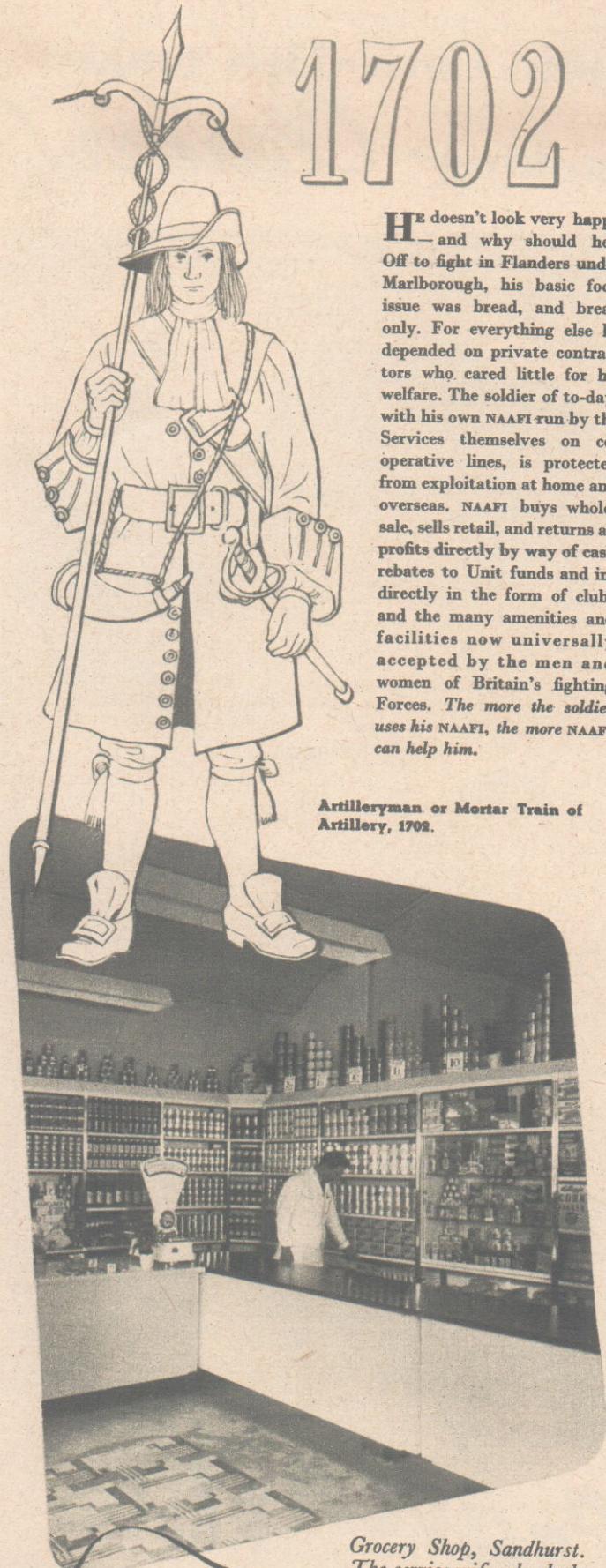
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RARELY, if ever, has an army slogged its way round the world to victory — and then chosen not to return to its native land.

That was the choice that a big proportion of the Polish Army made after World War Two. It was a poignant choice, and one with which no British soldier has ever been faced. The Poles had paid the price of victory; they had lost the prize of victory.

Today the Polish Army is all but wound up. The tragedy of its slow disbandment has not been relieved by newspaper articles urging "Get Rid of the Poles", by prejudiced gossips calling them "workshy" or judging them by a handful of black sheep, or by periodic howls at the expense — admittedly a heavy one — of resettling an ally.

But the run-down has been relieved — and the Poles enthusiastically agree — by the help and loyalty shown to this homeless Army by the British soldier.

Of all the armies from enemy-occupied lands that of the Poles was the biggest, the first to be blooded, and one of the bravest.

Thousands of Poles who chose not to go home have been helped to find jobs in Britain, which has never yet suffered by taking in Europe's political misfits. Thousands more have been helped to emigrate.

When Hitler loosed his Blitzkrieg in 1939, those Polish soldiers who were able to elude the enemy made their way to the Middle East or to France, and thence to Britain. Over 80,000 fought in France and Norway in 1940. Four thousand took part in

Action stations at Tobruk. The Poles fought gallantly in Africa, Italy, North-West Europe.

THE POLES: Last Act of a Tragedy

To the British Army fell the job of helping to wind up the army of one of its allies. The last Polish soldiers are now being resettled in Britain

the Libyan campaign in 1941, 88,000 in Italy in 1943—45, and 82,000 in North-West Europe. They distinguished themselves at Tobruk, Cassino, the Falaise Gap and Arnhem.

At the war's end their forces, including released prisoners-of-war, numbered nearly a quarter of a million. Of these more than 126,000 (including 3500 officers) either returned home or emigrated. Some 116,000 joined the Polish Resettlement Corps which was formed as an unarmed body in late 1946, with the object indicated by its title. The understanding was that they would join for two years, that they would receive no promotion, and would be released as soon as they found work, emigrated or were repatriated. Few were able to take up jobs, however, until the Government had finished year-long negotiations with trades unions. While waiting the Poles had the opportunity to learn English and adapt themselves to the British way of life.

The new Corps, which also took charge of dependents, was run on British Army lines.

Because it had to deal with many Government departments (the Ministries of Education, Pensions and Labour, and the National Assistance Boards) British advisory staffs were set up.

These staffs — which included a large and resourceful body of warrant-officers and NCO's — helped the Poles with all manner of problems not only military but domestic. One NCO would show a Polish clerk how to keep his ledgers; a private soldier would show a baffled Polish private how to look up trains in a time-table; an officer would tell a Polish expectant mother how to get extra milk or orange juice; another would be asked to tender the kind of advice which newspapers print under the heading "Loves Knot Untied." As usual the British soldier was able to make himself understood without learning the language; though many of the Poles picked up English fast. Certain of the British staffs shared messes with the Poles and ran joint dances which were conspicuously successful. All along the camaraderie was strong.

What has happened to the 116,000 men who joined the Corps and its RAF equivalent? The figure was reduced to 95,000 by repatriation, emigration and enlistment in the British Army (for instance, 240 joined the Royal Armoured Corps as Regulars, and many sons of Polish soldiers have gone to the Army Apprentices School).

Some 79,000 of the remainder have found jobs in Britain. About 15,000 went to the building trades, 9500 to the mines, 9000 to

DO THE POLES HERE REALLY WORK?

SOME FACTS

COMPILED

by
THE BRITISH JOINT COMMITTEE
FOR POLISH AFFAIRS

66, ELIZABETH STREET,
LONDON, S.W. 1

Against critics who called them "workshy," the Poles were driven to defend themselves in pamphlets. In 18 months 83 per cent found jobs.

agriculture and forestry, 7200 to foundry and metal industries and 6000 to spinning and weaving — all jobs vital to Britain's recovery. Within 18 months 83 per cent of the Corps had secured jobs — "a most gratifying volume of volunteering," to quote Mr. Hector McNeil, Minister of State.

The Poles are a proud people, but already it is estimated that 90 per cent of the Corps who had professional qualifications (mostly officers) have taken up jobs as manual workers. A big problem has proved to be the resettlement of elderly and infirm officers. Many disabled Poles are to be set up in a special camp with workshop attached.

The Polish Resettlement Corps is now contained in Western Command where the GOC is also GOC of the Poles.

When the Corps is closed down, in the near future, those who still remain will have to go on public relief. Figures given in Parliament recently showed about 13,000 left; of these 11 were lieutenant-generals and 37 major-generals. Only those on the Corps establishment have been receiving full pay (about two-thirds of the rate for British troops and subject to tax); the rest (including ten lieutenant-generals) have been on half-pay.

The end of the Polish Army will mean the end of another job for the British Army. Winding up the Wehrmacht was one thing; it was another thing to have to wind up an ally.





If Monkeys Can Eat it, You Can

JUNGLE lore, as taught to soldiers in Malaya today, was effectively condensed in a little yellow book issued to Servicemen during the war. It bore the matter-of-fact title: "Far Eastern Survival — Land and Sea."

If lost in the jungle, said the booklet, DO NOT PANIC. Sit down and think it out, or better still lie down and sleep. Survival may require every atom of intelligence and physical endurance you possess.

These are tips on food:

Anything the monkeys eat will be safe for you.

All snakes are edible, but cut off the head as soon as you have killed your reptile. Always skin frogs before cooking.

All birds are edible, but you won't like the taste of kites and vultures.

White ants, docked of their wings, may be eaten raw or cooked. The white grubs of wood-infesting beetles are quite palatable, especially when split and broiled, "the flavour being like that of oysters."

Grasshoppers and crickets, with wings and legs removed, should be toasted on a stick.

The booklet warns that too much reliance should not be placed on animal food, and points out that drinking water is more important than food. Here are camping tips:

Brush dead leaves into a pile and set fire to them. The ash, spread around, will prevent intrusion by leeches and ants.

Banana leaves can be water-proofed for roofing by laying them on hot stones until they turn dark and glossy.

Dry, dead wood for fires can always be found inside rotting trunks or fallen branches, even in the wettest weather. Given enough tinder, you can build a fire which will burn wet wood.

The booklet tells how to make fire without matches. Tackled properly, the business of "rubbing two sticks together" need not take long. By the bow-and-drill method "fires have been made in a few seconds."

Finally, a tip on jungle travel:

In dense forests, where distant landmarks cannot be seen, you can hold a course by the following method: line up three trees in the desired direction of travel. As soon as you have passed one of these, line up another beyond the next two, and so on.

The booklet makes it clear that it is no use trying to master the jungle by "brute force and bloody ignorance." One of the parting bits of advice is:

"Avoid obstructions instead of fighting them."

SELF-HELP IN THE JUNGLE

How to live in the jungle is the first lesson taught at this Malayan jungle school; how to fight in it is the next

ACROSS the Johore Straits from Singapore is a school which teaches civilised man what uncivilised man knows by instinct.

It is the Far Eastern Training Centre, where young soldiers learn from old hands the knack of making the jungle as hospitable as possible.

How should the newcomer to the forest know that from certain vines pure water can be obtained; that the sap of certain trees is poisonous; or that the bark of another provides smokeless fuel?

The training of the students is realistic from the day they arrive to the moment they leave. It is built up on a series of progressive lessons, so that constantly they are using knowledge they have learned in previous lectures and demonstrations.

The climax of the course is in the last few days when, with their instructors, the students go out in the jungle for three days.

with them and whatever else may be taken from the jungle.

Physical fitness is essential to every soldier who operates in the jungle, if only because from fitness grows alertness. A man can stand within ten yards of an opponent in the thick vegetation and never be spotted unless the searcher has been trained to look through the jungle and not at it. A soldier will never hit a fleeting target until he has been trained to a high degree of snap-shooting, from awkward positions.

The training centre has a jungle lane and a jungle range set with opportunity targets and booby traps. Here men are trained, with only the exact number of rounds for each target, so that every bullet must find its mark.

The most popular demonstration is the air drop. Known and welcomed by all soldiers during the war, this operation enables troops to stay deep in the jungle for long periods.

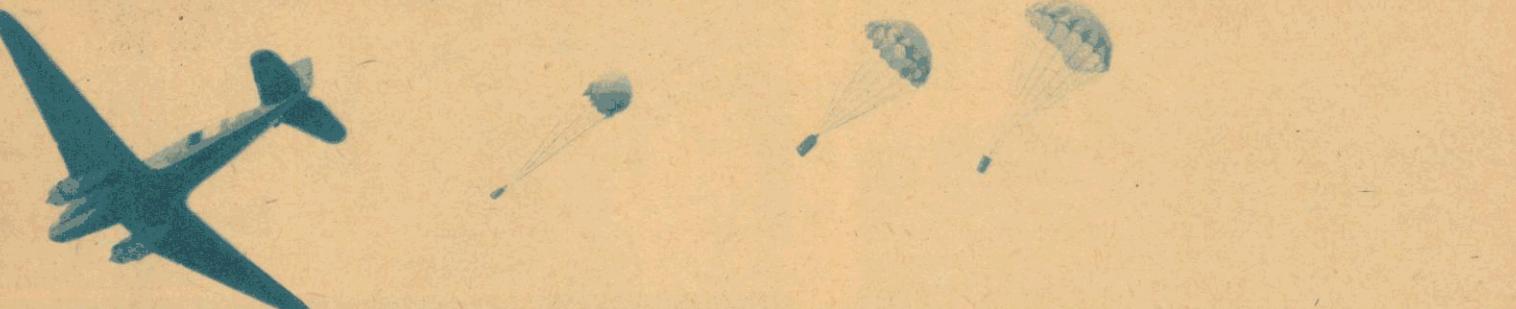
At every phase of the training students are encouraged to criticise and make suggestions. The best ideas go into the programme for the next course.

The Commandant of the school, paraphrasing a famous dictum of Lord Wavell, describes the perfect jungle fighter as part poacher, part gangster, part burglar. Not attributes to be proud of in a healthy society, but necessary in the fight against bandits in the Malayan jungles.

* Story and pictures on these pages and succeeding pages of Malaya Report from Army Public Relations.

BOARD and LODGING

Out in the jungle men must have shelter from torrential rain. This hut is made of sticks and tough leaves lashed with rope-strong vines; inside is a fern bed.



The soldier in the jungle must carry his supplies, but the time comes when they must be replenished. The RAF drop his rations in tinned form (below).

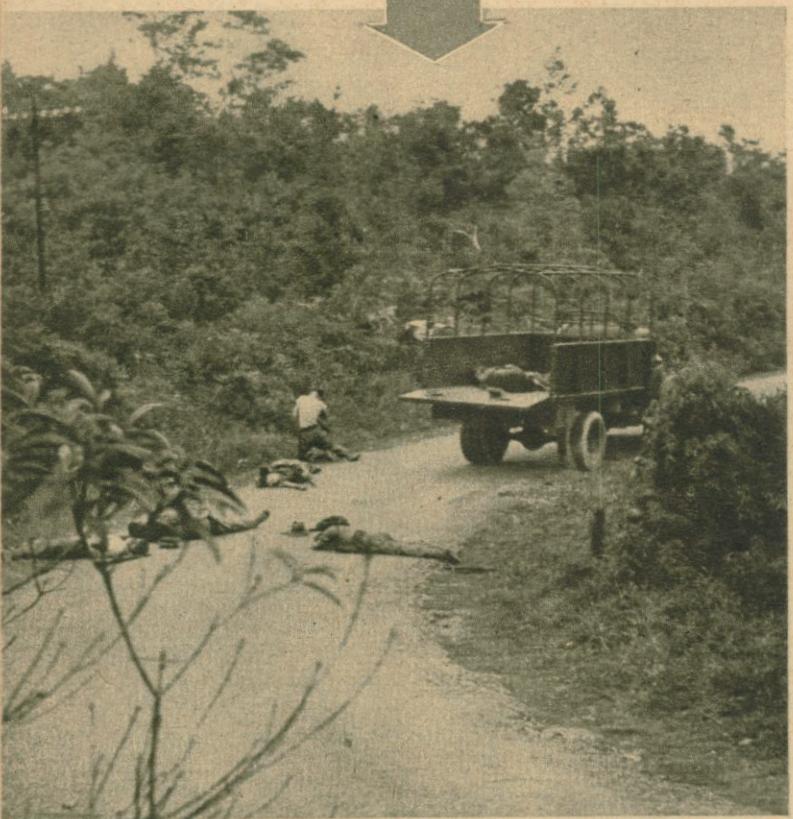


All too rarely troops get to close grips with bandits — but it is a good thing to know how to tackle them.



Left: the Chief Instructor (note crossed kukri flash) sums up after a demonstration. Above: as the class listens to a commentary on how to destroy the enemy, a corporal in foreground tackles a more immediate enemy. Who's the girl on left? Sorry, SOLDIER has no information.

THIS IS TRAINING



It looks like a fatal ambush; in fact, it is a warning staged by the training centre. Below: the kind of clearing in which bandit camps are found. Troops must learn to be ever alert on such terrain.



Bound for battle in a train: "D" Company of the 1st Devons. They rode silently, in closed wagons.

- BUT THIS IS

"D" Company of the 1st Devons recently rode to battle in a special train (writes an Army Observer who accompanied them).

They were the ground troops employed in a land-air strike against a Communist camp area lying to the east of the villages of Meng Kuang and Kemayan, in Pahang State.

The camp lay far from main roadways, and the only means of getting troops close enough to achieve a tactical surprise was by dropping them off a train at a point between the two stations, one-and-a-half miles from the scene of operations. The Communist terrorists are wily, ever on the lookout for security forces.

It was only a few seconds before the soldiers left their temporary lines that they learned they were going by train. The

Commanding Officer, Lieut-Col. R. G. Pine-Coffin, DSO, MC, told them that success depended upon keeping as silent as the grave when the train of seven ordinary eight-wheeled covered wagons was halted at Triang, while the engine tender was refilled with water, and again at the next stop when a platoon of "C" Company was to pounce out with the police to screen the entire village of Meng Kuang.

Major R. E. Robinson, commanding "D" Company, rode on the engine. His was the task of ensuring that the train did not arrive



Within half a mile of the targets which Beaufighters are strafing, the Air Liaison Officer operates his air-ground link.

THE REAL THING

at the disembarking point before the air strike had started.

For the men, it was an uncomfortably hot journey. I could hear the heavy breathing of sweating men as they sat silent while I peered through a crack in the side of the truck and saw a native boy leading a goat alongside. If that boy had heard us, our secret might have been divulged.

Railway traffic was completely stopped before the special train started its journey. The signal staff at one box were "confined to their box" under police escort until the train had fulfilled its purpose. Pedestrians were stopped from walking alongside the line — a common practice in the East.

As the train rattled to a sudden halt "D" Company flung themselves out in a space of seconds. In the distance the sounds of loud detonations could be heard; these were the explosions of 500-lb bombs from the four Beaufighters. It was 1205 hours.

The bandit buildings had all been given London names — Buckingham Palace, Marble Arch, and Piccadilly Circus.

As the leading platoon which I accompanied made good speed through the paddy (rice ground) and the criss-cross ditches, sometimes waist-high in water, so the noises from the battle ground grew in volume. Every few minutes a Beaufighter or one of the six Spitfires would come in

and their cannon and machine-guns would add to the din.

Six Spitfires strafed the fringe of the jungle on the far side of the area for a depth of 100 yards, so as to trap any bandits who fled across the *lalang* (high, razor-edged grass) to this jungle.

The air attack — eminently successful — lasted about 45 minutes, then was called-off by the Air Liaison Officer firing red rockets into the air to notify the pilots.

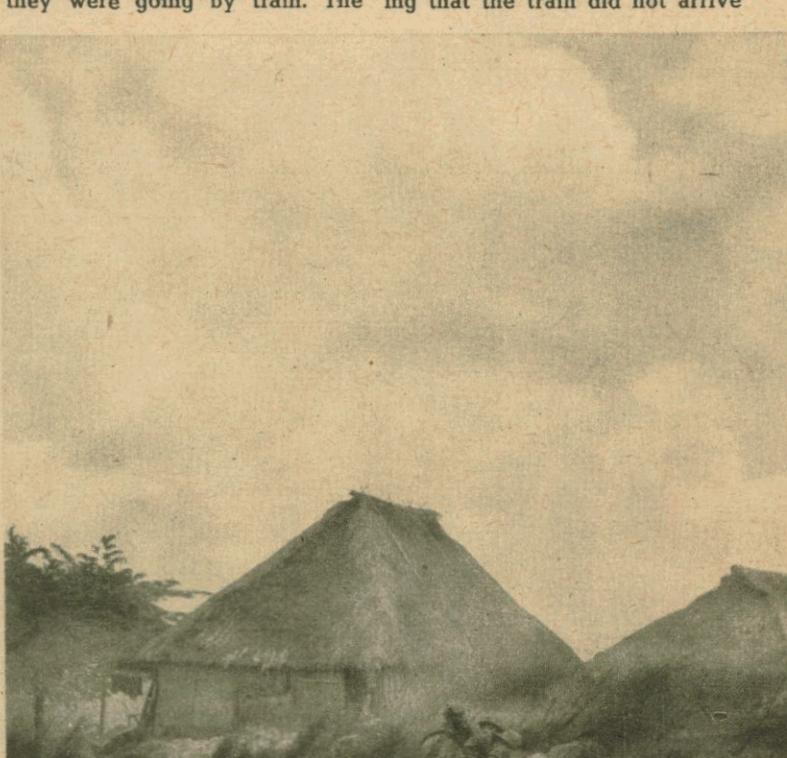
Rockets from the Beaufighters had started large fires in the dry *lalang*, and by 1630 hours all bushes and grass in the area — more than a square mile — were in ashes.

As we came to the building alleged to be that occupied by



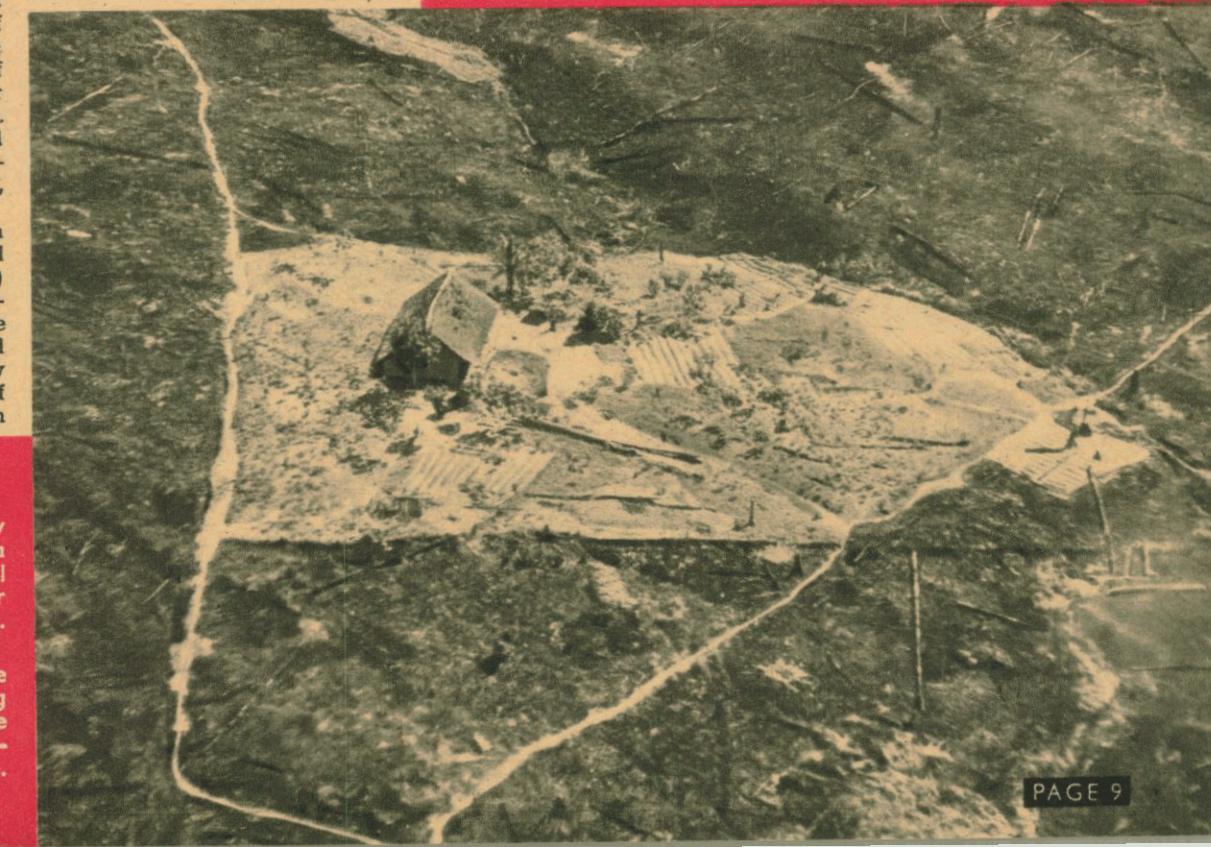
Through the high *lalang* troops move in to their objective, which has been raked by the RAF.

OVER



Left: This picture, darkened by drifting smoke, was taken a few seconds after a corporal had been killed and another wounded at the first objective.

Right: After the aerial strafe — shattered huts, smouldering patches of grass, littered tree trunks; nine bandits are believed to have been killed here.



five Communist bandits, I heard the cracks of what I took to be several rifles firing from the distance. One corporal fell dead; another was wounded in the arm.

They were not more than 50 feet from me. I tied up the wounded man's arm with a first-field dressing. The shots must have been fired just before the enemy retreated into the smoke and the jungle, which at this stage had not been combed by our troops. No bandits were seen.

The huge fires caused a change in plans, but the area was criss-crossed by the searching troops. Forcing our way through the six-foot high *lalang* and over the thickly scattered tree trunks lying around was gruelling.

Everyone was soaked with perspiration. Nobody envied the men carrying wireless equipment.

I saw an injured woman bandit being tenderly carried back to the railway and placed on the special train which brought our party back to Mentakab. Army doctors — summoned by radio — were on the train and gave her treatment, and when the train reached Mentakab, long after darkness had set in, she was taken to the civil hospital. I was impressed by the way the medical attendants on the march back kept stopping and giving her sips of water to drink, and ensuring she was as comfortable as possible. She was carried at the head of the returning column, and the speed at which she could be carried was the speed of the column.

Later, a report was received that bandits had given a "pep" talk to the villagers at Kemayan and told them they had not remained and fought because they had lost nine of their men in the bombing.

D. H. de T. READE

ONE of the more galling moments for the Editor of **SOLDIER** is when he receives a well-taken photograph of British troops doing some unusual job in some unusual corner of the globe — and then, scrutinising the picture a little more closely, finds somebody improperly dressed or behaving a shade too informally.

If the lapse is one which cannot be tackled by a retoucher (and more than one cigarette has been conveniently "lost" in this way) the problem arises: whether to print the picture and prepare for a barrage of letters from shocked soldiers, or to discard it and rob a number of deserving troops of their fair share of the limelight.

This is one problem which does not worry the Editors of the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Herald*. The subjects of their photographs, even if Cabinet Ministers, can be hatless and unbuttoned. But **SOLDIER** — as readers take care to point out — is an official publication and ought not to countenance pictures of soldiers improperly dressed. (Incidentally, these protests come as often as not from men in the ranks).

The introduction of the beret, recently described by Colonel A. Gomme-Duncan, MP as a hideous and sloppy bit of cloth, has not made **SOLDIER**'s job any easier. Not that **SOLDIER** altogether agrees with the Member for Perth; the real trouble is that the beret is so often worn incorrectly, or just half-worn.

* * *

THE beret, in **SOLDIER**'s view, is at least an improvement on the earlier side-cap which seemed to fulfil neither of the primary functions of a cap: it did not remain on the head, and it did not shelter the head.

Moreover, like the beret, it was all too easy to wear incorrectly — remember the lads who wore it at an angle of ninety degrees from the head, or who planted it vertically over the head like a tea cosy?

The beret, while an improvement, is not necessarily the final

answer to the British Army's long search for the right hat, a search embracing everything from giant mitres and bearskins to tricornes and tiny pillboxes.

SOLDIER has always had a sneaking preference for the peaked service dress hat, even with battle-dress (though not necessarily for wear on active service, when something like the Africa Corps cap might be more suitable). At least the service dress hat looks smart, does not take on an incorrect angle so easily, shelters the head and shades the eyes; and — another great advantage, though there will be some dissenters — it cannot be tucked under a shoulder strap. But it is apt to be hot in summer, and presumably it costs more to manufacture.

If the beret ever comes to be replaced, and the service dress hat is not favoured, there is a case for the wide-brimmed bush hat as an all purpose, all-climate head covering. (Yet wasn't there a report that the Australians were discarding their wide-brimmed hat for the beret?)

* * *

THE Monte Carlo army, said an MP in the recent debate on the Army Estimates, had few men but many formations. Was it true that the British Army had many men but few formations?

As during last year's debate, several MP's were concerned at the extent to which the Regular Army is tied up in training National Servicemen, and speculated gloomily on how many fully trained divisions we could field at short notice.

SOLDIER to Soldier

Taxed with saying: "In the future I hope that when voluntary recruiting becomes better we shall be able to diminish National Service," Mr. Shinwell said he was referring to the future — not the immediate future. Even if the strength of the Regular Army was raised at once to 250,000 men, he said, Britain would still be unable to meet her overseas commitments — the occupation of Germany, Austria and Trieste, the maintenance of garrisons in the Middle East and Africa, and the campaign in Malaya. "All of which is in addition to a vast number of men required in our training cadres, and over and above that a vast army of men engaged in the repair, reconditioning and maintenance of Army vehicles."

* * *

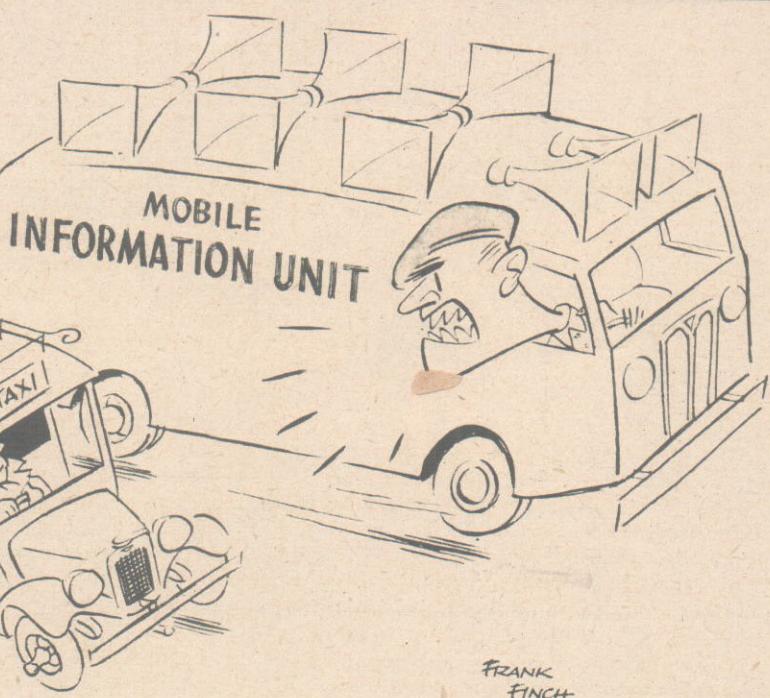
ONCE more a number of MP's were worried about the clause in the Army Act which allows soldiers to be transferred from one corps to another, from a corps into the Infantry, or from Infantry into a corps.

This clause, said Mr. Michael Stewart, Under-Secretary for War, was necessary because of the "unbalance" between the supply of, and demand for, volunteers in different arms, and because every new advance in military science altered the Army's demands for men in this, that or the other branch of the Service. Who knew whether in the next ten years scientific inventions would increase the importance of the Royal Artillery or reduce it?

There were timely protests at the tendency of some posting branches to think of men as "bodies" instead of men with strong traditional loyalties. But one member took the argument rather far — in **SOLDIER**'s view — when he said, "What has a man from Durham got in common with a man from Shropshire or Somerset? He is in a strange country, and he does not understand their language and they do not understand his."

One of the virtues of the Army surely is that it throws such men together and forces them to understand each other. A man after all joins to serve his country, not just his county. Does it really hurt a Highland regiment to be diluted (or stiffened, according to taste) with Cockneys, or for a Cockney regiment to be diluted (or stiffened) with Highlanders?

SOLDIER would be the first to oppose the posting of men according to administrative convenience rather than according to traditional loyalties, but local pride can be taken too far. What was it Field Marshal Lord Wavell said about the Infantry being too prone to think of themselves as "the Old Umpteenth" instead of as Infantry?





MAKE DO and MEND — for 65,000 Vehicles

On this airfield at Oldenburg, Germany are 15,000 vehicles, all reconditioned war veterans. (See next page)

Mr. Emanuel Shinwell, Minister for War, had this to say in the House of Commons on 10 March 1949 about the Army's transport problems:

"In this year and next the Ministry of Supply and the Army will begin the complete rebuilding of 65,000 vehicles of selected types which came into the Army during the war.

"This programme will take some time to complete and is in addition to the normal overhaul programme of vehicles and of the large range of other equipment which needs repair. From some points of view, we should like to curtail this reconditioning programme and extend the production of new vehicles. But that would hinder production for the export drive and to some extent, therefore, this repair programme of vehicles can be regarded as an acknowledgment by the Army of the prior needs of the country's economic recovery.

"But as equipment gets older and the supply of spare parts more difficult, repair becomes completely uneconomic. This is already happening with many of the lighter types of Army vehicles and the time is not far distant when it will apply to many other types. In future, therefore, there will be a tendency to increase our calls on new production. Nevertheless, demands on the repair facilities will be substantial for several years to come."

The 1949 Defence White Paper pointed out that the vehicles handed in immediately after the war were mostly in need of overhaul and added: "They could not be serviced at the time without serious dislocation of the demobilisation scheme; nor could they be housed at peace-time standards without making unacceptable calls on civilian storage accommodation. The work of overhaul, which has gone on continuously, must now be accelerated to cope with increasing demands for current use."

The White Paper also said that nearly £14,500,000 would be spent on the Army's vehicle overhaul programme.

More than half the vehicles mentioned by Mr. Shinwell as scheduled for rebuilding are being tackled in Britain.

Ministry of Supply auxiliary workshops are dealing with most of the rebuilding, while REME does "second-line" repairs. But REME is also rebuilding all motor-cycles and trailers and certain other specialised vehicles, like tank transporters. Tanks for rebuilding are being divided between REME and the Royal Ordnance Factories.

The remainder of the 65,000 are being reconditioned in Germany. The Middle and Far East Commands have no facilities for reconditioning except to satisfy their day-to-day demands.

On the following pages, SOLDIER describes how the vehicle problem is being handled in Germany.

Continuing

Make Do and Mend

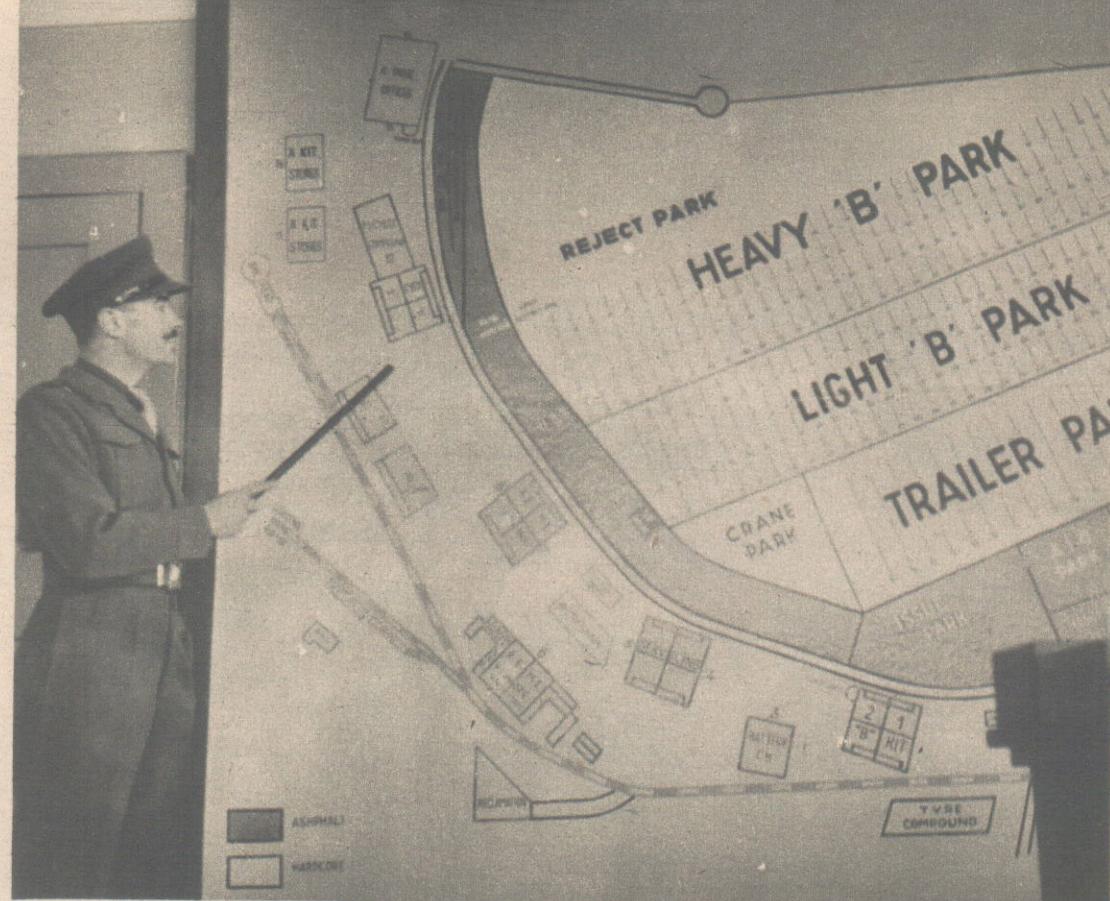
JUST after VE-Day, Rhine Army was told, in effect: "You will get no more vehicles for ten years. From now on, you live on your own fat."

With the run-down, Rhine Army was to have a good deal of superfluous vehicle fat. As units were disbanded, telescoped or reduced, their vehicles were neatly parked on autobahns and airfields, to await their turn as replacements for those which wore out or crashed.

Visiting pressmen saw these parks and without more ado dashed off their stories. Thousands of vehicles, they wrote, were left to the mercy of the weather. Birds were nesting in them. Pilferers were helping themselves, the vehicles were rotting away. Nobody was interested.

In the House of Commons one Member at least regularly enquired after the fate of 70,000 vehicles parked on an autobahn near Hamburg.

It was true, at least, that some birds nested in the vehicles. It was also true that they were parked under the open sky (where else would you find garage-space for so many?). But the vehicles



"Where's that wagon?" In his room in the airfield control tower, Major W. L. Porter will show you on his map.

were not left to the mercy of the weather; they were not rotting away. They had been given protection from the weather and regularly they were towed through a maintenance process. Pilferable parts had been taken off and put into safe places. Finally, everyone concerned with the vehicles was very much interested.

Every year one-third of the vehicles Rhine Army had on the roads became unfit for use and it was from these stocks that they were replaced.

Many of the vehicles are still there, on the autobahns and airfields. Only four of the ten years have gone by, and a steady stream from the parks goes out to units, to replace worn and damaged vehicles.

Keeping ahead of the demand, the REME vehicle inspectorate looks over batches of the vehicles and classifies them. Some will be fit for the road again after servicing and minor repairs. Some will need major repairs. Some will never run again, but will provide spares for others.

The vehicles go into workshops where they are completely stripped down and rebuilt. Not as many come out as go in. Out of a batch of, say, 1,000 elderly jeeps which fought their way from Normandy to Germany, perhaps 600 or 700 good-as-new jeeps will emerge. With British-built machines, the proportion would be higher. Supplies of spares for jeeps and other American vehicles dried up with the end of Lease-Lend, but spares for British vehicles are still coming along. The spares situation has been eased, too, by limiting the types of vehicles in use.

Once the vehicles are classified as "fit" they go to a central vehicle depot. SOLDIER went to Oldenburg to see how the depot there works. It is part of 16 Vehicle Battalion, RAOC, which is a British "island" in the Danish Brigade area of the British Zone of Germany, and to complicate

the international jig-saw, it has Jugoslav guards with dogs to ward off pilferers and prowlers.

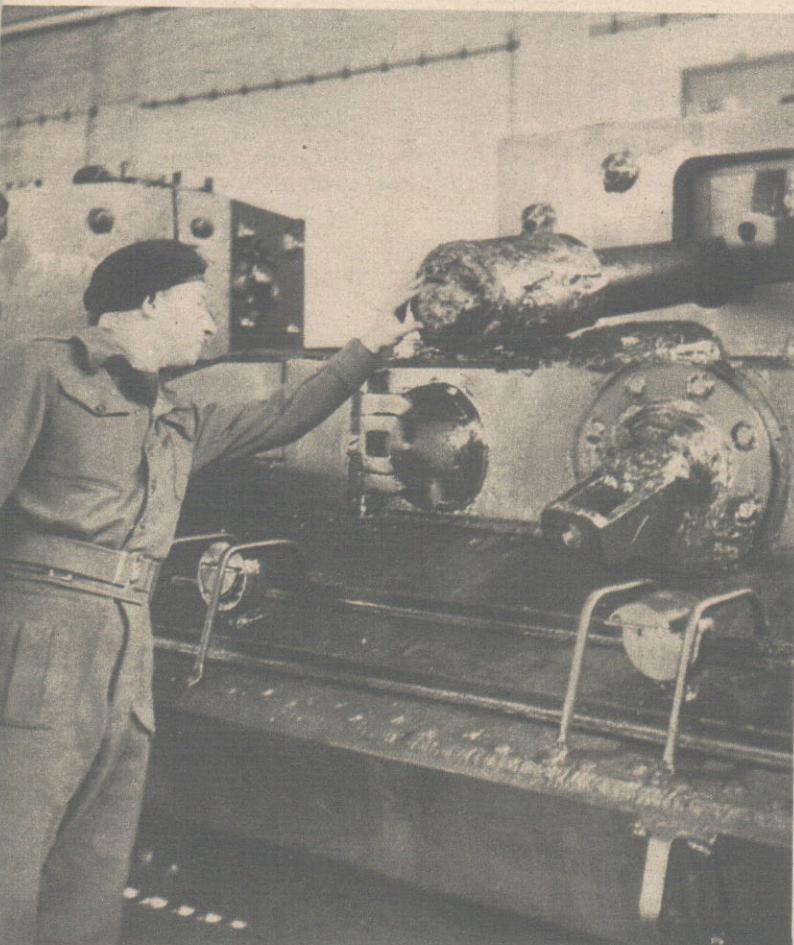
Besides the vehicle depot, the Battalion has a training wing which gives technical and driving training to new arrivals to RAOC units in Germany and regimental training to RAOC men in other vehicle battalions.

The Battalion is comfortably installed on Oldenburg airfield, which was once used for training Luftwaffe pilots. The Luftwaffe did itself well and the Battalion gets the most out of comfortable and well-equipped quarters; among other things, it claims the best canteen, club and other welfare amenities in BAOR. (If there are any rival claims, SOLDIER refuses to adjudicate).

The hangars which sheltered German planes are now storehouses and workshops for the vehicle depot, but the control tower is still the control tower because it houses the depot offices. The grassy pieces of the airfield have been covered with "hard standing" and its four square miles hold about 15,000 vehicles, to cope with which there are 180 officers and men and 1000 German workers.

The depot's job is to store the vehicles and issue them to units who want them. Vehicles in this case means anything from Cromwell tanks to jeep trailers and mobile bakeries to omnibuses — but no cars. The depot has a turn-over of about 300 a week.

When a vehicle arrives at Oldenburg it is as impersonal as it was when it was new. Two coats of paint have obliterated whatever name it may have had;



Grease will protect the tank from the weather. Next step is to provide protection from the grease for men who have to work on the tank.



The odds and ends. A tank kit may have between 300 and 400 pieces, every one of which must be checked before the tank is issued.

"Phyllis", "Brighton Belle" and "The Pride of Glasgow" have become mere WD numbers again. The divisional flash has gone from the mudguard, and so have the driver's gadgets for holding his girl-friend's photograph and his shaving-mirror.

Now the vehicle loses its "kit", which goes into stores, and it is armoured against the weather again. Woodwork is painted; unpainted metal parts and working parts are covered with thick grease; lanoline, an oil compound, is sprayed on to the paintwork. If it is a tank or an armoured car, its gun has the breach sealed, hot mineral jelly is poured down the barrel and a wooden tampon is driven into the muzzle. Tanks and armoured cars are completely sealed, except for one hatch which is left open to prevent condensation.

After this the vehicle is towed to a compound on the airfield, where it joins others of its kind.

It is parked in a lettered row and given a number in that row, so that anyone who wants to find it knows exactly where to go.

Now the vehicle is "on location" and it may be there for several months. Again, it is not forgotten. Every month its protective coat is checked and brought up to standard; every ten days, if it is a wheeled vehicle, its tyres will have their pressure tested and the wheels will be given a quarter-turn. With 15,000 vehicles to look after, this kind of maintenance is a big job.

Then a piece of paper arrives from Rhine Army Headquarters authorising the issue of a vehicle to a unit. The vehicle is towed off its park for REME inspectorate to examine again. First it must lose its protective grease. If it needs any work done (perhaps water has got into the ignition — you can't guard against everything), the vehicle goes into workshops. Then it is serviced; anti-freeze is put into the radiator, if it is winter; oil goes into the sump, grease into the nipples. And a battery is supplied (there is a plant at Oldenburg which can charge 576 batteries at the same time).

One of the nastiest jobs is getting tanks and armoured cars out of pickle. A gun, filled with solid mineral jelly, may take more than half a day to get clean.

Once serviced, the vehicle has its Class A kit (non-removable things, like hinges) and Class B kit (manufacturers' kit which can be removed, like batteries and rifle-brackets) checked and working. It goes off on a test run.



"So he's just like the rest of us under it all, eh?"

Batteries by the battalion. At Oldenburg 576 accumulators can be charged at the same time.

make up a kit without the help of an interpreter. Boxes on roller conveyors pass by the shelves as the Germans put in the different items, working on mass-production lines.

The boxes vary in size according to the kind of vehicle; some tank kits have more than 300 pieces, ranging from a Besa and a Bren, periscopes and a telescope, to matchets, a cooker and two wooden blocks on which to stand the jack.

Now the vehicle is absolutely ready to go into service. The unit to which it has been allocated has been notified and sends for it. The men who come are given every chance to check that the machine works properly and that there are no pieces missing. They are encouraged by a large notice to have REME inspectorate look over the vehicle before they take it away, if they think there is anything wrong.

"We want every vehicle that goes out to be perfect, and we want all the customers to be satisfied," said Major W. L. Porter, who comes from Leeds and is in charge of the technical administration of the depot. "It is our job to be of service, and that means we must produce efficient vehicles."

SOLDIER asked if the customer was always right, in the vaunted tradition of civilian retail business. But that, apparently, is too much to ask, not of the RAOC but of the customer. Some of the old hands at the depot answer with the story (for which no-one will vouch) of the man who arrived in a 15-cwt truck, equipped with a dog-collar and lead, to collect a Staghound armoured car.

RICHARD LASCELLES





Quite a change from an Army glider: the RAF's 350 mph Hastings.

THE ARMY HELPS TO FLY THE 'HEAVIES'

THE great, glistening freighters, colliers and tankers which stream down the narrow air channel to Berlin are not piloted by "blue types" and civilians alone; the Army is up there at the controls too.

NCO's of the Glider Pilot Regiment, some of whom flew on historic operations in North-West Europe and Sicily, are acting as second pilots of York and Hastings four-engined aircraft which form an impressive contrast to the gliders of Normandy and the Rhine.

The logbooks of the glider pilots are beginning to show very considerable totals of flying hours (one serjeant-pilot recently put in 100 hours in less than five weeks); this is a good deal more than they would be able to show in the normal course of training on gliders and light aircraft in England. But flying hours alone do not spell experience; the important thing is that, since January of this year, the Army pilots have been getting invaluable training in blind flying and all-weather navigation in operational conditions. And they are proud to share in the *camaraderie*

of the air crews who are engaged on one of the greatest emergency operations of peacetime.

Of the 15 NCO-pilots who come under the command of Captain P. A. Downward at Wunstorf, in the plains of Hanover, not all are on flying duties simultaneously. About half are stationed at Gatow airfield, Berlin doing the duties of air movements assistants — which

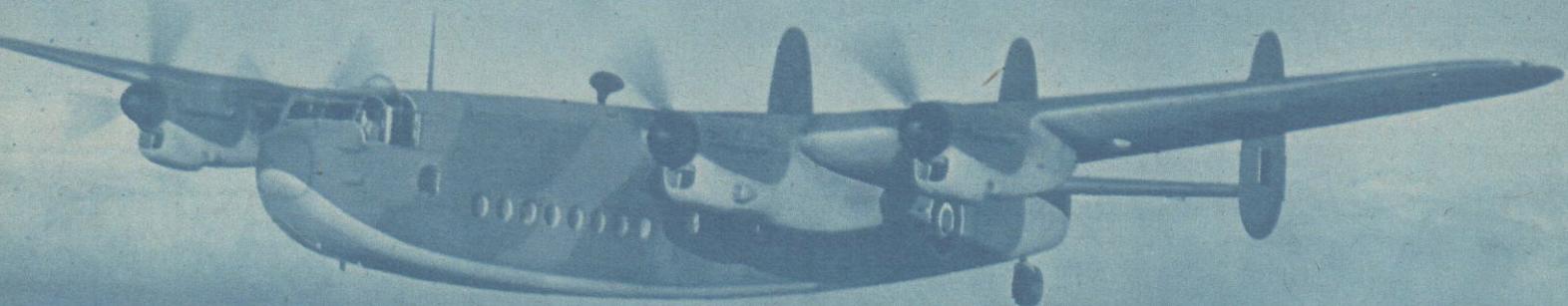
involves, among other things, supervising the correct loading of aircraft flying back to the bases in the Western Zone. This job entails quick and accurate loading of mails and also of goods manufactured in Berlin; loads are often bulky and awkward and require to be most carefully positioned and lashed

in the aircraft. The NCO's are trained to the point where they can put the centre of gravity of the plane exactly where the pilot wants it.

The NCO-pilots all of whom are Regulars include men like Staff-Serjeant G. Moorcraft, who received the Distinguished Flying Medal (usually an RAF award, but one for which the Army is eligible) for his service in Normandy and on the Rhine; Serjeant W. M. Garbutt, who has 18 years service and was taken prisoner at Arnhem;

NCO's of the Glider Pilot Regiment are flying as second pilots of four-engined freight aircraft on the great airlift to Berlin

Another of the planes with four engines flown by soldiers with three stripes: the York.



Conference before take-off at Wunstorf: Serjeant W. M. Garbutt, Glider Pilot Regiment, with RAF aircrew.

Serjeant P. Page, who also landed at Arnhem; and Serjeants A. Doobie and T. Slavern, who served in Burma and India. Their officer, Captain Downward, took part in the Rhine crossing as a parachutist and helped to capture the very aerodrome — Wunstorf — on which his men are now based.

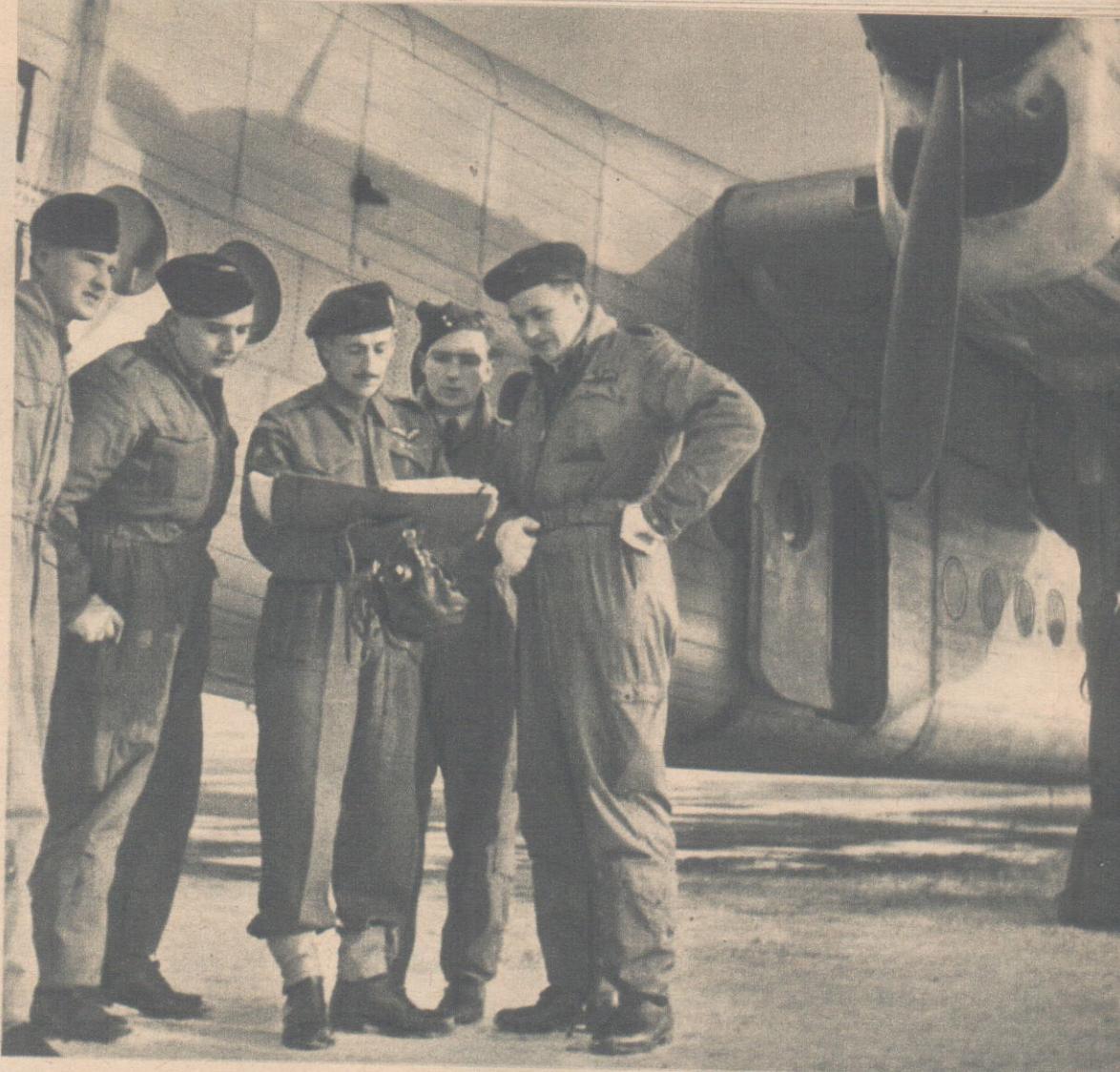
Before arriving in Germany for Operation Plainfare the glider pilots went through an air movements course with the RAF near Hereford. Their tour of duty is of about three months; then they fly back to Britain on leave to be replaced by another party from England.

On the ground they live with the RAF NCO's and share the buns and banter of the Malcolm Clubs. On the notice board of one of the canteens at Wunstorf a prominent space has been found for a *Sunday Express* cutting entitled "The Big Money Being Made On The Berlin Airlift," and there is a good deal of satirical comment, pictorial and otherwise, around it. When it comes to money, the glider pilots receive rather less pay than the RAF, but they do get the extra half-a-crown a day the Army allows to pilots in the Army Air Corps. The notice board at Wunstorf bears many pungent commentaries inspired by rash statements in the press about the airlift. If, by mischance, there is a howler in this article it will no doubt be cut out and put on the board too.

Wunstorf is only one of the aerodromes supplying Berlin. Up at Schleswigland, north of Hamburg, is a smaller group of glider pilots under Captain P. Scott, who is an Arnhem "veteran." They are helping to pilot the new four-engined Hastings aircraft which can carry a very impressive load.

What the Lords of the Treasury think about the airlift is not hard to guess, but the glider pilots view the operation through unjaundiced eyes. Serjeant Garbutt, for instance, thinks this is just the life, and feels that he is doing a useful job of work. He will tell you that in normal peace conditions there are not so many arms in which a man can become a serjeant in nine or twelve months, and at the same time lead such a stimulating life. Volunteers who join the Glider Pilot Regiment do so for a term of three years, renewable in the case of outstanding men. A glider pilot who goes back to his parent regiment does so fully trained as an Infantry leader skilled in all Infantry weapons and tactics, for it is the boast of the Glider Pilot Regiment that it produces fine fighting, as well as flying, soldiers.

Serjeant Garbutt, in the second pilot's seat of a York, tests equipment.





Soldier Looks



Above: The ancient cromlechs of Stonehenge make the subject for the flash of Salisbury Plain District.

Right: How did they rear these stones? No one really knows; the archaeologists can only guess.

Below: There used to be a Woodhenge, too. On Imber ranges gunfire produced a modern version.



at Salisbury Plain

Where the guns of today echo among fortifications built by ancient Britons and barracks of 1903 await the fittings of 1949



A convoy of three-tonners, filled with singing National Servicemen, sped along the Andover-Amesbury road towards Bulford. To their right was a great field, one half covered with derelict gliders, the other half ploughed. To their left, on Quarley Hill, were the outlines of a camp which might have been worth a mention in the early, misty chapters of a history book.

There, to be seen in one turn of the head, were three phases of the military history of Salisbury Plain that no visitor can miss.

The National Servicemen represented the constant bustle of modern military activity on the Plain — the great infantry, artillery and land-air warfare schools, the Vampire jet-fighter that whistled overhead, the rattling tanks and the sleek modern guns.

The field of gliders was one of many relics of World War Two. The machines lay at grotesque angles, though they still showed signs of the neat lines in which they had been fastened down (as protection from the wind) in their last "parade". Now wings pointed in the air or were embedded in the grass; pieces of fabric flapped in the breeze. The nose of one glider rested on the remains of a Rolls-Royce that had been someone's pride and joy before World War One.

A few months ago the gliders covered the whole field. Someone bought them up to turn the fuselages into holiday caravans

Last year the whole of this field at Thruxton Down Farm was covered in gliders. This year half of it will bear a crop.

The Army seems to have disliked open spaces for a long time: after Waterloo (1815), the Household Cavalry did not leave London until 1852, when they went to camp and learned to pitch tents. Training was almost entirely confined to barracks and the die-hards objected strenuously to manoeuvres on great open spaces. And Salisbury Plain is essentially an open space, suitable for manoeuvres.

Manoeuvres came late last century, but the Plain really came into its own when St. John Brodrick (afterwards the Earl of Midleton) conceived the idea, in 1900, of splitting Britain into six Corps Command Districts, the Second Corps of which would be centred on Salisbury Plain and would have five cavalry regiments, 27 batteries of artillery and 25 battalions of infantry.

The camp on Quarley Hill

and some were dismantled and taken away. The eastern end of the field was cleared of what was left and for the first time since 1939 the soil was ploughed.

Now a tractor was pulling the harrow by the side of the gliders. And the history of the tractor-driver was a comment on the progress of events since the gliders were built. His name was Gerald Wilner. He had been a sailor in the German navy and he had come to Britain as a prisoner-of-war when the Channel Islands garrison surrendered in 1945. Now he was a civilian.

The camp on Quarley Hill was a relic of earlier soldiering on Salisbury Plain. All over the area are earthworks and fortifications, roads and ditches, some built by the Romans and some built by British fighting men before the Romans came.

Wherever you go on the Plain are soldiers and memories of soldiers, but the memories of soldiers are mainly of very long ago or of comparatively recent history, for the modern story of Salisbury Plain as a military area is quite short.

It was solid, it was better than barracks had been before — but it was unbeautiful. And it still is. The square, red-brick buildings have weathered the years well. To outward appearances, at least, they are as sound today as ever they were. But many are empty, their windows broken, waiting for modernisation.

The Army had started to bring Tidworth up-to-date just before World War Two, but work had to stop in 1939. Now the 1939 modernisation plan is out of date; ideas in barrack standards have progressed in the last ten years. Fresh plans are being made for Tidworth.

So far as modernisation is concerned, Bulford is in the same boat as Tidworth. Outwardly, Bulford looks more in need of it: some of its accommodation consists of ancient, corrugated-iron buildings. But the tin-shacks were well built and they are surprisingly good inside.

Most dilapidated-looking place in Bulford is the tin-town Garrison Market, which hides behind some rather smarter shops in the Garrison's Bond Street. The market is three sides of a square with a covered walk and it houses cafes, outfitters, a tailor, a barber, a

OVER

Soldier Looks at Salisbury Plain (Continued)

fruit shop, a laundry, a dairy, a dry-cleaner and a fish shop.

It was known to thousands of airborne troops during World War Two. In the earlier world war large numbers of New Zealanders used Bulford as a training centre and left their mark in the shape of a huge white Kiwi cut in the chalk overlooking the camp. The one-and-a-quarter acre bird, which occupies a four-and-a-half acre site, is now maintained by an old soldier, Mr. Reg Paynter, who is employed for the purpose by the Kiwi Polish Company. He has two enemies to fight: weeds, which spoil the whiteness of the chalk, and rabbits, which do the same by burrowing.

Probably the bleakest permanent camp site on Salisbury Plain is that of Larkhill, a name which, after Woolwich, is engraved on more Gunners' hearts than any other. The camp sprawls over both sides of the road from Bulford to Warminster, neat and not unpleasant to look at, but exposed to all the winds that blow.

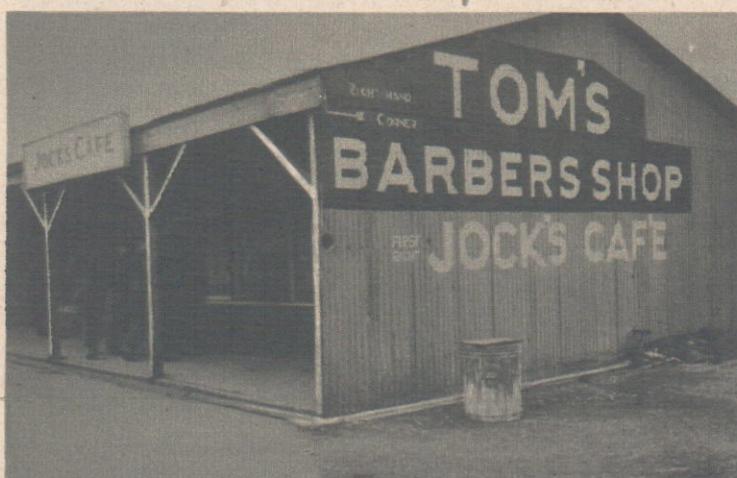
Gunners like the area. A bearded cowman, Mr. S. Foster, grazes his charges among the deserted Nissen huts of a camp which was

occupied by Poles in World War Two. He hails from the Midlands, was a Regular Gunner and he served at Larkhill in 1937 with the 9th Field Regiment. After a war spent in the Middle East, he came back to Larkhill to marry a local girl and settle down there.

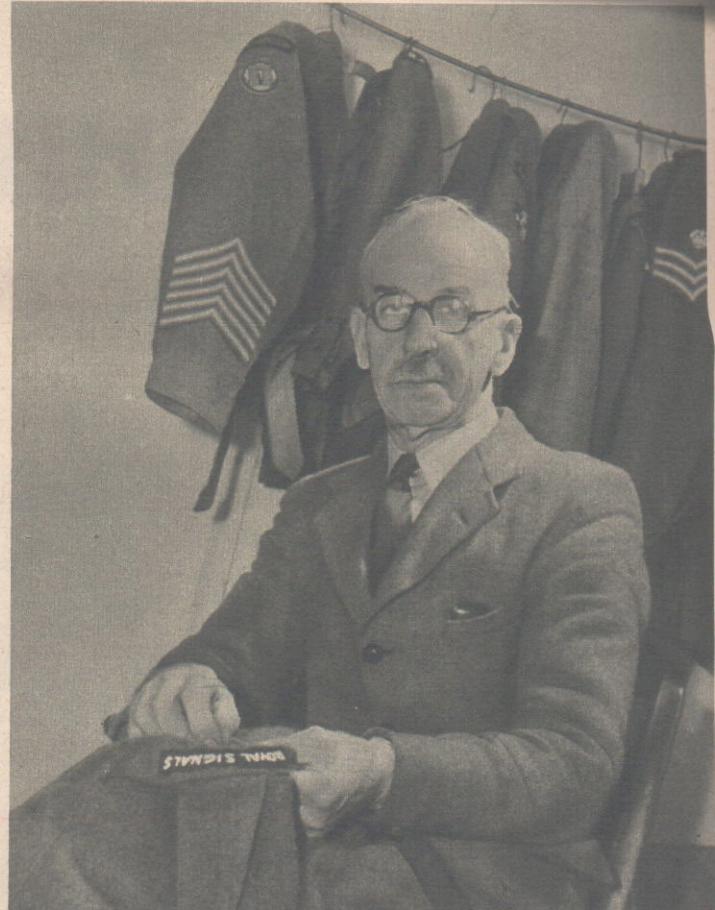
At Larkhill you find one of those odd similarities that sometimes occur between the ancient and the modern. The long barrows that Gunners build for storing their ammunition at Fargo ammunition depot look just like the long barrows in which the ancient Britons buried their dead and which are scattered over the Plain.

It was near Larkhill that the Royal Flying Corps had one of its first stations after it was formed in May 1912 and an elderly hangar, prim and primitive in comparison with the modern hangar as the planes of that day are compared to today's fighters, stands in a now-empty camp as a reminder of the early days of military flying.

At a road crossing less than a couple of miles away from that most enigmatic of all ancient monuments, Stonehenge (which as a national showplace costs the



Above: Advertising pays — even in Bulford Garrison Market.
Below: The Bulford Kiwi: 420 feet high, with a 150-foot bill.



visitor sixpence to see), is a memorial "To the memory of Captain Loraine and Staff-Sergeant Wilson who whilst flying on duty met with a fatal accident near this spot on July 5th 1912."

That memorial commemorates the Royal Flying Corps' first fatal accident; it had six deaths in accidents in its first year. The plane belonged to the RFC's military wing and was one of a number detailed to cooperate with the cavalry in the 1912 summer manoeuvres. The co-operation was not very successful, and the cavalry commander grumbled, "They spoiled the war."

Up a narrow road, getting nearer the sound of the guns on the Larkhill ranges, you come to one of the loneliest units in Britain, the Salisbury Plain Range Detachment, RA. Its job is to see to the safety of the Larkhill and Imber Ranges and to look after communications between ob-

servation posts and guns if the units practising cannot do the job for themselves.

The safety work is done at vedette posts on the roads leading to the ranges. Each post has a telephone and a map and can stop traffic or report who is on the ranges. On the Imber range, SOLDIER found a vedette post with its telephone supplemented by a walkie-talkie, to give it communication with a party out firing mortars.

When complete units fire on the artillery ranges, they usually provide their own telephone equipment — that is part of the practice. But for gunnery courses

and other incomplete units the detachment does the job, either through its permanent underground cables or by laying special overground cables. Its telephone exchange has 123 lines from the ranges and gun-lines.

Greenlands Camp, where the detachment lives, is a bright little military hamlet two miles from the nearest public thoroughfare. Life is not dull for the men of the unit. With their own cinema shows, transport laid on to entertainments in nearby camps, they can be entertained five nights a week if they want. Besides that, the nine married families on the station run their own little social events now and again.

The barracks are up-to-date and comfortable, and the unit is proud of its gardens. Last year it won a cup for the best-kept garden in Southern Command (SOLDIER, October).

At the west end of Salisbury Plain you come to the School of Infantry, snug in modern barracks built for tank units, and from there, with permission from a vedette post, you can go out on to Imber's blasted heath.

Here is the authentic setting for battle training. The downs are pockmarked with shell-holes; the trees have been stripped by shellfire and are pitted with bullet-holes; for a while the metalled road is good, but covered with mud, then the metal disappears and there are pot-holes and shell-holes, and thus you come to Imber village.

"Seven miles from any town, 'There stands Imber on the Down,'" they say in Wiltshire.

Imber has been the subject of a lot of controversy since the Army decided to keep the ranges after World War Two. It immediately became a "beauty spot" to the Army's critics. In fact, Imber is an ordinary English village; it has a few picturesque buildings



and a good many ugly ones, including some modern council houses, but it is well spaced out, has some good trees and must have been quite pleasant in summer, though it is dreary in winter.

During World War Two, Imber village was used for street-fighting training and it will be used for that again. Meanwhile, it echoes to the roar of the battle demonstrations on the ranges around it.

The ancient church, with its two Crusaders' tombs, is the only building unaffected by the battle training. It stands on a hillock, intact and solitary amid its

graveyard, protected by a barbed wire fence, "Out of Bounds" notices and the boards over its windows and doors.

The rest of the village, clustered along a main street that is a sea of mud, shows every sign of having been in the wars — and what more appropriate in a battle school? Brickwork is chipped by bullets, glass is broken; a shop has had its windows sandbagged

and loopholes made in its walls for weapons.

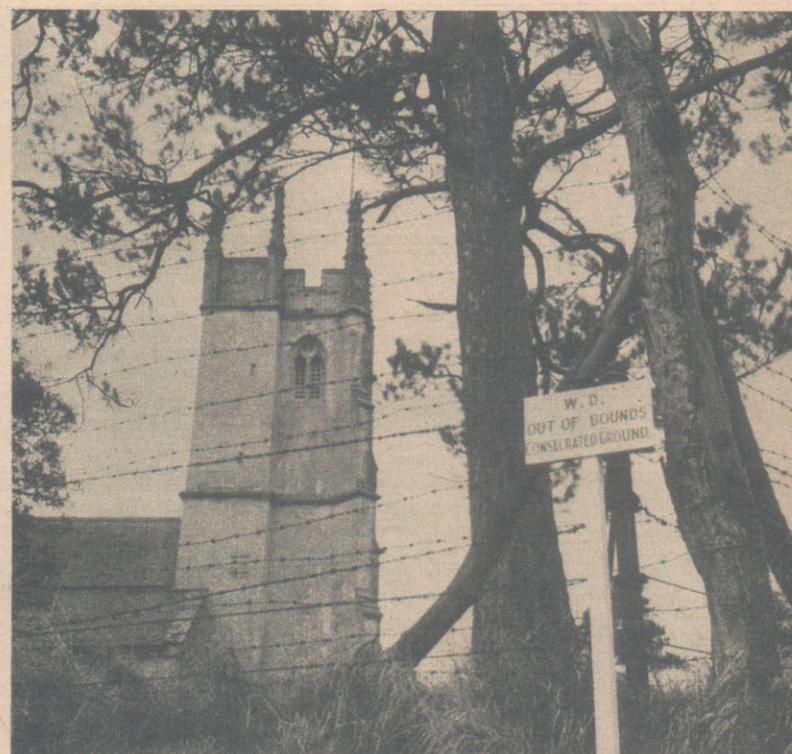
Snowdrops bloom among the thistles in the neglected cottage gardens and the ugly, corrugated-iron chicken-houses have not changed since their last occupants moved out. The only revival of Imber's old life is the occasional sound of a local hunt passing over the ranges (accompanied by an officer of the School of Infantry to see it does not run into danger).

You can tell the village pub from the outside only by the arm on which its sign used to hang.

OVER



Above: You can tell Imber's village pub by the arm from which hung the sign. Right: Behind its wire fence, the church is still intact.





Salisbury Plain (Concluded)

On its wall is a rusted metal plate that once was brightly enamelled. If you stare at it intently, you can just make out the Royal crest and the words "Recruits are now wanted..."

The results of that old recruiting campaign are forgotten, but in World War Two Imber served the country well. Its sacrifice helped to prevent other ordinary English villages from becoming like this; its continued sacrifice is still an insurance for other English villages.

After the desolation of Imber, it is comforting to get down into the drowsy life of Warminster, once famous for its corn-market, where soldiers go for a pint after a day on the ranges. One of their haunts is the Old Bell hotel, now kept by Lieutenant-Colonel K. S. Barker-Simson, who had 30 years in the Army. The Old Bell remained a happy memory to men of the Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry when they were abroad in World War Two; they named one of their tanks after it and sent a picture of the tank to the landlord.

Another quiet little town on Salisbury Plain is Amesbury, which was famous for its tobacco

pipes in the 16th century. Today it has little more to offer the soldier than a meal and drink and a bus station. If he wants town life, he may catch a bus off the Plain to the staid streets under the shadow of Salisbury Cathedral.

On his way, he will pass a sign that points to Winterbourne Gunner, the name of which has nothing to do with artillery but commemorates a lady named Gunnora de la Mere, whose husband owned the manor about the time of Magna Carta.

He will also pass by Old Sarum, the fortress that Romans built on British earthworks and where in mediaeval times the garrison and the clergy of the cathedral that stood nearby disliked each other so much that they came to blows now and again.

Old Sarum fell into disuse 700 years ago, but during World War Two it made a fine site for modern guns, and an angular concrete command post still protrudes grotesquely from the grassy earthworks. Home Guardsmen were stationed in the old fortress in those days and when one of them died, after the war, he left a request that his ashes

should be scattered on No. 1 Command Post. His request was carried out.

In Salisbury itself they are used to soldiers from the Plain, not only those at the permanent camps and schools, but those who come in summer, to occupy the sites where tin-shack cook-houses, ablutions and latrines look so forlorn in winter without their attendant lines of tents.

Among the Salisbury people with happy memories of soldiers between the two wars is Mr. W. J. Handford, editor of the *Salisbury Journal*. In company with famous military writers, he used to cover the manoeuvres on the Plain for London newspapers. In his early days, about 1924, Tidworth was occupied by crack cavalry regiments and he will talk nostalgically of the fine sight they made with fluttering pennons and shining harness. Mr. Handford was a soldier himself: he served in Russia in 1919 and in Ireland.

In the brightly-painted recruiting office in Salisbury, the recruiting officer, Major D. G. Tully, will tell you that the men in the area like what they see of the Army from the outside and that recruiting figures are gratifyingly steady. Helping Major Tully is Army Recruiter W. J. Wiltshire, who was born in Wiltshire and now recruits Wiltshire men. Unfortunately for the county connection, he did not serve in the Wiltshire Regiment — his 21 years service was divided

between the 60th Rifles and the Royal Tank Corps.

The historic pervades Salisbury. There is even a cinema you enter through a 15th century hall put up by a wealthy wool merchant; a thoughtful film company has allowed the old hall to set the style for its foyers and restaurant.

Salisbury is hoping to see a lot more soldiers this summer. Mr. Shinwell said recently that there would be field training for all units this year, and the units would be concentrated close to suitable training areas. What more suitable training area is there, asks Salisbury, than Salisbury Plain?



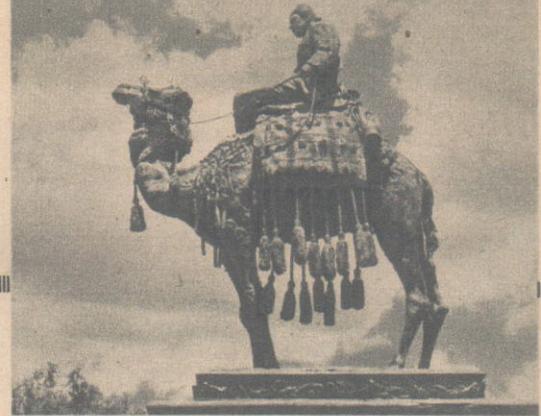
Across the bleak downs of Larkhill ranges, men of the Range Detachment lay telephone cables for practising units.



Less than two miles from Stonehenge is this memorial to men killed in the Royal Flying Corps' first fatal accident.

The country where the Union Jack and the Egyptian flag fly side by side over the Governor's Palace has had its garrison of British troops doubled in the last few years.

This article is compiled from material supplied by RICHARD NASH



The statue of Gordon on his camel, Lightning, is a Khartoum landmark.

REPORT FROM THE SUDAN

M 3630J



A stroll in the shade of the trees lining Gordon Avenue, to see Gordon's statue; a visit to the Gordon Chapel in the Cathedral; a lecture in the Gordon Memorial College; a shave in the Gordon Hairdressing Saloon; a night out in the Gordon Cabaret — you can have them all in the same city: Khartoum.

Khartoum is steeped in the Gordon tradition and in memories of the British soldiers who have served there since 1898. There have been a great many soldiers: up to 1939 battalions would spend only a year in Khartoum, usually on their way home from farther east.

It was a one-battalion, "no families" station then and amenities were not all they could have been. Yet most old soldiers remember Khartoum as one of the better stations. Today it is better still.

The garrison is bigger. Political changes in the Middle East have increased the importance of the Sudan as a base; Khartoum itself has become the air crossroads of Africa. So besides the South Wales Borderers in the Infantry barracks on the south banks of the Blue Nile, there are the 15th/19th King's Royal Hussars in barracks on the north bank and there is a RAF station.

Married quarters are planned now. A new £10,000 NAAFI club has been built, with a dance floor in the centre, surrounded by a pergola blazing with flowers and the ordinary club departments jutting out from the sides in the form of a star. The latest in chromium-and-plastic furniture, concealed lighting, a big Axminster carpet and a pale blue-and-pink plastic serving bar will make the club one of the smartest in the tropics. And it will provide a long-wanted alternative to the cabarets, where beer costs four shillings a bottle.

What else the soldier does in Khartoum partly depends on the climate. Not so long ago, troops were not allowed off the verandah between ten in the morning and five in the afternoon in summer. Now all that has gone the way of spine pads and pith helmets. Today the climate is not allowed to

OVER ➤

The *Haboob* blows up over Khartoum. From the sand-storm's Arabic name came the English word "hubub".



REPORT FROM THE SUDAN (Continued)

interfere with either sport or training, but all the same it is unpleasantly hot from April to the end of October and even more unpleasant when the famous *haboob* blows. Khartoum's winter climate, with bright sunshine and cool nights, is one of the best in the world.

Unlike most Middle East stations, Khartoum has unlimited water — from the Nile — and playing fields are green all the year round. Cricket flourishes in the hot weather and football never stops. Both barracks have their own swimming pools, where the standard of swimming and diving is high.

Khartoum has a well-established sailing club which was quite small until the *Kaid* (Commander-in-Chief of the Sudan Defence Force), Major-General L. G. Whistler, who is also District Commander, took the club in hand. A large grant enabled new boats to be built, and the Sudan Railways presented the Club with an old river steamer, the *Cairo*, for a club-house.

The *Cairo* was built on the Clyde in 1902 and shipped out in parts. Then for 44 years she plied up and down the Nile, between

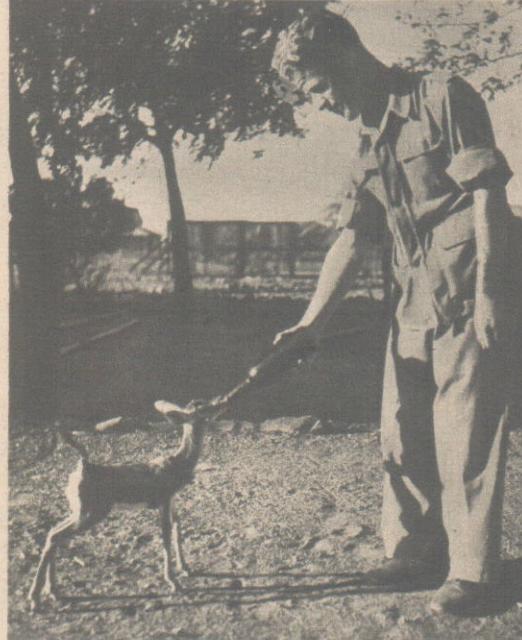
the swamps of Equatoria and Egypt. She has not such a romantic history as the *Melik*, which is the headquarters of the civilian sailing club and was one of the gunboats Gordon used to try to keep in touch with the outside world during the siege of Khartoum, but the spacious *Cairo*, looking a bit like a show-boat, makes a better club-house.

Any soldier who wants to take up bird-watching, the hobby recommended by Field-Marshal Montgomery, could find no better place to start than Khartoum, where there are brilliant little sunbirds, kingfishers, green, gold and carmine bee-eaters, Ibis cranes and duck along the Nile, blue roller-birds and cardinal birds which look like sparrows in scarlet and black fancy dress.

A fund of information on the Army in Khartoum is George, not very often known to troops by his proper name which is Ahmed Mohammed Shen. George's father was an officer in the Khalifa's army which fought against the British at Omdurman, but George "joined" the British Army in 1902 as garden boy to the CO of the Manchester Regiment at one piastre (2½d) a week. He rose

Two of the badges of Gebeit. That of the Green Howards was rebuilt last year. Note the relative size of the men around the top of the badge.

An occasional gazelle puts in an appearance at Gebeit. The Green Howards, who were there recently, made a pet of a dik-dik they call Marmaduckers.



through such jobs as corporals' mess waiter to his present status as head groundsman and gardener to the garrison. One day in 1924 he was taking tea to a guard on a bridge when Egyptian and Sudanese troops began to mutiny and George was wounded trying to rescue a dying British officer.

George is violently pro-British, wears a uniform designed by himself and is always an honorary member of the serjeants' mess in the south barracks.

Outside Khartoum, there is only one station for British troops in the Sudan, at Gebeit, 70 miles south-west of Port Sudan and 400

A turbaned soldier of the Sudan Defence Force. (This picture and the one on the right are from the film "Sudan Dispute" in the series "This Modern Age.")



Bebop beside the Nile: the Shilluks like any excuse to stage wild tribal dances.

miles from Khartoum. There are no shops nearer than Port Sudan, but life at Gebeit has its compensations: it is 3000 feet above sea level, so the climate is good; and the company is alone, free of many of the chores and restrictions of normal garrison life.

The camp has a cinema, a swimming pool of sorts in the pit of an old railway turn-table. The desert makes quite good football pitches but indifferent hockey pitches. Favourite pastimes are hill-climbing and camel-riding. Suakin, the old, disused port of the Sudan, where tall white houses, rising almost out of the sea and inhabited only by cats, are gradually subsiding into rubble, makes a good objective for camel expeditions or a platoon march.

**The Sudan was occupied by the Egyptians in 1821. In 1884, at the request of the Egyptian ruler, General Gordon went to Khartoum to evacuate an Egyptian garrison besieged by the Mad Mahdi's rebels. Gordon decided to stay and fight it out, but the city fell and he was killed three days before a relief expedition reached the city. The controversy over his action still goes on today.

In 1898 Kitchener avenged Gordon at Omdurman. A condominium (joint control of a state's affairs by two or more other states) was agreed with Britain and Egypt having equal status. And so today there are both British and Egyptian garrisons in the Sudan.

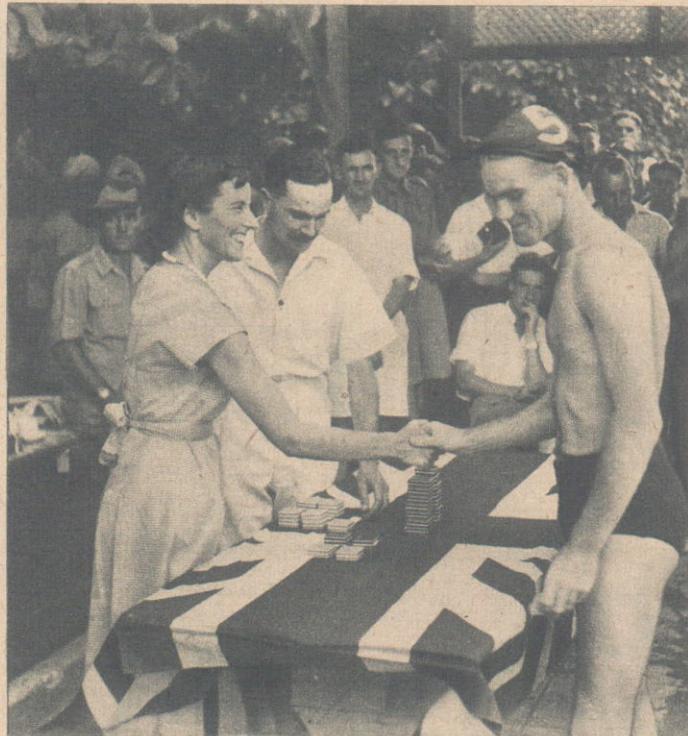
The British garrison, which has saved the Sudan much bloodshed since 1898, had trouble in 1924 when Egyptian-officered Sudanese troops mutinied. Afterwards the present Sudan Defence Force, with British officers, came into being, a force of warriors of unflinching loyalty who served Britain in World War Two.



Bare and menacing, the Kassala mountains brood over the walled town of Kassala. ("This Modern Age.")



The Cairo, an old Clyde-built river steamer which plied on the Nile for 40 years, is now the headquarters of the sailing club for British troops in Khartoum.



In hot weather, troops spend all their spare time in the water, and the standard of swimming is high. Here a bashful prize winner receives his award from Mrs. Whistler, wife of Major-General L. G. Whistler.

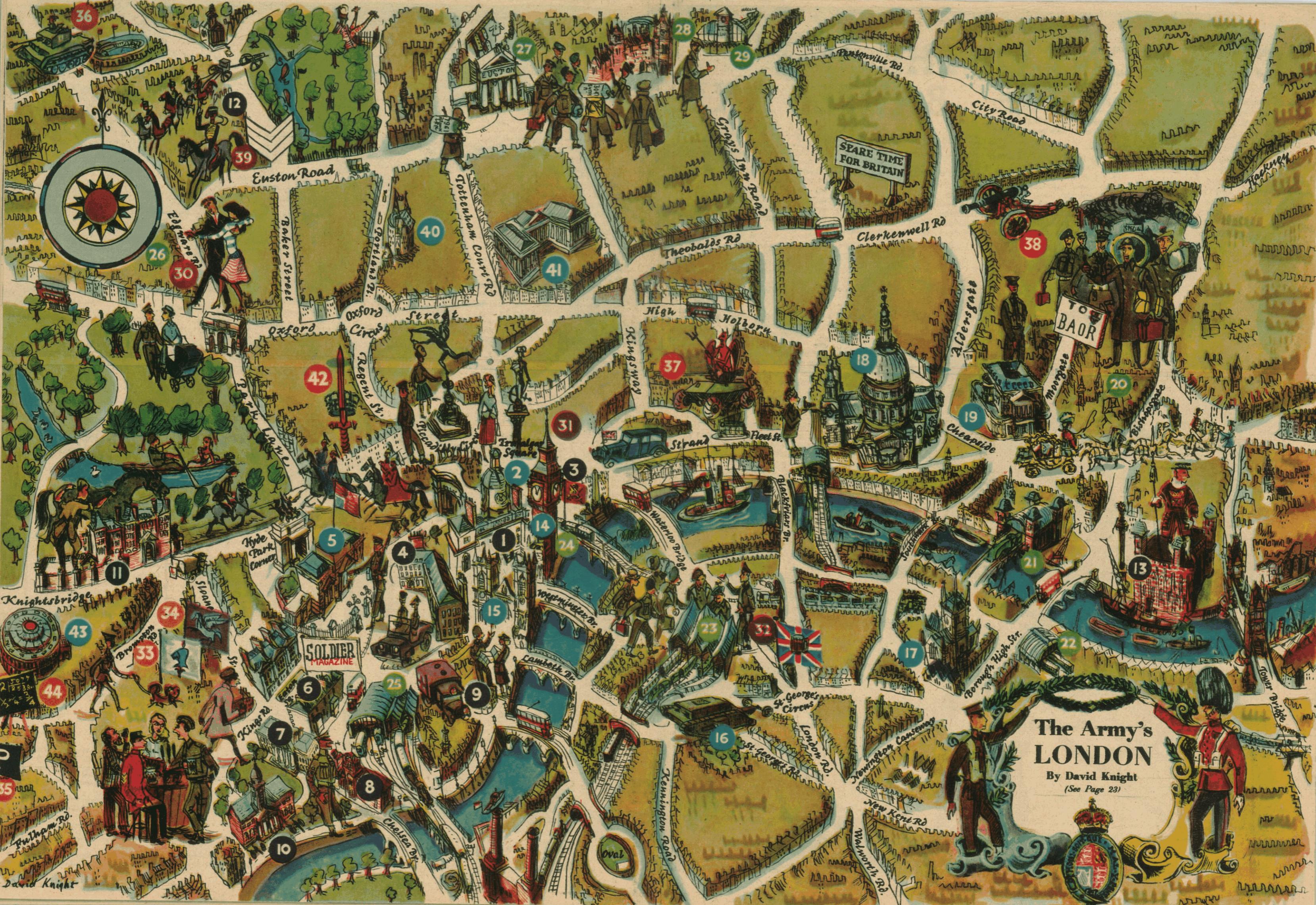


George... one of the best-known men about Khartoum. He is an honorary member of the serjeants' mess at Khartoum's South Barracks (See story.)

KEY TO THE ARMY'S LONDON

(See pages 24-25)

1. Horse Guards and War Office.
2. Trafalgar Square.
3. Central Recruiting Office.
4. Wellington Barracks.
5. Buckingham Palace.
6. Eaton Square (SOLDIER office).
7. Duke of York's Headquarters.
8. Chelsea Barracks.
9. Millbank General Hospital.
10. Chelsea Royal Hospital.
11. Hyde Park (Knightsbridge) Barracks (Household Cavalry).
12. King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery (St. John's Wood).
13. Tower of London.
14. Houses of Parliament.
15. Westminster Abbey.
16. Imperial War Museum.
17. Southwark Cathedral.
18. St. Paul's.
19. Bank of England.
20. Liverpool Street Station.
21. Cannon Street Station.
22. London Bridge Station.
23. Waterloo Station.
24. Charing Cross Station.
25. Victoria Station.
26. Paddington Station.
27. Euston Station.
28. St. Pancras Station.
29. King's Cross Station.
30. Victory Club.
31. Nuffield Centre.
32. Union Jack Club.
33. Headquarters, 56th Division (TA).
34. Headquarters, 16th Airborne Division (TA).
35. Phantom Regiment (TA).
36. County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters).
37. Inns of Court Regiment (TA).
38. Honourable Artillery Company.
39. Chevrons Club.
40. BBC.
41. British Museum.
42. Headquarters, London District.
43. Albert Hall.
44. London District Education Centre.



The Army's LONDON

By David Knight

(See Page 23)

CEREMONY OF THE

Two tales of tradition—from
Scotland and from Africa

BATTLE AXE

IT was a sticky period of British history. The French were our enemies, and the Americans were a long way from being our friends. The thin red line of the British Army was strung out all too thin across the world, 140 years ago.

From their quarters at Halifax, Nova Scotia a force which included the 7th Fusiliers, 8th King's, 23rd Royal Welch Fusiliers and a company of artillery were dispatched under General Sir George Prevost to the West Indies to capture the island of Martini-

que from the French. They were to join with a second British force at the island.

The French met the Halifax Brigade about half way between the bay and the town, and were driven back with heavy losses. In one day the artillery company of Halifax Brigade prepared and armed a battery of six 24-pounders

and four ten-inch mortars, and opened fire on the following day. "The British artillery was so well served," say the chronicles, "that most of the fort guns were quickly dismounted."

When the French garrison capitulated, the Gunners were assembled by the General to receive a reward for their bravery and good conduct. A beautifully

mounted French gun was offered them, but the officers, knowing that they were about to return to Halifax, and that a war with America was imminent, decided on a more transportable prize: an axe and a brass drum. A brass eagle was affixed to the axe, which from that time onwards was always carried by the tallest man in the company, who by virtue of his office was permitted to wear a moustache.

Tradition dies hard... Today the 74th (The Battle Axe Company) Medium Battery Royal Artillery still parades with the historic battle-axe on the anniversary of the Battle of Martinique. This year the ceremony was carried out at a home station for the first time since 1932 — at Gordon Barracks, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen.

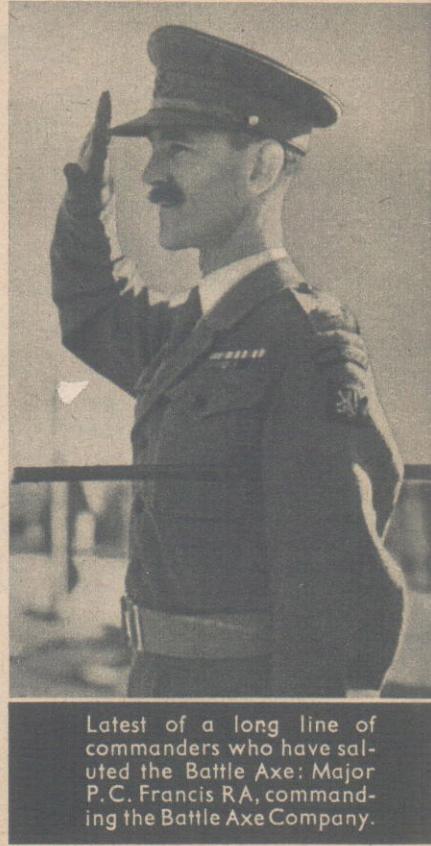
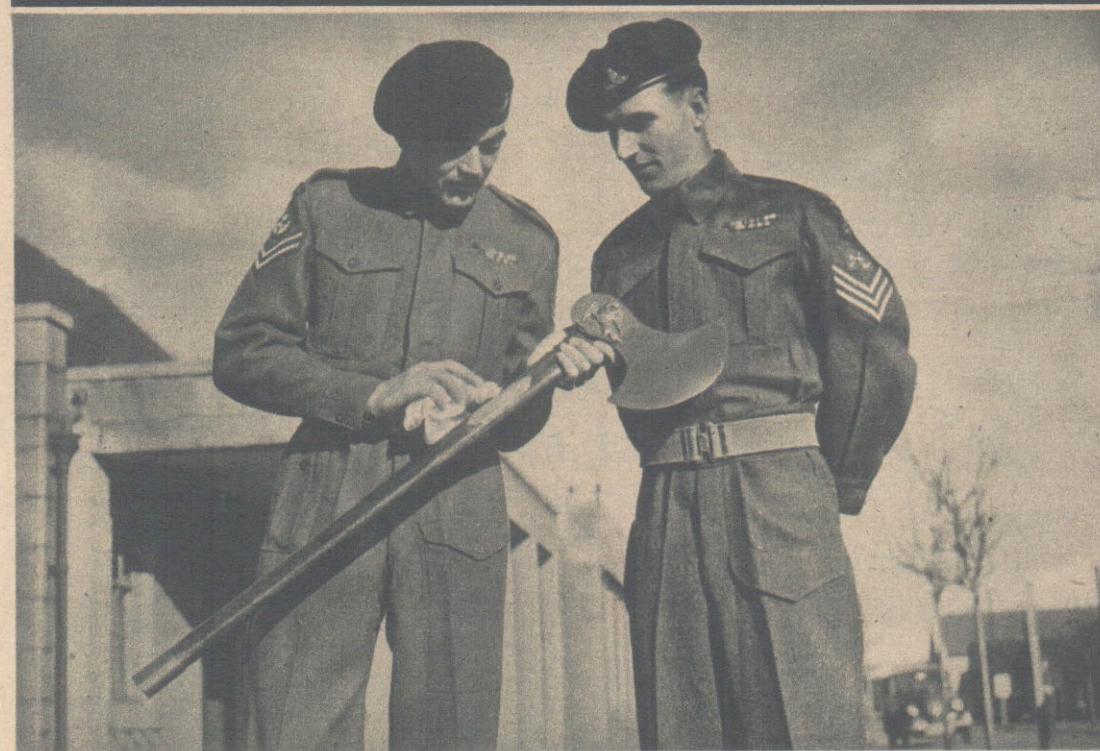
The tallest man in the company (and he had the requisite moustache) was Bombardier J. W. Storey, who was appointed Battle Axe Bearer. His escorts were Lance-Bombardiers R. Johnston and C. Garry, all under Serjeant J. Bowell.

After the parade the battle-axe was toasted by Lieut-Col. A. E. Chessells, commanding 32 Medium Regiment RA, at a special lunch served by the officers and serjeants of the company. Then followed an afternoon of sport. It was just like Christmas Day.

"There's a lot to be said for tradition," said the lads who had never been on a ceremonial parade before.



With the historic Battle Axe at the slope: Bombardier J. W. Storey. The Battle Axe Bearer must be the tallest man in the company, and must be moustached. Below: the axe is kept spotless. Note the brass eagle.



Latest of a long line of commanders who have saluted the Battle Axe: Major P. C. Francis RA, commanding the Battle Axe Company.

CEREMONY OF THE SPEAR

A craggy and thin-soiled piece of country in Kenya east of Lake Victoria is the home of the Nandi, a tribal group of tall, lean people.

Originally they called themselves the Chemwal, or cattle-raiders — and were proud of it. For cattle and yet more cattle meant everything to them in the way of worldly wealth, and their principal diet was one of milk—and blood, which they consumed separately, a tribal taboo prohibiting the consumption of both together.

They were given their present name nearly a century ago by disgruntled traders from the coast who passed that way and suffered much from their rapacity — *wanandi* being an old Swahili word meaning cormorants.

The Nandi have always been renowned as warriors, skilled in the use of their traditional weapon, the long-bladed spear, longer than the height of a tall man, which the raiding tribesmen carried and used with deadly effect on their forays. Fighting is in their blood and one can still meet African old soldiers (of

tribes other than the Nandi) who are entitled to wear the medal with the clasp awarded for service with a now almost forgotten punitive expedition undertaken against the Nandi in 1905.

A younger generation of the Nandi, as of many other East African tribes, proved their worth in Abyssinia and in Burma handling Bren guns and mortars instead of the long-bladed spears carried by their forbears.

During his farewell tour of East Africa Command before leaving for England, the former GOC, Major-General W. A. Dimoline, now commanding at Aldershot,

was presented on two occasions with a Nandi spear and shield as parting gifts from some of the African troops he had commanded.

After General Dimoline had made his farewell address to a unit stationed at Gilgil, on the floor of Africa's great Rift Valley, RSM. Ali Farejalla, of the King's African Rifles, stepped forward and, with a brief speech in the Swahili language, on behalf of his comrades presented the "Jemadari Mkuu" with a Nandi shield and spear as "a memorial of our service together."

Such trophies, among the Nandi, are often handed down from father to son as honourable heirlooms and are not easy to come by. But, after lengthy enquiry, one old man was found who had no sons to whom he could leave the shield and spear that he had carried in the days of his youthful vigour. When he was told how the young soldiers of the King's African Rifles wanted to obtain a shield and spear to present to their departing general as a token of remembrance, this old man readily and proudly agreed that his weapons, which he had long laid aside, should become those chosen for the gift.



When Major-General W. A. Dimoline took his farewell parade he carried the ornamental walking stick presented to him by the askari who served under him in Burma. The stick is surmounted by a quaintly carved African Infantryman.

Not to be outdone, askari of the 5th (Kenya) Battalion King's African Rifles also presented General Dimoline with a spear and a shield rather more elaborately decorated with the primitive heraldic devices borne by the Nandi warriors.

A shield and a spear for the General. They were the gift of an old warrior who had no sons to inherit them.



and CEREMONY OF THE LOG BOOK

BEFORE he left East Africa, where he had commanded for two years and served for twelve, Major-General W. A. Dimoline, received another unusual souvenir.

Air Commodore A. G. Bishop and his officers handed the General a blue-bound Service log-book, a neatly engrossed replica of the original log-books with their day-to-day entries carried by the RAF aircraft in which he had travelled over his wide-scattered command.

The first few dates and timings recall a strenuous tour which began at the RAF Air Station on the outskirts of Nairobi, and continued to Lusaka, capital of Northern Rhodesia and Chilekwa, in Nyasaland, where British soldiers are serving, before zigzagging back to Nairobi by way of Ndola, centre for the "Copperbelt" (Northern Rhodesia's rich copper-producing district on the borders of the Belgian Congo), Dar-es-Salaam (present port for the great ground-nut-growing project), picturesque Zanzibar (with its fragrant clove plantations) and Mombasa.

A trip to Addis Ababa in the Ethiopian highlands, circuitously made in something of the spirit of G. K. Chesterton's "to Birmingham by way of Beachy head", and another to white-walled Mogadishu (in former Italian Somaliland) and Berbera, on the Gulf of Aden, helped to swell the total of flying hours.

Later entries recall how, during a long over-the-sea flight to remote Mauritius, which also is in East Africa Command, the General made a friendly call at Madagascar, scene of one of his war-time triumphs when East African troops under his command helped to liberate the spirit of France in that great island. It was at Ambalavao that Brigadier Dimoline, as he then was, signed an armistice with the Vichy representatives on 6 November, 1942.

BUTCHER, BAKER AND



ANY of today's soldiers were too young to have settled down in a civilian job before being called up. Others were in blind alley jobs and have no wish to return to them. Others are keen to go back to their former work, but want to "get their hand in" again before returning to the workbench.

To all these, the British Army during recent years has offered an opportunity that no other Army has offered: the chance of a trial run, or a refresher run, either in a civilian firm or at an Army college, *before leaving the Forces*. (This must not be confused with the Ministry of Labour's vocational training scheme for Regulars *after release*).

Not every man who asks for a trial run will necessarily get one. The Army must be sure of his good intentions and of his natural aptitude; and his unit must be able to spare him. But once he is accepted, the Army gives him the necessary time off and locates an appropriate firm, saying, "Look here, we've got a man who wants to become a motor mechanic. Can he work in your place for a month?" And usually the answer is yes.

Men stationed in Britain and in Rhine Army are fortunate in that they can usually serve their "apprenticeship" with a firm in Britain. In Germany a small number of soldiers have been able to take short courses with firms in the Ruhr — last month, for instance, there was a man learning toolmaking at Krefeld, and others learning bootmaking



Still in khaki, Corporal Dennis Langdon recaptures his touch in the church bell foundry of the old London firm of Mears and Stainbank — established 1570. His hobby: bell-ringing.

CANDLESTICK MAKER ...

... not forgetting bell-founder and tropical fish-breeder — these are some of the jobs in which the Army has been able to give men a month's training before leaving the Service

at Dulken and Mulheim-Ruhr. The language difficulty and the differences in Continental methods and machinery limit the number of men who can be usefully trained in this way. Other Rhine Army soldiers are able to obtain pre-release training in a variety of trades at the College of the Rhine Army at Gottingen.

Men in the Middle East can attend a civilian firm out there, if a suitable one is available; they also have the chance of attending an Army college. In the Far East the opportunities, unfortunately, are few; there is no Army college and suitable civilian firms are scarce — quite apart from the pressure of military operations.

The hub of the Army Resettlement Scheme in the London area is a little office in London District Education Headquarters. Here Jun/Commander P. Cooper sits with her card indexes, her files and her application sheets before her, interviewing processions of Servicemen, answering the telephone, or trying to do both at once. She is one of the few fulltime resettlement officers (most commands spread the responsibility).

Twenty-five thousand men have received vocational courses

through her efforts during the last three years and there are hundreds of firms on her books who are willing to accept Army trainees. There cannot be many jobs she has not heard of, although in the past she has been startled by some requests.

"Please Miss, I want to be a clicker," said one man.

"Er — I don't think we have any of those," she replied, suspecting a legpull.

"All right, I'll have to be a closer then."

This only deepened suspicion, but it all turned out right in the end. A clicker was the man who stamped out boot and shoe uppers and a closer the man who fixed them to the soles. He got his course and is now happily clicking (or closing) in one of the best footwear factories.

Another man wanted to be an income tax clerk. No other type of clerical work would do. He even stipulated the area office in which he wanted to work. Perhaps he was after someone's blood there.

Although this pre-release vocational training is not officially concerned with finding men permanent jobs, many of those who undertake it return to work for

OVER



Noel Davies, kennelman before call-up, went on a pre-release course to Wembley Stadium — which meant working a longer day than in the Army.



From the Scots Guards, Ray Holton went for a month's course with the gamekeepers on the Crown lands at Windsor. Now he is a gamekeeper at Bagshot.



One of the many who applied for training in a machine shop: former Guardsman Arthur Cantellow. He turns out machine tools in a works at Chiswick.

After 29 years soldiering, RSM. A. L. Hind went for a month's training as a yeoman warder at the Tower of London. It turned out to be a hard month's swotting.

Continuing **BUTCHER, BAKER AND CANDLESTICK MAKER**



Bob Seaman gave up his pre-war job of engineering, decided to turn shopkeeper. He is branch manager of the firm which gave him a trial.

the same firm when they are machine tools for the Acorn Company of Chiswick.

This was the case with Mr. Wilfred Hambleton. His family have been musicians for generations and he too was a musician before the war. In the Life Guards they taught him to play the clarinet riding a horse. Then he got a month's refresher course with the Philharmonia Orchestra, one of the best in the world. He has been with them ever since and is now ranked as one of the finest bass clarinet players of the day.

One would hardly think that, after 29 years soldiering, RSM. A. L. Hind needed a training course to become a warder at the Tower of London, but — "It was the hardest month's swotting I've ever done," he says. The warders have to know the history of every part of the Tower. Ex-RSM. Hind, who wears seven medal ribbons, including the Croix-de-Guerre, has now been insulated — yes "insulated" is the word — as Yeoman Warder and Special Constable.

Guardsman Arthur Cantellow chose a less gaudy occupation. After his spell in Germany with the 2nd. and 3rd. Battalions Scots Guards he got a refresher course at his old job, but with a new firm, and is now turning out

Nothing less than a completely new occupation would suit Mr. Bob Seaman of Cambridge Terrace, North London. After four-and-a-half years abroad in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Italy and Palestine, he did not fancy going back to his engineering job in Civvy Street. He thought he'd try shop-keeping for a change and is now branch manager of a large firm of wine and spirit merchants, with whom he served his "apprenticeship."

"I used to like the stuff," he says, "but now I'm surrounded with gallons and gallons of it I just couldn't touch a drop."

Scots Guardsman Ray Holton was one of those soldiers you read about in books; he always seemed to know where to pick up a rabbit or a pheasant for the platoon stewpot. Now he is turning his wild-life lore to good account. After a pre-release course with the gamekeepers on the Crown property at Windsor he has returned to look after a group of plantations in the Bagshot area. On a daily round with gun and dog he keeps down the vermin that ruin the young trees.

It's a dog's life just now for



Virtuoso on the bass clarinet is Wilfred Hambleton, once a trooper in the Life Guards. He took a refresher course with the Philharmonia Orchestra — and now is one of their star performers.



Junior-Commander Phyllis Cooper interviews another in the long stream of applicants. You want the best firms — she has them.

20-year-old Noel Davies. Nearing the end of his National Service, he is spending a month looking after ten greyhounds at Wembley Stadium kennels. He starts at eight a.m. with exercise, feeding and grooming. Race days see him still at work at ten p.m. or later. He doesn't mind, though. He was a kennelman for four years before being called up and is going back to that job after release.

Another man who is returning to the old firm, with whom he has already done a refresher course, is Corporal Dennis Langdon. When he says "the old firm" he really means it. They are Mears and Stainbank, bell-makers, who claim to be the oldest firm in Britain, founded in 1570. Corporal Langdon is getting all-round experience with this famous old firm, whose bells include those of Westminster Abbey (cast in 1583), St. Paul's Clock Bells (1709), Big Ben (1858) and the original Bow Bells used in the BBC time signal.

So the procession moves on. Gem setters, picture restorers, footballers, slaughterers, stained glass window glaziers, baby carriage builders and tropical fish-breeders, they are all "apprenticed" to their chosen trade. During the peak period around

Christmas 1947, courses were arranged for 986 men in one month.

Most popular trades are those of carpenter, motor mechanic, builder and policeman. The majority of trade unions are very willing to admit new ex-Service members, but some are in danger of overcrowding. Servicemen who wish to become stevedores or french polishers, for instance, will find themselves up against all sorts of obstacles, and there is little chance of anyone over the early twenties, with no previous experience, becoming a carpenter. Barbers, too, are hard to place. No shop likes to let a novice loose on its clients.

Now that the last rush of soldiers who voluntarily deferred their release has ended, the work of resettlement should begin to diminish. Regulars whose service is nearly completed will still be eligible for courses, and so will many National Servicemen. No final decision has yet been made, but it is unlikely that the National Serviceman called up after 1 January 1949 will be allowed a month away from his military training to prepare for civilian life.

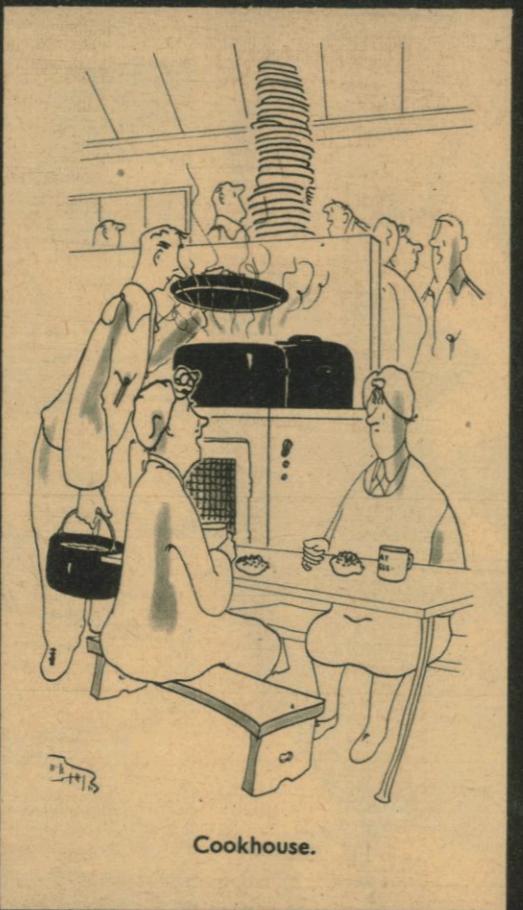
TED JONES



"That deep-sea diving course was the best break we ever had in the Army."



Officers' Mess.



Cookhouse.



Serjeants' Mess.



Interior decoration.

TOIL...

TOILET...



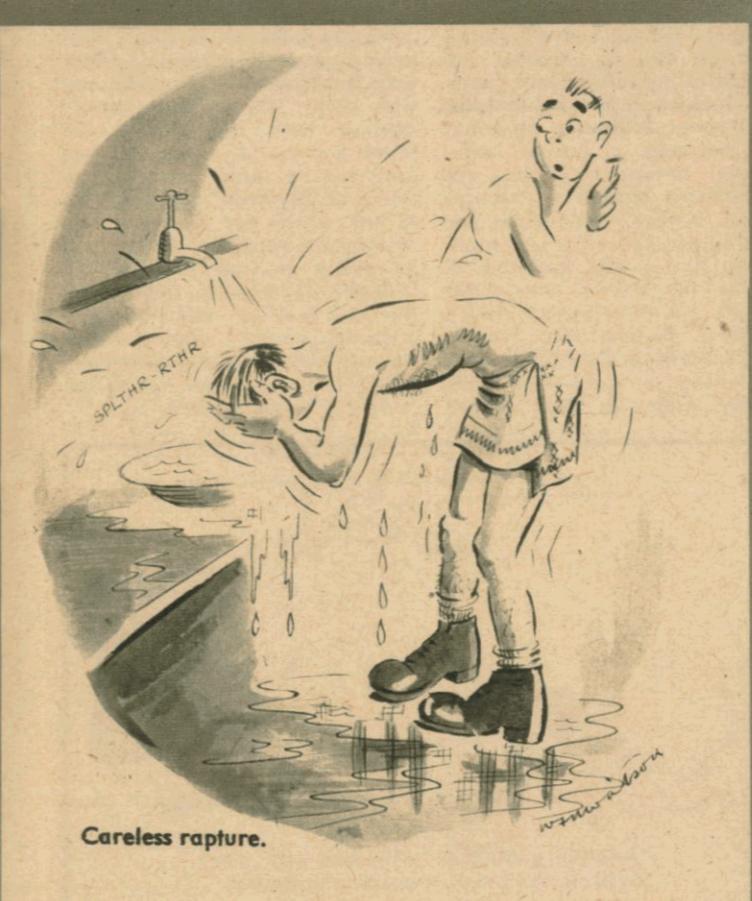
"Flippin' cold s'morn ennit?"



"I say, there's no hot water."



"Let's look in your mirror, chum."



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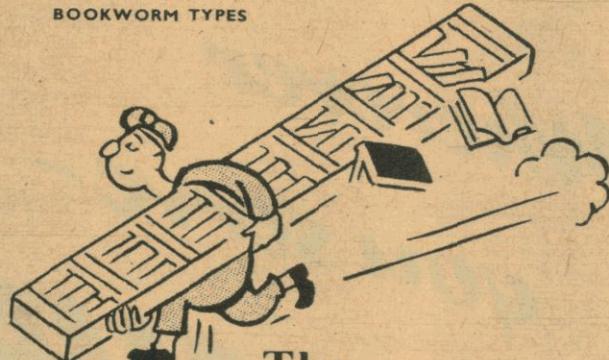
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SOLDIER BOOKSHELF

The Bengal Lancer

IN the summer of 1930 a former officer of the Indian Army found himself pitchforked into fame as the author of the Book of the Year, if not the Book of the Decade. Its title was *Bengal Lancer*, and eventually it sold nearly 150,000 copies. The author was Major Francis Yeats-Brown.

He had gained a spectacular success in the literary field comparable to that achieved by two other unorthodox soldiers: Lawrence of Arabia and Mr. Winston Churchill.

Millions who did not read *Bengal Lancer* later saw the film which was adapted at a fee of 25,000 dollars by a Mr. Achmed Abdullah (the author received only 15,000 dollars).

Bengal Lancer went round the publishers for a year before Mr. Victor Gollancz accepted it. The other publishers thought the public would jib at the author's obsession with Hindu mysticism. It turned out that this was what attracted the public.

Now, nearly 20 years after the autobiography, comes the biography: "Francis Yeats-Brown," by Sir Evelyn Wrench (*Eyre and Spottiswoode 15s*). It is a loyal and sympathetic life of a man who was talented but rudderless; a man of impetuous enthusiasms who never found the spiritual peace he sought so restlessly.

As a soldier, Francis Yeats-Brown was both conventional and unconventional. Because he was a good horseman and was fond of polo and pig-sticking, his fellow officers looked indulgently on his habit of standing on his head to clear his brain (as did his colleagues, at a later date, in the staid offices of *The Spectator*).

This was how Major Yeats-Brown described the joys of a cavalry charge in his training days on Salisbury Plain:

Here I was a trooper, jostled in the ranks, sweating and swearing, my mouth full of dust, but intensely happy . . . Some need of my nature was being fulfilled. It was a new sensation to me then, though now I know it is shared by all true cavalrymen. Galloping horses always bring back to me those days of youth, with their splendour and surprise. Though bruised and with torn hands, I was part of a herd of swift, flying creatures, part of something which I felt I had been before. Like the hero of Algernon Blackwood's great novel *The Centaur*, I felt the speed

Authors in the "I" Corps

THREE is a sudden spate of books by soldiers who served in Intelligence in the Middle East.

A month or two ago SOLDIER reviewed "Arabesque" by Geoffrey Household, who served in Field Security. Now comes "Absent Without Leave" (Heinemann 10s 6d), by another ex-member of the Intelligence Corps, Alan Jenkins. It is a lighthearted novel about a Russian ex-prince who becomes a British lance-corporal, deserts at Durban and rehabilitates himself at Salerno. In the interval the prince-corporal is whisked all round India, Persia, Arabia and Palestine—just as the author presumably was on his Intelligence duties.

Richard Pearce, who was in Field Security in the Middle East, has written a non-fiction book, "Three Years In The Levant"

(Macmillan 12s 6d), based on his experiences when he was stationed in a variety of Arab villages from the Turkish border to the Lebanon, living with the Arabs, attending their festivities—and conducting hashish raids. Finally Somerset de Chair, who served as an intelligence officer with the Household Brigade, and who wrote "The Golden Carpet" dealing with the Rashid Ali revolt and the fall of Bagdad, has produced a new novel, "The Dome Of The Rock" (Falcon Press 8s 6d), which has a background of wartime Palestine, Arabia and Abyssinia (at the time of the Wingate operations). Dominating the book is a love affair between a British cavalry officer and a Jewess, and there is a sprinkling of what one reviewer has called "robustly erotic sonnets."

Who Turned To Yoga

and strength of the earth coursing through my profoundest being: the glory of the earth when she was young: I was more than human: I was part of creation, revelling in its rush through space.

He could write still more sensually, as for instance of the nautch girls of Peshawar: "Their bodies were cypresses, their teeth camomile petals, their eyes falcons of morning, their lips like Solomon's seal."

Francis Yeats-Brown enjoyed the hard physical life on the North-West Frontier, but that was not enough. He began to study Yoga, which the dictionary calls "a religious philosophy aiming at the attainment of knowledge which will break the bands entangling the soul in the world of sense . . . it inculcates the practice of meditation, the regulation of breathing and the habit of appropriate postures."

But Francis Yeats-Brown, his biographer admits, "was not the stuff that saints are made of. He lacked that complete consecration essential to the mystic. He was too many-sided. There was always a part of him that held back."

In World War One the Bengal Lancer became an observer in the Royal Flying Corps, and was captured by the Turks after he and his pilot gallantly tried to cut the enemy telegraph west of Bagdad (a feat which earned both the DFC). The story of his prison hardships (mitigated by practice of Yoga) he told in another brilliant book, *Golden Horn*, which sold 30,000 copies.

Major Yeats-Brown resigned from the Army when the Bengal Lancers—the regiment he had made world-famous—were disbanded. Literary success did not come instantly, and after *Bengal Lancer* and *Golden Horn* it deserted him. In the thirties his admiration for the Corporate State as seen in Italy and Germany began to worry his friends. It also made the War Office reluctant to find a job for him when World War Two broke out. So, in a mood of anticlimax, the Bengal Lancer became a Home Guard. He died in 1944.

Temptation in Hamburg

IT'S strange that novelists should have neglected the subject so long. In some ways, it's just as well they have . . .

Anyway, at last comes a novel with the demoralising get-rich-quick background of Hamburg just after the war, the background of easy money and easy women, the false scent of luxury after the real stink of death, the absurd world in which a packet of cigarettes, a can of beef or a rict of lifeboat rations opened the richest doors.

Geoffrey Cotterell, former

Gunner major, author of "Then A Soldier," recreates this atmosphere in "Randle In Springtime" (Eyre and Spottiswoode 9s.) Because those days are all but dead it is possible to look back on them with a certain amount of detachment. Cotterell's writing is lightly satirical; he does not probe deep below the surface of his characters. But the moral is there. It was not a pretty period of history. There were excuses, perhaps. Men who had lived for so long in the unreal world of war could not grasp the

greater unrealities of a conqueror's peace. The temptations were of the highest; but there were men of firm fibre who came through unscathed.

Howard Randle, the central character of the novel, is an ex-insurance clerk turned lieutenant, who is posted to a job with the (fictitious) Sociological Division. His personal standards are no stronger and no weaker than the average and he begins to succumb to the atmosphere of false gaiety, of noon-day drinking, of calculated German flattery. He

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A medal for manoeuvres—but it was unofficial.



DARTMOOR MEDAL

MEDALS for manoeuvres are something of a standing joke in the Army, but troops taking part in the Autumn manoeuvres of 1873 did get one—unofficially.

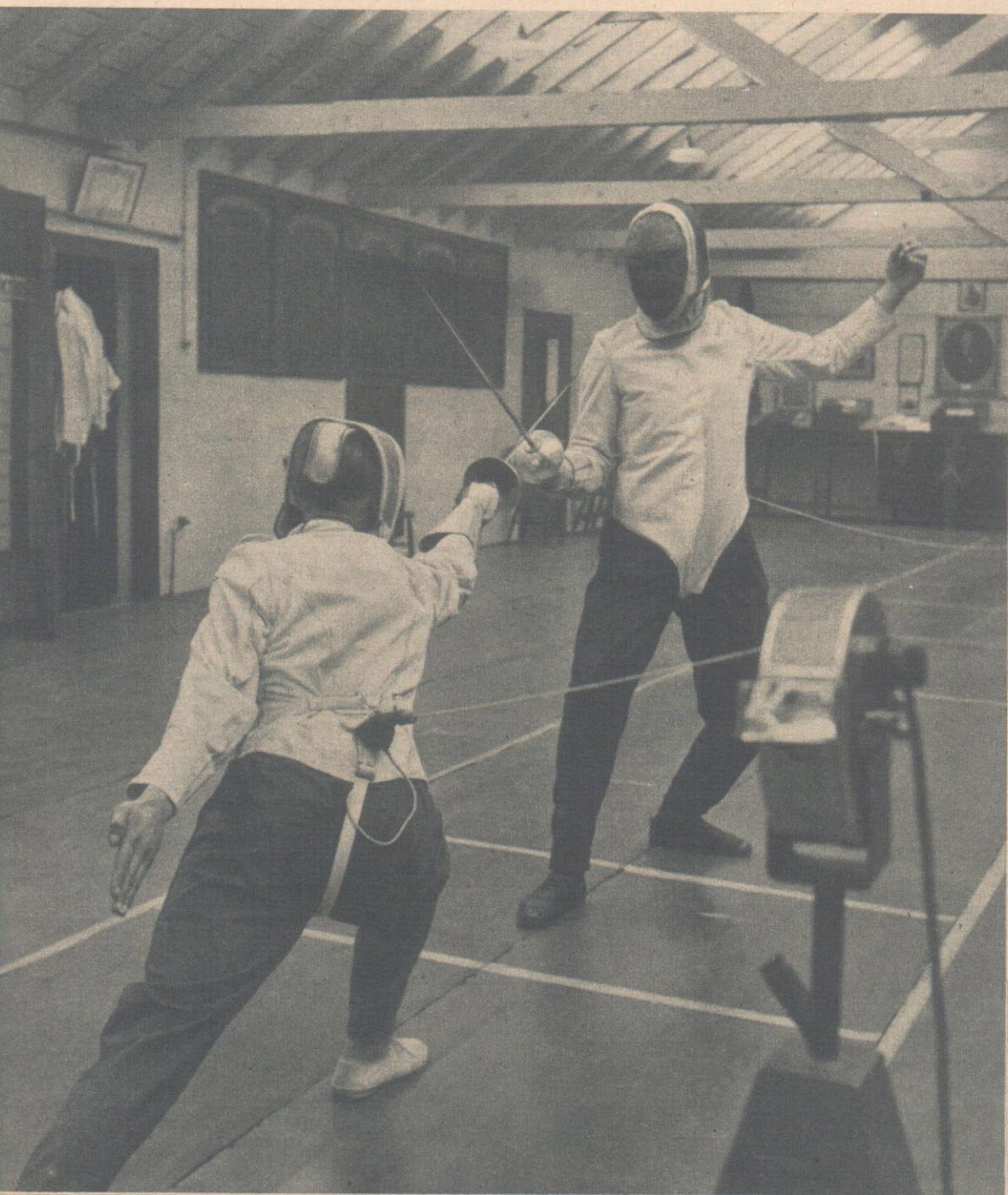
The manoeuvres were held in very bad weather. Men and horses ploughed through mud or waited damply in their lines in the hope that the sun would break through. In spite of all the difficulties, "battles" did take place on Dartmoor.

A few years ago, the medal issued to Troop-Sergeant-Major J. A. Conrade, Scots Greys, (enlisted 1857, discharged 1880) turned up, complete with bars for the "battles" of

Fencing is one of the best close-combat sports. The job of determining the winner is not always easy, but nowadays the electrician comes to the aid of the judge

— Photographs by Desmond O'Neill

On Guard - with an ELECTRIC ÉPÉE



A bout with the electric épée. When the tip of the sword strikes a player, a light flashes on a box before the judges (see right). Note the cables which are paid out and rewound as the contestants advance and retire. These pictures were taken at the Army School of Physical Training, Aldershot.

IN 1843 the Duke of Wellington abolished duelling in the Army. He did not, of course, stop swordsmanship as a sport. It takes wars to do that.

In peacetime fencing is one of the Army's proudest arts. In wartime the foil, sabre, épée and spring bayonet are put away for the duration.

There are various reasons. For one thing fencing is a minority sport in civilian life, which means few men coming into the wartime Army have knowledge of it. The equipment is not cheap and it is not an easy subject to learn.

And yet, say the experts, it ranks equal to boxing as a fighting man's sport, for it teaches the science of close combat and all the qualities that go with it: co-ordination of mind and body, the arts of deception, of parrying, of striking at the least expected moment and at the same time exposing the minimum of the body to attack.

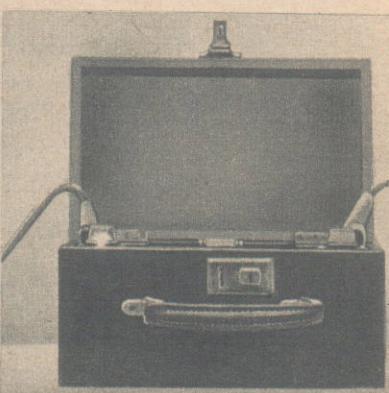
Like most sports, fencing in the Services is inclined to be seasonal, and season is governed not by the climate but by the Royal Tournament. Just now excitement is rising for the Army's eleven who have just been chosen to take on the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and RAF at Olympia this summer.

For this year's Inter-Services championships the judges will have a mechanical aid to help them during the épée contests, which are the most difficult to adjudicate.

The fencers will use the electric épée which has a push button at the tip and a cable running up the interior to the hilt. From here another cable runs inside the competitor's sleeve and emerges from under the back of his jacket. Another cable unwinding from a drum is attached to it, and every time the fencer advances or retires the cable is fed out to him or automatically rewinds on to the drum.

A competitor has only to make a hit and an electric current is transmitted to an apparatus containing a buzzer and two lights (one for each fencer). Provided the strike has a pressure of not less than 27 ounces for one-hundredth of a second or more the buzzer will sound and the light flash. This equipment was used at last year's Olympic Games.

The Army championships are staged at Aldershot in the Army





QMSI. F. Eveleigh, who trained for six months at a Belgian academy, shows how the correct lunge position reduces the target area of the body as seen by the opponent. The mirror is often used in instruction.

School of Physical Training's gymnasium, attached to which is the long-raftered room where fencing instructors are trained. To this fencing room recently came the officers and men who survived the eliminating rounds in Home Commands and in BAOR to compete for the first time with the swordsmen of the Army Physical Training Corps.

Physical training instructors have their own preliminary competitions. One of them is for the Inspector's Prize (presented by the Inspector of Physical Training) for other ranks in the Corps. Having once won the prize for one weapon, a competitor cannot again enter for that weapon in subsequent years. In this contest there are no judges. Each man is on his honour to acknowledge his own defeat.

The other instructors' competition is for the Bronze Medal (Royal Tournament) and is confined to past winners of the Inspector's Prize (on the weapon which won them the prize) and to officers attached to the Corps (which except for eight masters-at-arms has no officers of its own). The first four competitors in the final pool of each weapon qualify for the Army Championships.

In this way the pick of the Army's physical training staff annually fences it out with the pick of the rest of the Army — the eleven best individuals in each weapon being booked for Olympia.

For the Army's bayonet fencing team a different system is used. Contests are held between unit teams and not individuals. In the two post-war competitions so far held, the Scots Guards have represented the Army on both occasions.

In whatever part of the world a soldier learns to fence, he comes under the influence of that raftered room at Aldershot. Every APTC instructor who has qualified to teach the art has gone through his paces on its floor. In future every probationer instructor will do a course. In addition, three weeks courses are held for wartime trained staff and for regimental officers.

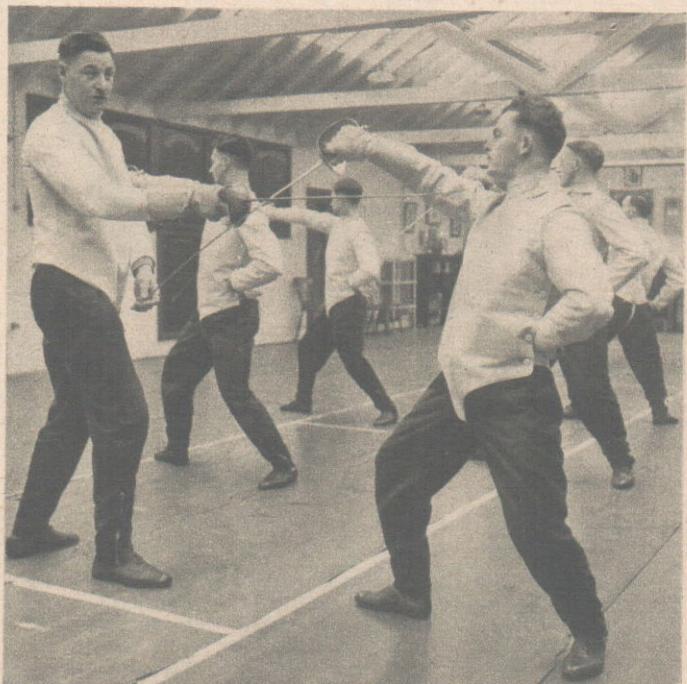
It is not only Regular soldiers who like to fence. Many National Servicemen — among whom are ex-public schoolboys who learned fencing as part of their curriculum — are keen for the chance to practise it, without having to buy the equipment and pay the instructional fees.

Newcomers to fencing find that it is not as easy as it looks and has a language of its own. Swordplay has always been much more of a Continental pastime than a British one, and thus the positions of guards and parries are numbered in French. A hit after a successful parry is called a *riposte*, for instance.

Of the three types of sword used the foil is really the training one and meant to teach the foundations of swordsmanship. The épée — the real duelling



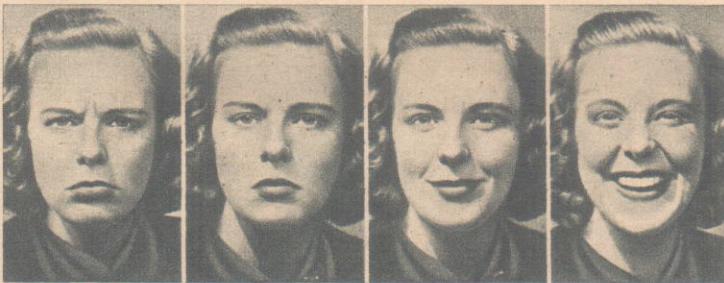
Parry of prime, with the foil. This parry is a defensive one against an attack in the "low line" (roughly the area below the lower ribs).



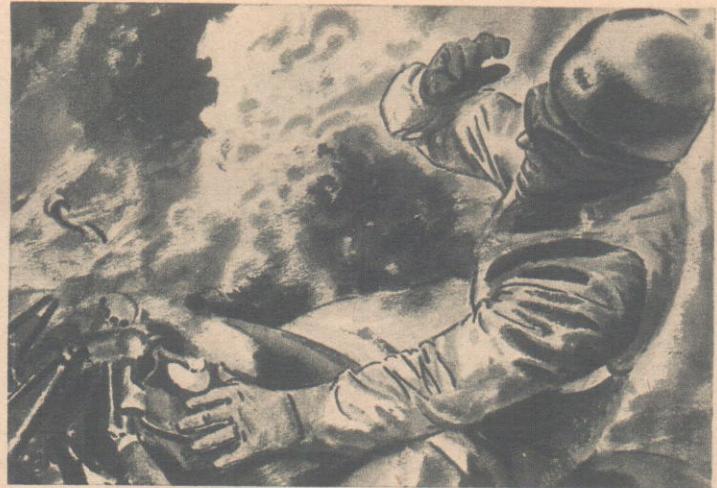
Above: QMSI. J. Pitt, assistant WO fencing instructor, adjusting the position of a student's sabre in a parry of prime. Instructors may touch the student's sword but may not touch the student, who must be able to correct his own stance. Below: the position of close combat. If the bodies make contact, the bout is stopped.



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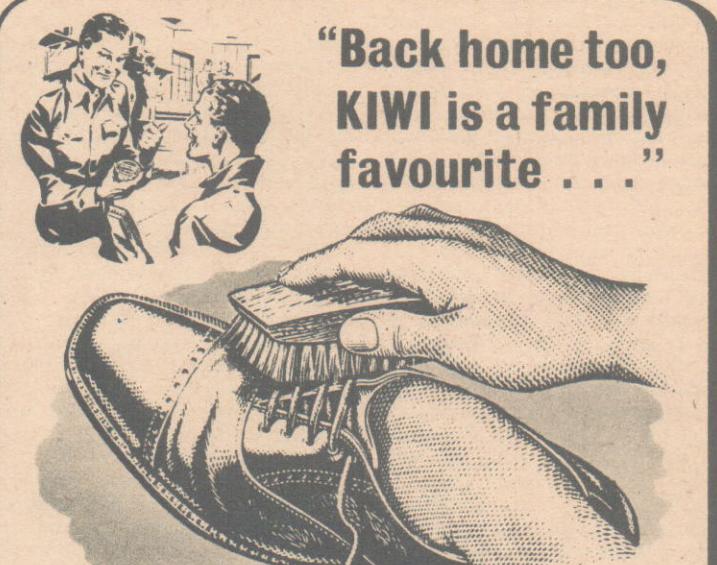
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sword — has a point only, and the sabre has a point and a cutting edge.

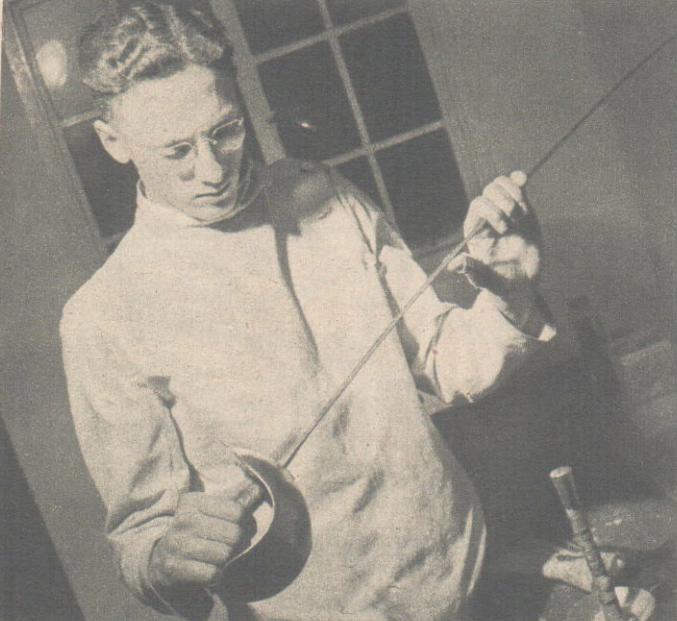
The methods of holding the weapons vary with the different types of thrust. The position of supination (with fingernails upper most) is used for certain parries, that of pronation (fingernails down) for others.

All Home Commands and Rhine Army have a certain amount of kit which is loaned to units. There is also a qualified fencing instructor at Command headquarters even if the staffs of individual units are not yet qualified. In addition, all physical training staff officers have lists of Army and civilian fencing clubs where troops can practise at little cost to themselves. One Army club was started in Aldershot a year ago and now has over 60 members.

What is the reason for this interest? Major George Gelder, who came into the Army 27 years ago and is now fencing officer at the School of Physical Training says: "There is a certain enjoyment in close combat which appeals to a soldier. Good boxers get a kick out of boxing but not everyone can box. Most people can have a go at fencing and even if they are not good, can enjoy themselves. And it is a sport that one does not have to discard through age. I have known men over 40 take it up — not with a view to competing, of course. In some of London's fencing clubs I have seen men of 80 still enjoying it."

Back in the 'thirties, when he was a warrant officer, Major Gelder won the Inspector's Prize for all four weapons and in 1935 was Champion at Arms Dismounted at the Royal Tournament. For three years before the war he was fencing officer at the School and then during the war went out to

PETER LAWRENCE



Students are taught how to mend a broken sword. Sergeant-Instructor H. Welsh has just bound the broken ends together in a thin metal envelope which is finally secured with solder.

Middle East to run physical training schools in Egypt and Palestine. Since his return to Britain he has fenced in a good many competitions. In 1947 he was the British Junior Sabre champion and last year was the Army sabre champion and Scottish open sabre champion, and was in the final pool of the open sabre championship of Great Britain. Already this year he has represented England against Scotland and Wales in the sabre.

Major Gelder has just taken over the post of fencing officer from Captain Leslie Lambert who was a warrant officer in the APTC before the war and won the Inspector's Prize for sabre in 1936. In 1938 he was inter-Services champion and Army champion in the épée, and since the war has represented England against Ireland (1947) and was runner-up in the English junior sabre championship the same year.

Last year a Belgian professor visited the School for three months to instruct the APTC and he took back with him QMSI Francis Eveleigh for a six-months course in Brussels. The Belgian, Professor J. Coulon, put him through his paces and then took him before the Academie Royale d'Armes de Belgique where he had to give a demonstration. After he had passed he was given a diploma which now hangs in the fencing room — believed to be the only one of its type in Britain.

The Belgians have a flair for fencing, which was very much their business in days gone by. One of the hints they give for developing the correct grip is to press and roll a marble between the forefinger and thumb, thus strengthening the muscles of the hand. They suggest, too, that pupils should not wear a glove in their early lessons.

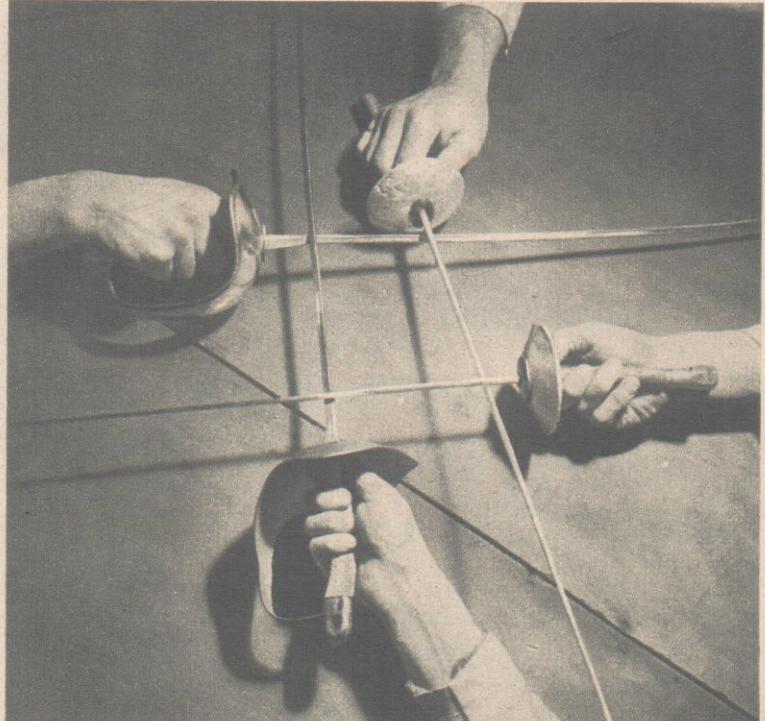
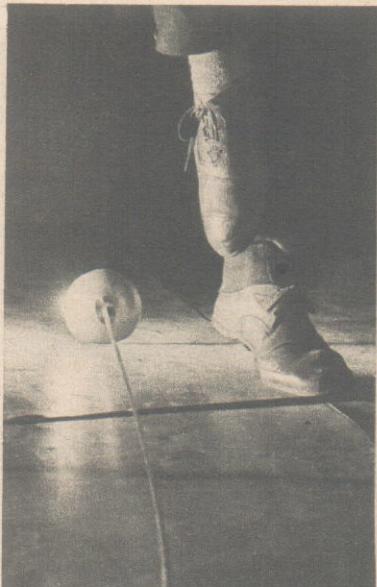
PETER LAWRENCE

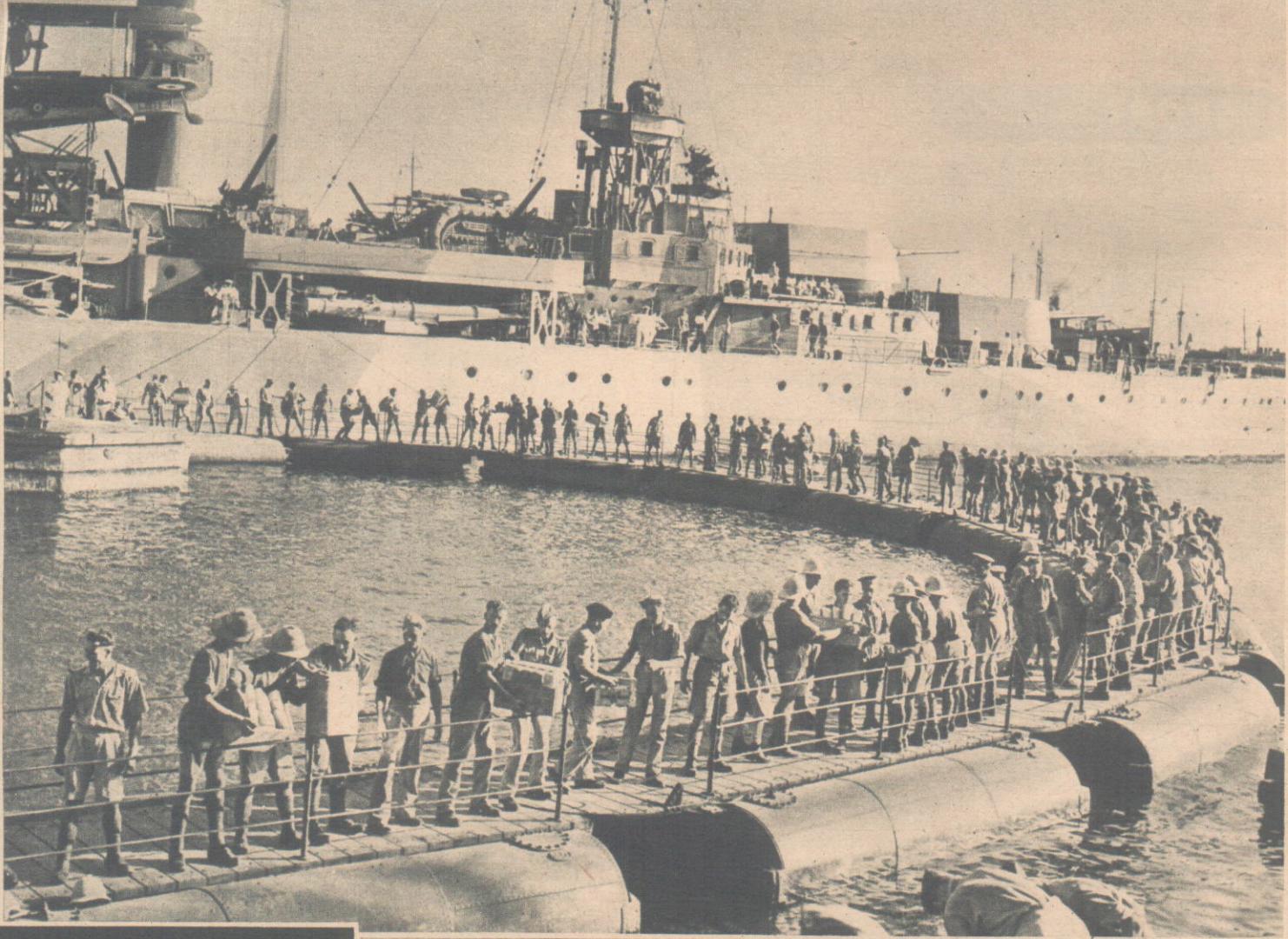


Class instruction in the method of applying the point of the foil to the target — one of the most important fundamental lessons.

As a training exercise all students learn to execute a sword dance. It teaches nimbleness of foot.

The grips of the sabre and foil shown in supination (bottom) and pronation (top). The hand in pronation offers a stronger parry than the hand in supination.

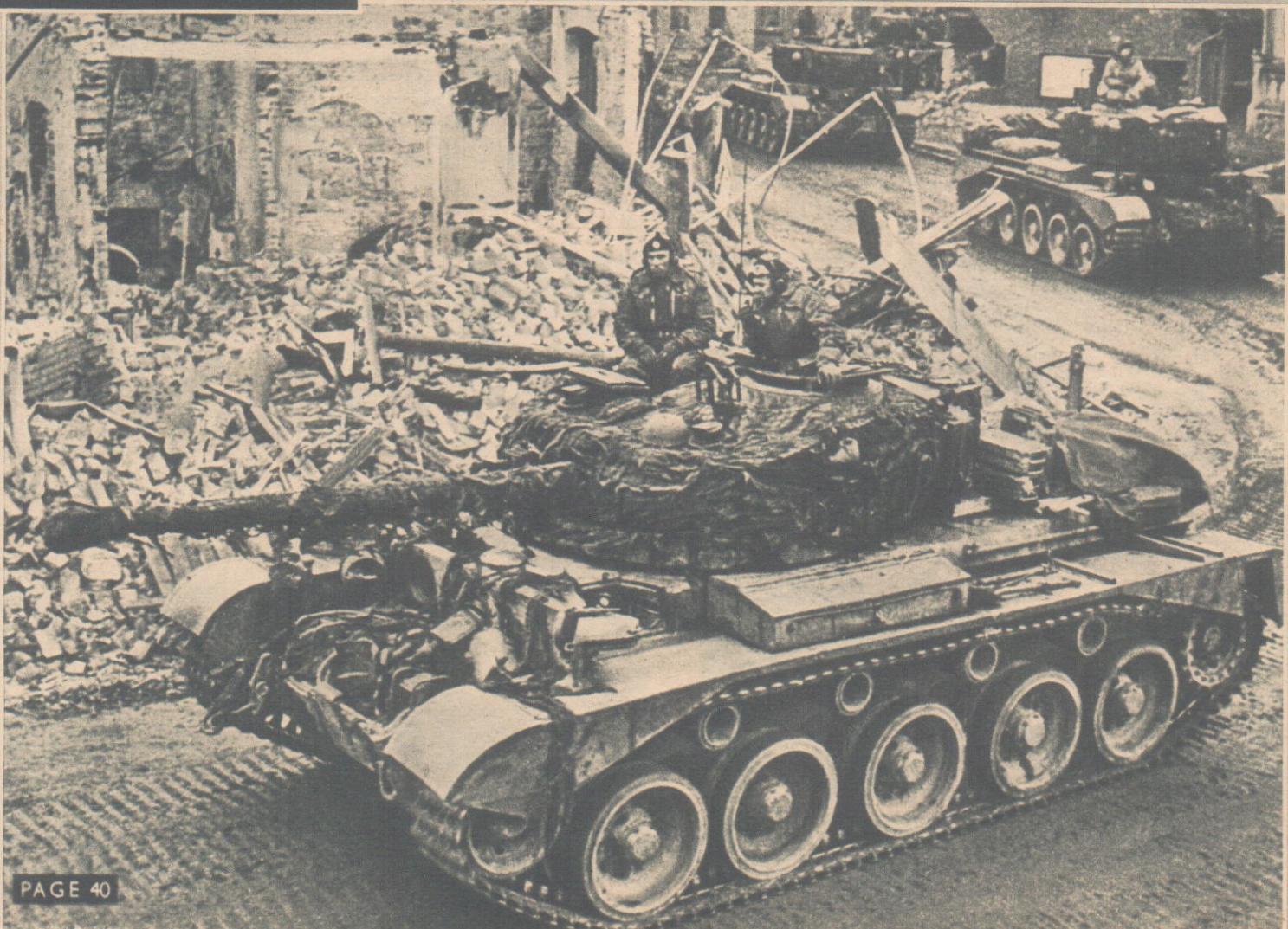




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Below: the war is nearly over. British armour roars through the ruins of a German town.



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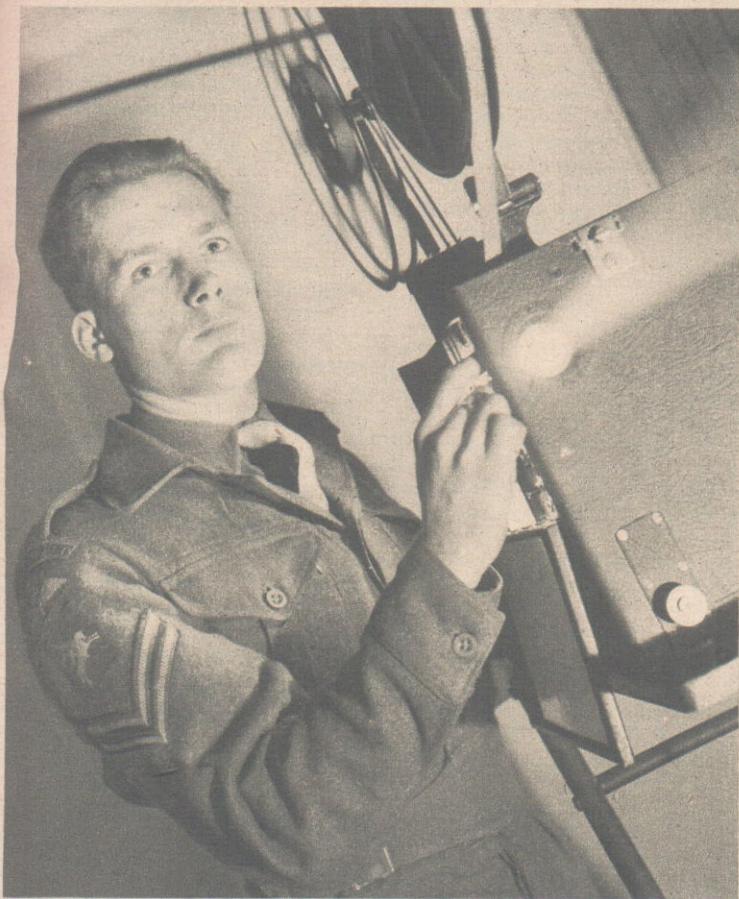
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SILENT DUST

The blind man's hero son, reported killed at Caen, returns a murderer, deserter and wastrel. The film is based on the play "The Paragon", by Roland and Michael Periwee. Cast includes Sally Gray, Stephen Murray, Derek Fart, Nigel Patrick, Seymour Hicks.

THE SMALL VOICE

Valerie Hobson, James Donald and Harold Kael in a story of a young couple and two orphans detained by escaped convicts. "An intelligent thriller" is how a cinema trade paper describes it.

THE GLASS MOUNTAIN

An Anglo-Italian film about a mountain in the Dolomites round which an opera is written. With Dulcie Gray and Michael Denison are Italian star Valentina Cortese and baritone Tito Gobbi.

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SCATTERED among the units of the Army are more than 1000 cinema projectors, 16-millimetre machines capable of showing sound and silent films for training and, in special cases, entertainment.

More than 1000 soldiers, from privates to warrant officers, take time off from their normal duties to work the projectors. In a wooden hut or a dining-hall, a gymnasium or a German theatre, a marquee or desert moonlight, they will put on a show with clear pictures and sound.

All round, the performance is not as good as you might get in a super-cinema at home; the operators have neither the special buildings nor the equipment for that, but they have the technical skill to get the best out of what is provided for them.

They acquire that skill on a course run by the Army Kinema Corporation in some huts of Boer War vintage at Hounslow, Middlesex, or on similar courses in overseas commands. Since the middle of 1946, nearly 2500 men have been trained, mostly at Hounslow, so that units have been able to take qualified projectionists overseas with them.

Each qualified operator has passed a written and practical test at the end of his course. It is a fairly rigorous test: "We get some failures," says Mr. G. R. Lewis, who is in charge of the AKC's activities at Hounslow. "The AKC maintain the films and of course we want them to be properly handled by the operators."

So film-handling, including how to splice torn film, is an important part of the course, as fundamental as setting up the projector, screen, loudspeaker and other electrical apparatus, operating them and doing running repairs.

There is a good deal of theory to learn, too, and such practical



Cleaning a projector lens. A projectionist must know all the secrets of keeping the reels turning.

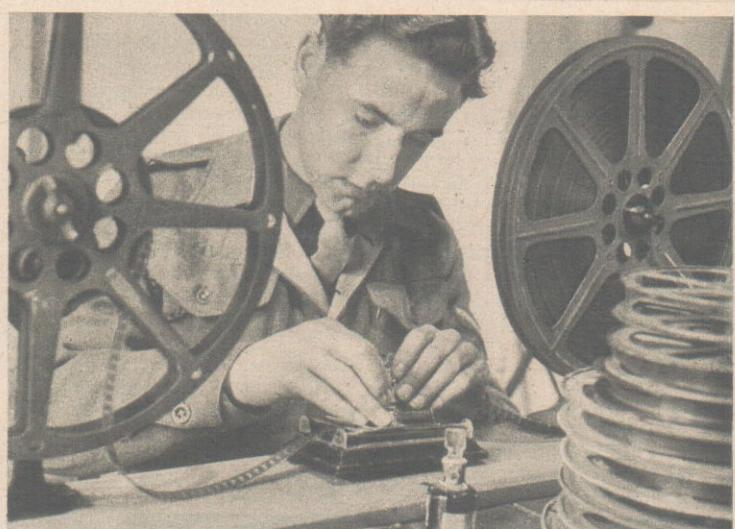
things as draping hard walls with blankets to overcome echo, tilting the loudspeaker to get the best results, using a silver screen in a long narrow room (because it reflects a picture straight back) and a white screen in a wide room (to give the people at the sides a better picture).

It is a concentrated three-weeks course, but even more concentrated is the course the AKC runs for Territorials, covering most of the same ground in two weeks. Sometimes Territorial soldiers can get away from their work for a fortnight to take the course, but most of the students are the permanent staff instructors. Projectors for the Territorial Army are kept in pools from which units can borrow them when they want to show a film.

Not all the would-be projectionists in Britain go to Hounslow. Sometimes there is a group of students ready in a distant command, so the accommodating AKC pack the instructor and his equipment off to where the men are.

And not all the students who go to Hounslow become unit projectionists. There have been several on resettlement courses; some of them planned to buy mobile projectors and make a living barnstorming with films on village circuits.

Splicing together two ends of film. Next time the film breaks, spare a thought for the man who has to mend it.



LETTERS

★ IF YOU ARE DUE FOR DEMOB SOON, READ THIS

"Mining offers an interesting job with plenty of opportunity and scope"—says ex-Flight Lieut. with D.F.M.

Tom Stonebank

Hazlerigg Colliery
Northumberland



"I came into Mining from school," says Tom Stonebank, who joined the R.A.F. in 1941. "When I was demobbed, I decided to make Coalmining my career—there's plenty in it if you only get down to it." With the increasing mechanisation, this vital National Industry gives you a skilled, interesting

job with the same team-spirit you found in the Forces; training with pay; 5 full days' work brings a bonus; and face-workers earn from £7 to £9 a week. When you are next on leave, call at the nearest Colliery or Employment Exchange and ask them about the opportunities in Mining today.

★ JOIN THE MINERS —the skilled men the Nation will always need



Issued by the Ministry of Labour and National Service in conjunction with the National Coal Board

IN WHICH SQUARE ARE YOU?

1 IS YOUR PERSONALITY GOOD?

COULD YOU address a public meeting to-night without notes? Have you personal courage? Can you "create" will-power? Are you a good mixer? Can you think and talk "on your feet"?

2 DO YOU HAVE PERSONAL DEFECTS?

ARE YOU a "shut-in" personality? Are you handicapped by marked shyness, inability to "mix"? Are you a prey to fears, worry, weariness or depressions? Do you suffer from inferiority complex?

3 IS YOUR MENTAL ORGANISATION FIRST-CLASS?

DO YOU HAVE a 100% perfect memory? Are you always "mentally alert"? Can you plan and organise? Can you write and talk convincingly? Can you conduct interviews?

4 ARE THERE MENTAL WEAKNESSES?

DOES YOUR mind wander? Do you lack mental energy? Do you put off important decisions? Are you overlooked in the race for promotion? Do you day-dream? Do you require a mental tonic?

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POST THIS
COUPON
NOW

DUSTY NUDE

Reading one of those fat American magazines, I came across the following advertisement, which I thought might amuse readers of SOLDIER:

"During the war, the Springs Cotton Mills was called upon to develop a special fabric for camouflage. It was used in the Pacific to conceal ammunition dumps and gun emplacements, but the Japanese learned to detect it because of its lack of jungle smells. To overcome this, when the fabric was dyed it was also impregnated with a permanent odour of hibiscus, hydrangea and old rubber boots. The deception was so successful that when Tokyo fell the victorious invaders hung a piece of this fabric on a Japanese flagpole.

"This process has been patented and the fabric is now available to the hip harness and bosom bolster business as Springmaid Perker, made of combed yarns... the white with gardenia, the pink with camellia, the blush with jasmine and the nude dusty." — John Symington, New City Road, Glasgow.

★ This is the first time SOLDIER has heard of anything being detected by its lack of smell.

GIBRALTAR GUNS

In "The Guns of Gibraltar" (SOLDIER, January) you say the saluting battery of 25-pounders took 54 men 11 days to get into position on King's Bastion. In fact, Master Gunner Birse put those guns in, with 12 men and myself; the first gun was got up on the first day; the other three were got up the second day and all four were put into position the third day. Within a week the guns were ready for firing and the old guns were taken out. At the time there were not 54 men in the battery. — Sjt. C. J. Gardner, 28 Coast Battery, RA, Gibraltar.

★ It is true that a small party of men under Master Gunner Birse put the 25-pounders in position in a week. But this was only a small part of the work: the old battery consisted of six-pounders on concrete pedestals and before the 25-pounders could be put into position the old guns had to be dismantled, the concrete pedestals removed and metal "stands" had to be made for the wheels of the 25-pounders. The whole job took at least

● **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. 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 own orderly room or from your own officer, thus saving time and postage.

11 days and more men than Master Gunner Birse's party were involved. SOLDIER could have been more explicit. Sorry.

IN MALAYA

In your October issue you mentioned the units in Malaya engaged in bandit warfare — all except the 26th Field Regiment RA who were, in fact, fighting before the Guards or the Hussars arrived. We have been in action since the second day of the emergency. We have a very good record and are respected everywhere, but it appears we are the forgotten army. — Gnr. K. J. Davies, BHQ Tp., 17 Bty, 26 Fd. Regt. RA, Malaya.

★ SOLDIER's apologies for omission. The regiment was listed in our December issue.

BY AIR MAIL

From the article on the Malayan campaign in your March issue, one gets the impression that only Auster aircraft can supply the jungle fighters. In point of fact most of the air supply work has been done by 799 Company RASC, the only air despatch company in the Far East. Their aircraft were flown by 110 Sqn. RAF and the men have many hours flying to their credit. — Dvr. W. J. Regelous, 336 Coy. RASC, Andover, Hants.

★ SOLDIER is informed that 885 Coy, RASC (Air Despatch) also operates in FARELF.

The history of 24th Field Regiment RA 1939-45 has been published. It can be obtained for 3s 6d post-free from James Galt and Co., Grove House Works, Plymouth Grove, Manchester 13.

SOLDIER is informed that a copy of the book will be sent free to the family of any member of the Regiment who lost his life in the war.



The Black Cat of 56th (London) Division may be officially extinct... but it lives on on the wall of this house at Muzzana, Italy.

SNOWS OF CYPRUS

In SOLDIER for March you mention the Army's mountain sports centres at Cortina (Italy), in the Harz Mountains and in the Tyrol.

Don't forget there is a flourishing winter sports leave camp on Mount



Olympus, in Cyprus. While the other winter sports resorts were whistling for snow (in Switzerland they carried snow to the ski slopes by truck) Mount Olympus had the biggest snowfall in memory; in fact, the leave camp was cut off by snow for many days.

My advice to anyone who wants plenty of snow: get a posting to the sunny Mediterranean. — "Kudos For Troodos", (name and address supplied).

★ Picture from the ski slopes of Troodos herewith.

OLD ACQUAINTANCE

I served with the RASC Water Transport from 1943 to 1947, and it gave me the greatest pleasure to read about them in your January issue. I saw that regatta at Rothesay. What a day for the Army that was! We old hands still talk about it.

The splendid photographs brought back many happy memories, and not a few regrets. I have made many a trip in the Erme, the Minca and the M. V. 160. May I wish all the hands at Freshwater, or wherever they may be, the best of luck and good sailing. — P. Bricknell (ex-Cpl), Kuwait Oil Co. Ltd., Kuwait, Persian Gulf.

NEW ENGAGEMENT

I enlisted as a boy for nine years with the Colours. This engagement would have ended in May 1949, but I later undertook to do another three years on a short-service engagement. My previous engagement was cancelled and I am now due to be discharged in 1952. Can I cancel the extra three years and finish in May? If so, must I forfeit the £25 and the civilian outfit which I received for undertaking to do the extra three years? — Bdsrn. C. Peet, East Lancs. Regt., Hadrian's Camp, Carlisle.

★ Men who have undertaken to do three or four years extra service on completion of their Regular engagement can cancel this undertaking, providing they have not already begun the supplementary service, by handing back the £25 initial bounty plus £8 to pay for their civilian outfit, but the rule does not apply in this case. Bandsman Peet has already cancelled his previous Regular engagement, and undertaken a new and longer one, which

incorporates the three years extra service. He has therefore forfeited his right to release in May 1949 and will be held to complete his current engagement, which does not expire until 1952, unless he can purchase his discharge.

SHORT SERVICE

I finish a short-service engagement on 30 September 1949. Will it be too late for me to sign on for another year on a Scheme "B" deferment when I have left MELF to be released in Britain, even if I arrive in Britain before 30 September? — L/C W. E. Walker, 1 Troop, 64 Engineer Sqdn, RE, MELF 8.

★ A man who has been accepted for a Type "A" short-service engagement is no longer eligible for a Type "B" engagement, but the question of whether he may extend for a fourth year under the Type "A" scheme is under consideration. If this extension is approved the procedure will be the same: the application must be submitted before the man leaves his unit on the "discharge journey." Having applied, he will be held with his unit until a decision is reached and will be posted home only if he becomes eligible under the normal overseas service rules.

HOME FROM EGYPT

If I were permitted to buy my discharge what passage money would I have to pay from Egypt to Britain? — Pte J. Pine, DCLI, attached RASC, Egypt.

★ By Grade C (troop deck) £23; Grade B (2nd class) £30.

PUKKA GEN

As a Royal Air Force type, attached to the Army for duty both at home and in BAOR, I have been puzzled by several dress queries. Your magazine is regarded as a "gen job" by the Army types I come into contact with, so perhaps you can give me the gen on these questions.

Are members of the WRAC or ATS entitled to wear Corps or Regimental badges above their left tunic pocket when attached to a Corps or Regiment? What colour shoulder titles do the Somerset Light Infantry wear? I have seen both white on red and gold on black. What type of lanyard is the Somerset Light Infantry entitled to wear and how are they supposed to wear it? — Sjt. N. A. Hastings, RAF, No. 6 Command Legal Aid Detachment, HQ British Troops Berlin.

★ Members of the WRAC and ATS are allowed to wear the badge of the Corps or Regiment to which they are attached, above the left pocket of the tunic.

At the moment the regimental designation worn on the arm title, prescribed for the Somerset Light Infantry, is SOMERSET L. I. in white letters on a scarlet background. On 15 March, however, these colours were changed to gold letters on a dark green background, which are the colours approved as standard for the arm titles of all regiments of the Light Infantry Group. Existing arm titles will be replaced by the new ones.

Officers of all regiments and corps are authorized to wear a lanyard. The colour, quality and method of wearing are left to the discretion of the CO. Only a few regiments have been authorized to use lanyards in the dress of their other ranks, and these do not include the Somerset Light Infantry.

(More Letters on Page 46)

Training for a career

To supplement their well-known Junior Training Scheme, J. Sainsbury Ltd. announce a new Training Course for young men now being released from National Service. Complete training in the retail food trade will be given in the Company's training department and at selected London shops, with attendance at the Technical College for Distributive Trades during working hours. Accommodation is available if required in well-run staff hostels at very moderate charges (28/- per week full board at age 20). Wage during training £4.10.0 per week at age 20, rising to £5.10.0 at 21 subject to passing proficiency tests. There are good prospects of promotion to rank of Leading Salesman or Leading Butcher and to more senior positions of responsibility.

★ Young men now on release leave who wish to be trained for this interesting career should write for illustrated booklet to: —

Education and Training Division,

J. SAINSBURY

Stamford House, Blackfriars, S. E. 1.

TRICKY WEATHER LIKE THIS calls for 'ASPRO'



Spring days are fickle—one day it seems "set fair," the next day down comes the rain. The body has to adapt itself to all these rapid changes as best it may. Just now there is a host of springtime chills, colds and rheumatic aches and pains about. The best course is to take action with 'ASPRO' as soon as their first symptoms appear. For 'ASPRO' means ACTION—and quick action too. 'ASPRO' dispels colds safely and swiftly. Two 'ASPRO' tablets taken at bedtime with a hot drink will give you a good night's sleep, and you will most probably wake up wondering whether you ever had a cold. Swift and safe, too, is the way 'ASPRO' relieves and soothes away rheumatic pain, bringing a wonderful feeling of comfort and well-being. So why not

Have 'ASPRO' ready when need arises

HEAD COLDS DISPELLED

Dear Sirs,
I suffered severe head colds frequently, summer and winter alike. I had only to meet anyone with a cold and sure enough I took it. Now, about three years ago, I saw an advert. for 'ASPRO' and decided to give them a trial. They proved really wonderful and when I feel the slightest chill or I am in company with anyone with influenza colds, I safeguard myself with a couple of 'ASPRO' tablets before retiring and at intervals during the day if necessary.

Yours faithfully, F. H. WEST (Mr.).

From N.A.A.F.I. CANTEENS
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MORE LETTERS

MORE MEDALS

Now that the day is drawing near (we hope) when the Peace Treaties for Germany and Japan will be signed, I think the time is ripe to consider striking an Occupation Medal for those who have served in the occupied countries since the end of the war.

In these countries there are thousands of Servicemen who were too young to take part in the war and who feel an inferiority complex because of their ribbonless chests. The practice of striking Occupation Medals is followed by other countries (American Servicemen wear medal ribbons for both German and Japanese occupations) so why should our Government ignore the need? — **Reginald Stuart, c/o Australia House, London WC 2.**

INDIAN MEDALS

Are British personnel who have served with the Indian and Pakistan Forces entitled to medals issued by the Governments of these Dominions? What are the ribbons for these medals and are they officially recognised by the British Armed Forces? In what order of precedence should they be worn? — **Major P. G. Nicholson, 1 Medium Workshop Coy, REME, BAOR 34.**

★ An ACI dealing with the granting of the Indian Independence Medal is being prepared. It will also lay down the place which this medal will take in the order of wearing. The ribbon is saffron, white and green in three equal vertical stripes. It is not yet known whether the Pakistan Government intends to issue a similar medal.

NO OAK LEAF

I was awarded the Commander-in-Chief's certificate for good service and outstanding devotion to duty in 21 Army Group. I was told at the time I was entitled to wear the oak leaf emblem. Is this correct? — **G. Dawson, Peterchurch, Hereford.**

★ No. The emblem may only be worn if notified in the London Gazette.

CROSSED NIBS?

Having blushed with envy at the sight of other sleeves bedecked with badges denoting trade or regiment, we would like to know if there is any device, however small, that we humble clerks can wear on our arm to brighten its drab bareness. — **"Penpushers", (name and address supplied).**

★ Sorry. You're out of luck.

2 minute sermon

"**FAITH**," said a little girl, "is believing what you know is impossible". She obviously had not studied logic, but she had the right ideas of how to live. She would get more out of life than the easy-going agnostic who says "Seeing is Believing" or "Prove it and I believe it".

Faith and knowledge should be inseparable companions. But Faith has a quality which knowledge lacks — the spirit of adventure. Knowledge may follow, but without the inspiration and leadership of Faith it will not get you very far. In all ages, Faith has led Man down the dark paths of the unknown, and knowledge has been a rather timid follower.

The Faith of a Christian is not a different sort of quality from the Faith of the man who is willing to try an experiment. His reason and experience tells him that it is likely that God exists and that the character of Jesus may be the answer to his question "What is God like?" His reason leaves him at this point — wondering if it is true. Only his Faith can enable him to make the experiment in living which gives him the answer. Only Faith can lead him to "bet his life" it is true; unless he is prepared to try it and see he can never hope to know.

ARMY RUGGER

In the article on Army Rugger in your April edition you refer to the final match between 1st Training Regt, Royal Signals and 9th Airborne Squadron, Royal Engineers. Very many of us in this part of the world feel that mention should have been made of the fact that this RE Squadron is a minor unit with a strength of only 200. For it to have reached the final at all must be reckoned as a not inconsiderable achievement. — **Lieut-Col. J. H. Cubbon, 1 Bn, The Parachute Regt., BAOR 11.**

★ **SOLDIER** agrees this was an outstanding feat and hastens to add its congratulations to the many already received by the unit.

SMOKE UP!

I, and lots of other soldiers in this unit, think that the scheme for rationing cigarettes suggested by a correspondent in your March issue is a rather selfish idea. National Servicemen can smoke just as many cigarettes as anyone else, even if they have taken to it more recently. Imagine how difficult it would be for the NAAFI staff to



decide who was a National Serviceman and who was an old soldier!

If your correspondent is so keen on saving the country's cigarettes perhaps he would be willing to have everybody's ration cut, including his own. In the meantime I suggest he buys a tin of tobacco and rolls his own as we have to do. — **Dvr. Grant, 54 MT Coy, RASC, BAOR 5.**

"Smoke Schemer" should not forget that National Servicemen and Regulars belong to the same Army. We all come under the heading of soldiers and should therefore share all rations equally. — **Pte. W. H. Barclay, 154 Ammunition Depot, BAOR 12.**

We are so much in agreement with the scheme for saving cigarettes that we feel the idea should be taken much further. For instance, the "growing lads" doing their National Service obviously need more sweets and chocolates than the older men. They should be given eight ounces a week while the soldier over 27 years old should get two.

The same with leave. Obviously a man who has stayed in the Army for years likes it. He does not want as much leave as the "infant" National Servicemen who have been dragged away from their homes. No doubt the Regular soldier over 27 would be only too pleased to give up a couple of weeks leave per year to the National Servicemen. Just as pleased, in fact, as we should be to give five of our cigarettes a day to him. — **Eight N. S. men (names and addresses supplied).**

A couple of patients and myself have been passing the time in this hospital discussing the "Smoke Scheme," but have so far failed to find anything good in it. We feel that if it were necessary to diversify the ration at all, it should be done according to the Command in which a man is serving and the type of occupation he is engaged in. For instance, out here in MELF there is precious little else to do during leisure hours, while those who are lying in a hospital naturally tend to become chain smokers.

The Army, as far as we know, is not losing anything on the sale of cigarettes, so why cut down the ration at all? Just to make more smokes available for home-based personnel we presume. And wouldn't discrimination against the

National Serviceman in this matter discourage him still further from signing on for a Regular engagement? — **L/C N. S. Brooke, RAMC Staff, MELF.**

As a non-smoker, I have never been able to discover *why* people smoke. I gather it is something to do with soothing the nerves. Why should the nerves of 19-year-old youths be in such a state that they require soothing all day long? — **"Stop Moaning" (name and address supplied).**

SUIT: FINAL 'NO'

After a month's consideration the Government has decided that no civilian suit, or cash grant in lieu, can be given on release to National Servicemen called up after January 1947.

Announcing this in the House of Commons on 30 March, Mr. A. V. Alexander said that the issue of clothing would impose too heavy a burden on the administration side of the Services, and an equivalent cash grant would cost the country between three and four million pounds.

He told ten MP's questioning him that although their representations had been considered carefully and sympathetically it had been agreed, with reluctance, that the decision taken in January 1947 to cease issuing civilian clothing as a release benefit could not be modified.

Mr. Alexander was asked if he realised the widespread feeling on the subject both in the House and in the country. Would he bear in mind that even three or four million pounds was a small price to pay to ensure that men left the Forces in a satisfied frame of mind?

In his reply, Mr. Alexander pointed out that the demob suit was a release benefit designed for men who had done a much longer period of service under very different conditions. Pay, too, was higher now than it had been then.

RELEASE LATEST

Here are the latest release dates to be announced:

Group 112 from 28 June to 10 July; group 113 from 11 July to 23 July; group 114 from 24 July to 5 August; group 115 from 6 August to 17 August; group 116 from 18 August to 28 August; group 117 from 29 August to 8 September; group 118 from 9 September to 19 September; group 119 from 20 September to 27 September; group 120 from 28 September (closing date not yet announced).

Group 083 opens on 1 August and closes on 30 September.

COVER SOLDIER

The soldier on the cover is Corporal of Horse T. Rockall, Life Guards. He has 19 years service. During World War Two he saw service in armoured cars in Africa, Italy, France and Germany.



"How do I keep
clear of colds?"

"In my profession I simply *must* stay free of cold infection, and POTTER'S CATARRH PASTILLES in the handy tin keep me that way. When 'colds are about' or I feel 'sniffy' I rely on these splendid pastilles to banish colds and catarrh." Most effective in Bronchitis, Hay Fever, Whooping Cough etc. 1/4d a tin.

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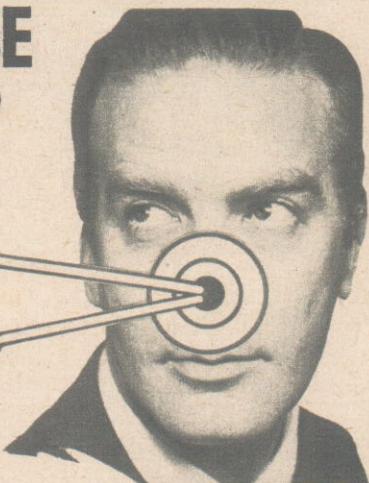
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COLDS

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Is your Nose stuffy and congested? Do you get constant Head Colds? Are you losing your senses of taste, smell, hearing? Is Catarrh getting the better of you? You can STOP Catarrh where it starts. Clear your NOSE—and keep it clear—with 'Mentholatum'. This amazing breathable balm—when applied into the nostrils and rubbed on the chest—volatilises instantly. Its medicated antiseptic vapours subdue inflammation, free congestion and open up stuffed breathing passages. 'Mentholatum' stays where it is put and keeps active for hours. It breaks up Head Colds overnight and even obstinate Catarrh yields to it. Breathing is believing, so get 'Mentholatum' right away. There is nothing like it.

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In Tins and Jars. Made only by
The Mentholatum Co. Ltd. (Estd. 1889), Slough, England.

SOLDIER

THE BRITISH ARMY MAGAZINE



— J. Arthur Rank

Bash on
Is the fashion;
But what bashers-on
Could ignore Renee Asherson?