

# SOLDIER

THE BRITISH ARMY MAGAZINE

APRIL 1954



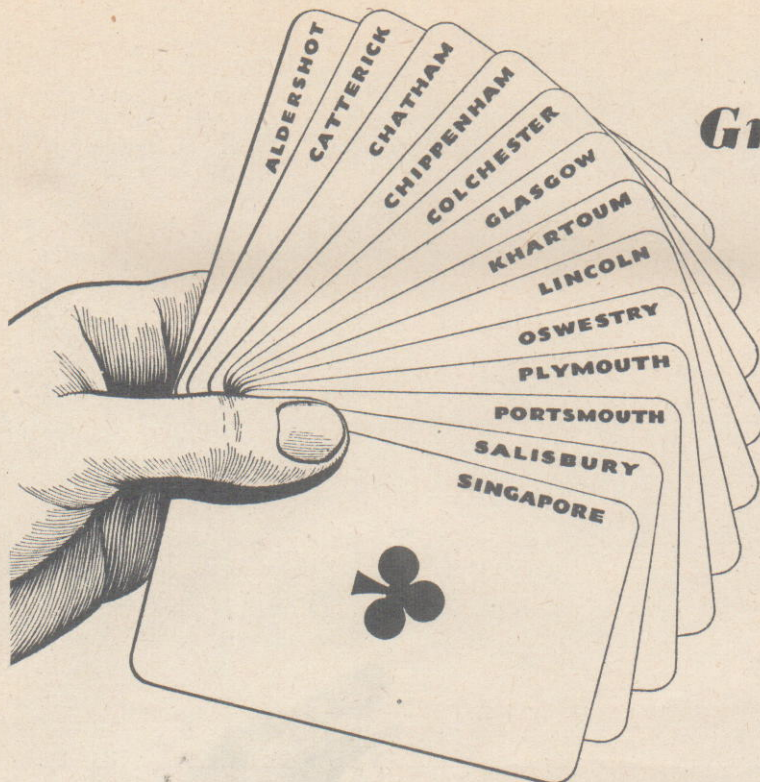
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100 years ago the Crimean War began: see pages 12-18





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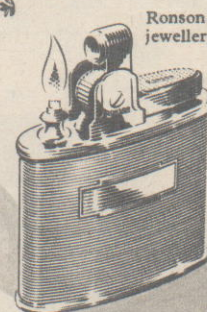
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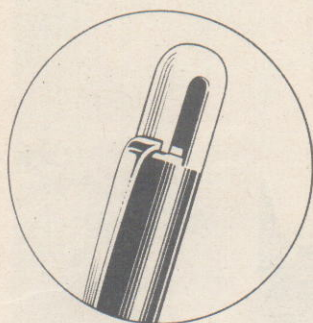
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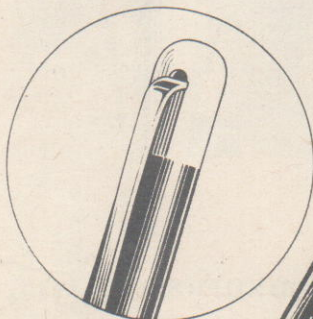
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**Anne Crawford** SAYS

*—success is certainly sweet, but  
hard work is the only way to get  
to the top—and stay there.*

**Jill Green:**

I've seen your latest film, Miss Crawford. My goodness you were wonderful, and how I envy you. It must be heaven to be a famous star!

**Anne Crawford:**

Well, success certainly is sweet. No one can deny that. But I wonder if people ever realise the years of hard work and patient determination that go to put your name in lights?

**Jill Green:**

I suppose you mean stars are made, not just born.

**Anne Crawford:**

Well, some people are naturally talented, of course. But without the will to win, talent alone never gets you anywhere. There are many set-backs and disappointments in acting and you just have to have the determination and enterprise to overcome them.

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British soldiers and aborigines in a jungle fastness.

## Men of the 22nd Special Air Service Regiment set out to win the good-will of a primitive people — and set up a new endurance record for Malaya

**F**ORTY men marched out of the jungle, and a Punjabi barber threw up his hands in despair.

He had good reason, for each of them carried more than four months' unhindered growth of hair.

They had been operating for 122 days on the Perak-Pahang mountain range of Malaya, among aborigines so primitive that they cannot count more than five. In the six years of the Malaya "emergency" no other soldiers had spent so long a stretch in the jungle.

They had set out from a jungle road-head in central Malaya, a specially-picked squadron of the 22nd Special Air Service Regiment, 80 strong. Two were killed in action, 13 were evacuated by helicopter owing to injuries or sickness, and 25 were tactically detached.

"My orders were to stimulate friendly relations with the Temiar aborigines," explained Captain J. M. Cooper, DCM, of Leicester, who commanded the squadron. "Until then, these aborigines had been dominated by Communist terrorists. We went to a jungle fort near which some aborigines lived, and from there our object was to circulate farther afield, using these people to make contacts. We knew it would be a three-months operation—a long time in the jungle. The idea was to make base camps in certain areas, get to know the local *penghulus* (chieftains), create good-will and then patrol."

One way in which the troops

created good-will was by distributing gift parcels among the aborigines. These contained *parangs* (Malay knives used for such varied purposes as cutting down small trees, opening coconuts and cleaning fish), sarongs, beads, fish-hooks and coloured string.

"The men played with the children, and got on very well with them—when the youngsters

did not make off into the trees," says Captain Cooper.

The only other officer in the patrol, 25-year-old Captain D. L. Bruce-Merrie, who joined the Special Air Service from the Loyals, tells the story of a little aborigine girl, aged about seven, who accompanied his troop for nearly a week.

"Her parents fled and left her

to us," he says. "She was a wonderful little girl and, believe me, she could outmarch us. We called her Lulu. She was brimful of confidence. We did everything we could to find her parents, and eventually left her at a jungle fort. She ate sweets and other European food, but only because we did. Of course, she had never seen such things before." **OVER**

After four months away from the barber (left to right): Trooper A. Lyall, Lieutenant D. L. Bruce-Merrie and Trooper R. Downey. They are waiting at a wayside station for a leave-train to Penang.







Captain J. M. Cooper, DCM, the man who commanded the expedition to the land of the aborigines.

For their own food, the aborigines grow tapioca, sweet potatoes, maize and tobacco, and vary their diet with wild pigs, deer and fish. It was a desire to tap this source of food which attracted the terrorists to the area.

At times five separate troops were operating from Captain Cooper's base, on missions lasting from eight days to eight weeks. The country averaged 4000 feet above sea level, but rose in one area to 7000. Up to 4000 feet, the bamboo was very thick, and the patrols often had to cut their way through it. Here the expedition's three Iban trackers, Corporal Ejok, Private Jelin and Private Ebai, came into their own.

"I wish I could cut bamboo as easily as those chaps," said one man afterwards. "They have a wonderfully flexible wrist, and cut with much less effort than a soldier."

Above 4000 feet, the bamboo gives way to large mountain trees with attap undergrowth. The height has its advantages, because it is cool. "At night-time, when we were on the 7000-foot range, it was as cold as it is at home," said Trooper Robert Ashley of Wrexham.

Some of the finest game in Malaya is to be found in the area in which the patrols were operating. Trooper Michael Bench, from London, saw an elephant



Bath-time for aborigine boys. They have never seen soap, or counted more than five and their sense of time is as bad as their arithmetic.

crashing through the jungle a few yards ahead of him. "I just stood still and it went away," he reported. The troops saw marks of tigers, but the beasts were too alert and fleet of foot to be seen. The area also contains deadly water-buffalo, apt to charge on sight.

Each of the five patrols carried wireless, and kept Lance-Corporal Jock Adams of Dundee, back at base, busy sending Morse messages to regimental headquarters. He also listened-in to provide the unit with news. Captain Cooper visited the troops

regularly, which meant up to three days' journey in each direction. To the aborigines who accompanied him this was nothing.

Obtaining intelligence from the aborigines was a difficult process. Painstaking efforts were made to convey to them numbers larger than five. The aborigines' sense of time was as vague as their arithmetic. One *penghulu* said certain people had passed through his area eight months before, whereas the soldiers knew for certain it was barely two months. Similarly the *penghulu* said the "big captain" had been through three weeks previously, although, in fact, nearly a year had elapsed.

The weather was not always helpful to the squadron. For 17 days it rained anything from six to 24 hours a day. Near Captain Cooper's headquarters, a stream 20 yards wide kept rising until it showed an increase in depth of more than 22 feet. Twice it swept away improvised bridges, making a formidable barrier between the east and west of the area. It was finally conquered when the Special Air Service men built a suspension bridge of bamboos. Meanwhile, it had swept away much of the men's Christmas mail and a set of false teeth belonging to Trooper John Dearden, one of the bridge builders.

None of the Special Air Service party had to live off what Nature provides in the jungle (few British troops have had to do so, though all those going on long-range operations receive appropriate instructions). Regularly, supplies were dropped by Valettas of the Royal Air Force. Between drops the men missed fresh bread and meat.

Constant replacements for the thin jungle-green uniforms and special rubber patrol ankle-boots had to be dropped. These garments last only two or three weeks in the jungle, thanks to sweat, prickles, sharp rocks and up to 50 miles of marching in a week.

For casualties, a helicopter could have been provided in 24 hours — if the weather had

## STOP PRESS

### MORE PAY FOR THE SKILLED

**R**EGULAR soldiers with long service and special skill—that is, mainly NCOs and technicians—are to be paid more as from 1 April.

The purpose is to raise the number of long-term, experienced Regulars able to operate and maintain increasingly complex weapons and equipment.

Officers in the "middle range," from captains of four years' service to brigadiers, will also receive increased pay.

There are no increases for National Servicemen.

Regulars will receive these increases in **daily basic pay**: Lance-corporals and corporals, 2s.; serjeants and staff-serjeants, 3s.; warrant officers, classes I and II, 4s.

The following revised increments for **length of service** will be paid to all Regular Other Ranks: after three years' man's service, 6d.; after six years' man's service, an additional 6d.; after 12 years' man's service, an additional 1s. (These increments replace existing increments of 6d. a day after five years' man's service and a further 6d. a day after 10 years' man's service. The existing increments for length of service in a rank remain unchanged.)

Special rates will be paid to men in a new trade group to be called **Group X**. They will receive the same rates of pay as men of the same trade classification in Group A, with these additions:

Privates and lance-corporals, Class III or II, 1s.; Class I, 1s. 6d.

Corporals, Class III, 6d.; Class II, 1s.; Class I, 1s. 6d.

Serjeants and above, Class I, 1s. 6d.

Thus, in Group X, Class I, a serjeant will receive a weekly basic pay of 157s. 6d., a staff-serjeant, 182s.; a WO II (other than RQMS), 196s.; a WO II (RQMS), 203s.; a WO I, 210s.

The Group X trades are: ammunition examiner, RAOC and WRAC; radar mechanic, REME and WRAC; electrician (control equipment), REME; instrument mechanic, RE, REME and WRAC; telecommunication mechanic, REME and WRAC;

line mechanic, R. Signals; radio mechanic, R. Signals; telegraph mechanic, R. Signals and REME; cipher mechanic, R. Signals.

These supervisory appointments also carry Group X rates of pay: armament artificer (all types), REME; clerk of works (electrical), RE; clerk of works (mechanical), RE; foreman of signals, R. Signals.

A new **Bounty** scheme is introduced. Tax-free bounties will be payable to male Other Ranks who increase their commitments for service with the Colours as follows:

From the three-year point to the six-year point, £40; from three-year and five-year point to 12-year point, £100; from six-year and seven-year point to 12-year point, £60; from eight-year point to 12-year point, £50.

These bounties will be final payments, not advances as in some instances hitherto. The present scheme of bounties for re-enlisting and re-engaging will be closed.

A revision of the existing **Gratuity Scheme** for men leaving with more than 10, but less than 22 years' service, is under consideration. This may result in some reduction at early points in the scale, with improvements for men of longer service. Men whose present engagements entitle them to a gratuity on the existing scale will have reserved rights to that scale.

**Officers**, excluding medical and dental officers above the rank of captain, chaplains and quartermasters, will receive these increases in daily basic pay: captains with at least four years' service in the rank, 4s.; majors, 5s.; lieutenant-colonels, 6s.; colonels and brigadiers, 7s. Increases for quartermaster officers will differ slightly.

**Women** will receive about three-quarters of all pay increases shown above. They will qualify for the bounties scheme, again receiving three-quarters of the rates for men, but in all instances, in order to qualify, women must serve to the 12-year point.





A "bamboo Bailey" is not the bridge for heavy traffic.

allowed. As the men were in the mountains, however, flying was very often impossible, and the longest wait was six days. Besides the 13 soldiers who were evacuated, a number of aborigines were flown out for hospital treatment of bamboo cuts. The aborigines provided some administrative problems: "You cannot keep normal registers for aborigine patients," explained Captain Cooper. "They change their names almost from day to day."

The aborigine patients would not stay out long, however. Once removed from their jungle fastnesses to civilisation, they are

liable to die quickly.

Some of the troops who were not evacuated suffered from jungle sores, but in each case, three penicillin injections cleared these up.

As they waited at a wayside railway station for a train to take them to Penang, for a spell of leave, Corporal R. Holt said: "We lost nearly all track of time. We used to know if it was the 27th or 29th, but nobody seemed to know if it was a Monday or Friday."

"You expect to forget a bit of the outside world when you're in the *ulu* for months on end," said another trooper, "but I knew how much back pay was building up for leave when I came out."

Out of a dozen men who were asked whether they would like another marathon stay in the jungle, every one answered, "Yes."

The party killed one terrorist and wounded two others. The value of their long stay in the jungle was in the information they brought back about the aborigines. "Some were co-operative, but others, owing to long Communist domination, were not," said Captain Cooper.

Until recently, the record for British soldiers in the jungle during the Malaya "emergency" was 80 days, except for officers of a Gurkha unit which completed 105 days. Another squadron of 22nd Special Air Service Regiment recently came within a fortnight of the 122 days record. In Burma, in World War Two, troops spent even longer periods in the jungle.—From a report by Captain D. H. de T. READE.

An aborigine fisherman shyly displays his catch.



## SOLDIER to Soldier

THE call-up has been blamed for many things. It is now being blamed because it interferes with courting.

A writer in a national newspaper says that many couples marry before the young man's call-up in order that the girl may claim the Army marriage allowance while he is away. During that period she continues to earn a wage and to live with her parents.

He also paints a heart-rending picture of young couples, much in love, sundered for two years by National Service, and tempted in their emotion to take too-intimate a farewell of each other.

By contrast, a speaker at a recent meeting complained that girls were tending to concentrate on young men in their early twenties, in order that their courting should not be interrupted by National Service.

Well, that's one side of it. Don't weep too hard yet.

It seems to SOLDIER that a marriage contracted in order to draw a few shillings a week is unlikely to last long, unless it is based on something much deeper. How many couples in their middle 'teens are mature enough to know their own minds? Precious few. Those rare couples who are deeply and genuinely attached will survive the test of separation; the others will not, and no harm will have been done. It is as simple as that.

The kind of marriage most likely to succeed is the one in which the man has a good steady job and a sense of responsibility. That is the kind of man a young woman with any sense chooses—and that may well be one reason why girls choose young men in their early twenties. The youth "marking time" in the year or two before call-up is, as a rule, in no state to undertake the responsibilities of marriage. Even if there was no conscription, the girls would hardly consider him as a "steady."

About one National Serviceman in 20 is, in fact, married. The other 19 probably get more fun out of their soldiering, having less on their minds. Most young soldiers think that their Army service is sufficient of an upheaval without piling marriage on top of it.

SOLDIER discussed this problem with Mr. Joseph Brayshaw, general secretary of the National Marriage Guidance Council. He pointed out that before the days of call-up many young men never cut themselves from their mothers' apron strings until they were married. Now call-up performed the very necessary task of severing the link with "Mum," widened young men's outlook and put them on their own feet. It was a pity, Mr. Brayshaw thought, for a married girl to live with her parents, when she, too, should be breaking free and setting up a home with her husband—much more so if she had a child. The risk of mother and child growing away from an absent husband was always there.

The latest statistics of the Registrar-General show that the proportion of early marriages ending in divorce is unusually high. One reason is that the partners do not know their own minds when they marry; another is that many early marriages are forced—a child is on the way. Obviously a high proportion of such marriages will be unhappy.

Conscription may delay a young man's chance of getting a sound, steady job, but if it delays the period of serious courting to a time when he is better able to know his own mind, there is something to be said for it.

Not that anyone is likely to quote this as a reason for keeping up National Service indefinitely!

ONE of the tasks which befall the British Army in war (and often in peace) is that of producing English-language newspapers in lands where English is little understood.

The *Sudan Star*, which closed down recently, was harried by more printers' devils than most. It had a Czech sub-editor, a Greek proof-reader and Egyptian and Sudanese compositors. A former editor, John Hyslop, writing a requiem on this newspaper in *World's Press News*, has recalled how competitions were held in Service messes to spot most errors in any one issue. On one occasion two NCO's wrote offering to clean up the paper. The management accepted and offered them £50 if they could produce an error-free paper, at the same time offering £10 to the reader who could spot most errors in the issue they corrected. After sweating all day correcting proofs the NCOs failed to win the £50. The prize of £10 went to a reader who spotted 217 errors.

There is no moral to this story; unless, perhaps: "Don't volunteer for anything."





A new headache for bandits on the jungle roads of Malaya: the Saracen.

# THE SARACEN IN ACTION

Twelve men can be carried in a Saracen. The carriers have been exhaustively tested in Malaya.

**T**HE British Army's new battle-wagon, the Saracen, is now operating in small numbers with the 12th Royal Lancers in Malaya.

It is a six-wheeled, ten-ton armoured personnel carrier which can give supporting fire to its troops, after they have gone into action, from its turret-mounted Besa. A Bren is mounted too.

Assault troops can "debuss" at speed, through the rear doors, to break up an ambush or to give chase.







# THE ARMY GAVE NORMAN WISDOM HIS CHANCE

Left: The boy who told the serjeant he could blow a bugle—Norman Wisdom, wearing the badges of the King's Own Royal Regiment.

**N**INETEEN years ago an under-sized, under-nourished, homeless and out-of-work boy of 14 stood quaking in front of an Army recruiting serjeant in London. He had assured the serjeant that he could sound a bugle with the best. What would happen if the serjeant called his bluff?

But there was something in the face of this luckless lad that softened the serjeant's heart, or prompted him to waive his suspicions. He added the name "Norman Wisdom" to the list of recruits who wanted to become Army bandboys.

Today that lad is a top-rank radio, television, stage, screen and ice-show comedian. His style of humour is knockabout—yet a good deal more than knockabout. He is the wayward urchin buffeted by the world, the irrepressible butt of Fate. He can turn on the pathos in an instant, but he knows to a split second when to turn it off again. One of his idiosyncrasies is to wear a very tight suit, whereas most comedians like their suits baggy.

And Norman Wisdom, ex-bandboy of the King's Own Royal Regiment, ex-trumpeter and trooper in the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars and 10th Royal Hussars, former Signaller in the Royal Corps of Signals, owes his rise in the world to the Army.

It was the Army, he says, which educated and made a man of him. "When I first joined up I failed the third-class examination which even a child of five could pass in those days. Boy, was I dumb!" The Army gave him self-confidence, encouraged him to appear on the stage. It taught him to keep fit (his act calls for much agility) and to *organise* himself. No doubt, too, it helped him to see life's funny side.

Norman Wisdom cheerfully admits that he never rose even to the rank of acting unpaid lance-corporal ("I think they must have rumbled me the first day I put on uniform," he says). He had his share of luck. When, on enlistment, he was sent to join the King's Own Royal Regiment at Lichfield, the bandmaster who discovered the lad's inability to sound the bugle took pity on him and agreed to teach him—and the pupil proved to be willing and quick. Those days, says Norman Wisdom, were among the happiest in his life. For a lad who had

been in and out of work, scraping his meals together as best he could, the Army was a haven of security, with regular meals, plenty of sport and a warm bed to sleep in.

Then he became re-united with his family and was bought out of the Army for £35. In vain he tried to get a job (those were the days of mass unemployment) and so decided to re-enlist, this time as a bandboy with the 8th Hussars at Aldershot. Shortly afterwards, he was transferred to the 10th Royal Hussars and in a few weeks was on his way with the Regiment to serve for four and a half years in India.

"They were wonderful years," says Norman Wisdom, "I found friendship which I had never known before and life began to take on some meaning. I was very keen on sport and soon became quite a good footballer and cricketer. I had always been able to run pretty well and surprised myself by winning several medals in the regimental cross-country championships. I also took up boxing and became regimental fly-weight champion."

It was through boxing that Norman Wisdom found he could make people laugh. One day while shadow-boxing in the corner of a barrack-room, he heard his comrades laughing at his antics. He played up to them, prancing about an imaginary opponent, knocking his man down and then falling over backwards and tying himself in knots to escape a furious attack by his assailant. His audience loved it and asked for more. Soon his act became a regular feature of the canteen and he became the unofficial regimental jester. He also took up tap-dancing (in Army boots). Although he did not know it then, this shadow-boxing act was to become one of the most popular items in his stage repertoire.

In the Army his high spirits were always getting him into trouble. "I just couldn't help it, life seemed to be full of opportunities

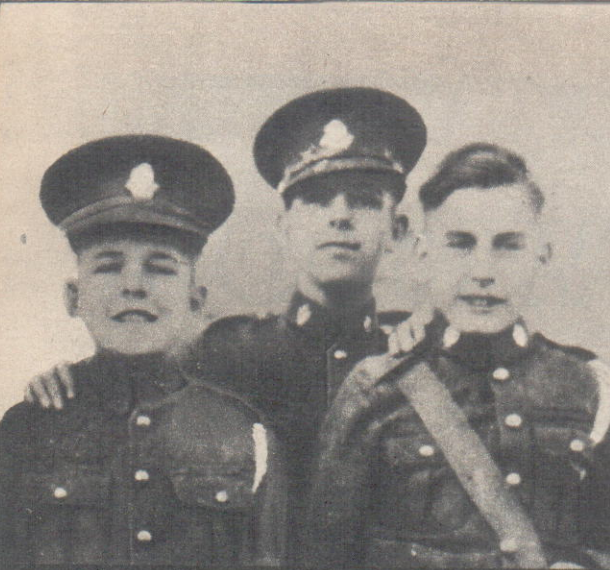
OVER

*The British Army is not specifically designed to produce comedians, but it has thrown up quite a few. Of these, Norman Wisdom, ex-bandboy and trooper, is a shining example*



"His devastating humour springs from grotesque and nimble physical movement and from a face which registers half a dozen moods in as many seconds. . . ."—Film Critic Jympson Harman. This picture shows Norman Wisdom in the film "Trouble in Store."





Three boys in the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars: Norman Wisdom in centre. Right: The future comedian, now a 10th Hussar, admires his favourite view in India.



"Norman Wisdom has a kind of amusing, sly pathos" (Film Critic Roger Manvell). Even serjeant-majors were sometimes susceptible to it. (This picture is from "Trouble in Store.")

## NORMAN WISDOM

*continued*

for having fun. Although I was only a little chap—only five feet two inches—I could eat like a horse and was known as the biggest eater in the regiment. One night I had spent too long in the canteen stuffing eggs and chips and arrived on the square just in time for the 'Officers Dress' Call. I was so full of food that I couldn't blow a note! I got 14 days for that."

One of his punishments was to dig a big hole large enough to bury a man. "I thought that if I made a good job of it the provost serjeant would be more lenient later on, so I made a really beautiful hole, four feet square and six feet deep with lovely straight sides. I was very proud of it. Then

the provost serjeant came along. He thought it was a good hole, too, and said, 'Well done, Wisdom!' Then he spoiled everything by taking a dead mouse from his pocket, dropping it into the hole and saying, 'Now fill it up again!'"

On another occasion Boy Wisdom was late for an evening bugle call (he had been over-eating in the canteen again). Grabbing a bicycle he rode towards the square, blowing with all his might and hoping no one would notice the sound was not coming from the base on which he should have been standing. When he had finished, the serjeant-major came

### IT WAS A GERMAN CUSTOM TOO

**N**ORMAN WISDOM'S tale of digging a man-size hole to bury a dead mouse reminds **SOLDIER** of the remarkable punishment meted out to a German Infantry section in the Pas de Calais area shortly after Dunkirk.

An inspecting officer found a match-stick on the floor of an otherwise immaculate barrack-room. Wrapping it carefully in his handkerchief, he ordered the section to parade at midnight, dressed in full service marching order and carrying picks and shovels and a stretcher.

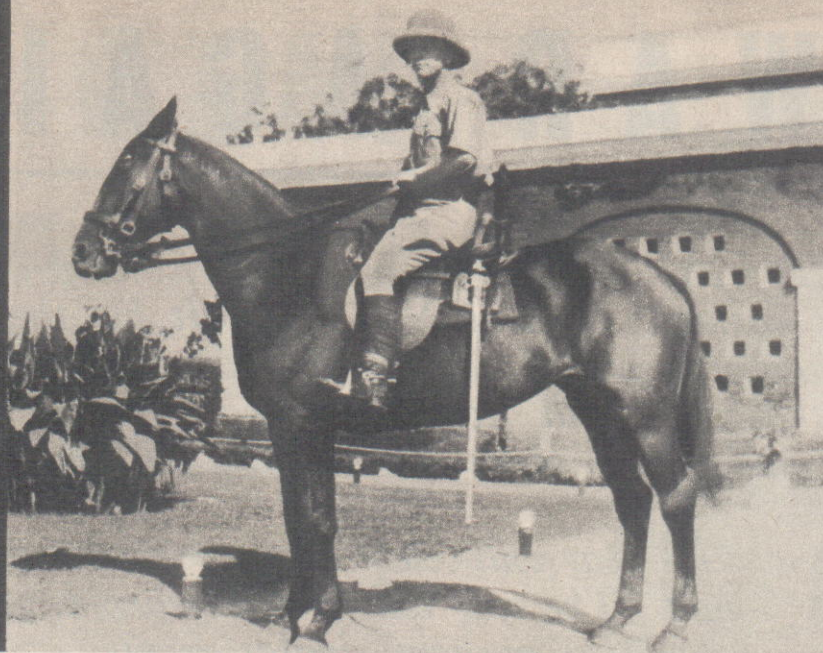
On the stroke of midnight the officer appeared (also in full service marching order), ordered the four men with the stretcher to open it and solemnly placed the offending match-stick on it. The rest of the section formed up and with the stretcher-bearers were given the order "Slow March." Two hours later they were brought to a halt in the middle of a field, the stretcher was lowered and the men were ordered to dig a hole, six feet long, six feet deep and three feet wide. When that was done the officer formed up the men once more with their arms reversed while the stretcher was brought to the side of the grave and the match-stick tipped in. The officer called for one minute's silence and then the hole was filled in.

At 4 a.m., back at their barrack-room, the section were dismissed. Except for the officer's commands not a word had been spoken throughout the operation.

**SOLDIER**'s informant said that after this incident no man in the section ever bought matches. All provided themselves with cigarette lighters.



Right: High spirits led Trooper Norman Wisdom into scrapes, but he was one of the smartest soldiers on parade. Nobody ever suggested he could not ride a horse. Extreme right: Trooper Wisdom blows his own trumpet, in the 10th Hussars.



out from behind a bush and said "Well done, my boy, Now you're on another charge." This time it was seven days confined to barracks.

Boy Wisdom duly passed his riding course and became a trooper. Even then he could not keep out of trouble. "I was very fond of my bed and I was caught several times asleep in the stables curled up in the hay," he told SOLDIER.

In case it should be thought that Trooper Wisdom spent all his time in tomfoolery let it be said that he became a marksman at the first attempt and was one of the smartest-looking soldiers in the regiment. He put a terrific shine on his boots—and he still cleans his own shoes because he does not trust others to do it so well. He insists that his dressing-room shall be kept clean and tidy, which must make him nearly unique among entertainers. "The Army showed me that a place for everything and everything in its place saves a lot of time and temper," he says.

In the 10th Hussars Regimental Band Norman Wisdom learned to play the drums and the xylophone and became a useful performer with saxophone, clarinet and violin, all of which he uses in his acts today.

His introduction to the xylophone is a typical Norman Wisdom story. When the band left the heat of Lucknow for the hills, he was the man left behind to blow guard-duty calls. In the band room he found a xylophone and filled in his spare time learning to play it by ear—as a result of which he was chosen, three months later, to play a solo on the instrument at an outdoor garden party. Unfortunately he missed a note in the middle of the piece and, unable to follow the score, knew he could never hope to catch up with the rest of the band. But luck was on his side. A rainstorm broke and the band dashed for cover.

When the 10th Hussars returned to England in 1939

Trooper Wisdom decided to try his luck in civilian life again and took his discharge. He found a job as a Post Office telephone operator in London. When war broke out he immediately applied to rejoin the Army, but the authorities left him at his switchboard until much later in the war, when he was called up into the Royal Corps of Signals, in which he served until demobilisation in 1946. For part of his war service he was batman to an officer who recently called on him in his dressing-room and asked, "Can I clean your boots, sir?"

It was while stationed at Cheltenham with No. 2 Company War Office Signals that Norman Wisdom first thought seriously of earning his living on the stage. Inevitably, he had found his way into the unit band and one night in 1944 at a dance he thought he would liven things up with his old shadow-boxing act. It was a big success, and as a result he was given a part in the unit concert party. Wherever the concert party went after that the shadow-

boxing act was the hit of the show and Norman made up his mind to become a professional comedian. He knew that to be a success he had to be physically fit so once again he took up cross-country running. He had lost none of his stamina and in 1945 was placed 12th in the Southern Command cross-country championship.

After demobilisation he spent months pestering theatrical agents before he was given an engagement at an obscure music hall. Dozens of demobilised soldiers had similar hopes of footlight fame; their pals in the Army had told them that their act would "go over big" in Civvy Street. Most of them fell by the wayside. Norman Wisdom refused to give up. Engagements followed with depressing irregularity, but by 1948 he had built up a reputation as a very good funny man. Then came his chance to appear in a West End production, and the rest is one of the success stories of the post-war years.

Norman Wisdom is a member

of the 10th Hussars Old Comrades Association, whose annual dinners and other functions he attends when he can. "I would like to meet my old pals much more often," he says, "but I have so little time these days."

His dressing-room door is always open to his old Army friends, and many of them find their way backstage. Recently Regimental Serjeant-major W. J. Hedley of the 10th Hussars, with whom Norman served as a boy, was an unexpected stage-door visitor. They spent so long talking that Norman nearly missed his cue to go back on stage.

E. J. GROVE.

**World War Two: Norman Wisdom (third from left) is now in the Royal Signals, playing in his unit band and reviving the crazy shadow-boxing act which went down so well in India.**





# THE WAR AGAINST

**100 YEARS AGO** Britain was at war with Russia. It was a war bristling with examples of How Not To Do It, but these were eclipsed by unforgettable demonstrations of courage and discipline by British arms.

There are thousands still living who have talked with Crimean veterans. Yet the campaign, in terms of weapons, uniforms and tactics, now seems remote indeed.

Many regiments this year will celebrate the centenaries of the Crimean battles in which they fought. The war will be remembered, also, in London's White City Tattoo and doubtless in many similar events.



Tents on the slope above Balaclava harbour: a photograph by Roger Fenton, the first war photographer.

**WHAT IT  
WAS ALL  
ABOUT**

BY mid-nineteenth century the ramshackle Turkish Empire was breaking up. "We have on our hands a very sick man," said the Czar of All The Russias, weeping crocodile tears on the bier. The Czar's idea was to kill off the patient and grab his possessions. Britain for her own reasons preferred to keep the patient alive, and rejected the Czar's suggestion that she should join in the pillage and annex Egypt.

For long Russia had coveted Constantinople. If she took that great port, her fleet would be able to range the Mediterranean and sever Britain's route to India. That was the spectre that worried Britain.

There were more immediate pretexts for war. Russia, Turkey, France and Britain brawled over the custody of the Holy Places in Palestine. In 1853 Russia invaded territories of the Sultan, and the two nations were at war. Forthwith British and French fleets sailed for the Golden Horn. Unin-

timidated, the Czar blew the Turkish fleet to pieces at Sinope in the Black Sea; 4000 sailors perished, 400 survived.

Intense anger swept Britain and France. Britain had not fought a war for 40 years, but that worried nobody. Louis Napoleon, the upstart, needed a dazzling military adventure to buttress his reputation. So, in March 1854, both countries declared war on Russia and drove her fleet into the shelter of Sebastopol Harbour.

Then the fateful decision was taken to send expeditionary forces to prevent the Czar marching on Constantinople. The best method of check-mating him seemed to be to seize Sebastopol from the land. Twenty-three thousand British troops (less than two modern divisions), 24,000 French and 7000 Turks set foot in the Crimea, a part of the Continent which the man in the street had never heard of—but of which he was to hear more than he liked.

# THE CZAR

## IT WAS THE FIRST WAR...

... in which Britain and France had been allies for 200 years. The Commander-in-Chief, Lord Raglan, who was a veteran of Waterloo, could not cure himself of the habit of referring to the enemy as "the French."

It was the FIRST war to be photographed. Roger Fenton set off to the Crimea with a wet-plate outfit and darkroom tent. He was unable to take action pictures, but he portrayed the life of siege and camp in all its unromantic starkness. Two Ensigns were sent out to perform the duty of military photographers, after a month's course.

It was the FIRST war to be reported throughout by war correspondents. Their despatches were uncensored, and there is more than a suspicion that the enemy obtained useful information from what they wrote. Although much claptrap was written about the campaign, the vivid messages of Sir William Russell of *The Times* describing the miseries of the troops before Sebastopol and in the hospital at Scutari shook up the Government and led to reform. It was Sir William Russell at Balaclava who wrote of "the thin red streak topped with a line of steel" (which has since become "the thin red line"). Russell did much

to build up the prestige of the private soldier.

It was the FIRST war in which wounded British soldiers were tended by women nurses. Until then it had been regarded as the height of immodesty for a woman—especially a young one—to attend a man's bedside. The imperious Florence Nightingale, known to the Staff as "the Bird," took out her devoted band of nurses and set up new traditions of humanity, cleanliness and efficiency for Army hospitals.

It was the FIRST war in which British soldiers were chloroformed before undergoing surgical operations.

It was the FIRST war in which troops were encouraged to save money and send it home. At Florence Nightingale's instigation, a Money Order Office was set up for this purpose at Scutari, and about £1000 a month was deposited in it.

It was the FIRST war in which British troops used a railway in the field. A line for carrying supplies was built from the harbour at Balaclava to the heights overlooking Sebastopol.

It was the FIRST war in which British troops used the Minie rifle, though many thousands still fought with the smooth-bore Brown Bess. At the end of the campaign troops were being issued with their first Enfield rifles.

It was the FIRST war in which commanders were linked with home by telegraph. They loathed the invention, which multiplied their paper work. London used the wire to ask whether it was true that a Captain Jarvis had been bitten by a centipede. Paris used it to tell the French commander how to run the campaign. General Pelissier said it was "impossible to carry on at the paralysing end of an electric cable."

It was the FIRST war in which commanders in the field were called on to render systematic returns, which simplified the task of supplying the forces.

It was the FIRST war in which



His claim to fame? He was one of the first British soldiers to be photographed on active service.



**THIS** is PRIVATE JOHN PENN, one of the most-decorated soldiers of the Queen to fight in the Crimea.

He was "born in the regiment"—his father being a farrier-major in the 14th Light Dragoons. As soon as he was tall enough he enlisted as a cavalryman. He had a passion for horses.

Private Penn served in the fierce Indian wars of the nineteenth century, in Afghanistan and in the Sutlej. At Moodkee, unhorsed in the capture of the guns, he lay wounded all night on the battlefield in great pain, until found by a reconnoitring party. Later he fought at Sobraon, Chillianwallah and Goojerat.

His regiment, the 3rd Light Dragoons, was ordered to England. Then, in 1854, he heard that the 17th Lancers were being sent to the Black Sea, and he joined them. By this time he had already seen 18 years service. At Balaclava he took part in the Charge of the Light Brigade. An eye-witness who saw Penn engage a Russian officer at the guns says he delivered "cut six" which instantly dismounted the officer, whose head was nearly severed.

Private Penn was the finest type of the old long-service soldier.

the Victoria Cross and the Distinguished Conduct Medal could be won. The latter came into existence at the end of 1854, and was intended for the duration of the war only. An annuity of £20 went with it. The Victoria Cross, instituted in 1856, was introduced to replace it, but when troops who fought in the Indian Mutiny (1857) complained that they were poorly rewarded with medals, having only the Victoria Cross to win, the Distinguished Conduct

Medal, minus its annuity, was restored in 1862.

It was the FIRST war in which troops had the benefit of big-scale exercises in the new camp at Chobham, and the first for which recruits were trained at Aldershot.

It was the FIRST European war in which soldiers sailed for the battlefields in steam-ships, though many troops—and great numbers of horses—went by sail.

## IT WAS THE LAST WAR...

It was the LAST European war in which the old long-service soldier fought. In 1847, enlistment for ten years instead of for life had been introduced.

It was the LAST European war in which wives of officers and men accompanied their men to the battlefields. At least one officer's wife embarked on a troopship with her own horse. When a group of Allied soldiers ran at Balaclava, an indignant wife cuffed and belaboured them as they fled.



# THERE WERE FOUR FAMOUS BATTLES

## HOW IT ENDED

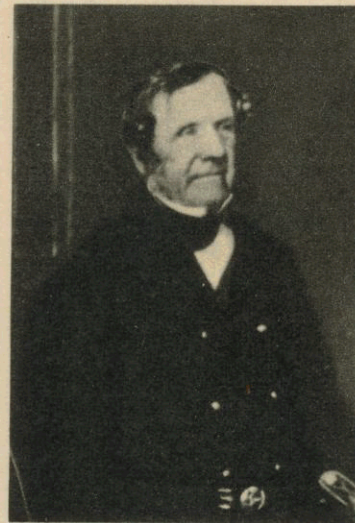
### ALMA

THERE was a touch of comedy about the way in which the British and French landed in the Crimea (of which they had no maps). They chose the port of Eupatoria, and sent a surrender demand to the Russian Governor. The Governor fumigated the document (for the British Army had already contracted cholera while concentrating in Bulgaria), realised he was outnumbered and instructed the invaders that they could land, but must consider themselves in strict quarantine.

That was the last touch of comedy in the campaign. The Allies had five rivers to cross before sighting Sebastopol, the defences of which were being ingeniously strengthened by the Russian Colonel Todleben. The sea approach to the harbour was blocked by sinking a series of ships across it.

On the River Alma was fought the first set-piece battle against the troops of General Menschikoff. It was a bungled battle which involved British Infantry crossing the stream, penetrating vineyards and scaling the steep bare heights held by the Russians. The new Minié rifle performed much execution. It was a proud battle for the Grenadiers and Coldstream, who advanced irresistibly up the heights in parade-ground order. In three hours the Russians lost 9000 men, the British 2000.

General Menschikoff temporarily withdrew his field army to an area where it was unlikely to be pursued. Sebastopol meanwhile continued to stiffen its defences. Belatedly the Allies looked for supply ports, and the British chose Balaclava. The main British army was installed on the Chersonese Uplands, overlooking Sebastopol. Still eager, the troops looked for the first time on a view which was to mock them for many long months.



The British Commander-in-Chief, Lord Raglan, a veteran of Waterloo. Worn out, disappointed, he died before Sebastopol.

Soon General Menschikoff counter-attacked at Balaclava, and succeeded in severing the paved road between the port and the siege camp. The long-drawn Battle of Balaclava was distinguished by three fine episodes: one, the repulse of a great body of Russian cavalry by the "thin red line" of the 93rd Highlanders (the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders) which alone, at that moment, stood between the Russians and the supply port; two, the superb charge by General James Scarlett's Heavy Brigade against the stationary mass of the Czar's cavalry, which was greatly superior in numbers; three, the equally superb, but tragic, charge of the Light Brigade (see pages 16-17).

Some days later General Menschikoff attacked again at Mount Inkerman. It was a "slog in a fog," and has also been called "the soldiers' battle," because the commanders had only the sketchiest idea of what was happening. What did happen was that 72,000 Russians failed to shift a force less than a quarter their own strength.

The siege of Sebastopol—the be-all and end-all of the campaign—went on intermittently during the late autumn and winter. Discomfited by his reverses, the Czar Nicholas died. During that winter cholera and other diseases



An Infantry commander reads out orders. The expression on the serjeant's face is "This is where I came in."

Below: A group of Staff officers, at ease: 1854 pattern.

ravaged the British Army, exposed on the Chersonese Uplands. At one period more than half the Army were sick. At last energetic steps were taken to fight the plague and to smarten up the supply lines. In April 1855 the siege of Sebastopol was resumed in earnest, and 500 guns assaulted the great fortress. Immense havoc was caused, but because of split counsels among the Allies there was no effective follow-up. A final bombardment was fixed for June 18—the Waterloo anniversary—but the infantry could not gain the fortress. Lord Raglan died of strain and disappointment a few days later. In Sebastopol, Todleben was badly wounded and had to be evacuated. He had done his job well.

Not until September 18 was the final assault made on Sebastopol. The French attack was successful; that of the young British recruits thrown against the Redan failed. It was not the British Army's proudest day, even though the Russians now withdrew from the fortress which had cost them unimaginable suffering.



THE war cost Russia half a million men. In the Crimea alone, some 153,000 died.

Hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers, combed from the remote recesses of All The Russias, died marching to Sebastopol. Russia's losses crippled her for a generation.

Under the Treaty of Paris she was banned from operating a fleet in the Black Sea—but soon disregarded the ban.

Britain's losses were 22,000 men. The number of British troops in the Crimea when the war ended exceeded 60,000 and there were thousands standing ready at Aldershot. The British Army ended the campaign well-fed, well-housed, well-clothed. Its medical arrangements, thanks in great part to the stimulus of Florence Nightingale, were so far advanced that the French sent out a delegation from Paris to study them. The supply lines were efficient too.

Among the lessons were these:—

- \* The war showed how far and how mightily an army based on sea power could strike, and how it could humble an enemy many times its size.

- The war showed that British soldiers, ably led by their regimental officers, could perform prodigies in snatching victory from error.

- \* The war revealed shocking Staff weaknesses. In 1855 the present Staff College was set up, and the notion that a knowledge of Staff work was something beneath the attention of a fighting soldier began to be combated.

- The war illuminated the folly of allowing wealthy peace-time officers to buy regiments over the heads of officers who had seen active service. Some years later the purchase of commissions was stopped and other outworn privileges were swept away.

- The war showed the stupidity of starving an army in peace-time and then expecting it to perform sudden prodigies with insufficient training and equipment. Politicians blamed the Crimean commanders for many things which could not in justice be laid at their doors.



"Roll on, demob!" Men of a British mortar battery wait for something to happen. All wars have their long spells of boredom.



In the rich annals of the British Army there is no more rousing story than the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava. Blunder though it was, the exploit sent a thrill round the world—and the story of it, re-told below, cannot fail to move new generations



The Charge of the Light Brigade inspired many artists. SOLDIER'S cover shows one version: here is another.

**L**IKE a cowboy riding recklessly down a near-precipice, an *aide-de-camp*, propelled by rage and zeal, urged his horse down to the Balaclava Plain.

A more cautious rider would have zig-zagged down the 800-foot slope. Captain Edward Nolan was a fanatic cavalryman, whose faith in what one horse could do was nothing to his faith in what massed squadrons of horsemen could do. Hell-for-leather, he slithered and plunged to the spot where Lord Lucan, commanding the Cavalry Division, sat on horseback with his Light Brigade on one side, his Heavy Brigade on the other.

Saluting, Captain Nolan presented the Commander with a scrap of paper which read:

"Lord Raglan wishes the cavalry to advance rapidly to the front, and try to prevent the enemy carrying away the guns. Troop of horse artillery may accompany. French cavalry is on your left. Immediate."

Lord Lucan read the order, not once but many times. It seemed to him excessively vague, even when read in conjunction with previous orders. He said so in the hearing of the impatient *aide*, who in an "authoritative" tone said: "Lord Raglan's orders are that the cavalry should attack immediately."

Lord Lucan was angered. Up on the heights, the Commander-in-Chief had a complete picture of the battlefield. On the plain, the disposition of the enemy redoubts was concealed by uneven ground.

"Attack, sir!" exclaimed Lord Lucan. "Attack what? What guns?"

Captain Nolan, half-Irish, half-Italian, was nearly beside himself.

## "THE BRIGADE WILL ADVANCE"

He knew, no doubt, which guns the Commander-in-Chief wished to attack: the captured British guns on the Causeway Heights, to the right flank, unseen. But Captain Nolan detested the slow-thinking Lord Lucan (Lord "Look-on"), who, in his opinion, had miserably mishandled the superb squadrons under his command. With a theatrical gesture of the arm—one of history's most expensive gestures—he cried, "There, my lord, is your enemy. There are your guns!" The gesture appeared to be in the direction, not of the Causeway Heights, but of the sinister, gun-flanked North Valley—or so Lord Lucan thought.

Lord Lucan had had a tormented morning. Now he was insulted in front of his troops by a mad-riding whippersnapper of the Staff, a fellow who had had the effrontery to write a book on cavalry. He could have put the insolent *aide* under arrest, or he could have choked back his wrath and asked for more information—information which the *aide* must have possessed. Instead he turned his back on Captain Nolan. He would obey the order to advance, even though the skies fell.

Alone, he rode off to transmit the order to his brother-in-law,

his heartily detested brother-in-law, Lord Cardigan, commanding the Light Brigade. Both men on this occasion were icily correct, but Lord Cardigan could not refrain from pointing out that the advance would involve entering a mile-long valley, flanked by guns and closed by guns at the far end. Lord Lucan shrugged and said that those were the orders from above.

Lord Cardigan, a harsh and arrogant figure, once the best-hated man in Britain, turned to his Staff and quietly ordered: "The Brigade will advance." To himself he said: "Well, here goes the last of the Brudenells."

Both brigades moved forward at a trot, the Light in front of the Heavy. A deflection of only twenty degrees in the path of their advance was all that was needed to carry them to the Causeway Heights, instead of into the deadly North Valley.

In the front line of the Light Brigade were the 13th Light Dragoons and the 17th Lancers. In the second line rode the 11th Hussars and in the third the 4th Light Dragoons and the 8th Hussars. Each regiment was extended in line, two deep. Fifty-seven-year-old Lord Cardigan, magnificent in crimson, blue and

gold, placed himself alone at a distance of two horses' lengths in advance of his Staff, and five horses' lengths in advance of the front line. Though "long in the fork," he sat tall and erect in the saddle. This part of his duty—leading the Brigade, as on review—he knew perfectly. Earlier that morning he had been criticised for not giving his Brigade the order to support the Heavies, in their tremendous clash with Russian cavalry. He had been given no specific order to do so, and he was a man who lacked initiative in the field. Now he had his orders—grotesque orders, as he thought, for it was unheard-of to hurl cavalry head-on against artillery—but if Lord Raglan wished it done, it should be done immaculately. In Lord Cardigan's mind, "advance" meant "attack."

After only one hundred paces came a melodramatic diversion. Captain Nolan, who had elected to ride with the 17th Lancers, galloped obliquely across the path of the advance, from left to right, turning round in his saddle, shouting and waving his sword. It seems likely that at this twelfth hour the *aide* had realised that the Brigade was advancing in the wrong direction and was trying to point out the true objective.



Captain Nolan was fated to inflame high commanders that day. The Russian guns were opening up and his desperate cries could not be distinguished. In the unseemly antics of the *aide*, Lord Cardigan saw only an attempt to urge the brigade forward.

What might have been the court-martial of the century was forestalled by a Russian shell-burst. A splinter ripped into Captain Nolan's chest. The sword fell from his hand though his arm still remained upraised; the grip of the other hand still held him firmly in the saddle. Then from the dying—or dead—*aide* came an inhuman, curdling cry, caused (as one writer thinks) by spasmodic forces, not by human will. The dead horseman rode right through the ranks of the 13th Light Dragoons before he fell from the saddle.

It was a deathly omen, for omen-fanciers.

Up on the heights, Lord Raglan and his Staff watched the scene in the sunlit valley as if it were a tattoo—a tattoo in a superb natural setting. Already that morning they had heard the fury and the cursing as the Heavies rode pell-mell into the Czar's stationary cavalry and routed them. Now a new act was to be staged, glorious and terrible.

At the start of the Light Brigade's advance an unnatural hush fell on the plain, the kind of hush which, in a circus, is artificially created in order to lend drama to a feat of exceptional daring. Understandably, the Russian gunners were slow to grasp the enormity of the enterprise which the brilliantly caparisoned squadrons were about to attempt. How should they know that the whole thing was a fantastic error? But when they realised that the unbelievable was happening they praised their Czar and passed the ammunition. If the British wanted glory, they should have it.

From the "cannon to left of them," from the "cannon to right of them," from the "cannon in front of them" hot iron was lobbed ceaselessly into the brilliant, rippling lines. Far ahead, the troopers in the front rank could see the flame-streaked smoke clouds hanging over the 12-gun battery across the valley, the battery which they now understood to be the main objective.

At first the fire, though withering, was not the kind calculated to mop out half a troop at once—though that was to come soon enough. As a rider was hit, the glittering lines momentarily distended while the troopers rode clear of the tumbling dead, then closed up again. In like fashion, giant rollers advance though fretted by reefs, then heal up for the last plunge to shore. Rigorously, Lord Cardigan controlled the pace, as he had been ordered to do. Whether they rode to death or victory, the squadrons would go down the valley in parade-ground order.

They would die in splendid symmetry, as they lived. A captain of the 17th Lancers, who was in a hurry to be amid the guns as the better of two evils, was held back by the flat of Lord Cardigan's sword across his breast and ordered to fall back.

The Heavies rode behind, the Heavies who had already fought desperately that morning. Soon the pace, throttled as it was, began to tell on them, and their ranks too were raked by Russian fire. Lord Lucan now had another heavy decision to make. He had ordered "advance," not "charge," but Lord Cardigan was clearly riding irrevocably for the guns. It was impossible to stop him. The Cavalry Commander watched

round-shot" burying itself in the trunk of man or horse. But not only round-shot and grape-shot were thinning the doomed squadrons; from the Fedioukine Hills, to the left flank, Russian infantry loosed a steady rain of rifle balls.

What did they think of—the troopers who took part in this fantastic ride? Their one urge was to reach the guns. In this dismal campaign the Light Brigade had constantly been held back. Comrades who had never wielded lance in anger had died of cholera. Now they would show, not only "the damned Cossacks" but their own "damned Heavies", how to fight. They were exalted. They raged with the tremendous, infectious excitement which al-

charge now slowed to an estimated seventeen miles an hour. It was each man for himself. To ride a horse into the confusion of guns, carts and limbers would have been a precarious feat at any time, but each man chose his opening and spurred for it.

As Lord Cardigan reached the guns a 12-pounder was discharged almost, as it seemed, in his face and the long spurt of flame appeared to engulf him. But he rode through a narrow gap and was lost to sight in the fumes.

Then the troopers were in among the guns, hacking and thrusting in a fine frenzy. Some of them performed "hideous wonders in the way of slaughter." One officer was beset by a blood lust and cut down Russian after Russian with his own hand; later a nervous reaction set in and he cried like a child. The Russian gunners, for the most part, fought bitterly; only a few cowered under the hot guns, even under their frightened horses.

Behind the guns waited a grim array of Russian cavalry, among them the same riders who had been thrashed that morning by the Heavies. Captain Morris who led the 17th Lancers (both front-line regiments were commanded by captains) found that his portion of the line outflanked the guns. He, therefore, led as many men as he could summon straight at a group of enemy horsemen. Picking out an officer who appeared to be the squadron-leader, Captain Morris spitted him so fiercely that his sword sank in the man's chest up to the hilt. When he tried to pull out his blade from the fallen horseman he was unable to do so. Tethered to the ground by one arm, Captain Morris was hacked at by the enemy until he momentarily lost consciousness. When he came to, his sword had become disengaged—he never knew how—and riders were thrusting at him with their lances. By a circular rotation of his sword he was able to deflect their lance-points and at the same time to slash their thighs. Then one lance-point pierced his temple and all but stunned him. A Russian officer struck up the lances of his men and invited Captain Morris to surrender. The odds were hopeless; he gave up his sword. That was just one man's battle. All around, officers and men fought out their private wars, against gunners or knots of cavalymen. When their horses were shot from under them, they seized stray horses and remounted.

Lord Cardigan extracted himself from the fray as soon as he could. He had led the charge, as was his duty; it was no part of that duty to hack and thrust among common soldiers. He could see hardly any survivors of the Brigade, though a few injured men were leading their broken horses back up the valley—a valley twitching with hot flesh and strewn with cannon balls.



Like an interrupted game of marbles: cannon balls on a Crimean battlefield. Long after the Six Hundred passed, the North Valley at Balaclava must have presented just such a scene as this.

the doomed light horsemen sweeping down the valley, with his old regiment—the 17th Lancers—in the van and made his decision. To Lord William Paulet he said: "They have sacrificed the Light Brigade; they shall not have the Heavy if I can help it."

Still fuming over the effrontery of Captain Nolan, Lord Cardigan set his gaze on the centre of the 12-gun battery. At nine-thirty that morning he had taken over command of the Brigade after sleeping on his yacht in Balaclava Bay. If the charge had been ordered a little earlier, he would not have been there to lead it, and there would have been a tremendous row. But here he was, after long years of peace-time soldiering, suddenly called on to ride the path to glory.

Never once did Lord Cardigan look back. No one could accuse him of an instant's wavering. Behind him men from humble homes and heirs of great lands died to the sound of parade-ground orders—"Close in to the centre!" "Back, right flank!" "Close in!" "Close in!" "Look to your dressing!"

The most evil sound of the battle, worse than the whine of iron (says the historian Kinglake) was "the moist plunge of the

ways went with a cavalry charge. It was "the hour when death is like a light and blood is like a rose." Men rode for regiment, for squadron, for troop. At last their urge to be at the guns forced Lord Cardigan to quicken the pace, but always he kept the correct distance in front.

The ordeal for those in the rear ranks was a heavy one. They were thinned as mercilessly as the foremost riders. Constantly death rode through them and they rode over death. Especially were they tormented by the riderless, crazed chargers which hurtled about the valley and then strove to regain the shelter of the ranks. At one time Lord George Paget (who is said to have smoked a cigar all the way to the guns) had three or four riderless horses jostling him on one flank, and five on the other. They covered his legs with blood and he had to drive them off with his sword.

At eighty yards from the guns a heavy salvo tumbled a wave of men from their saddles—but fifty men, crazed with excitement, still rode in the front rank. At last, through the soaring smoke, they saw the rosy brass mouths of the cannon aimed point-blank at the chests of their horses. The



The survivors were still strafed as they straggled back, but not from the Fedioukine Hills. When General Morris, commanding the *élite* Chasseurs d'Afrique, saw the Light Brigade ride to its doom, he chivalrously sent his Algerian horsemen to charge the batteries on the Fedioukine Hills. The irresistible Chasseurs silenced not only the guns but the Infantry. It was almost precisely the kind of action which the Light Brigade should have executed on the opposite heights.

Many who survived the tumultuous twenty minutes were still in a state of exaltation. Lord Cardigan said to a group of them: "Men, it is a mad-brained trick, but it is no fault of mine." Some of the men answered: "Never mind, my lord, we are ready to go again."

For Lord Raglan on the heights it had been a morning of agony and anger. He greeted Lord Cardigan with: "What do you mean, sir, by attacking a battery in front contrary to the usages of warfare and the customs of the Service?" Lord Cardigan could have said many things; he merely pointed out that he had obeyed an order.

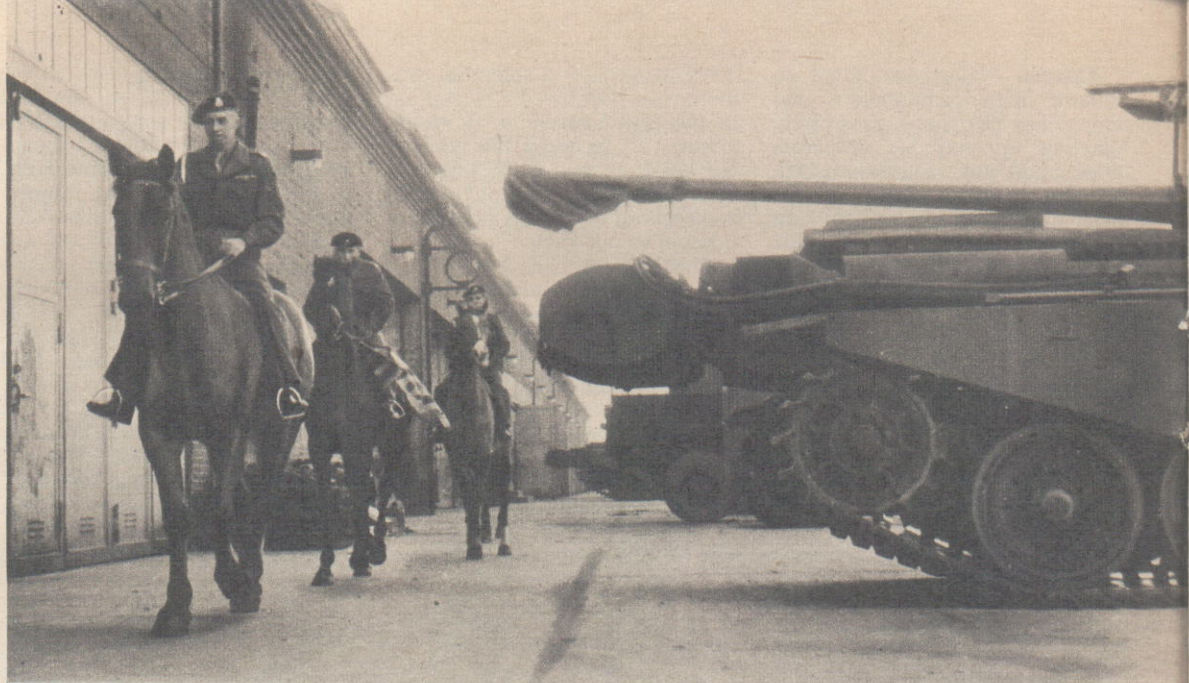
Later it was Lord Lucan's turn. "You have lost the Light Brigade," Lord Raglan said to him. Angrily, Lord Lucan replied that he, too, had obeyed orders. Those were the first exchanges in an inquest which still continues.

Through the autumn afternoon the shattered squadrons licked their wounds. Grim-faced farriers went about the battlefield shooting maimed and slaving beasts. The man who had splendidly led the charge rode, still fuming, to his yacht in Balacava Bay for a bath and dinner, with champagne. Lord Lucan sat out the night in his freezing tent, with his men. No camp fires could be lit that night.

When the toll was taken, it was found that the 673 horsemen who rode into action had been reduced to a mounted strength of 195. The 13th Light Dragoons mustered only ten mounted men. A later count showed 113 officers and men killed, 134 wounded, 475 horses killed and 42 wounded.

Up on the heights a French general, General Bosquet, summed it up, not unjustly: "It is magnificent, but it is not war."

\* A. W. Kinglake's "Invasion of the Crimea" (from which most of the facts in the above were taken) contains the longest account of the charge. Cecil Woodham-Smith's "The Reason Why" (reviewed in SOLDIER, December 1953) is a "double biography" of Lord Lucan and Lord Cardigan, and ends with an excellent description of the Battle of Balacava.



The dream and the reality; past the tank garages file the Lancers' well-loved horses.

## LANCERS IN CENTURIONS

**SOLDIER visits one of the regiments which charged with the Light Brigade at Balacava. It can still put horses in the field!**

ONE of the best-known regimental devices in the British Army is the skull-and-crossbones surmounting the words "Or Glory." The 17th/21st Lancers always refer to the device as their regimental motto, not as their badge. Worn in the cap, it becomes a cap-motto.

The skull-and-crossbones did not, as is widely supposed, have its origin in the charge of the Light Brigade at Balacava. Its history is nearly a century longer, and its originator was Lieutenant-Colonel John Hale, the man who was commissioned to raise the 17th Light Dragoons in 1759, when he returned from Canada bearing despatches announcing Wolfe's victory and death.

The significance of the motto, says Sir John Fortescue, the Army's historian, "lies not so much in clap-trap sentiment, as in the fact that it is, as it were, a perpetual commemoration of the death of Wolfe." It was, in any event, an astute choice. In the last 195 years, the motto has attracted many a fine recruit to the "Death or Glory Boys."

Soon the Regiment—now in Germany—is to have another connection with Colonel John Hale. One of his descendants is expected to join the Regiment next year—the first of the family to do so since the first commander.

Colonel Hale's regiment was to achieve a number of distinctions; for example, it provided the only genuine Horse Marines. This

was a detachment which disembarked from HMS *Hermione* in the 1790s to quell an insurrection on a West Indian island, and then re-embarked. Another distinction the Regiment claims with pride is that the only two soldiers to have their statues erected in Whitehall were both commanding officers of the 17th Lancers—the Duke of Cambridge and Earl Haig.

As a composite regiment, the 17th/21st Lancers can claim to have taken a foremost part in the

three great lance charges in the history of the British Cavalry—the 17th at Balacava, and at Ulundi in the Zulu War, and the 21st (Sir Winston Churchill with them) at Omdurman in the Sudan.

A glass-case in the sergeants' mess commemorates the most recent high-light in their history. It contains white overalls and a beret with field-marshal's badge worn by the Duke of Edinburgh when he visited the Regiment, and his personal standard, flown on the tank in which he rode.

In a busy tank regiment with a long history, it is not surprising that, except for a few pictures, there is little to remind the casual visitor of Balacava. On the commanding officer's desk, however, is the regimental motto worn by the trumpet-major of the 17th Lancers in the Charge of the Light Brigade—now mounted in stone, to serve as a paper-weight.

When, this year, the 17th/21st Lancers commemorate the Charge of the Light Brigade, they will forget for a little while that they are now mounted in Centurion tanks.

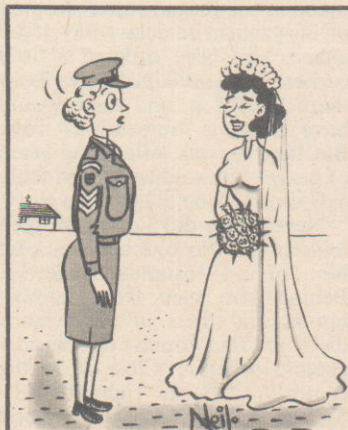
The Regiment can produce more than 20 horses of its own, one belonging to the sergeants' mess. Whatever form the centenary commemoration takes, horses will be there.

"This is our favourite squadron," Lieutenant-Colonel D. C. Barbour, the Commanding Officer, told SOLDIER as he opened the door to the stables. And Corporal Harry Thomas, who is in charge of the Regiment's stables, pointed out a glass-fronted case full of rosettes won by the Regiment's horses. "We collected 180 last year."

Though the Lancers handle their tanks as well as the next regiment—as their war-time record in North Africa and Italy confirms—the horse is still very near to them. They were mechanised in India in 1938, and the Regiment has more than a hand-



This motto worn at Balacava now adorns a paper-weight.

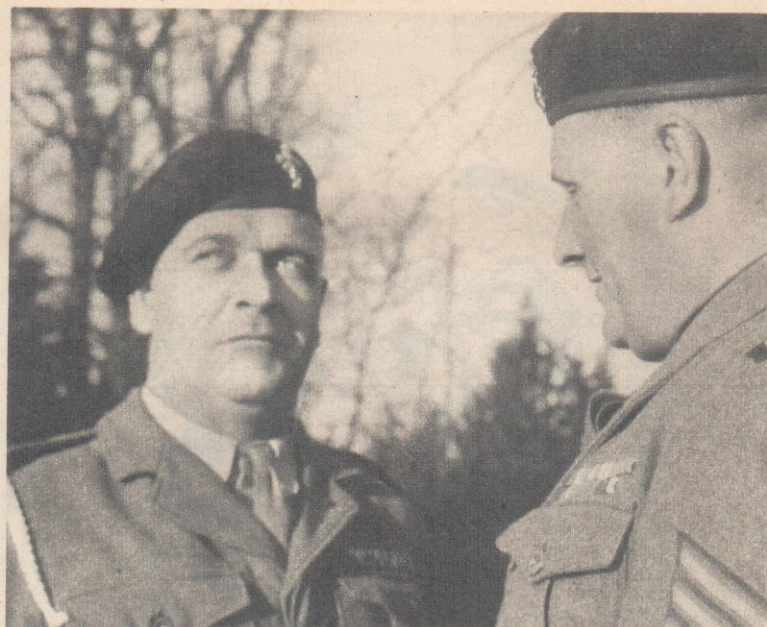


"Could I be excused first parade this afternoon, serjeant?"





Who ever heard of a tank winning a rosette? The horses of the 17th/21st Lancers won 180 awards last year.



They joined to ride horses, now they repair tanks: Staff-Serjeant W. Graves (left) and Staff-Serjeant R. Phillips, now both of REME

ful of members who can remember what it was like to parade on horse-back. Some of them have served with the Regiment continuously ever since.

One of these is the Quartermaster, Captain G. A. S. Graham, now the oldest serving member of the Regiment. He joined the 17th/21st in 1929 and is proud to say that, except for courses, he has spent every minute of his service with the Regiment. The connection of Regimental Quartermaster-Serjeant Charles Swift with the Regiment is nearly as long. After being pianist at Berlin's famous Adlon Hotel, he joined the 17th/21st Lancers as a musician in 1930. He left the band when war broke out, but

has never left the Regiment.

In the light aid detachment are three non-commissioned officers with a similar boast. Staff-Serjeant R. Phillips, who joined in 1935, Armourer Quartermaster-Serjeant S. Wardrope and Staff-Serjeant W. Graves, who both joined in 1936, all enlisted to ride horses. Now they all belong to the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, but not one of them has served away from the Regiment except for courses. They proudly wear the 17th/21st Lancers' numerals above their REME shoulder-titles.

"The Regiment found that men who were good in days of horses were good at other things," says Lieutenant-Colonel Barbour.



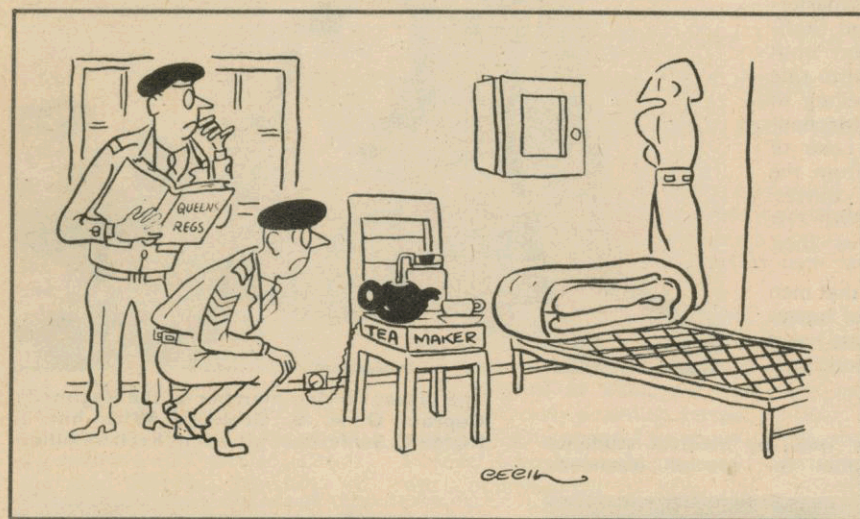
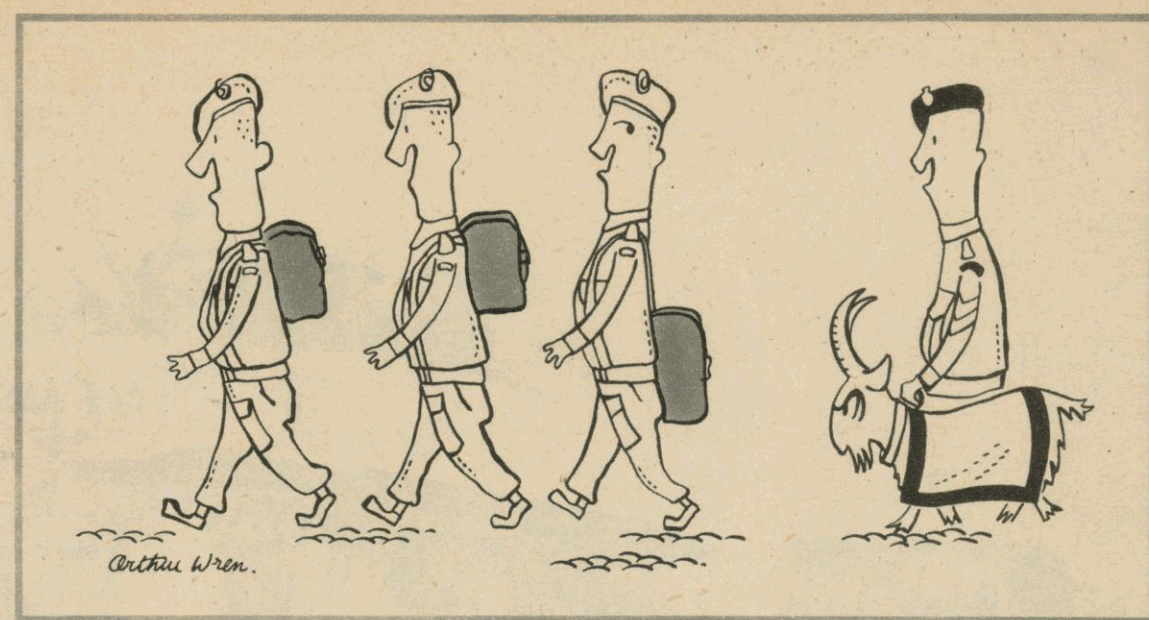
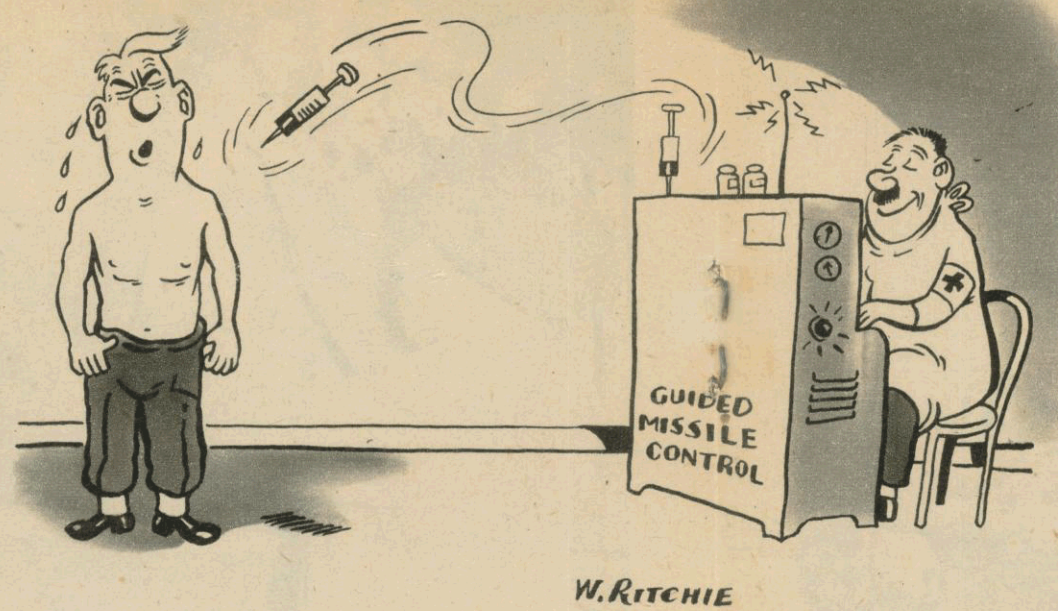
The oldest serving member of the Regiment, Captain G. A. S. Graham, With him is RQMS C. Swift, once pianist at Berlin's Adlon.

The skull in the glass-case was presented to the serjeants' mess by medical students. It is made of plastic and has interior electric lights for special occasions.

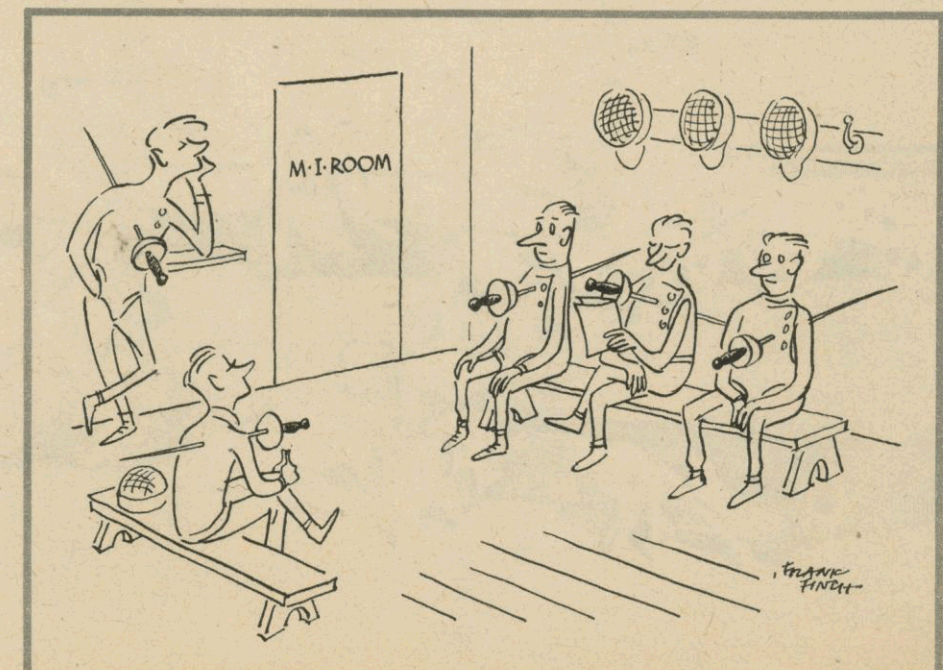
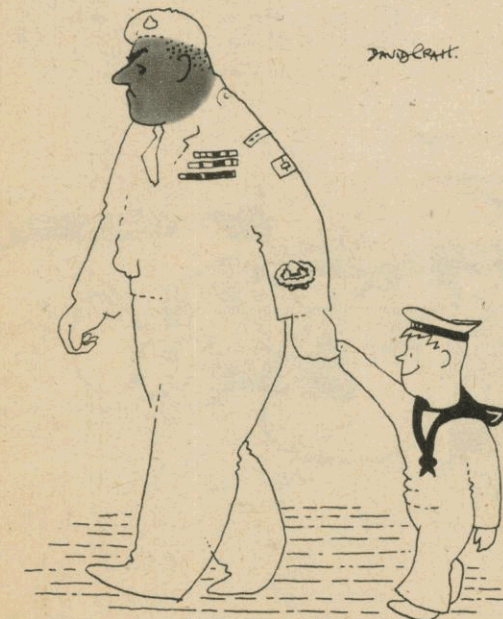
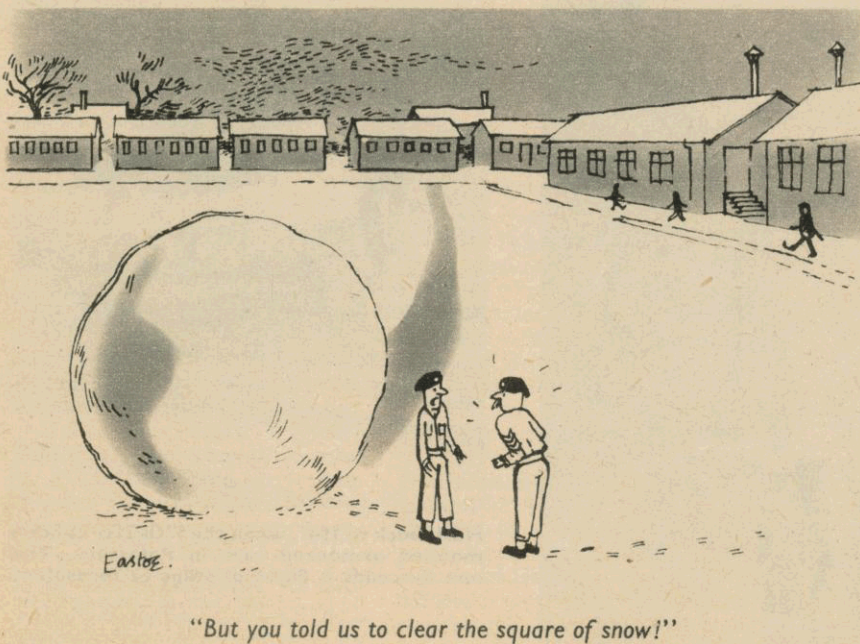
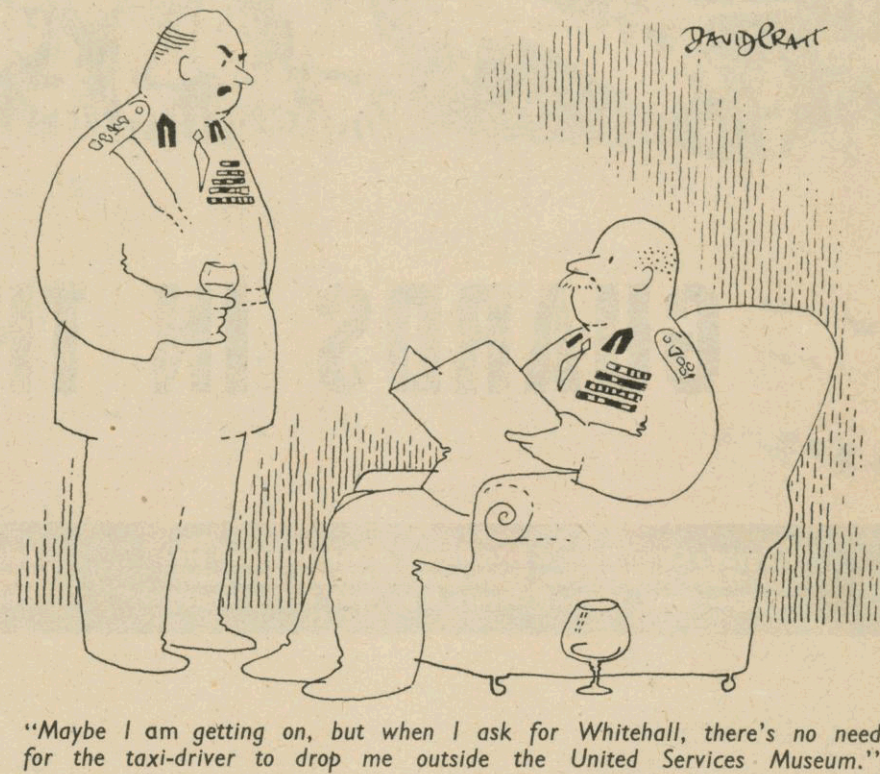


Flash-back to 1947, when the 17th/21st Lancers manned armoured cars in Palestine. This one descends a flight of steps in Jerusalem.





## SOLDIER HUMOUR







# GUARDS IN THE DESERT

In Egypt's Canal Zone, a detachment of the anti-tank platoon of the 1st Battalion, Scots Guards, sets out on a desert exercise. Their sawn-off Stuart tank tows a 17-pounder.

Below: A section of the medium machine-gun platoon prepares to engage a target in a "non-tactical" setting. One of the platoon's key men is the range-taker on the left.







Brothers-in-arms: these seven pairs of brothers serve in the same battalion,

Left: A big moment in any overseas station: the corporals - in - waiting collect the company mail.

Right: Guard-dog Butch has his own sentry-box at the entrance to the Battalion's desert camp. With him is Serjeant E. Marchant of the regimental police.

Below: Instruction for the pipers of the 1st Battalion from Pipe-Major J. Roe, BEM.

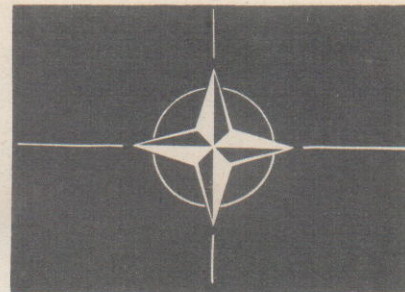
Photographs: Lance-Corporal P. Townsend, Royal Engineers.





*Today at SHAPE General Gruenther can call on forces three times as powerful as those commanded by General Eisenhower*

The emblem of NATO: "A four-pointed star representing the compass that keeps us on the right road, the path of peace, and a circle representing unity."



## FIVE YEARS OF "A GREAT ADVENTURE"

NATO has been called—by a top-ranking officer—"an uninspiring, concocted word."

Let's admit it. The curse of the day is that great ideals have to be expressed in initials, so that they sound like ointments or cough cures. Probably no other organisation has spawned initials so freely as NATO. Its high commanders are called SACEUR, SACLAN, CINCENT, CINCHAN and even CINCMACHAN. (Soon somebody will ask how the Duke of Wellington ever won his battles without calling himself CINCPEN—Commander-in-Chief Peninsula).

But no one should let the barrage of initials frighten him away from trying to understand NATO. What is in danger of being overlooked is that NATO is an idea which ought to fire the imagination. In Lord Ismay's phrase: "It's a great adventure. It is perhaps the most challenging and most constructive experiment in international relations that has ever been attempted." Yet to thousands of soldiers, even those who

have dug trenches at its command, and seen the white walls of its new barracks rising from the mud of Germany, NATO still remains something of an abstraction. How many soldiers could name the 14 members of the alliance?

After five years NATO is a thriving youngster, though it had some nasty setbacks in infancy and its health will always need care. But the essential fact is that it is alive and kicking.

The defensive alliance which is NATO constitutes a single force, stretching from the eastern seaboard of the North American continent to the mountains of Asia Minor. It works for the safety of 350,000,000 people—people who share three-quarters of the world's

industrial strength. It does not represent, by a long way, the whole of the free world, but it represents a formidable part of it.

If the West is threatened again, 14 nations will go into action under one command, operating a common plan, with common weapons—instead of fighting their own wars, with inadequate resources, untrained staffs and scant reference to their allies.

Though there have been military alliances since the dawn of history, their weakness has always been the lack of a rehearsed plan, a single command.

Today no small nation can afford to stock the full range of modern weapons, or to lay down mile-long concrete runways wherever the strategists want them. (Building an airfield is not just a matter of applying concrete poultices to the cold breast of Mother Earth—for each field there must be jet fuel pipe-lines, enough water

to give every man 40 gallons a day, electricity, sewage, barracks, messes, hospital, chapel, canteen, recreation-rooms.) But between them 14 nations, great and small, can build up a giant armoury and a gratifying network of airfields.

Today, General Alfred M. Gruenther, Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, commands forces three times as strong as those General Eisenhower commanded when he left SHAPE. In emergency, he will be able to call on nearly three and a half million men. He can summon at the moment some 4000 aircraft, mostly jets, more than double the number available two years before. In three years the number of NATO airfields has risen from 20 to 120, and there are as many nationally operated airfields on which to draw. Everywhere streamlined barracks and depots are going up at NATO'S direc-

The NATO spirit: These Servicemen and Servicewomen serving at SHAPE are on a sight-seeing tour of Paris.





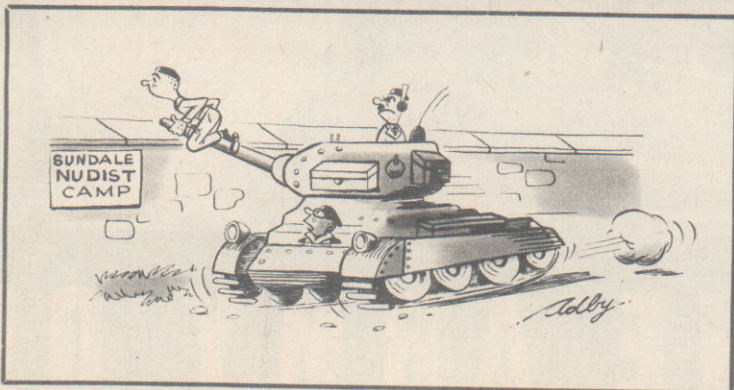
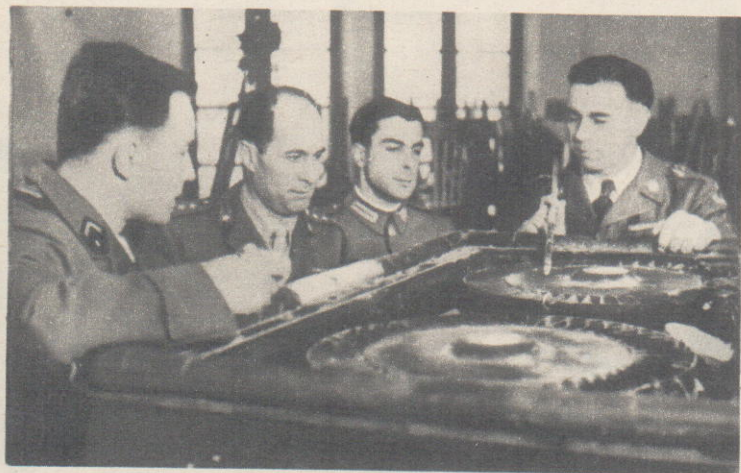
tion—with everything standardised down to the shape of the fence-posts. From the North Cape to the eastern Mediterranean, Europe is being pipelined and wired and radio-linked against a day of emergency.

Yet NATO'S record is not to be measured only in the dead-weight of its "infrastructure"—the jargonists' name for permanent installations. Its experts have been at immense pains to simplify and speed up the production of weapons, and to standardise as many of them as possible—a notable example being the Belgian FN rifle. They have done much to standardise signalling and operational procedure in all three Services. Not their least success has been to agree on a common method of preparing Intelligence reports.

It will surprise many to know that last year NATO held more than 100 military exercises, mostly involving use of land, sea and air forces in varying strengths. The most notable land exercise was Grand Repulse, in which thousands of troops of the British Army of the Rhine took part.

In Paris NATO has a Defence College which trains officers for key appointments, and at the various headquarters—from Bad Oeynhausen to Oslo, from Malta to Izmir, from Naples to Copenhagen—officers and men in many uniforms are learning to speak a common language, both officially and unofficially. In fact, NATO offers more than a military alliance. It is encouraging that community spirit which Europe has lacked for a thousand years.

At the NATO Tank Training Centre near Paris an American serjeant instructs (left to right) a French officer, an Italian officer and a Portuguese officer. Somehow they find a common language.



## IN BRIEF...

**T**HE North Atlantic Treaty—bringing NATO into being—was signed on 4 April, 1949. Its purpose was to defend the free world against Communist aggression.

The first member states were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Holland, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States. Later, Greece and Turkey joined.

If any or all are attacked, the members of the alliance will take such action as they deem necessary, including the use of armed force.

Western Germany does not belong to NATO, though NATO operates on its soil. There is a proposal that Germany should contribute to a six-nation European Army under the European Defence Community, the other contributions coming from Belgium, France, Holland, Italy and Luxembourg. Britain has declined to join EDC because of her heavy Commonwealth commitments, but would put troops in the field beside the forces of EDC.

French fears that a German Army under NATO would become too powerful led to the EDC plan.



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'the brightest jewel in her  
court' according to good*



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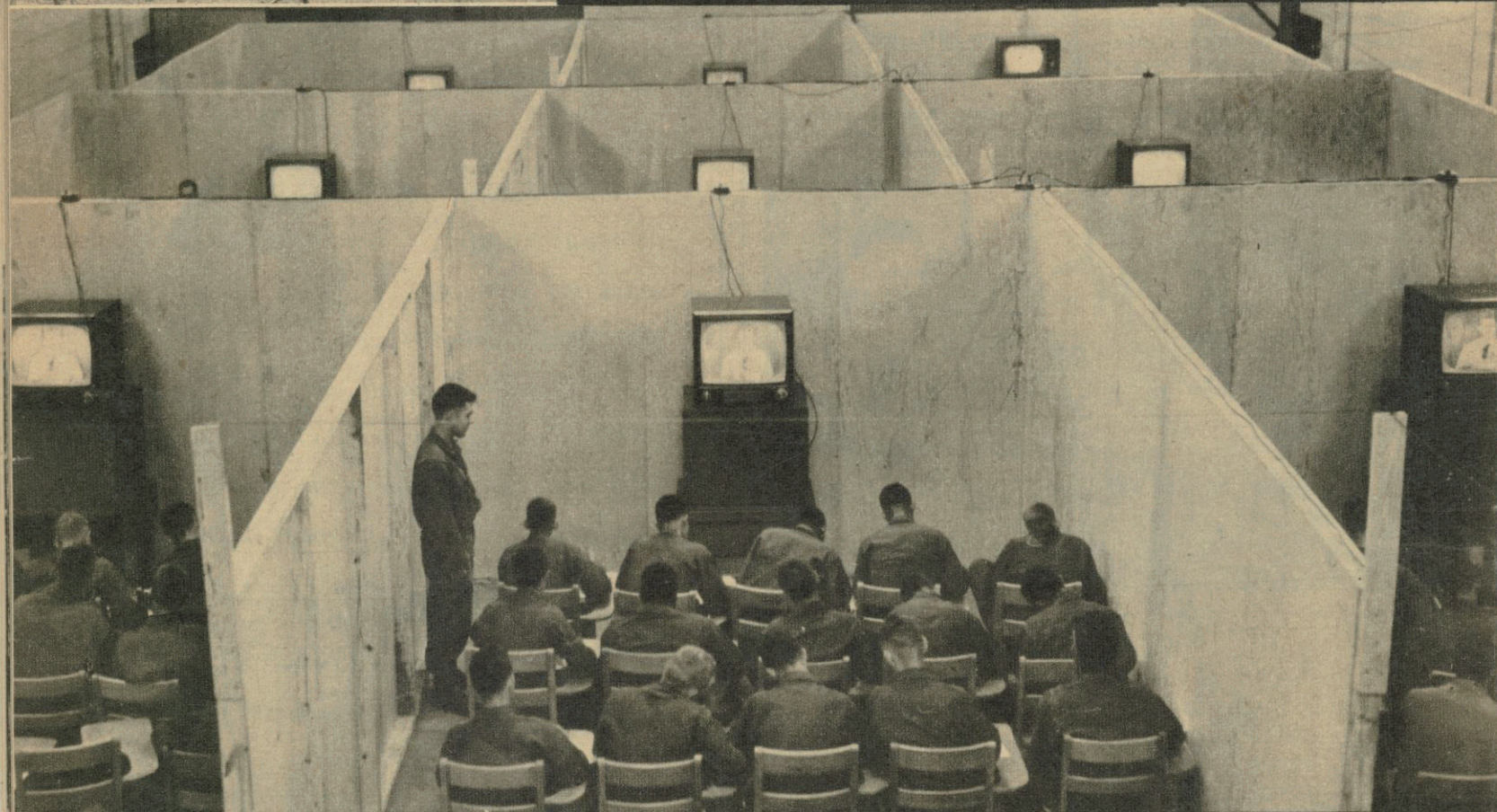
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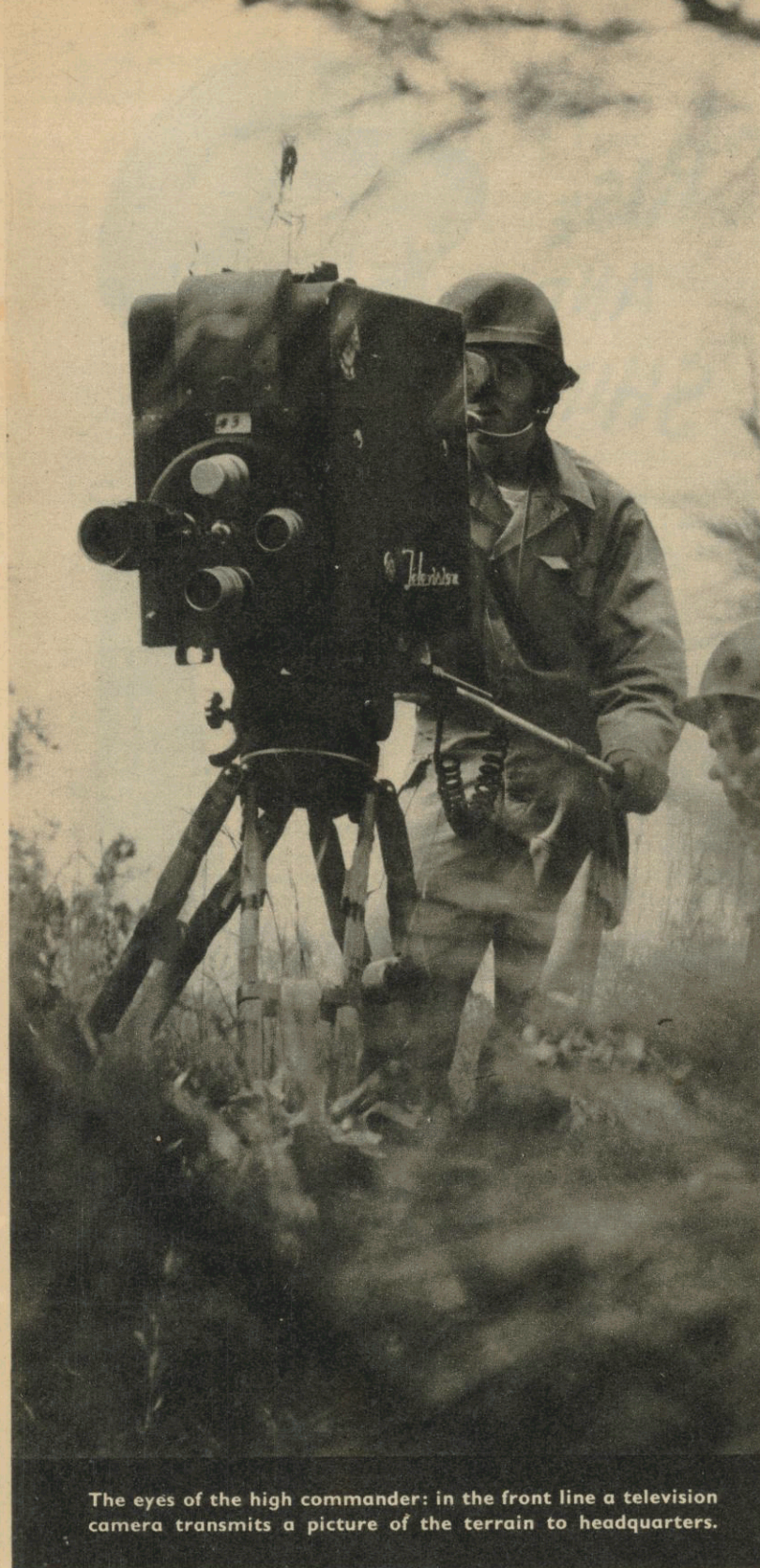




Left: Part of a mobile television unit is a high-lift truck to carry cameras. Above: a television camera is mounted in a liaison aircraft, ready to "report" an airdrop to headquarters. Below: The Army instruction of the future? Nine television classrooms are seen from the control room, at an Army base in the United States.



# IS THIS THE ARMY OF



The eyes of the high commander: in the front line a television camera transmits a picture of the terrain to headquarters.

TELEVISION, as a form of entertainment, is making big strides in the British Army (see *SOLDIER*, February).

But television has operational possibilities, too, as the pictures on these pages show. A Signal Corps Mobile Television Section of the United States Army demonstrates some of the possibilities.

It has also been suggested that television could assist in steering a guided missile to its destination. A camera in the missile's nose would transmit a close-up of the target before impact. In similar fashion boats loaded with explosive could be steered against sea targets.

# TOMORROW?

*You march in the rain  
you groan and complain*

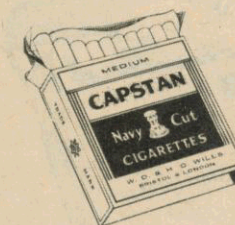


*Till the sergeant relents and unbends*

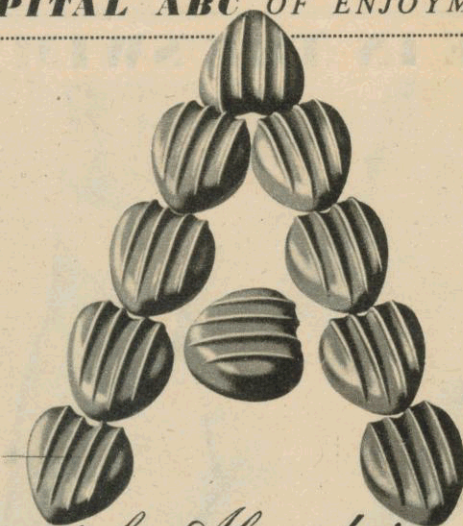


*To surprised rank and file  
he says with a smile*

**"Have a CAPSTAN"**  
*—they're made to make friends"*



**CAPITAL ABC OF ENJOYMENT**



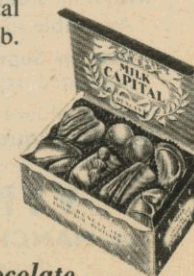
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- 2 Take the lid off the tin.
- 3 Remove dust and dirt from the boot.
- 4 Put a little Kiwi on the boot with a rag or brush.
- 5 Damp a rag with water.
- 6 Moisten the boot with the rag.
- 7 Finish with a dry cloth and "You could shave in it."

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# Blowing Up The Heavy Water—in FACT

**H**ERE is another book about the brilliant war-time exploits of Norwegian saboteurs, trained in Britain and parachuted back into their native snows.

Captain Knut Haukelid, author of "Skis Against The Atom" (Kimber 15s.), led two successful attacks which may well have altered the course of history.

One was against the heavy water plant in the snow-bound mountains of Rjukan, and the other was the sinking of a ferry-boat carrying the Germans' entire stock of heavy water, in process of evacuation. The saboteurs knew that heavy water

was of vital value to the Germans in their research into the atom bomb (which is more than the British soldier knew).

Earlier in the war a party of more than 30 volunteers of 1st Airborne Division—in two transport planes and two gliders—had

set out on a similar mission. Many were killed on landing; the rest were wiped out to a man, some being poisoned by a German doctor and thrown into the sea with stones on their feet.

"Never give a man a chance. If you've got him down, kick him to death" was the grim doctrine the saboteurs learned in England.

Captain Haukelid and his comrades lived a lonely life in huts on Norway's Barren Mountains, in conditions of utmost rigour. They slew reindeer, when possible, for food, but they often went hungry. Down in the valleys were Norwegians who had food but no weapons; up on the peaks were Norwegians who had weapons, but no food. Among those "weapons" were chloroform (for Norwegian watchmen) and suicide pills.

The raid on the Rjukan plant, as Captain Haukelid describes it, was almost too easy. It resulted in a tremendous "flap." The Reichskommissar seized ten leading hostages and threatened to shoot them, but General Falkenhorst arrived and ordered their release. "He said the operation was of a military nature; moreover, he added, it was the best job he had ever seen." Twelve thousand German soldiers ranged

the mountains looking for the culprits, destroying huts. It was necessary for Captain Haukelid and his men to leave the minimum of ski trails, which meant going on long detours so that their tracks should coincide with those of villagers. Occasionally they crossed the border to Sweden.

The destruction of the ferry, a most skilfully prepared feat, was a grim task, for it meant sending Norwegian passengers—fourteen, as it turned out—to their death. But the ferry's cargo was one of the utmost danger to the Allied cause. If this attempt had failed, the consignment would have been attacked by others who were lying in wait.

Throughout, the Royal Air Force did a fine job of parachuting supplies, including baby clothes for the wife of one of the Resistance men.

Among lesser acts of sabotage by the Norwegian Resistance was the abstracting of German anti-aircraft rounds which they filled with much more powerful explosive and replaced. As a result several guns were blown to pieces. At one time the Resistance succeeded in tapping Quisling's telephone calls. There was even a proposal that he should be kidnapped for displaying in Piccadilly Circus!

## —and in FICTION

**T**HERE used to be rumours—not confirmed and never likely to be—that the war work of certain young women in World War Two was to see how far they could fascinate young men chosen for dangerous missions in enemy territory. If a potential saboteur fell hook, line and sinker for a voluptuous young woman and talked to her about his job he was Returned to Unit—or so the story went.

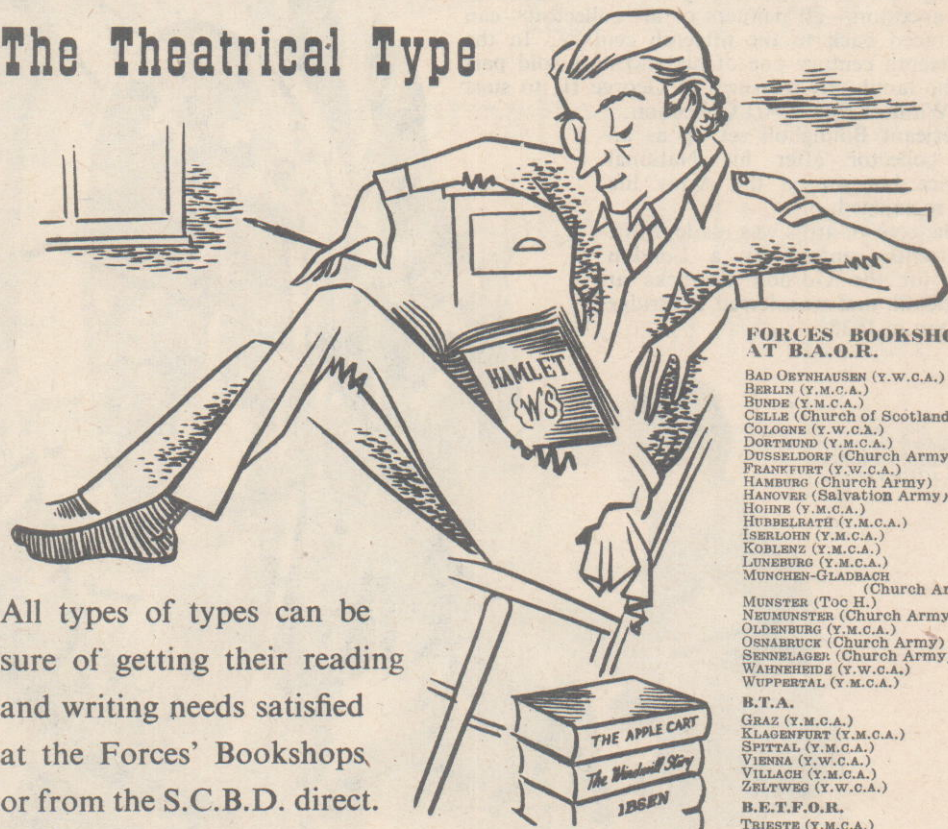
One saboteur who should have been given this treatment is the hero of the novel "Johnnie's Sister" by Leigh Howard (Longmans 10s. 6d.). A young British officer, he is parachuted into Norway to take part in an attack with the Norwegian Resistance on a German heavy water plant. The author says there is no resemblance between this exploit and any real-life enterprise, and one is glad of this assurance.

The hero, David, has a best friend in England who is a Norwegian, with a sister in Oslo. Recklessly, he decides to look her up. Her name is Synnove, and she is staggeringly beautiful. In no time at all he is engaged in the utmost intimacies with her. Some may feel this a curious way to behave with one's best friend's sister, but as the magistrates say, "This is not a court of morals." So intoxicated is David with Synnove's beauty that he prattles to her of atoms. Nor does he bother to wonder seriously how she comes to have so many war-time luxuries, so many fine clothes, and such a luxurious flat in occupied Oslo. The reader at an early stage suspects that Synnove does not earn this money by performing invisible darning in a shop window, but

David has no suspicions. Eventually his Resistance friends tell him that Synnove is the plaything of German naval officers, and suggest that he should do something about it. He does.

The raid on the heavy water plant makes an exciting enough episode. There is interest, too, in the account of the day-to-day life of the Norwegian Resistance. The pity is that the young British hero had to be such a clot.

## The Theatrical Type



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# The Campaign You Never Heard of

**P**ORTUGAL was a neutral in World War Two—yet one little-known campaign was fought out in a Portuguese colony.

It was, of course, a minor campaign, but just how far-reaching were its effects can never be reliably assessed. The plain fact is that in 1942 it tied down as many as 30,000 Japanese troops, at a time when the Japanese Army was stretched to its limits across Indonesia and South-East Asia.

This was accomplished by a handful of Australian troops and a few Dutch, sometimes outnumbered by a hundred to one. The Australians lost 40 men killed; the Japanese killed are estimated at 1500.

The story of this campaign is told by Lieutenant-Colonel Bernard J. Callinan, DSO, MC, in "Independent Company" (Heinemann, 18s). It starts in 1941, when a military mission arrived in Australia from Britain to teach the Australians the newly-devised art of the Independent Company

—later to be called the Commando.

Timor, to which the 2/2 Australian Independent Company was sent, is an island about 300 miles long and 40 wide, the western half of which was a Dutch colony and the eastern half a Portuguese colony. When the Japanese invaded, in February, 1942, the 2/2 Company was an uninvited guest in the Portuguese half of the island, a fact which the neutral Portuguese accepted with mixed feelings.

As the Japanese landed, the Australians withdrew into the hills and settled down to guerilla

warfare. For two months they had no communication with Australia, where it was believed that, like the main Australian force in Dutch Timor, they had been forced to surrender. Then, from odds and ends, an improvised high-powered transmitter was built and supplied with current by an old motor-car generator operated by natives on the other end of a complicated system of wheels and ropes. Contact with Australia was established. Now came stores for the Australians, and bombs for the Japanese.

For nearly a year the Australians fought on, beset by disease, resisting Japanese drives, hampered by a private war between the Portuguese and some of the natives. The 2/4 Independent Company came to join the 2/2,

then the 2/2 was evacuated.

The Japanese, as usual, provided some laughs. A commander called on the Australians to surrender, saying he knew they were in a bad way because he had himself seen through binoculars an Australian without a shirt. Outside a coffee and rubber plantation in which the Japanese had a large interest they erected a notice: "Australians, do not enter this area."

The Australians' native followers, *criados*, served them loyally. One stayed with his wounded master while the Japanese searched the neighbourhood, then moved him just ahead of the Japanese. Another was captured, refused to give information and escaped by biting the ropes with which they had tied him. Others carried messages through the Japanese lines.

Towards the end, the Australians had to take over some of the work of the civil government in the area they were occupying. The author, by then commander of the force, was called on to give a verdict on a disputed cock-fight.

The Australian Commandos evacuated Timor in good order, and lived to fight another day, in New Guinea.

## BIGGEST COAT-OF-ARMS?

**O**NLY twice in two centuries has the task of painting the giant coat-of-arms at Gordon Barracks, Bridge of Don, been undertaken.

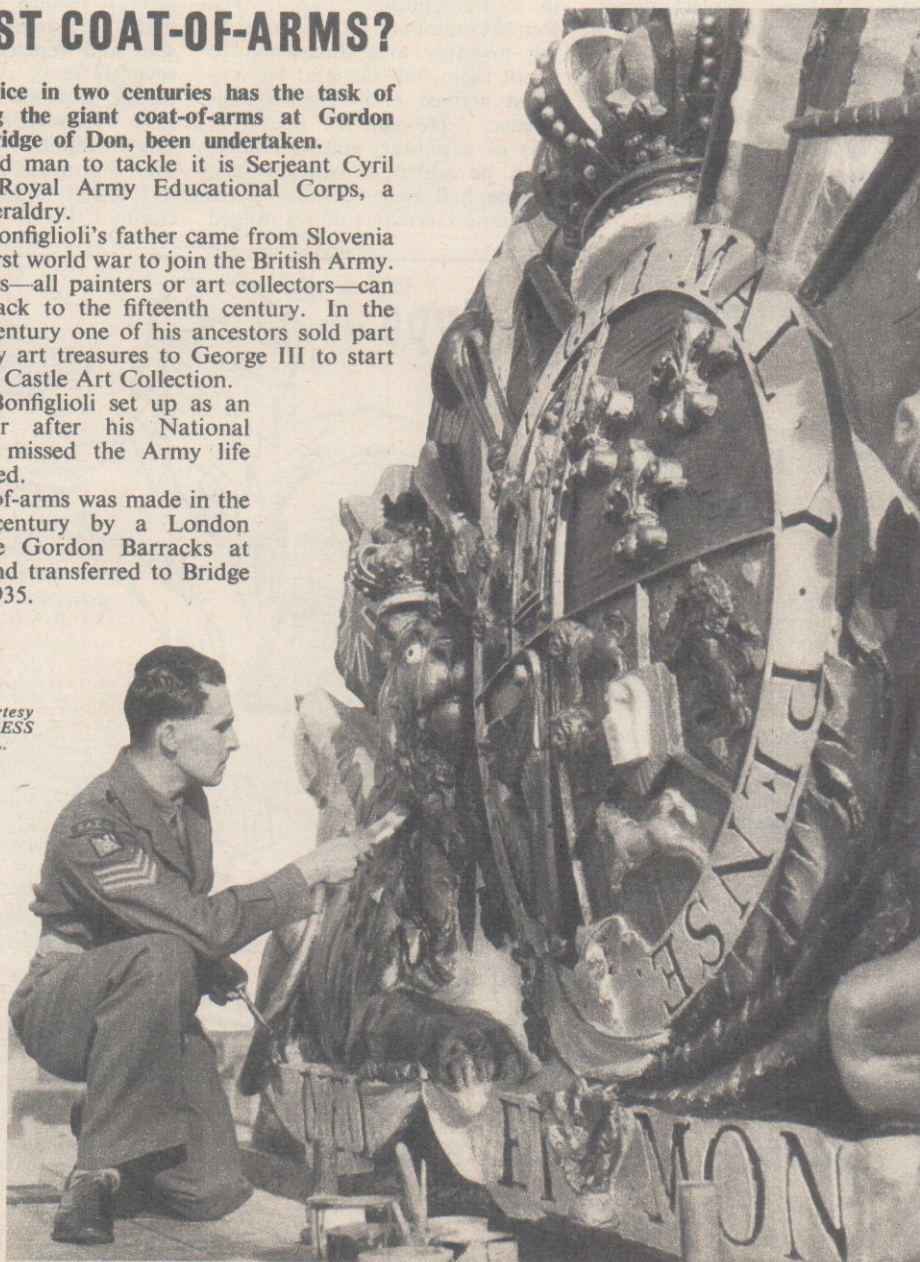
The second man to tackle it is Serjeant Cyril Bonfiglioli, Royal Army Educational Corps, a student of heraldry.

Serjeant Bonfiglioli's father came from Slovenia during the first world war to join the British Army. His ancestors—all painters or art collectors—can be traced back to the fifteenth century. In the eighteenth century one of his ancestors sold part of the family art treasures to George III to start the Windsor Castle Art Collection.

Serjeant Bonfiglioli set up as an art collector after his National Service but missed the Army life and re-enlisted.

The coat-of-arms was made in the eighteenth century by a London firm for the Gordon Barracks at Castlehill, and transferred to Bridge of Don in 1935.

Photograph: courtesy  
ABERDEEN PRESS  
AND JOURNAL.



## So You'd like to be a Spy?

**T**HE German Army's most active counter-intelligence agent in France in the second world war never rose above the rank of serjeant. He was known variously to his victims as "Colonel Henri" and "Monsieur Jean." His real name was Serjeant Hugo Bleicher and he was a former clerk in Hamburg. It was he who arrested "Odette" and Captain Peter Churchill.

Now Serjeant Bleicher tells the fantastic tale of his operations in "Colonel Henri's Story" (Kimber, 15s). Anyone with ambitions to be a secret agent would do well to read these pages; he may then decide there is a great deal to be said for the Infantry.

Ian Colvin, who has edited the English edition of Bleicher's book, has checked the facts where possible, and added a useful commentary. He thinks that Bleicher "between the years 1942 and 1944 may well have done more harm to the Allied cause on the intelligence front than any other one man, including 'Cicero,' the spy in the British Embassy at Ankara." Bleicher had energy, zeal, a good command of language, great powers of dissimulation "and a double nature, which enabled him to play two roles at once with perfect conviction."

Serjeant Bleicher appears to have genuinely disliked the Nazis. He played his part in a running feud with the rival counter-intelligence branch of the Gestapo, and was often denounced by them. This rivalry of the two

(Continued on page 33)





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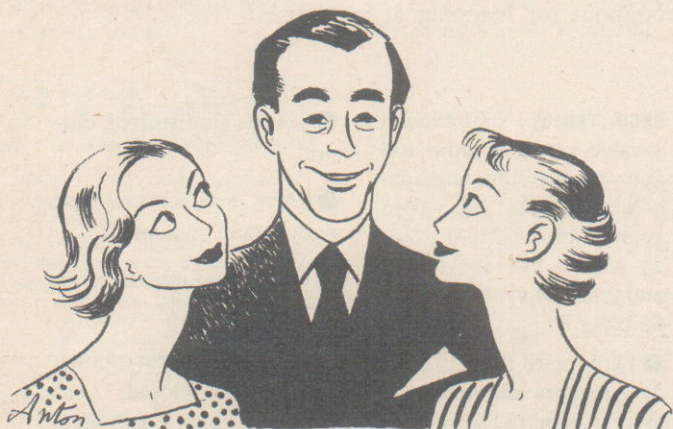
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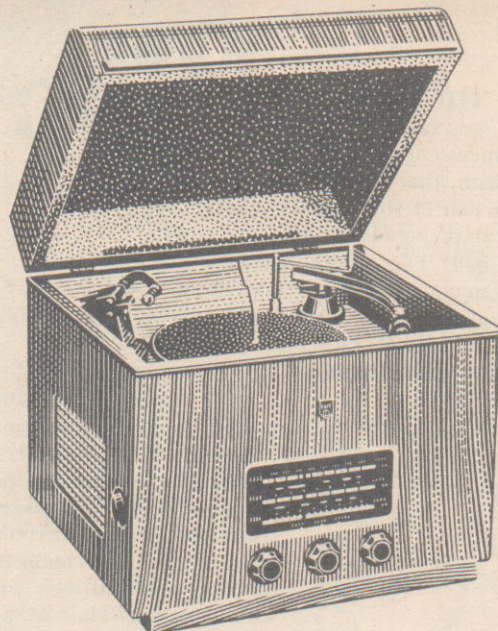
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services happily occupied a vast number of man-hours, which otherwise might have been spent fighting the Allies.

Bleicher was happiest when infiltrating his own men into Resistance circles, so that he could keep the enemy's activities under observation. He hated round-ups and mass arrests, which meant he had to start again from scratch. He worked with traitors against traitors.

A pretty example of the double-dealing that went on was when Serjeant Bleicher was ordered—for reasons unknown to him—to take a captured Resistance leader from jail in Paris and allow him to escape, and to make sure that the Resistance knew of the incident. The first part of the order was easy—a fake traffic accident was staged and the prisoner was allowed to bolt in the confusion. To ensure that the Resistance knew, Serjeant Bleicher took with him one of his men known to be working for the other side!

In these pages of treachery and infamy there are bright streaks of courage. Not everybody played the double game; not everybody changed sides when fortune frowned. Bleicher, the spider, respected bravery. One of the finest men whom he played along and at last, reluctantly, handed over was "Paul" (Major Henri Frager), who was hanged in Buchenwald. When Bleicher heard this news, he says, he wept like a child. "What was I doing? I was putting chivalrous, courageous enemies into the hands of the SD (the Gestapo counter-intelligence), while double-dealing scum still enjoyed liberty." His justification was that, as a German soldier, he was saving his comrades from death by sabotage.

It is a strange story of the seamy side of the war. By contrast a bayonet charge is a clean and lovely thing.

## FILMS

coming your way

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

**OUR GIRL FRIDAY:** A British film company takes a leaf out of the Hollywood book and goes to a desert Pacific island to shoot its colour-film. This is a cheerful three-men-and-a-girl story, adapted and directed by novelist Noel Langley. George Cole, Kenneth More and Robertson Hare battle and intrigue for their enchanting fellow-castaway, Joan Collins. The cast also includes Hermione Gingold, Walter Fitzgerald and Hattie Jacques.

**THE RUNAWAY BUS:** Frankie Howerd, bus-driver, among the cops and robbers. His bus is an airline vehicle, which becomes lost while taking an oddly-assorted party through the fog from London airport to another airfield. It ends the journey on the target end of a military exercise with live ammunition. With Margaret Rutherford, Petula Clark and Belinda Lee.

**THE MILLION POUND NOTE:** If someone gave you a bank-note for a million pounds, what would you do with it? Gregory Peck, faced with this prob-

lem in London, finds nobody will change it—but thanks to the note he has no need for ready money anyway. His path crosses those of Ronald Squire, A. E. Matthews, Wilfrid Hyde White and Jane Griffiths.

**THE GLENN MILLER STORY:** When a small aircraft bearing Major Glenn Miller, leader of the American Army Air Force band, disappeared over the English Channel in 1944, it ended the career of a man who had succeeded in bringing a "new sound" to dance music. Glenn Miller's success was due to his ability as an arranger. His rags-to-riches story is conventional; the appeal of this film is in the music. James Stewart pretends to play a trombone; June Allyson is his co-star.

**MEET DOCTOR JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE:** In the full title, the names of Bud Abbott and Lou Costello precede the above. The two comedians are American policemen taking a course with the Metropolitan Police at the beginning of the century, when they run into Boris Karloff's version of Robert Louis Stevenson's character. They turn all the staff of a London police station into monsters.



Storming the hill-top: a scene photographed on a Korean battlefield.

## KOREA IN THREE DIMENSIONS

**I**F you have never sat in a plush seat with the muzzle of a tank gun resting in your lap, you have the chance to do so by going to see "Cease Fire," the first three-dimensional film about the Korean war. It was made by an American company.

On several occasions guns reach out (apparently) into the auditorium, but the audience is spared bayonet charges and grenade assaults.

The story is about an American patrol which goes out to "grab a coupla Chinks" on the day when the armistice is finally signed at Panmunjom. Any moment, as the patrol knows, the war may be over, but until the signatures are on the dotted line it is still on, and Intelligence—in everybody's interest—must have its "coupla Chinks." The operation inspires a good many sardonic wisecracks by the members of the patrol.

The excitements encountered by the hard-bitten patrol are vividly portrayed, and some of the problems of leadership emerge. A British soldier is encountered out in no-man's-land, with a wounded comrade. He guides the patrol through a minefield. Eventually the patrol reaches the hill-top objective, where there is a brisk and bloody mêlée. All the enemy are killed; there are no

prisoners for Intelligence. It is a pity that one soldier finds it necessary to spit in a trench where a valiant enemy lies dead.

Among the best shots in the film are those of the zig-zag trenches cut into the tops of hills, as seen from a helicopter, and of an aerial strike with napalm.

"Cease Fire" was photographed on the Korean battlefields.

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## SPORT

**A** RUGBY team which looks like becoming a legend in Army sport is that of 1st Training Regiment, Royal Signals, at Catterick.

In six Army Cup games this season the team amassed the startling total of 301 points, conceding only three.

As SOLDIER went to press the lads from Catterick were about to meet Rhine Army's champion team to settle the fate of the Army Cup. If they won, as the pundits prophesied, it would be for the fifth time in six years, with a record in Cup matches since the 1947-48 season as follows: played 48, won 46, drawn one, lost one. The total points at the time of writing exceed 1600, more than 33 per game.

The Catterick team are the only unit side strong enough to play leading clubs. This year they were strongly fancied to regain the Yorkshire Rugby Union Cup which they won in 1952. Already this season they have beaten such first-class clubs as Liverpool, Waterloo, Harrogate, Huddersfield and Halifax. They have suffered only one defeat—against Roundhay.

The lads are mainly radio, telegraph, line and cipher mechanics whose course at Catterick lasts between 20 and 22 weeks. This means there is sufficient time to weld them into a team. Many of them have played rugby at school.

What is the team's secret? Many of the players are brilliant individualists but it is in well-rehearsed team-work that the real strength lies. Of an evening after duty the team turns out on their ground at Catterick to try out new tactics, to improve their handling and kicking and to get off the mark more quickly. If the weather is bad they train in the gymnasium or go for long distance runs to increase their stamina. They hold discussions on tactics, "post-mortems" after every match and even study films on rugby.

This year's team is one of the youngest to reach the final of the Army Cup. Thirteen are National Servicemen, who, when free from Army engagements, turn out for civilian Rugby League or Rugby

# THEY'RE THE PRIDE OF CATTERICK

The rugby team of 1st Training Regiment, Royal Signals, scored more than 300 points in six games. Was there ever a unit team like this?



The start of a Signals attack against the Royal Army Medical Corps at Aldershot: scrum-half Evans has passed to his waiting halves and full-back Dunn (extreme left) has come up to help.  
Photographs: W. J. Stirling and A. Blundell



This is the team which has beaten all comers. Left to right (standing): Sgmn. J. P. Horrocks-Taylor, Cpl. W. G. Spillane, Sgmn. D. M. Manley, Cpl. D. B. Holdsworth, Sgmn. G. T. Curnow, L/Cpl. N. O. Mackie, L/Cpl. A. K. McCrae, L/Cpl. J. Dunn, L/Cpl. R. Higgins. Kneeling: Cpl. J. A. Turner, SQMS D. Rees, L/Cpl. W. Boston, Sgmn. R. Evans, Sgmn. P. Jackson, Sgmn. B. Gabbitas. Only two are Regulars.



Union fifteens. Eight have played for the Army, which is probably another unit record.

The three lynch-pins are SQMS Dai Rees, right winger and captain, who first played rugby for Signals when he was a boy of 15; Lance-Corporal Billy Boston, left centre three-quarter; and Lance-Corporal Reg Higgins, wing forward. All three are Army players. Rees, who makes up for his lack of inches and slight build with a

superb turn of speed, tremendous daring and an extraordinary sense of anticipation, was in the Signals Training Centre team which won the Army Cup in 1947-48. Boston, who has already scored 80 tries this season, has played Rugby Union football for Neath and recently signed as a professional for Wigan. Higgins, son of an England International Rugby League forward, was chosen this year to play for England against Wales, New Zealand and Ireland. The experts predict a great future for him.

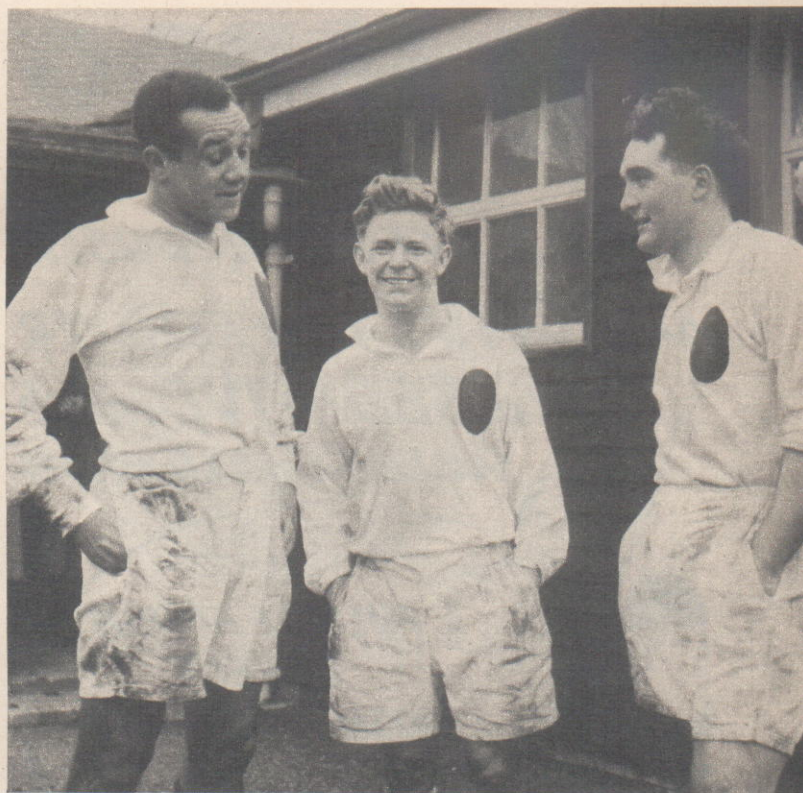
Lance-Corporal J. Dunn, full back, another Army player, turns

Scoring his 79th try of the season, L/Cpl. Billy Boston breaks through the RAMC defence.





The Signals have their own supporters club, the members of which parade before each game waving aloft a cardboard Mercury.



Three key men: L/Cpl. Billy Boston (left), SQMS Dai Rees and L/Cpl. Reg Higgins. Below: An "airborne" scrum-half whips the ball away from the scrum and the Signals attack again.



out for the Leeds Rugby League side. National Serviceman Phil Jackson, right centre three-quarter, is another who has played in a Rugby League trial and he stands a good chance of being chosen to tour Australia this summer with the Rugby League team. He also plays for Barrow, one of the leading League sides. Signalman B. Gabbittas, the fly-half, is another Rugby League man. He turns out for Hunslet and has represented the Army. The scrum-half, Signalman R. Evans, is a Welsh school-boy International Rugby Union player. Last winter he toured France with the Combined Services team.

Four of the forwards—Lance-Corporal Higgins, Lance-Corporal N. O. Mackie, Corporal J. A. Turner and Signalman

D. M. Manley—have also played for the Army.

Among famous players who have turned out for 1st Training Regiment since 1948 are "Nim" Hall, England's full-back and stand-off half; Glyn Davies, Welsh international stand-off half; and Russell Robins, Welsh International second row forward.

In Catterick the 1st Training Regiment have a strong supporters club, the members of which travel by coach, paying their own fares, to the most important away matches. Several hundred of them journeyed to Aldershot for the final of the Home Command championship.

Incidentally, 1st Training Regiment has an excellent soccer team too and some redoubtable cross-country runners.

## AND THEY'RE THE PRIDE OF MALAYA

**M**ALAYA has an all-conquering rugby team too. It is that of the 1st Battalion of the Fiji Regiment.

These ever-smiling warriors are as formidable on the sports field as they are in the jungle against terrorists. At rugger they out-class not only battalions and corps, but the best civil teams from Malaya and Singapore. In a new attempt to break the Fijian's two-year record the opposition have decided to field a team drawn from the Combined Army of Singapore and Malaya.

The arrival in Malaya of a strong rugby battalion, the 1st Battalion The Royal Hampshire Regiment, will stiffen the challenge. The Hampshires have three Rhine Army players and Lieutenant G. C. Phipps, Irish International.

One sports writer has suggested that if the Fijians are to be defeated it will not be on Malayan soil. Why not, he says, send the team to Britain and let the people see these fine sportsmen and fighters who have done so much for the prestige of their colony?

They could even play 1st Training Regiment, Royal Signals!



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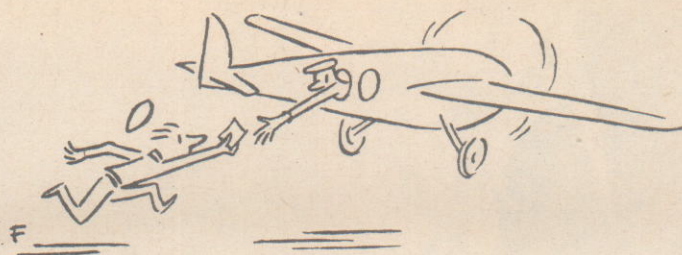
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# LETTERS

## ARE THEY OTHER RANKS?

Warrant officers in the British Army are getting increasingly touchy about being termed "Other Ranks" and I feel it is high time the War Office reviewed the matter in the light of the following facts: 1. Warrant Officers in the Royal Navy have in recent years gained additional status and are now known as "Commissioned Warrant Officers" and use the wardroom. 2. Where NATO forces serve side by side a British warrant officer is, I believe, the only one who does not use the officers' mess. 3. The United States Army recently reviewed the position of their warrant officers and now give them a semi-officer status. Most regimental diaries this year publish the United States Army ranks and have omitted the rank of warrant officer.

I feel it is only right that warrant officers in the British Army should be able to stand side by side with warrant officers in the United States Army as they perform the same kind of job. The biggest rub of all comes in the scaling of allowances. In many cases warrant officers are given Other Ranks' travelling and retention allowances where a second-lieutenant receives three or four times as much.—"Out-classed" (Name and address supplied).

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

Anonymous or insufficiently addressed letters are not published.

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

● **SOLDIER** cannot admit correspondence on matters involving the discipline of an individual unit.

a day for rations, messing and laundry, leaving him 6½d. a day for his pocket.

The next increase after 1873 was in 1898, when, in addition to the basic rate of one shilling, the soldier also received a messing allowance of threepence a day after six months service if he had reached the age of 19 and was given free rations. It was not until 1907 that a soldier was given messing allowance on enlistment.

Basic pay rose to 1s. 6d. a day on 29 September, 1917 when, in addition, the soldier could also earn up to threepence a day for special proficiency.

## NO PLAY

As a member of a hockey team which has a very small number of men on which to draw, I have tried unsuccessfully to reason out why it is ruled in "Games and Sports in the Army" that only one Army Physical Training Corps instructor shall play in each team.

I agree that the Army Physical Training Corps should not be allowed to take part as a unit. Our team would be quite strong if it included three or four of the Corps, but with only one we become sadly depleted. None of the three or four has represented the Army in England at hockey, but they are all good at boxing, basket-ball and, naturally, gymnastics. Why they are not allowed to play hockey merely because they wear the Army Physical Training Corps badge is beyond my comprehension.

It is quite possible for a team such as ours, deprived of a boxer and a basket-ball player, to clash with a team carrying Army representative players, several Corps players, even Internationals (and, in football, professionals). Provided they belong to anything but the Army Physical Training Corps, they are eligible, while our boxer and basket-ball players stand on the touch-line shouting and inwardly wishing they could transfer to some other corps for the duration of the Army Cup.—**WO II, Royal Engineers** (name and address supplied).

## DESPATCH RIDERS

Am I right in saying that the Royal Corps of Signals is the only corps or regiment to have despatch riders, and that other corps or regiments have motor-cyclists?—**Lance-Corporal D. Baker, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (Territorial Army), 3, Elm Cottages, Gadbrook, Betchworth, Surrey.**

★ The Royal Corps of Signals is the only corps or regiment to have despatch riders as an Army trade. Motor-cyclist messengers in other units, however, are often loosely described as despatch riders.

## VCs IN PAWN

I agree with **SOLDIER** (February) that it seems wrong for dealers to traffic in Victoria Crosses. Sir John Fortescue, the historian of the British Army, had something to say on this subject:—

"The holders of the Maria Theresa order—the corresponding order to the Victoria Cross in Austria—have (or had) a chapel where their crosses are (or were) hung up after their death with their names and the dates inscribed alongside. It is a pity that no such regulation was laid down for the Victoria Cross, for it is not a pretty sight to see one (as I have seen myself) hung up in a pawn-shop window."—**Pensioner, Woking, Surrey.**

## ALL IN

If I was on the Army Recruiting Staff and a prospective recruit asked me what the Army was like, I would take him to a hotel or boarding-house to make him aware of the cost of living. Then I would show him round the nearest depot and have him provided with a normal Army meal to indicate what the Army provides free of charge. Too often Army food is compared with a slap-up cafe meal costing from 3s. 6d. to 5s., but multiply this by three for three meals a day, and again by seven for seven days a week, and add on another 25s. a week for accommodation. It adds up to a fair sum which is seldom fully considered.—**"Army Enthusiast," Torquay.**

## SHILLING A DAY

When did the British soldier first begin to receive pay of one shilling a day and when was it first increased?—**D.A.W.O., Headquarters, Northumbrian District.**

★ The basic rate of one shilling a day was first paid in 1873, when the soldier was also given a free ration of bread and meat, but had to pay a halfpenny a day for laundry. Before that he had received 1s. 2d. a day plus one penny a day beer money, but out of that he paid 8½d.



## DOUBLE BUNKS

Though we hear much about fine new barracks for the modern Army, it seems that in some camps men still sleep in double bunks. Surely the double bunk is an anachronism in this day and age?—"Shorty" (name and address supplied).

★The Secretary for War told a Member of Parliament on 16 February, that about 3500 men still slept in two-tier bunks. In the past year the number of soldiers sleeping in this fashion had been reduced by 3000. "If we could build barracks rapidly," he said, "the whole problem would be overcome. I am anxious to do away with double bunks."

## PRONOUNCED

QARANC is not unpronounceable, as you say in "SOLDIER to Soldier" (February). It goes something like this: Quar-rank, the first part as in quarters.—Serjeant N. Juniper, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Woolwich.

## "J" OR "G"?

Why does SOLDIER spell the rank of a three-striper serjeant? My dictionary gives it as sergeant (law serjeant) and amplifies this by spelling all the military references with a "g" and the legal ones with a "j". The London Gazette Supplement uses Sergeant every time.—2/Lieutenant A. J. L. Gray, 12th Cornwall (Land's End) Battalion, Home Guard.

★SOLDIER used the "j" from its first issue for two reasons: Serjeant is the older form of the word, and thus accords with the ancient dignity of the rank, and Serjeant is the spelling most generally used in official Army documents—see Queen's Regulations and Army Council Instructions. There were serjeants in civilian life long before there were any in the Army. A serjeant was usually the chief servant of one department of an aristocratic household—serjeant carpenter, serjeant cook, and so on. The King's Serjeant appears to have been an officer of the King's Household.

## IRON CROSS

A few issues ago, a correspondent wanted to know how an African regimental-serjeant major won the Iron Cross in 1914 while serving with the German Army operating in German South-West Africa. I knew a German ex-officer who had served in German South-West Africa in 1914 and he told me that every single member of the German forces there who survived was awarded the Iron Cross—first-class for officers and second-class for the rest. It was all done in one message from Berlin. As the Iron Cross has been issued to millions, it surprises me that it is still regarded as a decoration and not as a German service award.—"Chunky," MELF.

★In World War One, every third German soldier received one form or another of the Iron Cross: 5,196,000 the 2nd Class, 218,000 the 1st Class and five the Great Cross.

## BREAST-PLATES

Your caption to the picture of the Household Cavalry (SOLDIER, February) reminds me of the following tale:—

A very young subaltern of the Foot Guards was dining with a Household Cavalry officer when the former remarked, "I should think those breast-plates you wear are most uncomfortable."

"No more so than your busbies," replied the Cavalryman drily.—WOI W. Luffman, Royal Army Educational Corps, attached Household Cavalry, Windsor.

★SOLDIER's reference to a breast-plate on a Household Cavalryman was not so very wrong. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines a cuirass thus: "Body armour, breast-plate and back-plate fastened together." In the photograph only the front part was visible.

## SHAGGY DOG?

This tale was told a few nights ago in a Surrey pub. The scene was a Militia camp in the Home Counties in 1939. A squad of recruits was drilling when the regimental serjeant-major, a little man with a high-pitched voice, came strutting by and decided to take a hand. He had given what the squad considered to be quite enough orders when a little dog appeared, sat down on a corner of the parade ground and yapped twice. The squad halted and fell out.—Ex-Serjeant, Woking (name and address supplied).

## IS HE ESQUIRE?

Is it an offence against military etiquette to address a lieutenant, in a letter or on an envelope, by his rank? Should he not be addressed as "Esquire"? And does the rule apply to second-lieutenants? Many will regard the raising of this point as pure snobbery, but when one works in an office which frequently communicates with Service officers, one wishes to be correct.—H. Whitethread, 82 Water Street, Old Chesterton, Cambridge.

★The rule seems to be unwritten, but a book on such matters which is frequently consulted at the War Office gives this as the rule for lieutenants and second-lieutenants:—

Address in speech as "Mister." The formal manner of writing is "Sir," the social manner "Dear Mr. Fry."

Address of official and Service envelopes—To Lieut. (or 2nd Lieut.) T. W. Fry, 2nd Life Guards.

Address of social envelope—To T. W. Fry Esq., 2nd Life Guards.

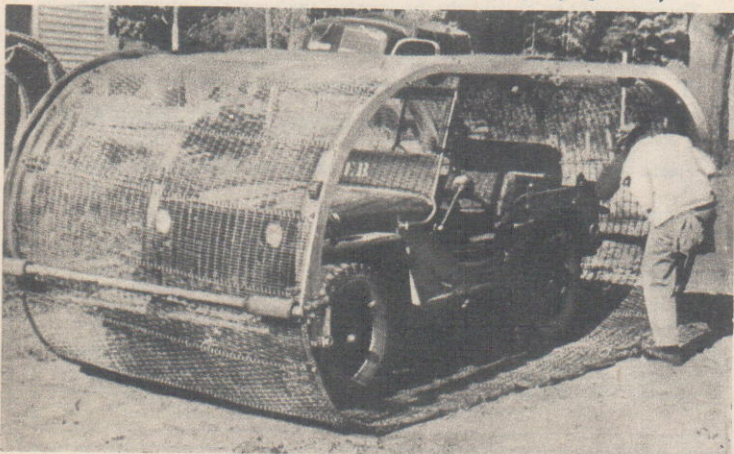
## TREADMILL JEEP

Members of our mess were puzzled by your reference (SOLDIER, March) to a jeep which laid its own track. We have never heard of it. Could you publish details?—"Sammy," Rhine Army (name and address supplied).

★The Americans produced the idea about five years ago. The jeep was enclosed in an endless track within which it moved like a donkey in a treadmill—except that the treadmill moved along. The invention was designed for use over swampy ground.

LETTERS CONTINUED OVERLEAF

The jeep that lays its own track (see accompanying letter).



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## MORE LETTERS

### THAT GAMP

To add to Gamp's letter (SOLDIER, February), may I point out that Field-Marshal Montgomery still had his umbrella in North-West Europe—see "The 43rd Wessex Division at War," which also contains a photograph.—S. J. Rogers, ex-RQMS, 4th Somerset Light Infantry, 24 Blenheim Road, Taunton.



The place: Brunssum, Holland.  
The date: 25 November, 1944.

★The history of the 43rd Wessex Division says: "Field-Marshal Montgomery came to Divisional headquarters on 24 November (1944) and stayed to lunch. To the astonishment of the staff he was carrying an umbrella. The last commander-in-chief to appear with this essentially civilian article had been the Duke of Cambridge in 1870. Someone may have pointed this out, for the umbrella never appeared again. It is difficult in any case to imagine two field-marshal's who had less in common."

### THE NEW RIFLE

During the debate on the new Belgian self-loading rifle in the House of Commons, it was said that "we had achieved a common round among the NATO powers." In SOLDIER (February) you said: "Although of the same calibre as the current United States ammunition, the new round has a different bullet and case." Can these statements be reconciled?

The justification of the new rifle appears to be based on the Infantryman's need for such a weapon. But the Infantry represents only a small

part of the modern Army, and almost all arms of the service are issued with rifles. Is it intended to supply a £35 rifle which will fire 60 well-aimed shots a minute to heavy anti-aircraft gunners, cooks, saw-doctors, postal-workers and locomotive fitters, education instructors, base workshops men, clerks at general headquarters and many others whose rifles are fired no more than once a year, on the range? Would it not be practicable for it to be considered an Infantry weapon, like the PIAT, light machine-gun and machine carbine, to be supplied only to troops who need it, and let the rest have a .300 bolt-action rifle? An economy of £20 on each of half a million men would seem worthwhile—Major L. H. Birtles, E. Yorks, 102 Golf-Links Road, Hull.

★Both statements in this reader's first paragraph are correct. All North Atlantic Treaty countries have agreed to adopt the new .300 inch round which will fit any of their rifles and automatic weapons after standardisation. The present American .300-inch round is longer and heavier than the new NATO round and American weapons will have to be modified to fire the new ammunition.

In the British Army, only soldiers normally in close contact with the enemy will have the new rifle; the rest will probably be armed with the new L2 A1 sub-machine gun, which will cost less than the Lee-Enfield rifle.

### ARNHEM FILM

I remember seeing, about 1946, an excellent film about the Airborne Forces at Arnhem. When my husband, who was in the Far East at that time, and I went to see "The Red Beret" we were disappointed that it was not this film. Can you tell the name of the earlier film and whether it is likely to be shown again?—Mrs. Edna L. Whemmouth, "Rudgwick," 43 Elmwood Avenue, Bognor Regis.

★The film was "Theirs Is The Glory," which was made for the Ministry of Information and released as an entertainment film. The Army Kinema Corporation have included it in their library as a training film, and are not likely to show it as entertainment since soldiers would not take kindly to seeing the same film for both work and pleasure.

### FOUR-STRIPERS

Is there a man in the British Army who wears four ordinary stripes on his arm similar to the sergeant's?—(Ex-Guardsman) F. Bartram, 14, Niton Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire.

★Yes. Squadron Quartermaster-Corporals in the Household Cavalry, and Squadron Quartermaster-Sergeants in the Middlesex Yeomanry (now 16th Airborne Divisional Signals Regiment).

## DO NOT MISS SOLDIER!

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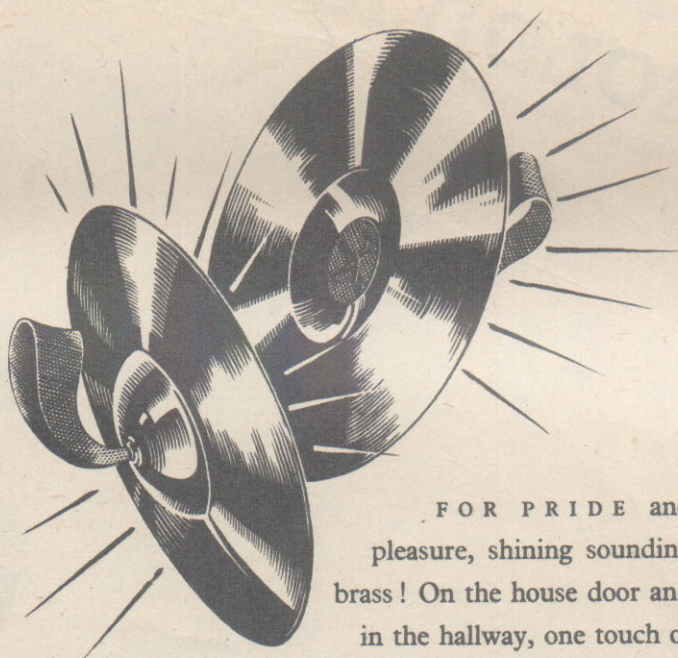
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