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GENERAL IN THE SADDLE

General Sir Brian Robertson, Commander-in-Chief Middle East Land Forces, plays a hard game of polo. This picture was taken at Fayid's Olympia Stadium, shortly before the Egyptian crisis arose, by SOLDIER Cameraman Leslie A. Lee.



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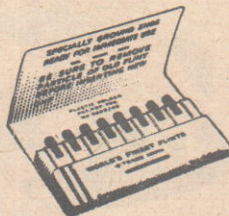
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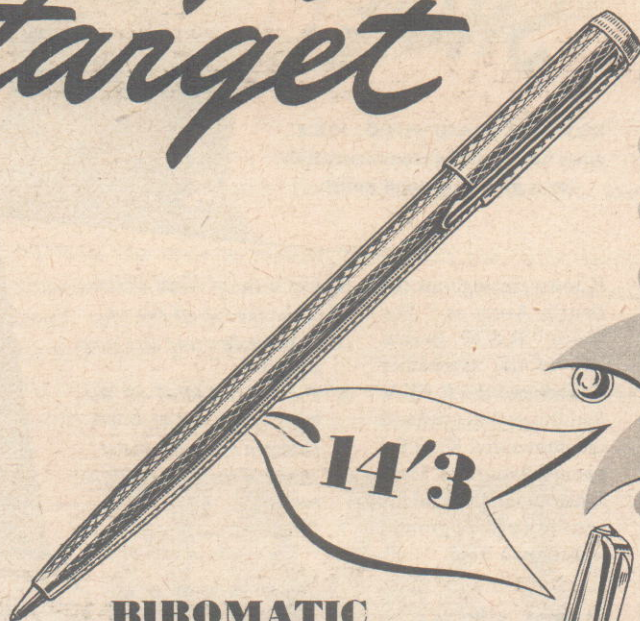
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★ MIDDLE EAST REPORT

Like a destroyer laying a smoke-screen: a Centurion of the 4th Royal Tank Regiment rumbles over the desert near Shandur. This was the regiment which moved up to Palestine to cover the British evacuation. Its Centurions have been on gruelling manoeuvres in Sinai.

FIVE YEARS HARD... and then THE HEADLINES

For five years the Army strove to make the Canal Zone a more agreeable place for soldiers — and families — to live in, knowing always that there might come a day of wrath

Story by E.S. Turner; photographs by Leslie A. Lee

IT was a testing life for an army, camped among dust devils and unconvincing mirages, clinging to an unclean waterway which was, nevertheless, the fount of life. It was a monotonous life, too, in which an outing to the Sinai Wilderness or a spell in the furnace of Akaba ranked as a welcome break.

For months the atmosphere had been "difficult." The soldier who wanted to visit the Pyramids had to change into plain-clothes and join a large party, behaving with much circumspection. It was like setting off on a cloak-and-dagger adventure, instead of an innocent day's sightseeing. Even such simple pleasures as taking snapshots were banned.

Plain-clothes were worn, also, by soldiers on malaria control — a service which brought benefits not only to the British.

Then, overnight, everything changed. Overnight, the air was cleared, and men said, "Now we know where we are." The role altered from occupational to operational. It was not only Nature that was practising "intense non-co-operation."

During those frustrating post-war years the Army by the Suez Canal had known that the shallow

Continued on Page 7



His father was a general too: Lieutenant-General Sir George Erskine, who commands British Troops, Egypt. He served in the King's Royal Rifle Corps, and in World War Two commanded 7th Armoured Division and 43rd Wessex Division.

ABC OF THE CANAL ZONE

(for beginners)

ACKERS. The Egyptians call them piastres, but the British soldier prefers the down-to-earth name of ackers. There are 100 of them to the Egyptian pound, which is about the same value as an English pound. Some ackers are like cogwheels, some are like washers, and differently shaped coins may have the same value. Paper notes are usually stuck together with sticky paper, and the sticky paper is then stuck together with more sticky paper. The game goes on until your ten-acker note is found to have vital numerals missing. Then it is yours to keep.

BILHARZIA. The permanent plague of Egypt. Snail-borne parasites burrow into the human body, with dire and colourful results. British soldiers rarely contract bilharzia; if they do, bad water discipline is usually to blame.

COLA. Egypt is cola-nised through and through. Often the only modern fitting in a shanty town is the red cola sign. There are cola posts even in the Sinai wilderness; there is cola for sale even above the clouds.

DHOB. Laundry is done by the dhobi wallah, who often has a compound inside the camp. "Flying dhobi" comes back the same day, ordinary dhobi in two or three days. Generally the dhobi wallah does a good job cheaply, but some are more abrasive than others.

EGGS. Two Egyptian eggs equal one English egg.

FLIES. Egyptian flies are more persistent than English flies, and are eye, nose and mouth specialists. They are not so thick as they were, especially in Army areas. Sporting enthusiasts stalk them with tattered whisks; the non-sporting destroy them with spray guns of gratifying power. Six puffs inside a tent, and not a fly remains.

"GIPPY TUMMY." Another plague of Egypt. Sufferers wear a pre-occupied look and keep disappearing without explanation. Blame flies.

HASHISH. The rule is: Never carry a parcel for anyone, however ingratiating he may be — for this is what it will contain.

INOCULATIONS. On the troopship they will tell you that if you fall in the Sweet Water Canal you will be rushed to hospital and given a dozen inoculations. Resident wiseacres, who know a man who knows a man who drove into the Canal, say that all you get is a scrubbing down with carbolic — and are kept under sharp observation. It's not worth testing out which version is correct.

JERRICANS. Those white saw-tooth boulders lining the camp roads are in fact painted jerricans. Those curious-looking Arab huts are built from jerricans. (No, this is not the source of the phrase "jerry-built.")

KHAMSEEN. This is a super-heated wind which, scooping up sand, can blast the enamel from a new motor car and leave the metal shining. The big khamseen in the spring of 1950 made it almost impossible to see across a canteen. It stopped work in offices, drove dwellers in tents half-crazy.

LIGHTS. When an oncoming driver, in daytime, switches on his headlights, he means, "I am coming right through." When the other driver also switches on his lights, the results are interesting. On the Canal Road at night, drivers are required to switch off their headlights when they see a ship approaching, even though the ship's searchlight is often the more dazzling.

MAALEESH. You say "Maaleesh" with a shrug. It is an all-too-handly word which means "It doesn't matter," and sometimes includes a dash of "couldn't care less" and "so what?"

NAAFI GIRLS are thin on the ground. Your favourite redhead is now a tarboosh-topped Sudanese with three scars on his cheek.

OPEN-AIR CINEMAS. If you don't mind birds flying overhead, these can be very pleasant; and, in any case, birds have been known to fly overhead in the closed cinemas. Downwind, you can hear Bob Hope wisecracking from 100 yards away, all for nothing.

PERIMETER. The odds are that your camp will have an enormous one — anything from five to 17 miles. Sooner or later you will find yourself guarding it.

QUOIS. One of the two Arab words that everybody knows. It means "Good."

RAIN. Many a man has served his tour and never seen any.

SWIMMING. Every soldier's child over the age of five can swim, so if you can't, you're going to find it embarrassing. Some soldiers and airmen have taken to swimming across the Great Bitter Lake — the local "Channel swim."

TALCUM. As the poet said, "A touch of talcum is always walcum."

UNPOPULARITY. You can earn this by talking about the television set you had in the canteen back home.

VALUES. You'll change your values quickly, and find, for instance, that one of the most wonderful things in the world is just slaking a thirst.

WORKING HOURS. In normal times, these run from seven on a summer morning to one or two in the afternoon, with the rest of the day off. You work up quite an appetite for lunch. In winter there are two or three hours to be worked in the afternoons on three days a week.

(e)XPOSURE. You can stand much more of the sun than your father or grandfather could, or thought they could. Topees are as scarce as toppers.

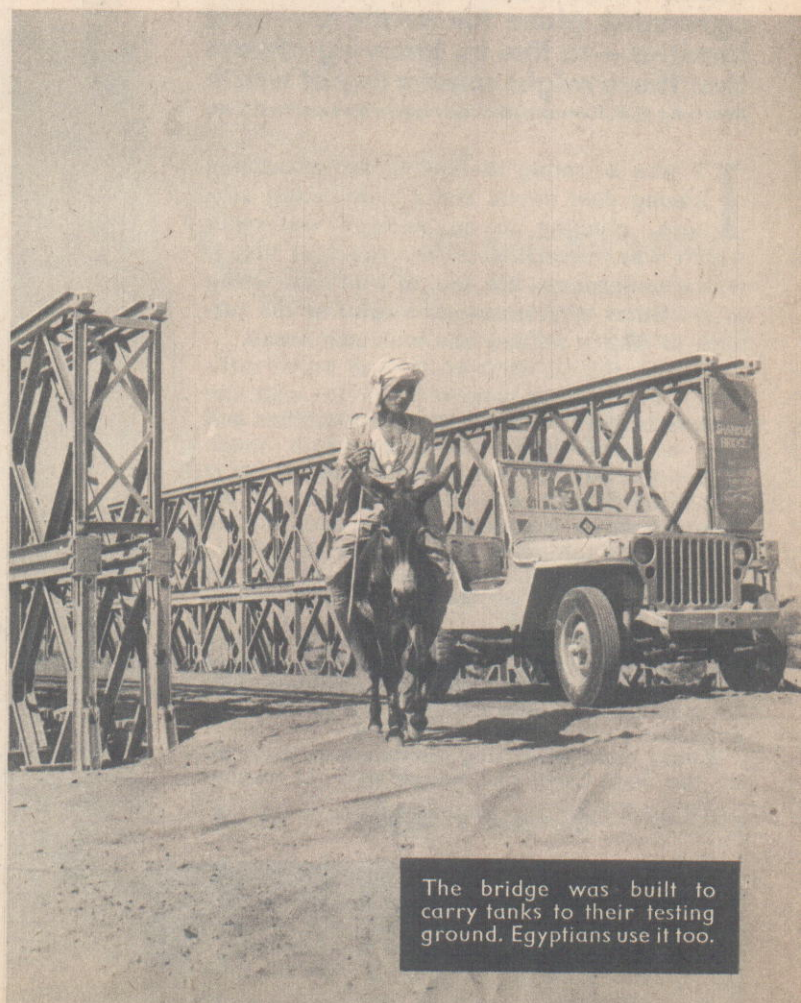
YELLOW. All Army vehicles are yellow — you didn't expect to find them khaki or dark green, or did you?

ZIBIB. The local firewater. Leave it alone.



In specially filtered pools, soldiers' children play in the crèche at Fayid. Many mothers work in headquarters offices.

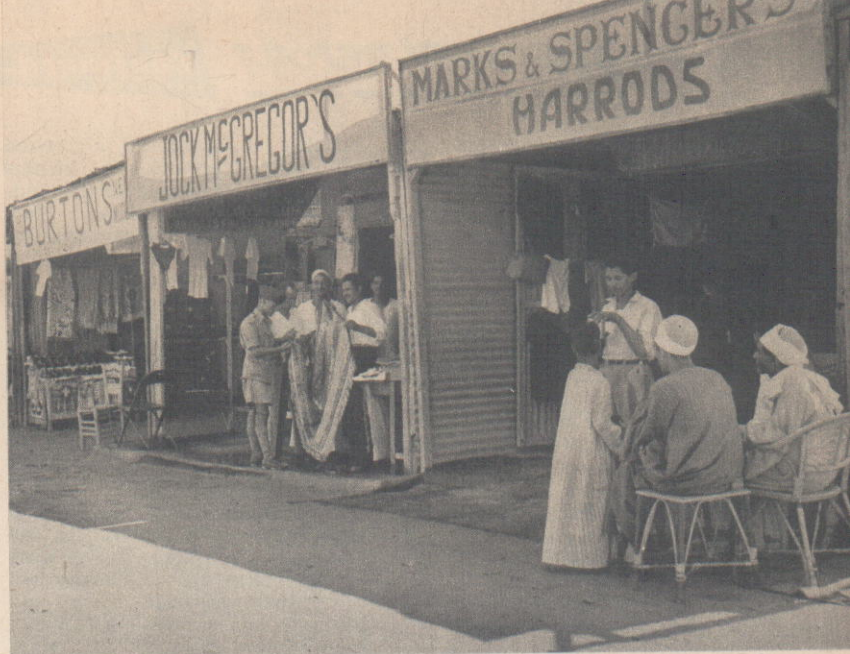
FIVE YEARS HARD ... and then



The bridge was built to carry tanks to their testing ground. Egyptians use it too.



Many shopkeepers, like "Jock McGregor" at Fayid, looked to the Army for much of their custom. Inspecting the rug are Privates Irene Parvin and Betty Lee, WRAC.



The humbler the shops, the more imposing the names. Fayid boasts rather more stylish shops than these, also a big NAAFI Emporium. Below: Mohamed Jan makes a bold bid for distinction.

THE HEADLINES (Continued)

sands of goodwill on which it rested might shift suddenly. Like other British forces overseas, the Canal army had been forced to depend on local labour; but it was ready for a day of wrath, as the world has seen. What the world does not know is how the British Army, during those five years of waiting, made the desert a more tolerable place to live in; how, in those five years, the Army did a masterly, but characteristic, job of self-help.

It would have been easy just to sit there in the sun and grumble, to say, "This is no place for wives and children" (as it is turning out it is not). It would have been easy to leave the dreary huts naked to the sun, to let the flies and mosquitoes have their way. And it would have been easy for the wives, when they arrived, to sit round and niggle (as a very few did), instead of making themselves useful to the community.

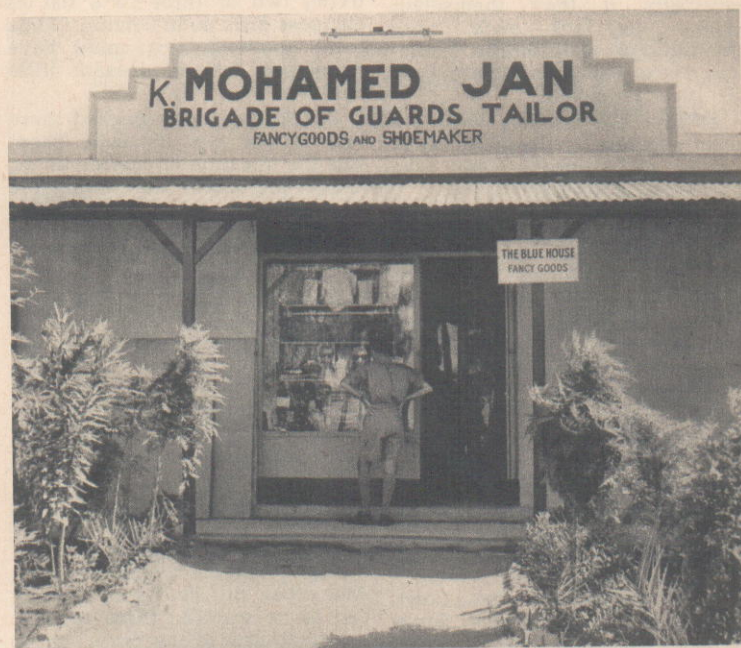
From the outset the Army's attitude in the Canal Zone might have been summarised as, "Dammit, we may be in the desert, but let's do things properly." So, in due course, the camps began to sprout clubs, lidos, pools, stadiums, gardens and — miraculously — green fields.

To the casual visitor the British encampments in the Canal Zone looked monotonously the same; but they were not all alike inside. In one, soldiers were sprawl on their beds, writing letters home; in another, officers were dining

by candlelight, with all their mess silver aglitter; in another a band of amateur actors were rehearsing "This Happy Breed." All under the same roofs, under the same long-bladed fans, stroked perhaps by the same searchlights, with the same white-robed *ghaffirs* standing motionless, and humming tunelessly, outside.

In Westminster and in Fleet Street, not to mention Whitehall, there has always been a tendency to think of the Canal Zone in terms of Fayid. But Fayid is only the seat of General Headquarters, Middle East Land Forces, which lodges in Egypt for its own convenience. Fayid is concerned with garrisons and military missions in a score of countries besides Egypt. The headquarters of British Troops Egypt is the pre-war garrison town of Moascar. Neither Fayid nor Moascar is necessarily typical of the Canal Zone. At the western tip of the Treaty territory, for instance, is the isolated garrison of Tel-el-Kebir, locked inside its 17-mile perimeter of wire and mine-fields and guarded like many other camps by Mauritians; "Tek" is typical of nothing but "Tek." North of Moascar is El Ballah, a cluster of unromantic camps where the Eighth Army's captives were once penned. In the south is the lonely garrison of Suez. In between are sprinkled batteries and battalions, squadrons and workshops, in sprawling, dusty camps which bear the names of

OVER



Below: Whatever Florence Nightingale might have thought of El Ballah, she would have approved its military hospital. Here Signalman Denis Ratchford chooses a book from the trolley wheeled round by Miss Barbara Foxall, of the St. John and Red Cross Headquarters, Ismailia.



most of the famous battles in the Army's history, from Tangier to Alamein.

Just before the Egyptians tore up the Treaty, Lieutenant-General Sir George Erskine who commands British troops in Egypt, told SOLDIER something of the problems of housing an army, and an army's families, in the desert. The original policy, he recalled, had been to concentrate on making the central buildings in each camp — the canteens, dining halls and so on — as comfortable as possible. Since then barrack blocks have been built as and when there was money.

When families began to move to the Canal Zone, it was important to hold the balance as between the single soldier and the married. Single soldiers may be excused if they do not enthuse over the sight of "luxurious" quarters being erected for married men doing the same job, especially if they themselves happen to lack such basic amenities as water-borne sanitation. Here was a problem calling for nice judgment.

At first the families were set up in communal villages, many of which still survive; but the tendency, more recently was to turn from the public life to the private. There were wives who thought it a fine thing to get away from continual cooking, but often they were the first to criticise what the camp cooks did with the rations. So the stage of transition began. In Fayid's Kensington Village the visitor could still find a communal village where the pattern of life was not unlike that of shipboard — big, long lounges, long dining-rooms and an open-air dance floor. He could also find, still in the Village, separate colonies of Canal Cottages, little pressed-mud, white-painted bungalows spelling home and privacy. Some of these were soon half-concealed behind screens of vegetation; others had only the barest outlines of gardens. In this climate, the soldier-tenant who failed to take advantage of the well-stocked Welfare Nursery was the sufferer thereby.

Incidentally, in Kensington Village were to be found all ranks from private to major-general.

Since it was impossible to build Canal Cottages for every military family, the Army hired blocks of civilian flats in towns like Ismailia. Here, as elsewhere, speculative builders ran up property with an eye to letting to the Army. Additionally, in Ismailia, Suez and elsewhere, the Army subsidised those families who were able to rent flats from private landlords. The Army insisted on certain safeguards: in

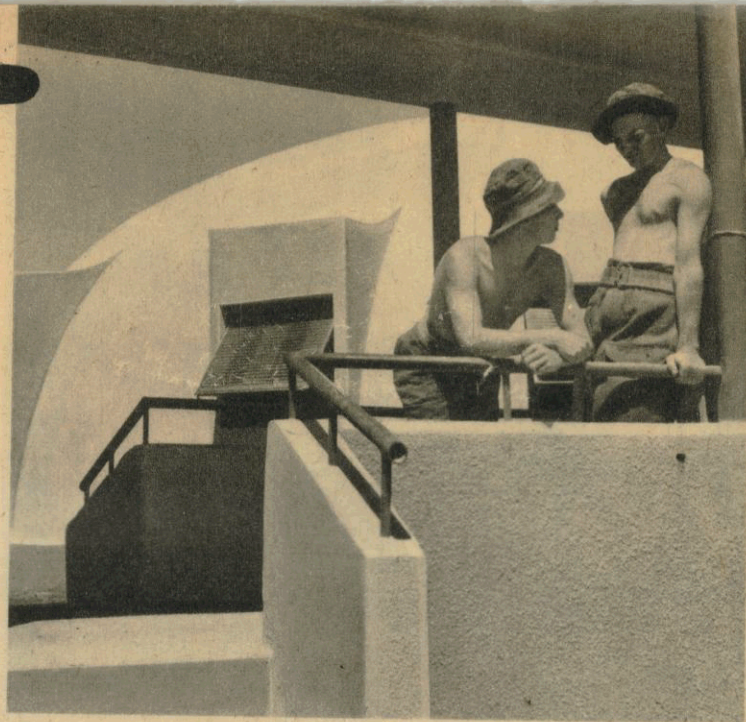
Ismailia it appointed a retired officer to operate a hirings agency, which would settle landlord-and-tenant troubles. Flats had to conform to a standard set down by the Army medical authorities; rents had to be reasonable; and tenants had to be made to toe the line on occasions, too. Many of the difficulties arose out of lingual misunderstandings.

Latterly the policy, in Ismailia, was to concentrate the British community, for its own safety and convenience, in one locality, just as the French colony had long been concentrated. On the edge of the Arab town were blocks of flats where families had their own medical room and library, and where a special NAAFI was being built. These flats were excellent of their kind, though not intended for families with children. The occupants included Army school-mistresses, living two or three to a flat as business girls do in London. Given local goodwill, this could have developed into a pleasant little enclave.

The Canal Army needed more than a roof over its head. There was the question of playing fields. Games are vastly more enjoyable when played on traditional green grass, as against hard, hot wastes, but the creation of a playing field in Egypt is a feat akin to building an ice-rink 1000 miles up the Amazon. Nevertheless, in the more populous garrisons, it was tackled successfully. First the chosen surface had to be bulldozed flat, then laboriously coated with Nile mud to a depth of several inches and planted with grass, tuft by tuft, by native labour. Manuring might also be necessary, which did not please the medical officer, conducting his single-minded war on flies. And when the field was sown it had to be watered three times a week, otherwise the grass would become a parched waste. That water had to be specially piped to the field; there had to be hydrants and sprinklers; and every piece of equipment cost money. At the end of it, the field would be big enough for, perhaps, half-a-dozen football pitches, and there would be many times that number of teams still punting about on dusty earth.

The Zone's fine swimming pools — an essential rather than a luxury — were not built for a song, unless £22,000 per pool counts as a song. Funds were always tight, though luckily General Erskine was able to draw on a special local fund. For the records, it is worth mentioning that just before the disorders began he was hoping to smarten up the cinemas in the Zone (some cinema-goers have always carried their own cushions).

Now General Erskine has more urgent problems, the story of which can be read any day on the front page of any newspaper. And the influx of thousands of troops means that his housing problem, far from being ended, is only beginning.



Outside their "igloo": men of the Lancashire Fusiliers at Moascar.

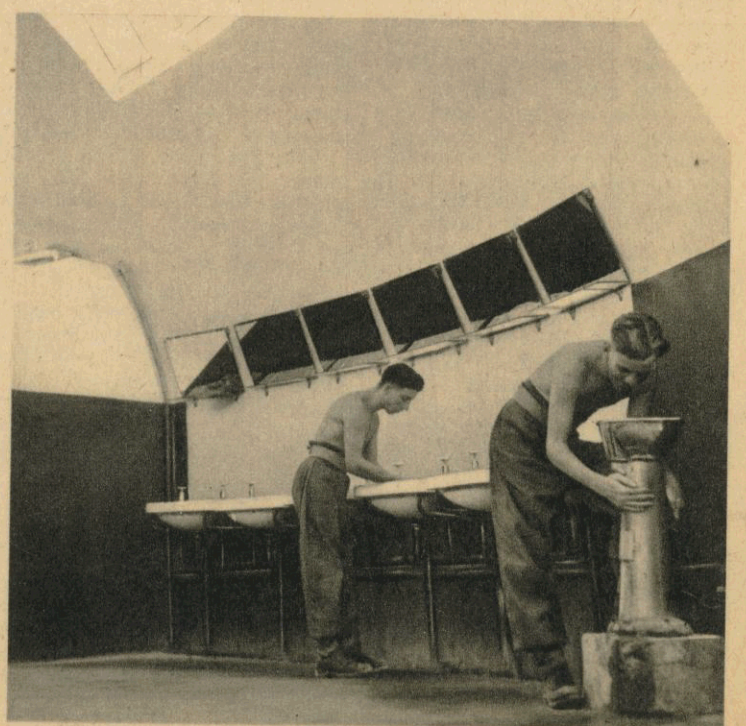
BIRTHPLACE

OVER the wastes of Sinai, early in the year 1915, toiled an armed column on a mission which, had it succeeded, would have ranked as a classic military exploit. The column made slow progress, which was not surprising in view of the equipment it was carrying.

The soldiers were Turks. Their equipment included cumbersome landing-craft, on rollers. Their objective was to cross and seize the Suez Canal, not far from the green town of Ismailia, headquarters of the Suez Canal Company.

Then as now, British troops stood athwart the Canal. When the Turks, after gruelling hardships, launched their craft, they were scythed by heavy fire from across the "ditch," and also from British and French gunboats. After a day — 3 February — on which the battle ranged from Ismailia down to the Bitter Lakes, the Turks withdrew and moved back across the desert to Gaza, to report an honourable failure to their German "advisers."

Today a tall, cleft monument stands on raised ground near the scene of the battle. This landmark is within sight of the British



Drinking water jets and an unaccustomed profusion of mirrors are features of the "ablutions" block in experimental "airform" barracks.



This barrack block consists of four domed barrack-rooms grouped round a central dome, which houses the "ablutions." All are linked by the equivalent of "spiders," and each dome is differently arranged inside. Other Lancashire Fusiliers are more conventionally housed.

- MOASCAR

Headquarters of British Troops Egypt is Moascar, a garrison with family tradition. Many a soldier's child has been born there

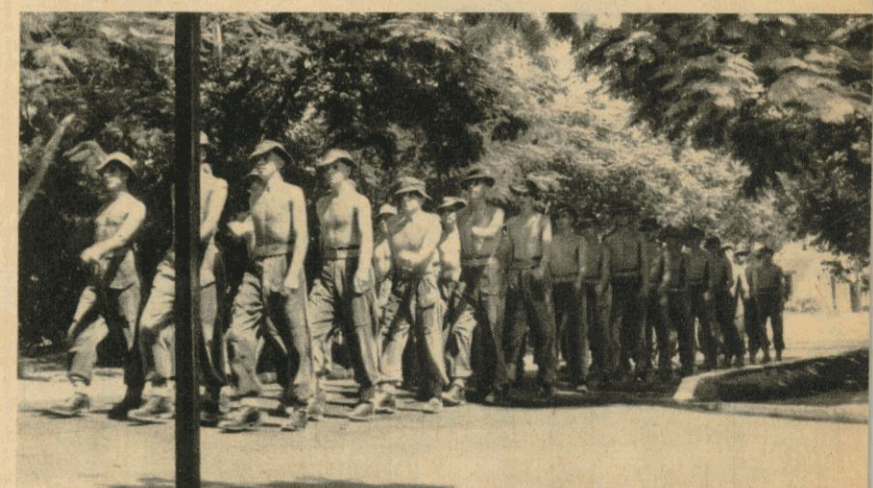
Army garrison of Moascar, a flourishing Army town which, in those days, was no more than a row of stones in the desert. It is a useful reminder, this monument, of the reason for Moascar's existence.

Moascar is a name which can be found in very few books about Egypt. It is an Arab word meaning "camp." Though the garrison has never made headline news itself, it has steadily grown to the point where it could be described, with a certain licence, as the Army's garden city in Egypt; not, perhaps, a garden city on the pattern of nearby Ismailia, which has taken generations of Canal Company patience and resourcefulness to develop. And unlike Ismailia, Moascar is locked inside a wired perimeter, the gates of which are guarded by a special force of "Bluecaps" drawn from more than a dozen countries, many of them European.

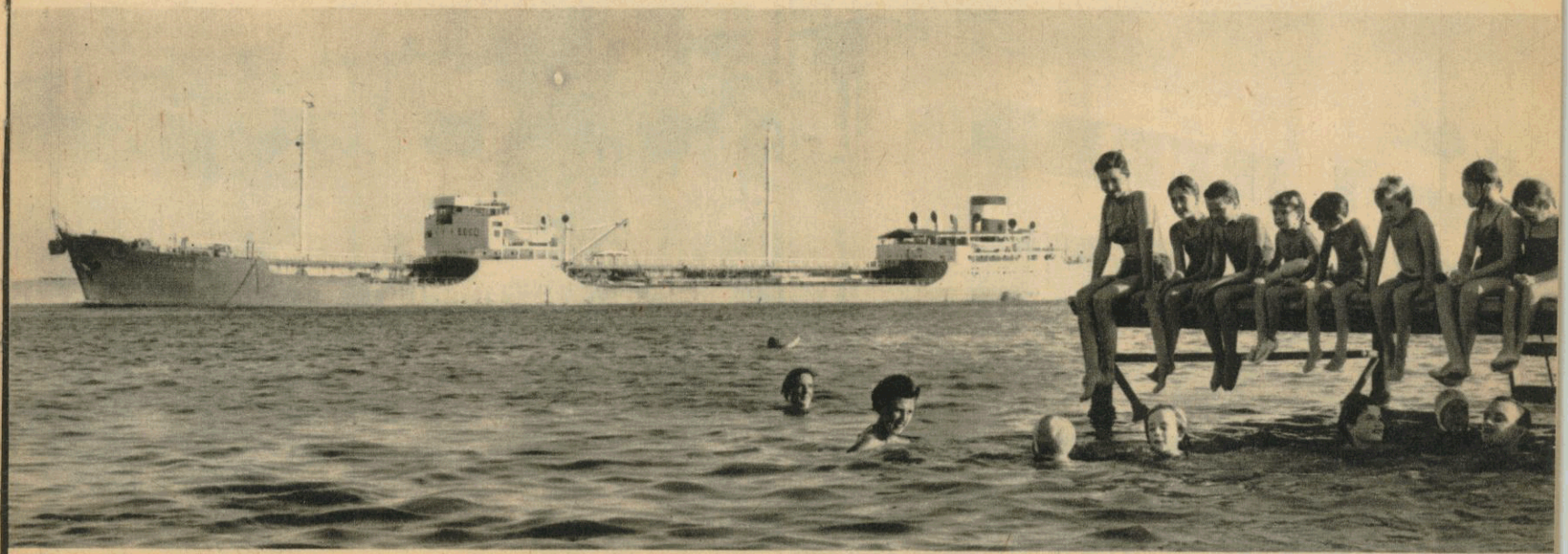
Before the recent disorders broke out, Moascar with its 1500 families ranked as one of the Army's biggest family stations overseas. It sent 900 children to school every day. And it enjoyed the distinction of being a birthplace town, for to Moascar's families hospital, for their confinements, came Army wives from all over the Middle East.

At one moment, Moascar is England, with village church, green fields and fish-and-chips; at another moment, it is India, for it has Indian-style barracks and tent-topped buildings, and tents which are still stamped with the names of contractors in Delhi and the Deccan; at another moment, it is Egypt, with patches of blistering sand, palms, Arab shops

OVER



Bare to the waist, men of the Lancashire Fusiliers march along a shaded road in their Moascar camp. Free circulation of air is a defence against prickly heat.



While north-bound Suez convoys pass through Lake Timseh, soldiers and families of Moascar's garrison bathe from the French Beach.

**** Further articles in this Middle East series will deal with the Soudan (including the Soudan Defence Force), Eritrea (including a visit to the battlefield of Keren), and Cyprus.**



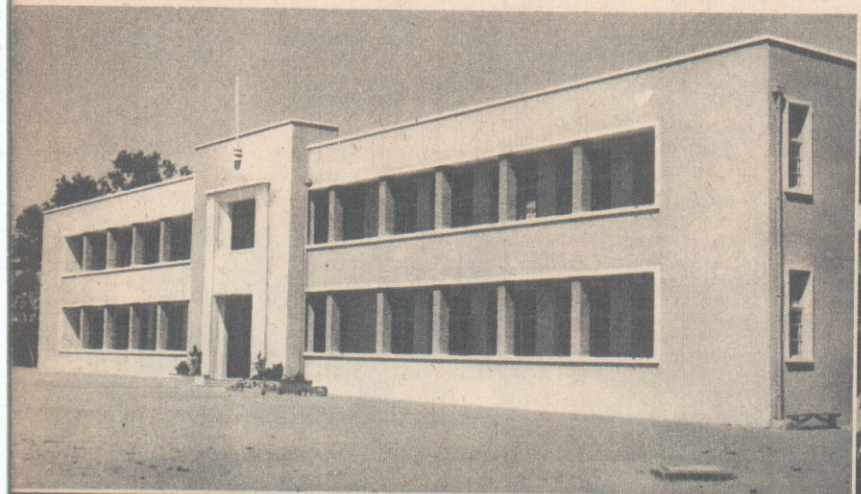
Tent-topped dwellings are still found in Moascar and elsewhere in the Canal Zone. Many have been roofed with corrugated iron.



Yet another experimental barrack block, occupied by Moascar's military police. It is built of hessian and strengthened by cement.



One of Moascar's new Canal Cottages — with a screen of vegetation already rising. The picture does not show the open desert which begins a few yards away beyond a barbed wire fence.



**ONE
YEAR:**

The picture above was published in *SOLDIER* in September 1950. The picture on right shows the same building fronted by a sub-tropical garden — the kind of enterprise in which Moascar excels. Intended as an education centre, the building had to be turned into a secondary school.

MOASCAR (Cont'd)

and barefoot *suffragi* in long white garments. All three backgrounds blend and overlap, and for good measure the garrison is studded with novelties of architecture which look like survivals from an international exhibition.

Indeed, to anyone interested in architecture, especially military architecture, Moascar is a fruitful study. Some of its buildings are the results of improvisation; others are experimental models which, for financial or other reasons, will not necessarily be repeated. Meanwhile, each of these variegated structures represents a much-needed roof over somebody's head.

Before the crisis, tents were few in Moascar, and the curious-looking tent-topped houses, or *wanahs*, were also dwindling in number. These hybrids are stone-built rectangles, with door and windows, capped by a cone of canvas. Ordinary tents may be cooler in summer, but the tent-topped dwelling has one conspicuous advantage: it can be locked. Many of these *wanahs* have had their tent tops replaced by corrugated iron.

Among the more recent experimental barracks, there is one block made of a hard fibrous material derived from straw and reeds. It is surprisingly robust, but in certain parts where wear-and-tear is to be expected this material is reinforced by brickwork. This type of building is quick to construct. Another block, where military police are quartered, is made of hessian stiffened with cement, and has agreeably high vaulted ceilings.

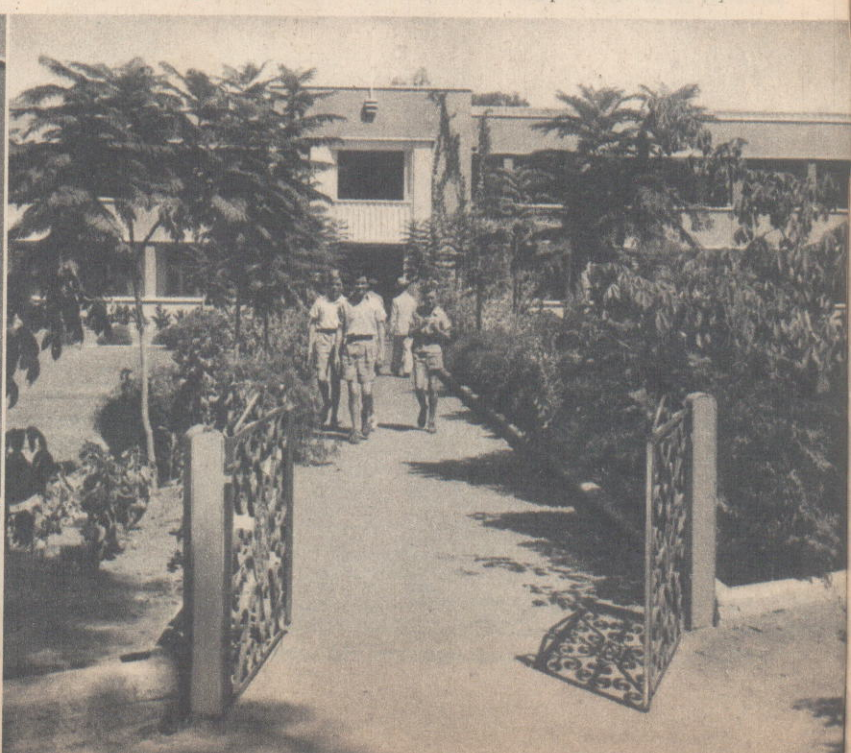
Most arresting in appearance, however, is the "airform" block occupied by men of the Lancashire Fusiliers. It consists of four large "igloos," or domes, grouped round, and linked to, a central dome which houses the "ablutions." The prescribed method of erecting these domes is to inflate a balloon to the appropriate size and then build the structure over it; but they can be erected, more laboriously, by other means.

In this revolutionary-looking barrack unit, each of the four domes is differently arranged inside, so that varying patterns of living can be tried out. One dome, for instance, is divided into smaller compartments, giving a measure of privacy; another has no divisions, the idea being that barrack furniture shall be grouped in the large central space. Instead of sleeping in conventional rows, the men are ranged in a circle; each bed, with its head to the wall, has a built-in light above it. The ablutions block represents a considerable advance on anything else of its kind (there are field officers in Moascar whose washing facilities are primitive by comparison). It has an unusually generous array of mirrors. It also has jets of drinking water, and a spacious blancoing and ironing room. Elsewhere in Moascar is an airform building erected as a married quarter and which at first glance would seem to pose some furniture problems. But the warrant officer who occupies it is reported to be well satisfied.

Moascar has other married quarters designed on original lines, but latterly the policy was to build the Canal Cottages which were the order of the day in the Canal Zone.

SOLDIER was shown round Moascar by the Garrison Commander, Lieut-Colonel K. S. Hayes-Palmer, South Lancashire Regiment, who personally has done much to alter the pattern of the garrison, and in particular to change its hues from brown to green. His especial pride are the big new playing fields — one of them, which cost £4000, is only a year old. All this man-made greenery on the desert's edge would startle any soldier who passed through Moascar's war-time camps on his way to the Western Desert.

Moascar's main thoroughfare is the Mall. On or near it are most of the buildings which are indispensable to the life of an Army garrison. At one end is a big two-in-one cinema — a closed house and an open-air one side by side. Hard by is a smart fish-and-chips bar run by the



SOLDIER to Soldier

REMOTE though the idea of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation still remains to the average soldier, the arrival in Germany of the Canadian 27th Infantry Brigade helps to give it substance.

These are welcome invaders. It was fitting that they should land in Holland, where they fought bloody battles and made firm friends among those they liberated; and where, after the fighting, they helped the Dutch to rebuild their army.

The Canadians pulled out in the summer of 1946. They had been abroad, some of them, for more than six years. Their Government wanted them back as much as their wives did. The supply line across the Atlantic was long and costly.

Today the supply line is just as long and probably twice as costly. But Canada, like Britain and America, recognises the kind of world it is, and the responsibilities that go with freedom.

"IN real war the greatest risk and the greatest strain fall, normally, upon the soldiers at the front and their regimental officers; it is quite the other way round on manoeuvres."

Thus the leader-writer of *The Times*, in a playful article inspired by the recent manoeuvres in the South of England.

On exercises, the writer points out, defeat holds no terror for the rank and file, "tending rather to improve their chances of refreshing themselves with a dish of tea. They look on the umpire, that grisly reaper in an armband, as their ally, or at worst as a neutral." To the general, however, the umpire is an enemy, always springing unpleasant situations at short notice.

The footslogger often looks on manoeuvres as a faintly foolish charade. How can a man fight invisible foes and dodge imaginary shells? This excuse is not officially admissible; it is still less admissible if advanc-

ed by the higher command. In combat conditions, a commander may see no more of the actualities of fighting than he does on manoeuvres, but he must make swift decisions just the same.

So the footslogger on exercises must not let himself grow bitter at the thought of the Staff sitting about in caravans and not even getting their boots muddy. Their plight, if he only knew it, is far worse than his; their anxieties are shocking; their job is hell. *The Times* says so, though in more polite language. If the footslogger remembers this, he may find manoeuvres much more enjoyable!

BY order of the Army Council, soldiers bound for Korea are given an official booklet entitled "Hints On The Correct Use of Cold Weather Clothing."

Its bears all the outward hallmarks of an official publication — Royal coat-of-arms, signature of the Permanent Under-Secretary for War, War Office Code Number and so on. But on the inside of the back cover is a refreshing novelty in the shape of the following in black capitals:

IF YOU CONSIDER THAT THIS IS A LOT OF NONSENSE YOU ARE JUST THE CHAP WHO SHOULD READ IT AGAIN.

If SOLDIER were allowed three guesses as to who inspired this postscript, one of them would go to an officer so highly placed as to be debarred of further promotion.

Is this Egypt or England? The pathway leads to Moascar's garrison church, built in the mid-nineteen-twenties.

Church of England. Not far along is an ice factory, a co-operative venture of the Royal Engineers and the Royal Army Service Corps. It turns out 14 tons of much-needed ice a day, and if the married quarters were not all fitted with refrigerators its output would have to be increased.

Then comes the Army's outstanding Command Library, with the remarkable total of 30,000 books on its shelves (total borrowings 2500 a week). It is a library and much more besides: how many libraries in England serve tea, coffee and iced drinks to their customers? Some librarians think it unethical to make the patrons too comfortable; not so Captain D. Ward, Royal Army Educational Corps. He also has a library of gramophone records, which are lent out to between 400 and 500 persons a week. Several wives and daughters of the garrison are employed to assist Captain Ward and his two warrant officers.

Across the road from the Command Library are Moascar's schools — infant, primary and secondary. It is a measure of Moascar's domestic expansion that the building which is now the secondary school was first erected as the education centre (and was so depicted in SOLDIER, September 1950). Such was the influx of children that it had to be converted into a school. Until the recent troubles, the *Empress of Australia* could be relied on to bring a fresh batch of school children every voyage for Moascar to educate. The *élite* of the secondary schools, from Moascar as elsewhere, were sent to the English School in Cairo; unfortunately their education has now been forcibly interrupted.

In a garrison where schools are closed on summer afternoons boys cannot be allowed to run wild. That is why the Scouting movement has been encouraged

in Moascar, by Lieut-General Sir George Erskine personally. This year some 24 boys were sent to the Scouts' jamboree in Austria. There is also a youth welfare building in the garrison.

Moascar has an exceptionally fine swimming pool within its perimeter; and it has its bathing beaches on nearby Lake Timseh, where Suez Canal ships gather in convoy.

Many Moascar troops frequent a popular YMCA club in Ismailia, also with a beach on Timseh. This club has been open since 1940 and was frequented by large numbers of British and Dominion troops during the war. Here, until recently, were organised plain-clothes parties to visit the Sphinx and Pyramids, and even — for those who cared to save up their money — the Valley of the Kings at Luxor.



"Army Mansions": One of the Ismailia blocks of flats in which Moascar families were being installed before the recent troubles.



"The wife said, 'Why don't you give up drinking and increase my allotment?' and I said, joking, 'Why don't you break my right arm off?'"

★ KOREA



The officer with the field telephone is Brigadier George Taylor, commanding the British 28th Brigade, which moved to Korea from Hong-Kong. Right: Serjeant James Haye receives the ribbon of the Military Medal from Major-General A. J. H. Cassels, Commander of 1st (Commonwealth) Division. Serjeant Haye belongs to the Black Watch, is serving with the King's Own Scottish Borderers and wears the badge of the Argylls (it's that Group system!)



"Heads down!" Men of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry shelter in a newly-captured trench, as the Communists bring down mortar fire.



An American 75mm recoilless rifle is fired. Evidently it is not soundless. Note curious halation, apparently caused by the explosion.



"Korea's longest elevated tramway system," built by American engineers, carries men and material to a hill-top in six minutes. Before it was constructed, the trip took four hours.

WAITING FOR

WHILE truce talks were still going on in Panmun-jom, the war in Korea seemed to be developing into a stalemate; which did not mean that shot and shell were absent.

The reasons for the standstill are peculiar to this curious war in which the fighting area is limited as strictly as a football pitch.

Today the United Nations Eighth Army is strong and confident. Despite recent massing of troops by the Communists, Eighth Army could probably make substantial advances into North Korea if it felt so inclined.

If, however, United Nations troops push forward, they extend their own lines of communication, a move which would tie up a great many men behind the "teeth" and add to supply difficulties over snow-bound Korean roads.

At the same time, a United Nations advance would shorten the enemy's lines of communications, releasing more troops for his front line. It would also reduce the area in which United Nations aircraft and guns could hit at the Communists, and would enable the Communists to withdraw important rearward units across the frontier into the safety of "neutral" Manchuria. It is like playing a game of football in which the other team has no goal to defend.



THE NEXT MOVE

Another military consideration is that the United Nations forces are now well situated for repelling an enemy offensive. Recent "limited offensives" by the United Nations have wrested from the enemy a number of excellent forward vantage points, some bought at a high price.

Behind these, in recent months the Allies have been able to establish good defence in depth. If the Communists chose to launch a major offensive, it would cost them dear in lives, an outcome more valuable to Eighth Army than the capture of a few hundred square miles of territory.

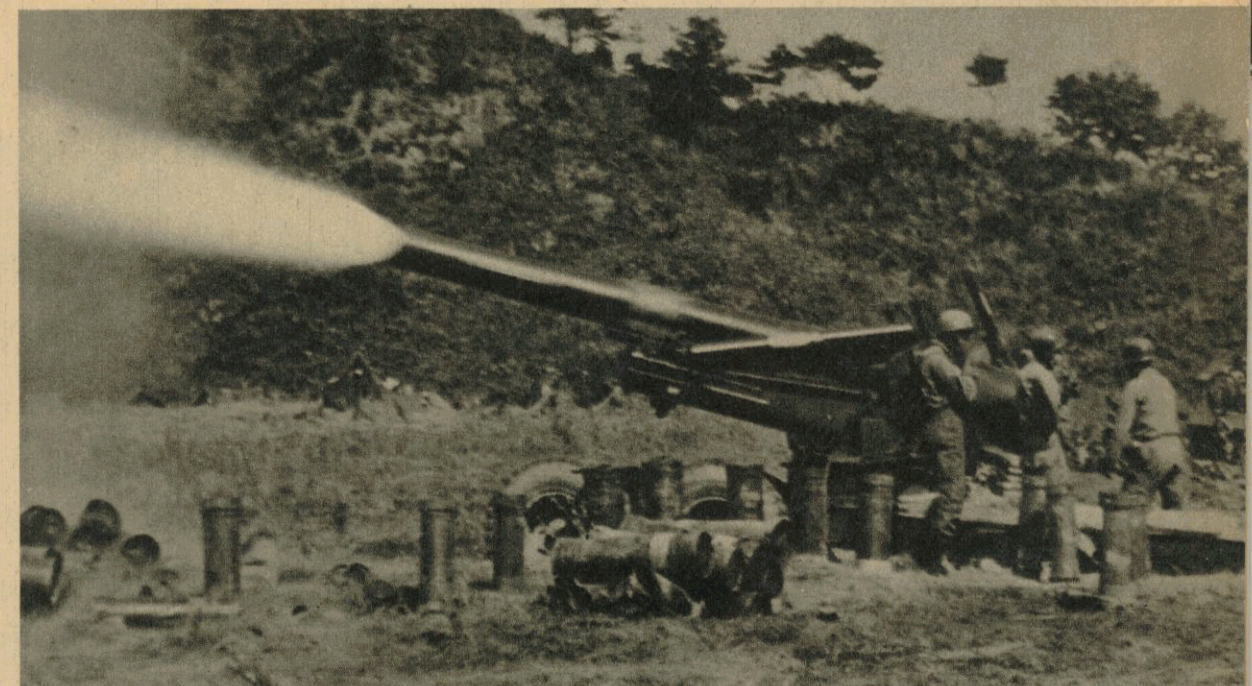
Stalemate or no stalemate, new drafts of British troops continue to travel to Korea. They go to replace those who have completed their year's tour in the theatre.

Among troops now on their way home are the men who comprised the "Rolls-Royce" 29th Brigade when it went out to Korea last year. They were greeted out there by the veterans of 27th Brigade, already a legend. Now they are themselves time-served Korean veterans with a legend of equal glory. Their Commander, Brigadier T. Brodie, is among those who have left Korea.

The Gloucesters are to be replaced by the 1st Battalion, The Welch Regiment, and the 8th Hussars are to hand over their Centurions to the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards.

The 5th Dragoon Guards, and other troops who travelled out with them, had the unexpected pleasure of making their journey in the *Georgic*, still equipped for the Festival of Britain tourist trade. There were no standee sections, no hammock-hung troop-decks, but cabins with bunks and spring mattresses.

The wrestlers are locked, and the grip shifts only slightly from day to day. Who will take the initiative next?



Big stuff: An American 155mm gun taking part in an action in which British and American guns poured 13,000 rounds on to Communist positions.



Below: Nobody can get twopence on these empties from an American 105mm howitzer. There are plenty of full 'ones where they came from.

A BABY FORT ON RAILS

Just another job for an Infantryman... soldiers of the Green Howards in Malaya are learning to operate armoured rail trolleys

THE latest weapons to be used against Malaya's railway saboteurs are Army-conceived and Army-manned armoured rail trolleys.

These vehicles, called "Wickhams" after the manufacturer who produces the chassis, are expected to play a prominent part in both offensive and defensive roles.

Men of the Green Howards recently completed a special course on railway signalling and operation at the Malayan Railways Training School. They will act as drivers and crews of some of the trolleys; others will be police-manned.

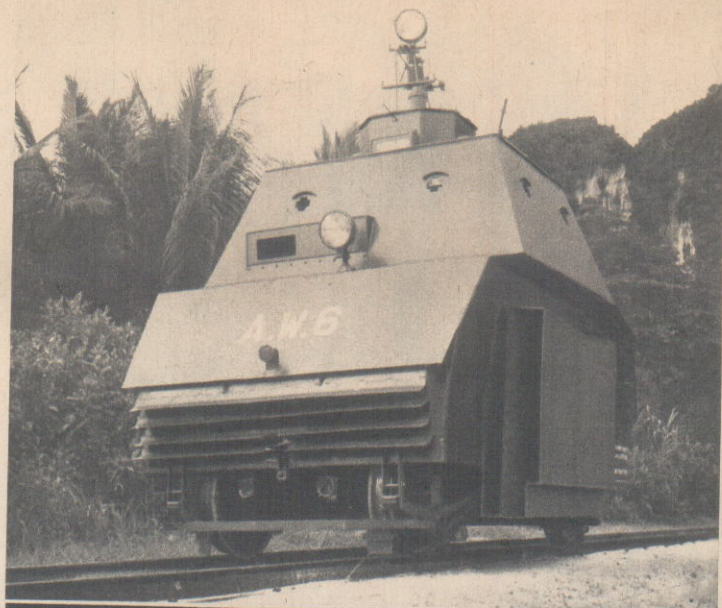
Adapting jeeps and ordinary road vehicles to run on rails was impossible if armour of sufficient thickness was to be used. Malayan railway engineers and REME experts put their heads together and decided to adapt a special vehicle used by engineers for examining rail tracks.

Steel plate, specially cut, was sent out from Britain, and the trolleys were erected at the rail workshops in Kuala Lumpur. Motive power is one Ford V8 motor. Keeping the engine cool was one of many problems, but this was overcome by placing the radiator at the side, at the same time leaving no angle from which bullets could pierce the cooling system. The look-out apertures were fitted with bullet-proof glass of the same texture as that used on war-time Hurricane fighters.

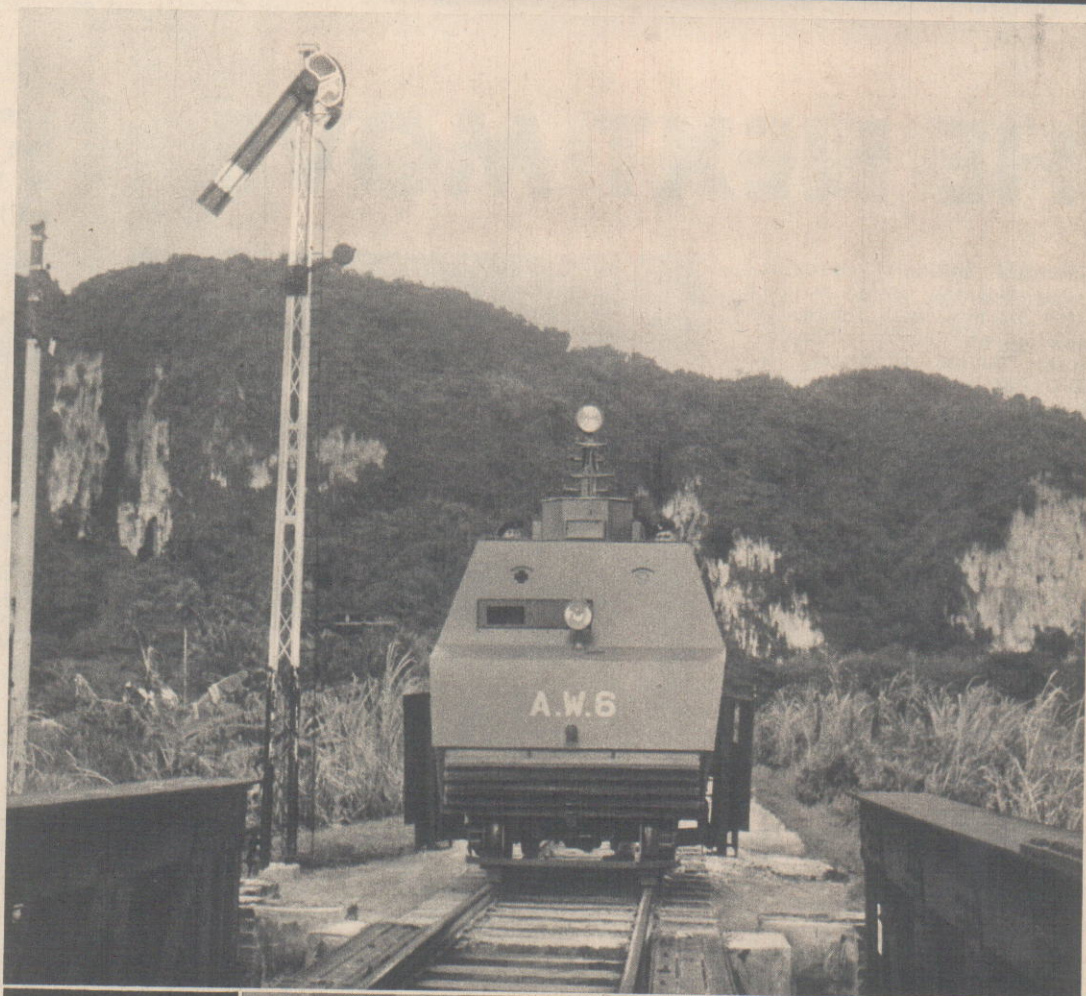
On the long stretches of jungle-lined track in Malaya the value of the "Wickhams" is unquestioned, for they make little noise and pack a powerful offensive.

None of the Infantrymen selected to go on the railway course had previous experience of railways. Two were lorry drivers, one a plumber and another a miner. Two of the men who are National Servicemen are already talking about going on the railways when they finish their service.

D. H. de T. READE



The "Wickham" — showing bullet-proof radiator at side. Under the searchlight will be mounted twin Brens. From slits, riflemen can command all-round fire.



Front view of an armoured trolley undergoing test.

Right: Men of the Green Howards learn railway signal control.





Left: Sapper C. Halliwell pulls on his thick thigh stockings before his first descent. They are not very chic, but they ward off the chill.

Right: Headless man? No, the diver has ducked down to enable the corselet to be raised.

LEARNER-DIVERS

How to avoid turning head over heels under water is just one of the lessons taught to volunteer divers in Rhine Army

THE breast-line twitched six times — four long pulls and two short ones for ascent.

"Stand by, he's coming up," said Corporal Albert Felgate. Two Sappers moved to the water's edge and two more went on turning the great wheel of the pump which forced fresh air to the diver down below.

The air bubbles on the surface decreased in size and number and gradually a dark shape appeared beneath them. As the diver's head broke surface the corporal and his assistants drew him to a flight of steps, holding him there while they removed the leaden submersion weights. Corporal Felgate unscrewed the face-piece and Sapper Charles Halliwell, the man inside the diving suit, took a long, deep breath.

"That was fine," he pronounced, and added as a rather embarrassed afterthought, "but I was scared to death at first."

Sapper Halliwell had just completed his first dive in a 10-ft static water tank in a Rhine Army barracks where 250 Port Operating Unit, Royal Engineers trains Sappers who volunteer for diving duties. At present only Sappers from local units are receiving this training; later men from Sapper units throughout Rhine Army may be sent there.

The idea of using a static water tank for training divers occurred to the Commanding Officer, Major C. C. McKenzie, when Corporal Felgate, a Royal Navy diver in World War Two, was posted to the unit. A good reason for holding the course was that there were very few qualified divers in the British Army. Most of the Army's war-time divers had been released and were working for civilian diving companies. Major McKenzie borrowed two diving suits and equipment and placed Corporal Felgate in charge of the course.

The training, which lasts for nearly three weeks, is divided into three phases. First comes a series of preparatory lectures based on the corporal's first-hand experience. Students receive an idea of what to expect when they go "down below." They learn the 48 hand signals which can be transmitted on the air pipe and breast-line. And they are instructed in the type of work which can be carried out at different depths.

The second phase begins when the men are sent down to the bottom of the water tank and learn how to ascend and submerge at the right speeds, how to crawl and walk on the bottom and to use simple tools like hammer, saw and chisel. At the bottom of the tank Corporal Felgate has had fixed a steel table on which divers practise cutting metal.

The final phase of training is carried out from a jetty in the nearby River Elbe where the conditions are more difficult. At this spot the river bottom is very muddy and under-water visibility is almost nil. There are also many obstacles, some jettisoned from the nearby U-boat pens by the Germans at the end of World War Two. Here, the learner-divers go down to a depth of between 18 and 20 feet and learn how to carry out a reconnaissance, mostly by sense of touch, in a river which is tidal and fast-flowing.

"When their training is completed," Corporal Felgate told SOLDIER, "they should be able to

OVER



Below: Divers' bootlaces are made of thick tarred rope. The boots, capped with brass, weigh 19 pounds each.



LEARNER-DIVERS

(Continued)

pass without any difficulty any diving course the Army can provide."

Corporal Felgate should know. In World War Two as a diver with the Royal Navy's Eastern Fleet he helped to raise a huge floating dock which had been sunk at Trincomalee. In 1946 he left the Navy but, finding he could not settle down to civilian life, he joined the Army. He was at once the innocent victim of an error on the part of someone at a records office. "I volunteered for the Royal Engineers in the trade of a diver," he says. "Within a few weeks I found myself on a *driving* course at Aldershot!"

Shortly afterwards the corporal was sent to Stranraer as a diver, helping in port maintenance and ammunition dumping. There, he was mentioned in despatches for his devotion to duty when a huge and costly mobile crane toppled into the sea. This was during Britain's coldest winter for more than 50 years, when the sea-water temperature was close on freezing point. Corporal Felgate and another diver went down and fixed shackles and wires to the crane which was then raised, saving the Army many thousands of pounds. Later Corporal Felgate flew out to the North African port of Derna to carry out an under-water reconnaissance.

Most of the Sappers now being trained by Corporal Felgate are National Servicemen. Some seriously consider volunteering as Army divers. A qualified Army diver receives additional pay of four shillings for the first hour of a diving operation and two shillings for each subsequent hour; when not diving he receives an extra threepence a day. Attendants receive an extra sixpence an hour.

Learner-divers agree that the worst moment is when the glass face-piece is screwed on and they



It took three men ten minutes to dress Sapper Halliwell in his diving suit. Corporal C. Deakin guides the breast-line and air pipe. Left: Last-minute instructions by Corporal Albert Felgate before the face-piece is screwed on. All learners say this is the worst moment.

are cut off from the rest of the world. It is no job for a claustrophobe. That is why all diving volunteers are put through a rigorous physical test before being accepted. It is only a perfectly fit man, too, who can wear 197 lbs of diver's uniform and equipment and work in it.

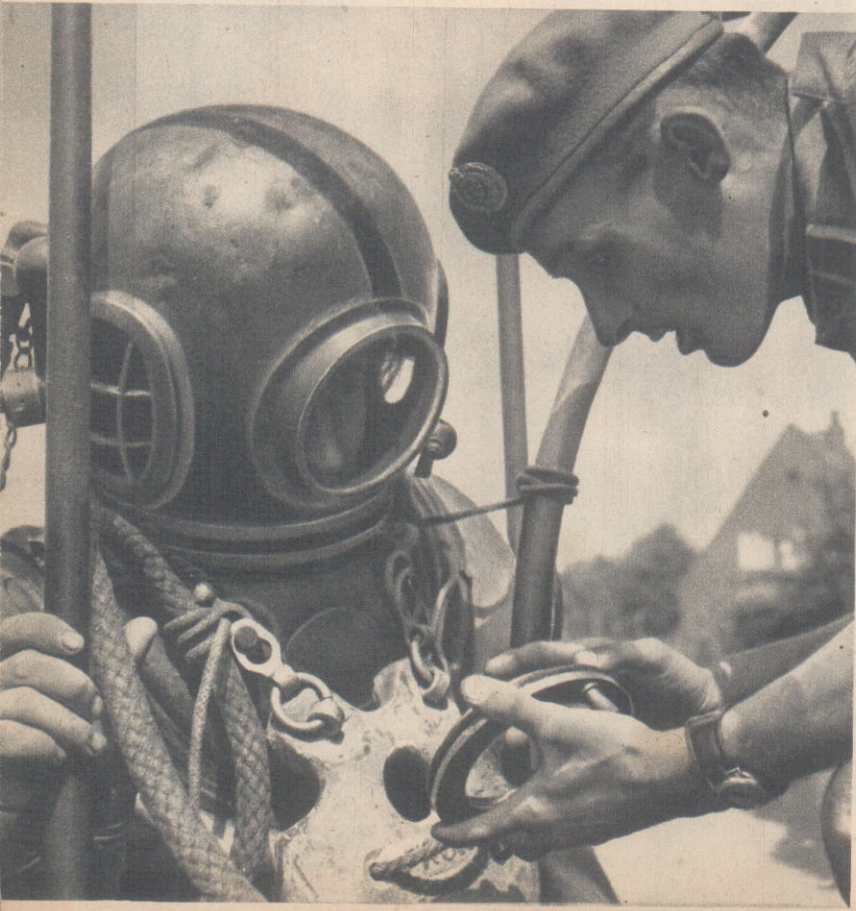
Experience alone can teach the students the right way to keep just enough buoyancy with the help of the air-valve. Most of them have to be "down" for several hours before they are really proficient. Others forget, in spite of Corporal Felgate's warnings, never to put their heads lower than their feet, especially when they inflate their suits to ascend. As a result, some have broken surface feet first.

One golden rule they are never allowed to forget is: Always carry a knife. A sharp blade may save the life of a diver trapped in wreckage.

E. J. GROVE



As Sapper Halliwell sinks from view a cascade of bubbles breaks the surface. If he forgets his lesson he will come up feet first . . .





THE Army is well represented in the new Parliament, not only on the back benches but in the Government.

One of the oldest soldiers in the House of Commons is the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, Mr. Winston Churchill, who saw service in Cuba, India, the Soudan and South Africa, and on the Western Front in World War One.

Mr. Churchill was Secretary of State for War

from 1918 to 1921. He is now Colonel of the 4th Queen's Own Hussars, in which he was once a subaltern. He is also honorary Colonel of two Territorial units of the Royal Artillery: 387 Field Regiment (Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussars), in which he was once a major, and 489 Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment. He is also honorary Colonel of the 5th (Cinque Ports) Battalion, The Royal Sussex Regiment.

17 Guns for a Brigadier

BRIGADIER Antony Head, the new Secretary of State for War, joins a very short but distinguished list of senior Regular Army officers who have been appointed to that office.

The last to have held rank above that of Colonel was Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener, who was appointed on the outbreak of World War One. Before that, the last senior officer to have held the post was Lieutenant-General Jonathan Peel, in 1866-7.

By his new appointment, Brigadier Head becomes entitled to a 17-gun salute when making an official visit to a station authorised to fire salutes. As a brigadier, he was not entitled to any gun salutes (even a brigadier's right to have 11 guns fired at his funeral has been taken away in recent years).

The new War Minister was born in 1906 and educated at Eton and Sandhurst. He was commissioned in the 15/19th Hussars, then joined the Life Guards, of which he was adjutant from 1934 to 1937. In that capacity he took part in many public ceremonies.

In 1939 Brigadier Head attended the Staff College at Camberley and in 1940 he was a brigade major. He won the Military Cross in France. In 1940 and 1941 he was assistant secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defence; then a staff major with the Guards Armoured Division. From 1943 to 1945 he was concerned with amphibious operations. He served in the Middle East, North Africa, Canada, America and Russia.

In his spare time, he is a keen sailor and horseman. He has sailed from Sweden to Australia before the mast in a sailing barque and has ridden in the Grand National.

As one of the Conservative Party's principal experts on the Army, he has had

some pointed remarks to make on the subject in Parliament.

Last March, in the Army Estimates debate, he expressed concern at the shortage of Regular officers. In what he described as "a quisling speech, for I was a Staff officer myself for a great part of my service," he attacked the General Staff and said there were too many officers on the Staff and too many Staff levels.

Here are more things Brigadier Head has said about the Army:

"In the Army there are two offences, stealing and unlawful possession. One is a very bad crime and the other, at one time, became almost a military sport."

"Many officers enjoyed riding, or falling off, horses. The horse has disappeared from the Army. It occasionally makes an ignoble appearance on the men's plates at dinner to vary a monotonous diet."

"It is my experience of the War Office that their habit, when they have got something going a little bit, is to leave it without any water for about two years and then suddenly upset the entire water-can over it."

"There are many officers of the Regular Army who never hated the Germans in war half as much as they hate the Treasury in peace."

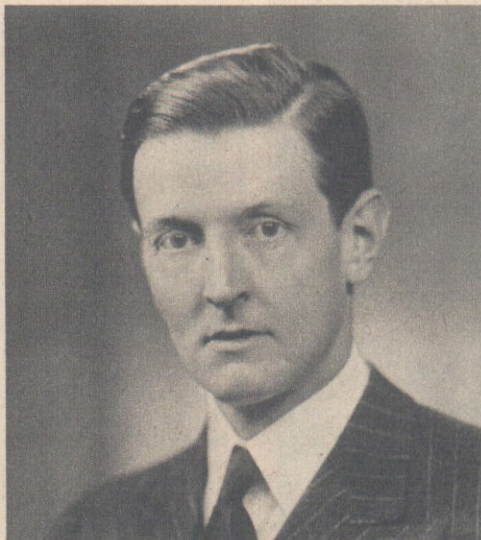
Now Brigadier Head has his chance to impose his will on the War Office — and to get tough with the Treasury.



The new War Minister: he once wore breastplate and plumes.



General Lord Ismay, who has become Minister for Commonwealth Relations, had long experience in India as a soldier. His first appointment there was as an officer of the 21st Cavalry (Frontier Force) in 1907; his last as Chief of Staff to the Viceroy in 1947. He was secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defence in 1938 and in World War Two Chief of Staff to Minister of Defence (Mr. Churchill).



Lord de L'Isle and Dudley, VC, is the new Air Minister. As Major William Philip Sidney of the Grenadier Guards, he won the Victoria Cross helping to repulse German attacks in the Anzio beach-head, after a grenade had hit him in the face and he had been injured in the thigh. He is son-in-law of the late Lord Gort, also a VC. He has contributed to many House of Lords debates on the Army.



Colonel J. R. H. Hutchison, new Under-Secretary at the War Office, underwent a facial operation to outwit the Gestapo who might otherwise have recognised him as a former British Army liaison officer in France in 1939. A bone from his thigh was grafted on his chin, his ears were clipped, his nose re-shaped. Then he parachuted into France on D-day plus 4 and helped wreck German supplies in a big way.



The climax of the carol service, when the Christmas gospel is read by the Guards' Chaplain.
(Photographs: SOLDIER Cameraman
LESLIE A. LEE)

Carols in Wellington

Behind broken columns, the Guards begin the feast of Christmas with traditional hymns in their temporary chapel



This kneeling pad, on the altar steps, was embroidered by Queen Mary.

OF all the carol services which will be held this month, few will have colour and pageantry to equal that in the Guards Chapel at Wellington Barracks.

The Guards Chapel carol service is an annual event, inaugurated four years ago by the Chaplain to the Brigade of Guards, the Reverend Richard Fitz-Patrick. It is a simple service, and follows the form of the one which is broadcast each year from King's College Chapel, Cambridge. The congregation is not large, for the chapel, in its present condition, will seat only 350.

Pageantry begins outside the building. From across the barrack square comes a procession, headed by one of the finest processional crosses in London. Behind are the State Trumpeters in full dress; all the chaplains of London District, robed, with the Guards Chaplain in the Guards cope of scarlet, gold and cream; and last the choir.

From outside, the chapel promises little. Its walls and pillars are broken and grim reminders of the day in June 1944 when a flying bomb struck during a service and killed many of the congregation, including the chaplain.

Inside the walls, the arched corrugations of a big Nissen hut do duty for the columns and roof of the nave — and will continue to do so until, in time, the chapel is rebuilt as part of a modernised Wellington Barracks. The steel is painted a light colour and, for the Christmas season, much of it is hidden by holly.

At the far end, the altar — the Guards memorial to King George V — and the rich mosaics stand as they did before the rocket struck. They were damaged, but have been restored.

Silver candlesticks, which were a gift of King George VI, give light to the altar, the gorgeous altar cloth, the gold communion plate and the alabaster bread casket. They light, too, flowers which are gifts from the Royal gardens at Windsor.

In front of the altar sits the band — each year a different band of the Brigade of Guards — in full dress and with glittering brass.

As the procession enters the chapel, the State Trumpeters sound a fanfare and the service begins. For each carol there is a lesson, and each of the first eight lessons is read by a member of the Brigade of Guards in full dress. The first is by a boy or a guardsman; the second by a corporal; the third by a sergeant; the fourth by a regimental-serjeant-major. An ensign reads the fifth, a captain or a major the sixth, a colonel the seventh. The eighth is read by the general commanding London District — traditionally a Guards officer. Then, after another fanfare by the State Trumpeters comes the climax of the service: the Christmas gospel, read by the Chaplain.



The arch is that of a Nissen hut, but the sanctuary stands as it did before 1944, its bomb-damage made good.

Barracks



Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, leaves at the end of last year's service. Behind her is Major-General J.A. Gascoigne, who commands London District, and on the right the Rev. Richard Fitz-Patrick, Chaplain to the Brigade of Guards, wearing the Guards cope.



The procession enters the chapel, first the Cross then the State Trumpeters.

GUARDS WORSHIPPED IN COOK-HOUSES

THE Guards owe their chapel at Wellington Barracks — officially the Royal Military Chapel — to one of their chaplains of more than a century ago.

He was Doctor William Whitfield Dakins, who was not only Chaplain to the Guards but at the same time Principal Chaplain to the Forces, Precentor and minor canon of Westminster, rector of a London church and vicar of one in Essex.

The Guards, however, were his main interest, and he campaigned long to get them their chapel. Previously, Household troops had attended services in the Banqueting Hall, Whitehall (now the museum of the Royal United Services Institution) where they occupied a gallery from which they could not hear the officiating clergy. When the Banqueting Hall ceased to be used as a chapel, services for Foot Guards were held in cook-houses, where the appetising smell of Sunday dinner occupied the men's attention more than the sermons. Household Cavalry had to worship in riding schools.

Thanks to Dr. Dakins, the Treasury approved a scheme for building a Guards chapel with second-hand materials; the Royal Engineers' estimate put the cost of the building at exactly £4445 6s 9½d. Perhaps because they did not like the odd farthing, the Lords of the Treasury finally decided on a plan for a chapel to seat 1030 at a cost of £5417 5s 5d.

The building which went up, and was opened in 1838, included a gallery for the poor civilians of Westminster (which they never used). It was bare and dingy inside. In 1877 the chapel was closed down and the whole interior was rebuilt and redecorated before it was opened again two years later.

At this stage memorials were introduced. Just before World War Two there were about 800 of them, commemorating lance-corporals as well as kings. Some memorials were useful contributions to the chapel furniture, like chancel seats; some were elaborate ornaments; many were simple plaques. Few of the memorials were saved when the chapel was bombed, and those were in the sanctuary.

The chapel was also the resting-place for the Guards' Colours, of which, by the time of the chapel's centenary, there were 57. Today, they are still in the safe place to which they were taken before World War Two.

SURPRISE PACKET

THE biggest exercise in Britain since the war and the first in peace-time England in which a complete armoured division has taken part—that was “Surprise Packet.”

The manoeuvres covered part of four counties and involved 50,000 troops and 12,000 vehicles. Two smaller exercises, “Merry Widow” and “Corunna Packet,” were curtain-raisers for the two divisions involved.

England was turned into a peninsula divided into a dictatorship

WHAT IT WAS ALL ABOUT

called Fantasia and a democracy called Southland, between which lay the buffer state of Midland. Just inside Midland, at Broad Hinton (south of Swindon), was an atomic pile, the entrance to which was cunningly built to look like a village church. It was known that Fantasia wanted this pile for use in aggressive operations she was planning elsewhere.

Just before the outbreak of war Midland suddenly threw in her lot with Fantasia. Southland's immediate aim was to concentrate

her troops for an advance into Midland in order to destroy the atomic pile before it could be used by the enemy.

For the exercise many formations on both sides existed only on paper. Those on the ground included a corps, commanded by Lieut-General A. Dudley Ward, in which were two of Britain's newest divisions, 3rd Infantry (Major-General Sir Hugh C. Stockwell) and 6th Armoured (Major-General C. E. Prior-Palmer). The enemy were a mixture of Regular and Territorial units, ranging from

The Life Guards to the Artists Rifles, Royal Army Pay Corps and RAF Regiment. One formation called Monckcol (named after the Cromwellian general Monck) made many vigorous dashes into Southland.

Southland, outnumbered on the ground and in the air, made a brave thrust into Midland, but owing to a right flanking drive by Fantasian forces was forced to withdraw. The manoeuvres ended with an all-out battle in the Larkhill-Tidworth area. Thus were two of Britain's newest divisions exercised in concentrating, attacking, river crossing, withdrawing, and fighting on the defensive. One of these divisions—the 3rd Infantry—has since been ordered to the Middle East.



A warrior king who never heard of wooden bullets, or any other kind of bullet, watched the tides of war flow past in Pewsey. At King Alfred's feet the Army laid its route arrows.



Ready to roar into action at a moment's notice: A Comet of 6th Royal Tank Regiment lies up in wooded country during the Southland advance.



In Indian file men of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment advance in the lee of a wood in the Stonehenge country.



All set for firing wooden bullets which disintegrate as they leave the Bren: Fusilier J. Butler, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers.

SHAKEDOWN FOR NEW DIVISIONS

IN the normally peaceful acres of Wiltshire the Kennet-Avon Canal is an insignificant waterway along the banks of which couples wander hand in hand, and small boys set out hopefully with their home-made fishing nets. In Exercise “Surprise Packet” it became a frontier patrolled by sentries and armoured cars.

The village of Pewsey was a frontier town divided only by the “ruins” of its narrow arched bridge from the wooded, hilly countryside of hostile Midland.

It was Saturday and for nearly two days war had raged between the people south and north of the canal. Hostilities had started in the early hours of Friday morning when armoured cars of the King's Dragoon Guards had dashed through the village to guard the bridge. There were bursts of machine-gun fire as they made contact with enemy parachutists who arrived in Land Rovers, and then the troop commander, Lieutenant Tony Bull, of Hindhead, withdrew after enemy casualties had been awarded. He headed for Urchfont, ten miles away on the left flank, to shoot up the Life Guards who had crossed the canal and were involved in battle with the rest of his regiment.

The people of Pewsey saw more of those airborne forces before the day was out. They were, in fact, Territorials from the Special Air Service (Artists Rifles) under Lieutenant-Colonel A. C. Newman, the St. Nazaire VC. Although they had been to camp in the summer, 90 were able to take time off to act as Midland troops for the exercise.

Just before dark a tank from 2nd Royal Tank Regiment arrived at the bridge. It was the spearhead of the 6th Armoured Division, which had spent the whole day racing for the frontier. The driver, Trooper Dick Martin, had just reached it when it disintegrated in an imaginary explosion. Pewsey was divided from its enemy neighbours by the canal and a pile of rubble.

The acting commander of the tank, Lance-Corporal Howard Painter, an aliens officer from Scotland Yard who was doing his Territorial camp with the Royal Tanks, ruefully surveyed a broken track. But he did contrive to shoot up six members of the RAF Regiment who were lurking on the far bank.

Thus it was on this Saturday morning that the Division's Infantry started to pour into Pewsey, to be followed by a weary squadron of 27th Field Engineer Regiment, Royal Engineers. Their orders were to bridge the canal in the shortest possible time, for on no account could the division's armour be held up.

To the folk of Pewsey the idea of the canal without its bridge was a novel one. From their doors and windows they watched the Army face up to the problem of crossing a narrow strip of water without wetting its feet. A Sapper officer, Second-Lieutenant T. A. Linley, after hunting along the bank for a suitable crossing place, decided that there was no better spot than alongside the blown bridge. This suited the spectators.

They watched Captain E. R. Mackenzie, a troop leader, organise his men into carrying and building parties; then the class 65 bridge (extra wide) began to take shape. All had heard of the Sappers' bridge across the Thames to the Festival site. Now, on their own doorstep, they were to have a Bailey of their own. Who said the Festival of Britain was over?

But in the world of Exercise “Surprise Packet” bridging a frontier canal in full view of a well-prepared and well-concealed enemy on the rising wooded hills of Midland was no easy task. The King's Own Royal Regiment, responsible for Infantry defence, had only time to thrust a few men across the battered remains of the old bridge before trouble was let loose. Thunderflashes thrown by umpires represented accurate artillery fire from the north, and soon houses and streets on the village's outskirts were—in theory—spouting rubble. The Sappers drew back to the cover of buildings and folds in the ground

OVER



The canal bridge has been “blown.” Sappers build a Bailey to carry Southland Centurions.

SOLDIER reports by Peter Lawrence and David Grove. Pictures: Desmond O'Neill and William Stirling.



SHAKEDOWN FOR NEW DIVISIONS (Continued)



October Morn: the war always looks better after a shave.

and evacuated 50-odd casualties from the devastating fire.

Worse was to follow. From out of the smoke-filled sky appeared enemy Vampires, their jet engines screeching above the noise of traffic and drowning commands as they turned and dived for the bridging party. From behind a pile of railway sleepers Lance-Corporal Michael Bailey aimed his Bren gun in the direction of the oncoming planes. Somewhere in the rear Very lights represented anti-aircraft fire, and the rest of the engineer squadron put up a hail of rifle fire. The effectiveness of such a barrage against fast-moving jets must always remain in doubt, but it was a question of using all weapons in an attempt to make the pilots' job as difficult as possible.

On both flanks attempts were being made to throw armour and troops over the frontier. On the

Well dispersed to minimise casualties, Scots Guards advance over the open plain. Waiting for them is a gas attack.

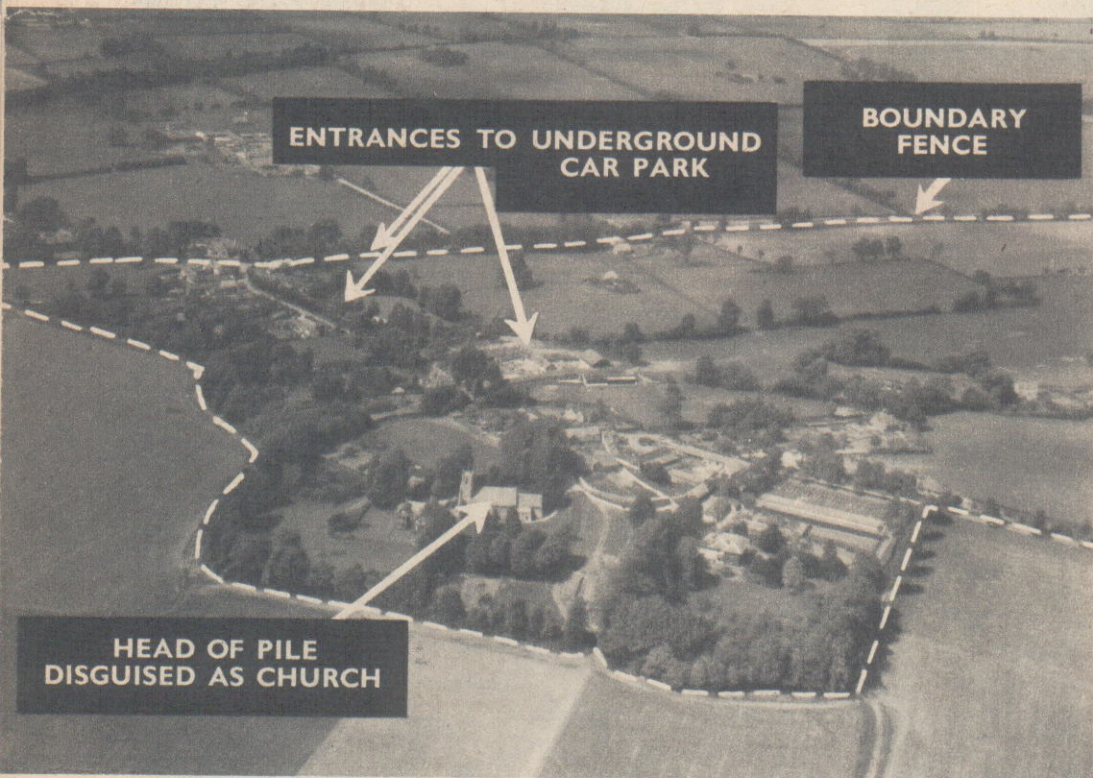
left the Buffs were preparing to ford the canal. On the right the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, having already fought a battle on Sidbury Hill near Tidworth, were pushing three companies over the ruins of the bridge across Savernake Station (the canal passes under the station) and were digging in on their newly won bridgehead.

A realistic touch was added by the evacuation of two soldiers, Privates Frank Haley and Norman Brown, by helicopter. For the benefit of a news-reel cameraman, one of them had his face plastered with some of his company's jam ration. To the envy of their colleagues and the chagrin of opposition news-reel men who arrived on the scene breathless but just too late, they were

whisked back to a reception station at Wimborne.

Beyond the Light Infantry bridgehead the Midland forces prepared for mischief, their target being the Pewsey crossing where the continuous air attacks were hampering the defences. Lieutenant-Colonel Peter Fleming (the author) sat in his headquarters in Lockeridge school and planned tip-and-run raids by his private army, made up of 75 per cent National Servicemen from the Royal Army Pay Corps and 25 per cent Territorials of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, most of whom were sitting astride road blocks.

Back at the canal the Sappers were preparing to return to their bridge building, the air attacks now having fallen off. The King's



THE bells of St. Peter Ad Vincula, the 13th century church at Broad Hinton (pop. 300) were summoning villagers to Sunday morning service. Two scout cars of the Fantasian Army suddenly roared up the narrow main street and skidded to a halt in the shade of the old village tree.

A few minutes later, a battalion of 131 Airborne Engineer Regiment TA and units of 44 REME Workshops and 16th Ordnance Field Park arrived to place a screen around the church to guard it against the Southland Army.

St. Peter Ad Vincula had become, for the purpose of Exercise Surprise Packet, an atomic pile, the main objective of Southland's armoured columns.

Rather bewildered, the congregation filed into the church to listen to the usual Sunday morning sermon delivered by the rector, Canon Hugh Vaughan White, who took this opportunity to impress upon his flock the necessity for maintaining strong forces to guard against evil. The sermon was frequently interrupted by the shriek of Vampires flying low to strafe spearheads of the advancing enemy.

After the service, Mr. F. Brewer, a sidesman, and his nine-year-old daughter, Christine, walked to the church gate to find it guarded by two paratroops armed with Sten guns. In a field adjoining the rectory, REME cooks were preparing the mid-day meal. All around the church slit trenches were being dug and anti-tank and machine-gun posts set up.



Own were starting to push some more companies forward. As they advanced along the main road into Midland's interior the leading platoon heard the sound of an approaching armoured car. Second-Lieutenant John Aslett ordered his men into the ditch and waited. Round the corner came the armoured car, preceded by a truck containing seven of Fleming's "irregulars." Their orders were to ambush any Southland troops coming up the road, but the boot was on the other foot. A burst of Bren fire from the King's Own, and the truck off-loaded its passengers in a hurry. The armoured car opened up, but was hit by Piat fire from Private A. H. Alford of the King's Own. The umpires decided the South-

Above: Schools were closed for the exercise. Private G. Entwistle, 1st King's Own, shares an apple with a National Serviceman of tomorrow.



Farmer Gay watches tanks of the 17/21st Lancers churn up his fields as they withdraw under an attack by jet Vampires.

land men had won that skirmish and as a reward for their good work, Number Eight Platoon were presented with apples by some small boys who had been watching from the surrounding trees.

Alongside the demolished Pewsey bridge the Sappers were finishing off the Bailey. Most of them had not slept for two days. Already tanks had crossed at Savernake Station, where with the aid of bulldozers the rubble of the "blown" bridge had been

stacked into a causeway sufficient to carry the tanks across.

As evening approached the Centurions rumbled their way towards the newly completed crossing, and almost breathlessly the inhabitants waited to see the first one roar across the Bailey bridge. Suddenly, however, the tanks made for the old stone bridge which had been so dramatically "blown" the previous night, and without a pause drove over it into Midland. The um-

pires, in their wisdom, had decided that there was little purpose in breaking down fences and hedges in manoeuvring the tanks back on to the main road. It would be assumed that the Bailey had been used and that the stone bridge was still debris.

For perhaps the first time that day the inhabitants and the tired, unshaven Sappers shared a united sense of disappointment. But after all, the exercise was called "Surprise Packet."

SURPRISE PACKET (Cont'd)

On manoeuvres umpires fare even worse for food than the fighting man, and nobody loves them except the men they "kill"

"HOW'S THAT, UMPIRE?"

FOR the attackers, the dawn mist was a blessing. For the umpire, it was a head-ache.

The battle had all been laid on. A company of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers were due to attack Morgan's Hill, south-east of Calne in Wiltshire. The umpire, Major H. D. Pyman of the Sherwood Foresters, who was attached to the company, had spoken to the umpire on the opposing side. He knew exactly where the shells were to fall and delay the company.

Now this mist had come down and thrown out all the umpires' plans. The mist cloaked the "Skins" and it was obvious that they would reach the minefield as a complete company, without casualties. If Major Pyman had any thought to console him, it was that he was at least better off than he had been in Rhine Army's exercise a few weeks before; there he had been the only umpire with a battalion, here he was one of seven.

The company, and Major Pyman, duly reached the minefield wire, intact. The commander, Major James Hastings, ordered his men to work round to the high

OVER



There's an umpire close behind me, and he's treading on my tail... Major W. N. R. Scotter, of the Border Regiment, listens in to an orders group called by the Commanding Officer of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, Lieutenant-Colonel D. G. Moore (centre).

"HOW'S THAT, UMPIRE?"

(Continued)

ground on the left, leaving the next company to probe for a gap. Major Pyman followed them and suddenly realised that they were out in the clear sunlight. Across the valley, still full of mist, he could see Morgan's Hill. In a moment his thunderflashes were bursting. To the company commander he said: "Sorry, but you have just lost three killed and 17 wounded, one of whom will be evacuated."

He detailed the casualties and from his pocket drew a prepared label on which was scribbled "Leg blown off." The dead and wounded walked off to an isolated farm building at the base of the ridge, where they would wait until they rejoined the battalion as reinforcements that night. The seriously wounded man, his label tied to his belt, was carried off by stretcher, one of the battalion's quota of 16 men a day to go back via the regimental aid post to a casualty clearing station. This was considered enough to give the medical officer practice in documentation, without causing too many men to lose training. The man who lacked a leg would be back on the battlefield next day.

Major Pyman hurried on to keep contact with the company commander who was making for the high ground. The company were to be counter-attacked and driven off. Major Hastings did not know it, but Morgan's Hill was going to be a very expensive attack.

Major Pyman did not know it, but Morgan's Hill was nearly no battle at all. Back at battalion headquarters Major W. N. R. Scotter of the Border Regiment sat in a ditch near the Inniskillings' commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Dennis Moore, who



Tear gas coming up... Bombardier J. T. Evans is ready for it, anyway. Right: On the edge of the gas area, Lieut-Colonel J. G. M. Wybergh, The King's Own, measures wind speed.



had been lucky enough to pick up the enemy on his wireless. There was a voice giving orders and then there was a pause. The colonel cut in, imitating the voice, and ordered the forward companies on the hill to withdraw 200 yards. The ruse appeared to work, for he heard four stations give "Wilco, out."

For a moment Major Scotter, as battalion umpire, wondered how he would reach the forward company umpires in order to explain this change. Then the enemy voice came back on the air: "Suspect you to be a pirate station. Please give call sign of big sunray." Lieutenant-Colonel Moore tried the first letters that came into his head, but the enemy went off the air. The defences of Morgan's Hill remained intact.

From Major Scotter, reports went back to 39th Infantry Brigade headquarters, where they were studied by more umpires, who then passed back the brigade's story to divisional headquarters. Another umpire at brigade headquarters shadowed the brigade major and still another stayed close to the administrative staff. Over all of them watched the chief brigade umpire, Lieutenant-Colonel C. B. Mackenzie of the Cameron Highlanders.

In a large wireless truck at the headquarters of 3rd Infantry Division, sat Lieutenant-Colonel R. V. Russell, senior divisional umpire on the operational side and deputy to Brigadier D. Rennie, the division's chief umpire. He watched reports coming in from the three brigades and from the 14/20th Hussars, who were responsible for the division's anti-tank protection. More reports came in by special General Post Office landline. Umpires who wished to call up the divisional headquarters merely rang a telephone operator and said, "Surprise Packet. Shrewton 95, please."

Umpires were also reporting from rear divisional headquarters, where they were keeping a watch on the work of the Army Post Office and the Ordnance, Engineer, Workshop and other services. Umpires must watch the interior

economy of a force as closely as the operational side. All these reports would be sifted and go back to the headquarters of 1st Corps.

Meanwhile, on the sheet in front of Lieutenant-Colonel Russell the story of the Inniskillings was being unfolded as it had come back from Major Scotter. "Phase one successful. Innisks now hold Stone Pit Hill," said a message. Stone Pit Hill was the point before Morgan's Hill. Then the headquarters heard that the Inniskillings had been held up by mines and heavy artillery fire. That was the moment when Major Pyman was writing on his label the name of the man who had lost a leg. Half an hour later came a new message: "Innisks have found gap in minefield and are trying to make progress."

In the afternoon there came another change in the planned battle for Morgan's Hill. Divi-

sional headquarters received the signal: "Elements of 6th Armoured Division approaching the objective of 39th Infantry Brigade from East. This may alter brigade's plan."

It did, and as Lieutenant-Colonel Russell was trying to sort the whole thing out, a junior umpire reported that the 14/20th Hussars had brought in a flight-lieutenant and three American officers as prisoners. They were four tired, unshaven men taking part in an Air Ministry endurance exercise of which nobody on "Surprise Packet" had heard.

Lieut-Colonel Russell signed permission for their release, and as he watched them walk off across Salisbury Plain he said: "If anyone wants an endurance exercise, he should be an umpire. Yesterday my brigadier set off at three o'clock in the morning and got back at six o'clock at night, for his first meal in 24 hours."



An umpire explains the situation to visiting French generals. Four-star general is Chief of Staff of the French Armed Forces, Général de Corps d'Armée C. Blanc.



Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery, visiting 3rd Infantry Division, is given a quick picture of the battle by Lieutenant-Colonel C. B. Mackenzie, DSO, Cameron Highlanders.

SURPRISE PACKET

(Concluded)

MANOEUVRES are designed to test every branch of the Army and to try out new ideas. Exercise "Surprise Packet" had its own selection of little-known activities.

For example, Territorials of 873 Movement Light Battery, Royal Artillery, provided "artificial moonlight" for the first time on an exercise in Britain. Experts from the Royal Army Ordnance Corps

and Royal Engineers were studying the use of machines for handling stores. An Amesbury hotel became a Press camp, from which newspaper correspondents covered the "war" escorted by Public Relations officers.

NAAFI had its own exercise with mobile canteens. To the surprise of the men who manned them, only luxuries were wanted.

FLYING PROVOST

A military policeman standing on a busy crossing on the Andover-Salisbury road saw a large silver helicopter fly above the line of traffic and come to rest over the hedge.

He expected a party of foreign military observers or possibly an air vice-marshal to emerge. To his surprise out sprang an assistant provost-marshal. It was the first time a helicopter had been used by provost officers to make snap checks on traffic control points; but the Corps of Royal Military Police hope it will not be the last.

When Lieutenant-Colonel A. G. Joslin, Deputy Provost-Marshal in Berlin, was sent to Salisbury Plain to act as assistant provost-marshal to 1st Corps headquarters, it was decided to try this new form of air control. It had already been used by civilian police to deal with football crowds.

Four trips were made during the exercise, one of them with the Provost-Marshal, Brigadier L. F. E. Wieler, sitting next to the pilot. The helicopter can hold 12, but the military police consider that

an officer and a section of eight men would normally be carried. On a busy route the police could be dropped off one at a time at crossing points where convoys clashed. When no longer needed, they would then be picked up by the helicopter, which takes only a few minutes to land and take off.

Explained Lieutenant-Colonel Joslin: "Helicopters would be of very great use when wet or frozen roads or traffic blocks made it difficult to get police to congested points quickly."

If police were needed in built-up areas, or if the surrounding country were heavily mined, a pointsman could be dropped by rope ladder from a hovering plane right on to a road centre.

Police who were taken up during the exercise included Regulars and Territorials from 1st Corps Provost Company and 23rd Corps Provost Company, Territorial Army.



Shape of things to come? A helicopter disgorges Provost officers and military policemen. Tomorrow's pointsman may be dropped at the cross-roads in this fashion.



"The enemy morale is unshaken..." With the aid of an oil lamp, the staff of the *Southland Times* prepare the next day's edition.

PRINTED IN THE FIELD

TROOPS taking part in the manoeuvres read up-to-date news of the "war" in four news-sheets and a photo-litho printed newspaper, the *Southland Times*.

The four news-sheets, printed on office duplicators, were produced each night by Royal Army Educational Corps teams at 3rd Infantry and 6th Armoured headquarters and at similar headquarters on the Midland side. The *Southland Times*, also edited by the RAEC but printed in a truck by a printing platoon of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps, was produced at 1st Corps Maintenance Area near Wimborne Minster.

One night the area was invaded and the editor, Major Douglas West, poked his head out of the door to find a "parachutist" killing off half-a-dozen signallers.

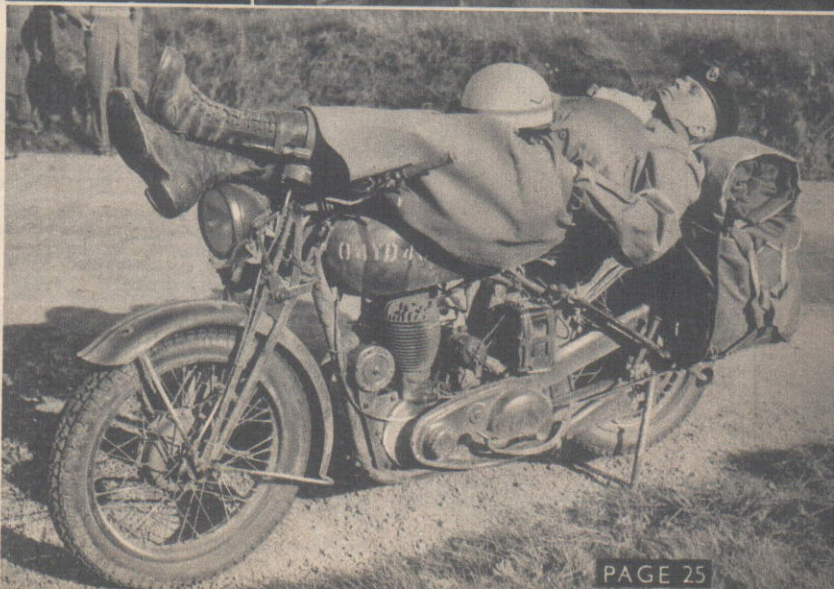
News for the *Southland Times* was derived from the BBC, the War Office's Forcereuter service, and from members of the British Army News Unit with forward troops, who also sent back photographs. On a small office-style offset litho press copies were printed at a speed of 1500 double sides an hour. Delivery to forward troops was by Army Post Office and despatch rider.

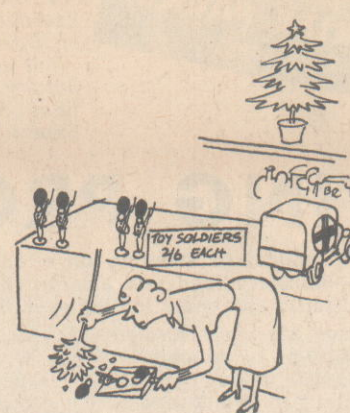
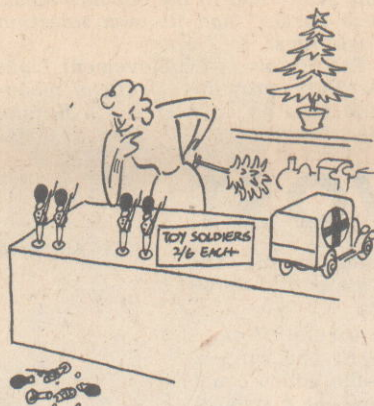
Serjeants on the editorial staff included a horticulturalist at Kew Gardens and an entomologist at the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, both National Servicemen.

THE LIGHTER SIDE

The things that go on during manoeuvres... Lance-Bombardier J. Davis's greyhound catches live rabbits for his master.

Below: Art of relaxing in improbable places has been mastered by L/Cpl. E. Clarke, of the Royal Military Police.



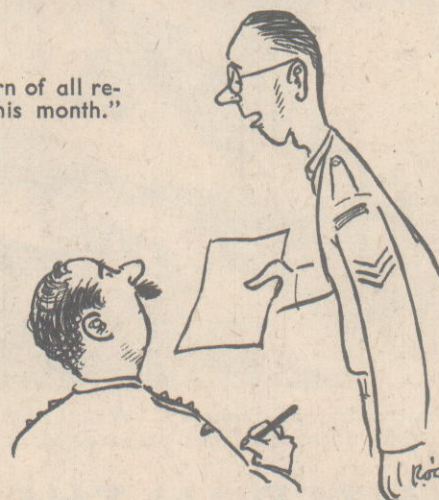


SOLDIER humour

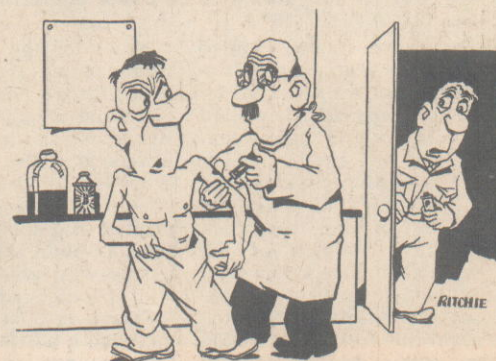


"I don't care how long it takes —
advance and be recognised."

"And this is a return of all re-
turns discontinued this month."



"Then when this lot's thawed, you can whitewash 'em again."



"Excuse me, sir, have you
seen a tin of metal polish?"

Secrets of Sleep



If you dream of a ball

TO DREAM you are dancing at a ball signifies joy and good fellowship. It also foretells that you will receive a large sum of money or unusually good news. In matters of love, this dream promises happiness and success.

It's a thrill to dream of joys to come, but it's a bigger thrill to taste the joys of here and now. Dip into a box of Duncan's Capital Assortment. Those wonderful centres—old favourites and new ones—every one different, every one a delight. In $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. cartons and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. packs.



The chocolates of your dreams

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Classical Cooler



Do you remember an ancient by the name of Tantalus? In punishment for some unacceptable piece of behaviour he was placed by a river, but whenever he tried to drink, the water moved away from his lips. He worked up a sensational and eternal thirst, and incidentally gave his name to a decanter devised to baffle unauthorised parties trying for a drink. There are times when we all feel as dry as Tantalus. So when thus tantalised, make the most of the enjoyment to come. Let your mind dwell on the Rose's Lime Juice bottle, the slim lines and cool colour. Think of the long glasses, the clear water and tinkling ice, the reviving tang. And when you actually feel this most famous of cooling drinks flowing through your parched being, remember: if you ask for Rose's, thirst becomes a privilege.



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Ovaltine

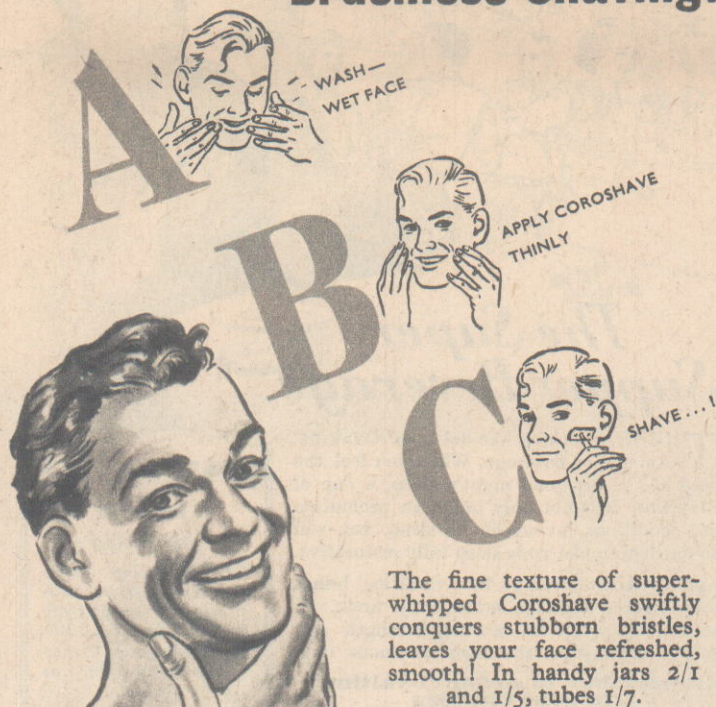
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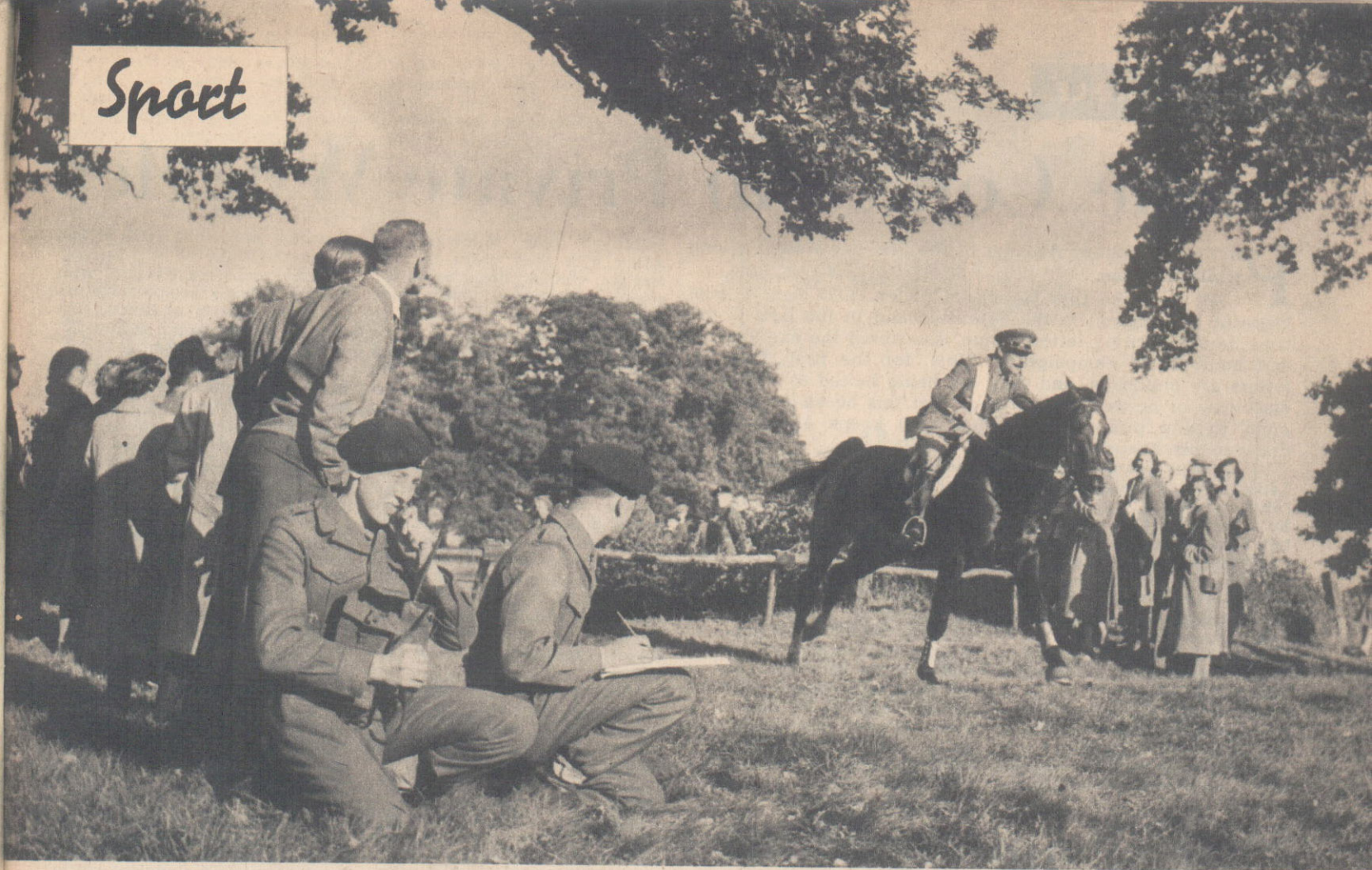
Age



The choice of champions

Scotland wore "Umbro" when they
beat England in the
International at Wembley

OF LEADING SPORTS OUTFITTERS ALL OVER
THE WORLD



This Army meet was highly organised: at the fences, judges had the services of troopers of the Life Guards who reported faults by radio to the recorder's tent.

Army Riders Show Their Paces

THE Army Saddle Club Association is two years old this month. Since it started it has made about 50 grants to Army saddle clubs at home and overseas.

Its object, declared in the programme of its second championship hunter trials, is to encourage riding among soldiers as "a robust form of off-duty amusement."

Certainly the trials at Twyford in Berkshire looked robust enough. The course, which was the one used by the Garth Hunt, was about a mile and a third long. There were 13 fences, including a water jump and a scramble with post and rail, and the standard time was four minutes for individual entries and 20 seconds longer for teams.

There were spills. Two or three riders went into the water; at least one broke a stout-looking rail by falling on it. But nobody was seriously hurt and all the caps which flew off were carefully collected by the men on duty at the fences and returned to their owners.

At the fences, the judges were supported by men of the Life Guards with walkie-talkie sets, which communicated each rider's faults to the recorder's tent. There officers and men of the

Infantry riders competed with men of horsed units when the Army held its hunter trials in Berkshire

same regiment calculated the results.

Most of the 150 entries, as was to be expected, were from Cavalry units and from those few units which still use horses for duty, like the mounted detachment of the Household Cavalry, the Military Police, the Horse Transport Training Company of the Royal Army Service Corps, the Royal Army Veterinary Corps and the King's Troop of the Royal Horse Artillery.

Other units, however, were well represented: Grenadier, Scots and Irish Guards, the Cameronians, the Buffs, 1st Training Battalion RASC, the School of Artillery, the School of Infantry, the Royal Military Academy (which has its own drag hunt) and others. There were also entries from the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force.

In the open individual class ("open to the world") Lieutenant K. F. Brown of the 3rd King's Own Hussars (from Germany) won on Marmion, with only two faults, both for style. Second was Captain C. B. Toller, Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry, on Christopher Robin, owned by Lieutenant-Colonel M. St. J. V. Gibbs; he

had five fence faults. Third, with five fence faults and one style fault, was Major P. C. Worthington, Royal Artillery, on Merry Fox. In this event, 33 of the 50-odd entrants covered the course in three minutes.

All three places in the Army individual championship (open to the other Services as well) went to members of the King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery. First was Lieutenant J. Cameron Hayes, who made the only faultless round of the day on Fritz; second and third respectively were Captain S. P. H. Simonds on Nuthatch and Lieutenant C. W. D. Morgan on Heavy Weather. Captain Simonds and Lieutenant Morgan each had five faults, but Captain Simonds' time of three minutes 23 seconds was 15 seconds faster than that of Lieutenant Morgan.

Squadron Corporal-Major W. L. Thompson, DCM, of the Life Guards, who won both the individual events last year on Angela, had another mount this year and was unplaced.

The unit teams (any rank) event went to a team of the King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery, consisting of Lieutenant Cameron Hayes, Bombardier F. H. Hooson

and Bombardier P. J. Ryan, with 22 faults. The Life Guards Mounted Squadron was second, with 28 faults and another team of the King's Troop third with 33 faults.

In the unit team event confined to captains, subalterns and officer-cadets, first place went to the King's Troop (Captain Simonds, Lieutenant Morgan and Lieutenant Cameron Hayes) with 27 faults. The 3rd Hussars were second with 36 faults and the King's Dragoon Guards third with 44 faults.

In the unit team event for the Territorial Army and reserves of the other Services, the Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry had a walk-over. Their team (Captain C. B. Toller, Captain C. L. Loyd and Lieutenant J. I. Morrison) made a round with 70 faults. The Regular Army event for teams from units other than mounted units or Cavalry or Royal Artillery, went to the Cameronians (Colonel H. T. Alexander, Major Sir E. Bradford and Serjeant Clarke) with 104 faults; the Staff College (Major W. S. Brownlow, Captain W. G. Blaxland and Captain R. C. Gibbs) were second with 116 faults.

The inter-hunt event was won by the 10th Hussars Hunt (from Germany) with 43 faults; the Bedale Hunt of the 17/21st Lancers was second with 49 faults and the Royal Military Academy Drag third with 62 faults.

Fame Comes to Private Wheeler

PPRIVATE William Wheeler of the 51st has waited a long while for fame.

All the time that he served under "Old Nosey" (the Duke of Wellington) in the Peninsula and in the Low Countries he was writing letters home, describing the excitements and humours of campaigning. Now, for the first time, his letters are published, and they are being hailed as a literary discovery of no mean importance. Let this be an encouragement to any present-day soldier who keeps a day-to-day diary in his knapsack.

By a happy coincidence, "The Letters of Private Wheeler" (Michael Joseph, 18s) are edited by a distinguished writer, Captain B. H. Liddell Hart, who served in the same regiment as Wheeler (the 51st became the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry). Of Wheeler's story, Captain Liddell Hart says: "I know of no contemporary story by a fighting soldier that equals this in atmosphere and interest."

Private Wheeler's story begins in England in 1809. He goes on the Walcheren expedition; he serves a long spell in Portugal and Spain; he fights in Belgium

and he joins the occupation troops in Paris; then his battalion is sent to Malta and Corfu. In 1828 he is invalided home with a pension of one-and-tenpence a day.

Wheeler liked the Army, which does not mean that he approved everything that happened in it. He shuddered at the frequent floggings and shootings; he thought that women were a nuisance on the battlefield; and he had some hard words to say about the chaplains of his day — "If these reverend gentlemen were stationed at the sick depots and made to attend to the hospitals, they would be much more usefully

employed than following the Army with their brace of dogs and gun, running down hares and shooting partridges." Often there was "no minister of religion to cheer the dying sinner."

To Private Wheeler the French were "frog-eating rascals." But he and his comrades had an admiration for Napoleon — remarkably similar, says Captain Liddell Hart, to the admiration expressed for Rommel by British soldiers in a later war. As for the Portuguese, one look at Lisbon inspired Wheeler to say: "The dogs should all be destroyed, the able-bodied priests draughted into the Army, half the remainder should be made to keep the city clean, and the remainder if they did not inculcate the necessity of personal cleanliness should be hanged."

Military justice in Wheeler's day was savage and quixotic. A private soldier was found drunk on sentry duty; though he had been sober when posted, his corporal and sergeant were reduced to the ranks and awarded 300 lashes each, the soldier 500. Wheeler swore that he would accept no promotion if he was to be flogged for other men's offences; but later, promotion was thrust upon him.

Shortly before Waterloo, Wheeler and his comrades were uneasy because the higher command was in the hands of the inexperienced young Prince of Orange. The Prince, however, signed a general order surrendering the Army

"into the more able hands of His Grace the Duke of Wellington," and the ranks went frantic with delight. In their eve-of-battle exuberance, a party of British officers pulled Brussels' "mannikin" statue from its pedestal.

Wheeler's first letter after the Battle of Waterloo began: "The three days fight is over. I am safe, this is sufficient." He did not know by what name the battle would be called, but he knew the news would be "a grand treat to John Bull." He was in the thick of the fighting, and saw the French *cuirassiers* broken on the British squares, and scores of men trampled to death under frenzied horses. After the battle, he records a curious mishap. A corporal fired at a barrel of brandy, to make a bung hole, as was the custom. Unfortunately it turned out to be a barrel of gunpowder, and all the men holding their canteens ready to catch the liquor were blown to smithereens.

In due course Wheeler's battalion camped in the Bois de Boulogne and the soldiers saw the sights of Paris. One day a woman parachuted over the city from a balloon, and Wheeler's comrades fought a violent battle with a Hanoverian brigade for possession of the balloon, which was torn to shreds. Much of the charm of Private Wheeler's record lies in its wealth of odd, illuminating stories like this. It is a book which no one interested in the history of soldiering can afford to miss.

He Fell among Monks

A peninsula which has been out of bounds to women for more than a thousand years is not at first glance a haven likely to attract a soldier.

But for Second Lieutenant W. B. Thomas of the New Zealand Army, it had its points. After many attempts, excitingly retold in "Dare to be Free" (Allan Wingate, 12s 6d), he had escaped from captivity in Greece and was at large with an open wound in his leg.

On the Mount Athos peninsula there lived some 8000 monks, in 21 monasteries of varying sizes, and they were reported to be more friendly to the British than to the occupying Germans.

Not all of them gave him a welcome, however. Some were scared of the Germans. But Papa Sergos, who lived by himself, gave the fugitive a meal, insisted on washing his feet for him, and followed this up the next morning by washing his socks.

For some months, the author led a wandering life on the peninsula living with the monks, who tended his wound. In one monastery he was hidden in a bricked-up cell, which he entered by the sky-light, while Germans searched the building. He never discovered why the cell and some of its neighbours were bricked up except that there had been "unhappy incidents which warranted the sealing of the rooms."

Boats were precious at that time, and no Greeks in the area were willing to sail escaped Britons to the safety of Turkey. So, along with other fugitives, the author decided to steal one. On their first attempt, they were



Major W. B. Thomas DSO, MC and Bar, USA Silver Star, is the author of an exciting escape book. A New Zealander, he now serves in the Royal Hampshire Regiment.

swept back, after a long ordeal in a storm, to Mount Athos.

The second attempt, which was literally daylight robbery under the eyes of the owner, failed because the escapers did not notice that the plug of the boat was not in place. They had to turn back to the shore. The owner, once he discovered who they were, welcomed them to his house and told them where there was a better boat, belonging to a friend, which they might steal. This time, there were no mistakes.

By the war's end the author had become — in the words of Lieut-General Sir Bernard Freyberg — "one of the most dashing and seasoned commanding officers of Infantry in the 2nd New Zealand Division."

Story of the "Slashers"

THE reputation of the Gloucestershire Regiment has never stood higher than it does today.

That stand on the Imjin River, however, is but the latest of a series of gallant feats by the Gloucesters, recounted in a new history of the regiment, "Cap of Honour," by David Scott Daniell (Harrop, 17s 6d.)

Probably the most famous episode was that at Alexandria in 1801 when the 28th, later the 1st Battalion, were charged from the rear, and the two ranks of the regiment fought back to back and earned themselves an extra badge on the back of their headdress.

Less known is the fact that the 61st, later the 2nd Battalion, performed a feat which might well have entitled them to a similar honour at Chillianwallah, the "Waterloo of India," in 1849. They, too, were attacked from the rear and ordered to change front to rear. The commanding officer instead, ordered, "Sixty-first, right about face," explaining to his divisional commander, "If my rear rank's not as good as my front rank, they've no business here."

The steady discipline of the Gloucesters in battle recurs constantly in their story; time and again they held their fire until the enemy was almost upon them, to make every bullet count.

On St. Lucia, in 1778, 12,000 French were advancing on 1300 Britons, including the two flank companies of the 28th. British ammunition was down to the last few rounds; there was one round each for the only two British guns. The commander of the 1300 ordered "Cease fire," intending to give one final volley and then finish the engagement, win or lose, with the bayonet. In the heat of battle, with overwhelming enemy numbers advancing, every British soldier unquestioningly lowered his musket and waited. The guns fired their one round each, then the muskets loosed their volley. It won the battle; the French turned and retreated.

It was the same discipline which astonished an officer of an armoured unit in Burma in World War Two. He was inside his tank, in the thick of battle, when he heard a tapping on the hull. He opened up and there was a Gloucesters' sergeant-major who saluted in parade-ground fashion

then, standing rigidly to attention, asked, "Permission to speak, sir?"

Field-Marshal Viscount Alexander inspected a battalion of the Gloucesters after the retreat from Burma and found them all shaven, although razor-blades were short and troops had been given permission to grow beards. "The 28th prefer to shave," explained the regimental serjeant-major.

The 1st Battalion achieved their nickname, "The Slashers," in

Canada in 1764 when the mayor of Montreal, who had done his best to make the military uncomfortable, was attacked by disguised men and had half his right ear slashed off. The blame was never pinned on the 28th — but they proudly adopted the nickname. Today, one may find on Admiralty charts the name Slashers' Reef, a spot where ships carrying the regiment ran aground off the Australian coast in 1842.

It Began in Room 057...

VALENTINE Morland was an officer "of no fixed military occupation." That is to say, he wore a General List badge on his cap and held himself ready for any unorthodox mission which might be thrust upon him by "Uncle George," the otherwise nameless brigadier who occupied Room 057 at the War Office.

Morland had just returned from a rather messy little assignment in Portugal when Uncle George ordered him to rescue a pregnant pedigree cow from the German-occupied Channel isle of Armorel. Not that Uncle George really approved of the mission; but the Chiefs of Staff, whose servant he was, had been persuaded that it really was important not to let such a proud bovine heritage pass into enemy hands. Morland, on the other hand, was delighted with the mission: it showed that even in the midst of total war Britain still retained her sense of values.

Naturally, it was essential to find a guide with personal knowledge of Armorel. The War Office located such a one serving as a private in the ATS and flew her to London forthwith. Morland had been warned to expect a "female battle-axe," but nobody with a name like Nicola Fallaize

could be other than wholly charming. Indeed, when officers saw Nicola at the wheel of a staff car they always found some excuse for sitting in the front seat — and Morland was no exception.

That is perhaps enough about the plot of Jerrard Tickell's "Appointment With Venus" (Hodder and Stoughton, 10s 6d) to whet the reader's appetite. He must find out for himself whether Morland and his battle-axe are successful in coming home with the milk.

The author, who wrote "Odette," has an agreeably light touch, but his story is not all comedy. *The Times*, which is not easily impressed by popular novels, thought that the ending of "Appointment With Venus" was "really rather touching."

Mr. Tickell is one of those fortunate authors whose works appear in book and film form simultaneously. (See Page 34)

How Much Do You Know?

1. A new "Seven" was on display at this year's motor show, but its engine was rated at a higher horse-power. How high?

2. As in Korea, strategy on the autumn manoeuvres in Britain was concerned with a "frontier" on a parallel. It was not the 38th, but—which?

3. If a salesman told you, "That's a nice piece of West of England," would he be talking about (a) mutton, (b) beef, (c) cloth, (d) turf?

4. Bodoni, Gill, Asti, Caslon, Baskerville — one of these words has got into the wrong company. Which?

5. This year saw the 300th anniversary of the last major battle in England. Where was it?

6. The horse lends its name to the following: (a) a tree; (b) rowdiness; (c) a non-existent fighting man; (d) a root which is used to make a strong sauce.

Can you complete the names?

7. What are (a) black diamonds, (b) blacklegs, (c) the black art?

8. Who killed Cock Robin in the nursery song?

9. RAMMER GO BY NO TREND is an anagram of the Christian name and surname of a famous personality. Can you sort them out?

10. What are the usual nicknames associated with these surnames: (a) Miller, (b) Murphy, (c) Wilson, (d) White, (e) Clark?

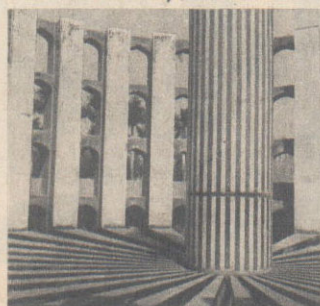
11. This picture shows:

(a) A scene from a new Hollywood Bible film;

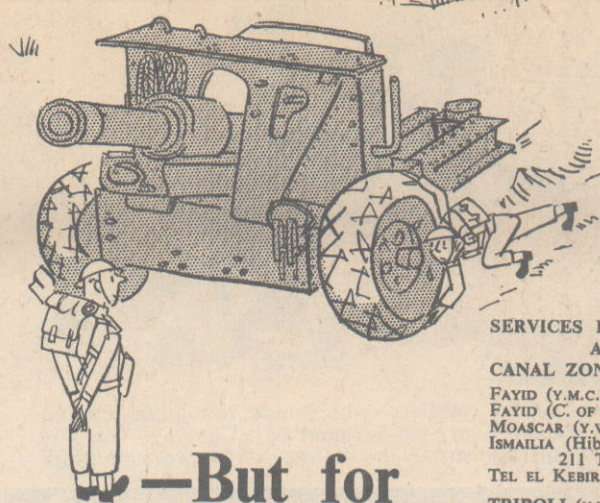
(b) an Eastern device for measuring altitude and azimuth of heavenly bodies;

(c) a water filtration plant in Syria;

(d) part of a Roman bath in Tuscany. Which?



(Answers on Page 36)



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OLDENBURG (Y.M.C.A.)
SENNELAGER (Church Army)
WAHN (Y.W.C.A.)
WINTERBURG (Y.M.C.A.)

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One of the soldiers who made the prize-winning 25-pounder was Staff-Serjeant B. J. Conway. The picture on right shows the delicacy of the workmanship.

SILVER MODEL WINS SILVER MEDAL

THERE is no stopping a determined model-maker.

There were several of them in 4 Infantry Brigade Workshops, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, in Germany. They had set their hearts on a one-twelfth scale model of a 25-pounder field gun.

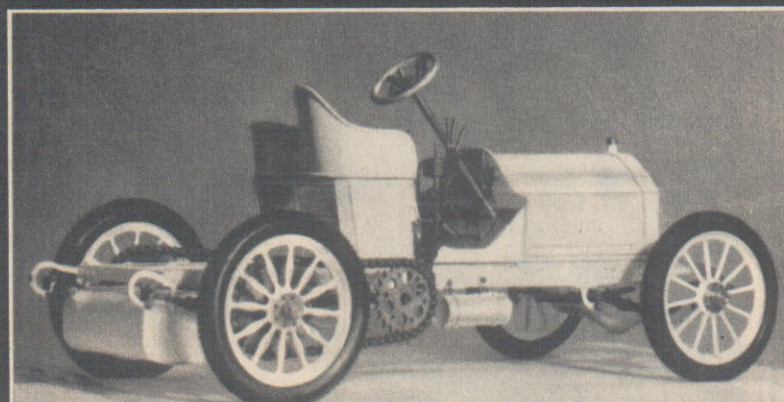
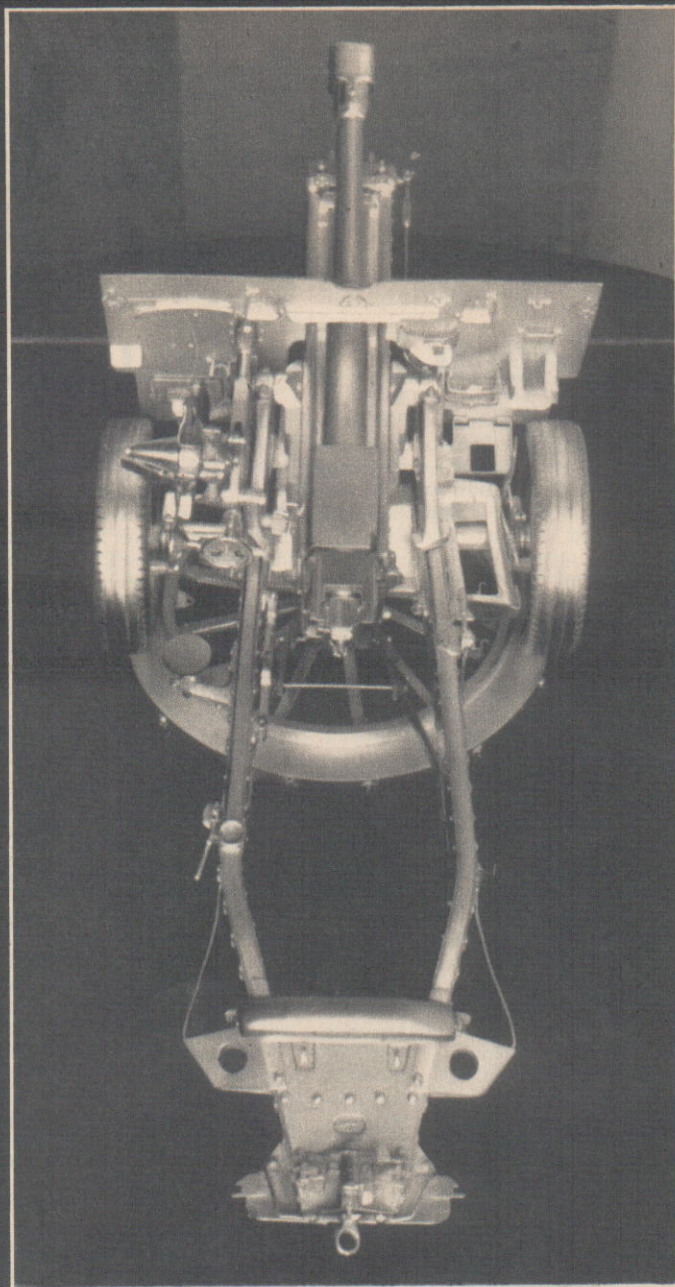
But working drawings were not available. So Staff-Serjeant B. J. Conway, Craftsman B. E. Lear and Craftsman W. Morrison went into their workshops and seized upon a full-size 25-pounder which had come in for repair. They stripped it, measured each part and made a careful scale drawing of it. Then they went to work with nothing more elaborate than an electric hand-drill and a seven-and-a-half inch lathe.

The result was a glistening scale model, silver-plated and mounted on black velvet, which would do credit to any silversmith's showcase. All the working-parts, including full recoil mechanism, are faithfully reproduced; the breech-block, the brake gear and towing eye are fully detailed. Handspikes are fitted into properly-shaped clips on the trails and there are all the latest modifications. Cabinet-maker's tiny pins have been filed down and used as rivets.

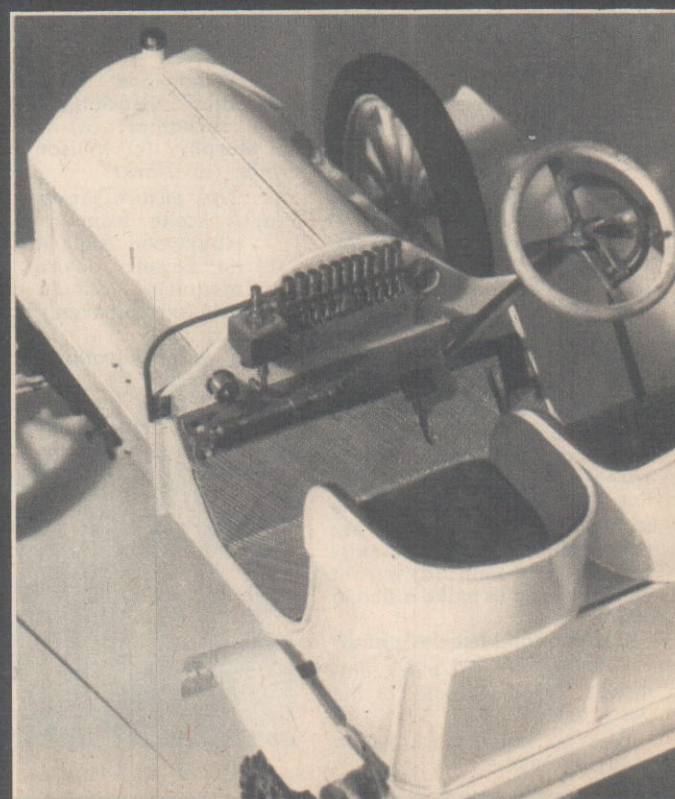
The model gun was shown at this year's Model Engineering exhibition in London, and was the first model ever entered officially by the Army. It won a silver medal. The gun will become an inter-regimental trophy for Royal Artillery units of 2nd Infantry Division. Details of the competition have not yet been decided.

Another Rhine Army entry which won an award at the Model Engineering exhibition was a scale model of the Mercedes-Benz racing car which won the 1903 Gordon-Bennett motor race. The builder of the model was Major T. W. Stubbs of Army Public Relations.

The Mercedes-Benz entries in that race were ordinary touring models converted for the occasion. All the drawings were destroyed when the Mercedes factory was bombed during World War Two. But Major Stubbs, who is conducting research into Mercedes-Benz early racing history, had full co-operation from the works and access to the archives. His model is fully detailed, down to tiny split pins in all the nuts. When he has put the finishing touches to it, the model will probably go into the Mercedes museum at Unterturkheim, near Stuttgart.



This tiny scale model of an early Mercedes-Benz race car was built by a Rhine Army officer. Right: showing the dashboard gauges and wooden-rimmed steering wheel.



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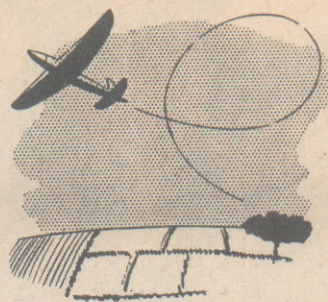
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AGE (if under 21)



The major and the ATS girl are in a tight spot: a scene from "Appointment With Venus" (the book is reviewed on Page 31). David Niven and Glynis Johns are the stars of a lively comedy-thriller.

FILMS COMING YOUR WAY

SCROOGE

"A squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching covetous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster." That was Charles Dickens' description of Scrooge, and that is the man whom Alastair Sim is called upon to impersonate. Kathleen Harrison plays Mrs. Dilber, the charlady, and Jack Warner Mr. Jorkins. Also in the cast are Clifford Mollison, Mervyn Johns and Hermione Baddeley. The book was prepared for filming by Noel Langley, who is now at work on still another Dickens picture, "Pickwick Papers" (which will be made next year).

VALLEY OF EAGLES

Jack Warner again, this time as a Swedish police inspector who tracks his criminals into the sub-arctic. The rogues have stolen the secret of a sound-weapon. Highlights of the film include a stampeding herd of reindeer plunging over a precipice, a battle between trained eagles and man-eating wolves, and an avalanche. Ploughing through the snow with Jack Warner are Nadia Gray and John McCallum.

GUNMAN IN THE STREETS

Another American turned loose in Paris. This one is not a gay dog, but an escaped convict who wants to flee from France with his former mistress and does not mind how he does it. "An adroit blend of thuggery, thrills and sentiment" says the publicity sheet. The cast is a mixture of American and French players, headed by Dane Clark, Simone Signoret and Fernand Gravet.

LADY WITH A LAMP

This has been quite a year for Florence Nightingale: two biographies and now a film, based on Reginald Berkeley's play. Most soldiers will wish that this film had contained rather more of Miss Nightingale's bitter battles with the military, rather less of the unspectacular events of her later life. The pictures of the Crimea are good as far as they go, but they do not go far enough. Don't worry about the Lamp; it looks like a Chinese lantern, but that's the way it was. Anna Neagle is excellent in the complex part of Miss Nightingale, though she is not allowed to show the dragon under the skin. Michael Wilding is Sidney Herbert, looking a little ill-at-ease among his whiskered Cabinet colleagues. A good film, but if only they had put the climax at the end, instead of in the middle!

Florence Nightingale (Anna Neagle) pleads for co-operation from an obstinate medical officer in the Crimea. (See "Lady With A Lamp").



Flight-Lieut. L. S. Lumsdaine (left) and Lieut J. J. Percy, Durham Light Infantry.



ARMY PENTATHLETES

TWO Army officers and one RAF officer made up Britain's modern pentathlon team for this year's world championships in Sweden.

The British entrants were Flight-Lieutenant L. S. Lumsdaine, who came ninth; Lieutenant J. J. Percy, Durham Light Infantry, who was 12th; and Major C. H. Blacker, Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards, who was 16th.

The British team finished fourth to Sweden, Finland and Brazil, beating France, America, Italy, Denmark and Switzerland.

Flight-Lieutenant Lumsdaine was last year's British champion and fourth in this year's British championship held at Aldershot; Lieutenant Percy was fifth in this year's British event; and Major Blacker was a member of the winning team at Aldershot in 1950.

The individual winner in Stockholm was Lars Hall, of Sweden, who competed as a guest in this year's British championship and beat the champion.



Major C. H. Blacker, Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards.



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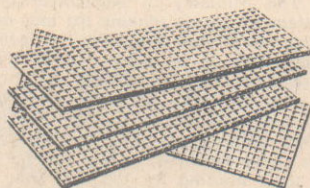
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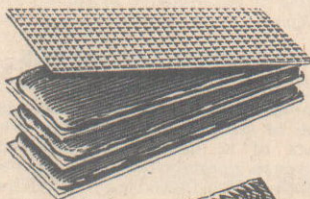
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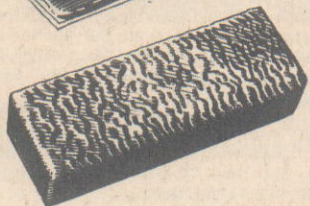
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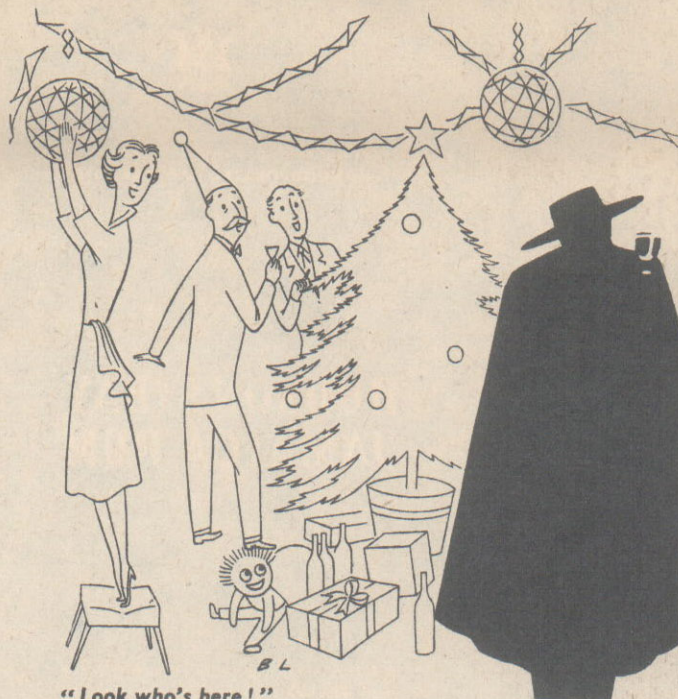
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LETTERS



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"WHAT DID YOU DO ...?"

Can you tell me the origin of the saying, "What did you do in the Great War, Daddy?" Was it a line from a popular song, or a caption to a cartoon, or what? — "Nosy Parka" (name and address supplied).

★ The saying originated from a series of recruiting posters issued at the time of Kitchener's appeal for his first 100,000 men. One of the first was entitled "FIVE QUESTIONS TO MEN WHO HAVE NOT ENLISTED" and ran:

1. If you are physically fit and between 19 and 38 years of age, are you really satisfied with what you are doing today?

2. Do you feel happy as you walk along the streets and see other men wearing the King's uniform?

3. What will you say in years to come when people ask you — "Where did you serve?" in the great War?

4. What will you answer when your children grow up, and say, "Father, why weren't you a soldier, too?"

5. What would happen to the Empire if every man stayed at home like you?

Other posters contained variations on the theme of shamefaced fathers being questioned by their children.

LAND GRANTS

Could you give me any information about the Government's Land Resettlement Scheme and how much capital would be required? — Driver G. Humberstone, RASC, BAPO 3.

★ The Ministry of Agriculture resettlement grants scheme for men and women who have served in the Forces since 1939 is to assist those who were working agricultural or horticultural holdings on their own account for commercial food production before joining up. The scheme also aids those disabled by war service to set up a holding for the first time.

Readers interested are advised to enquire at the Resettlement Advice Office of the Ministry of Labour after release.

MARRIED QUARTERS

Can you tell me why we have to pay different charges for the same type of married quarters? We are a block of 12 families all occupying "C"-type quarters but the rents vary between 14s, 15s 6d and 17s. There is also a difference in the electricity charges, although we are all allocated the same amount of fuel each month.

I have made enquiries and have been told that where there are no "A"-type quarters available, families are put into "C"-type and charged only "A"-type rents.

I have always paid according to the type of accommodation and not the size of my family, and I feel it should be the same here. It does not seem right that those with three children should be paying more than those with two. — "Soldier's Wife" (name supplied), Quebec Barracks, Wootton, Northampton.

★ Both quartering charges and the allotment of quarters are based on the size of the soldier's family. The childless family is entitled to an "A"-type home, the family with one child a "B"-type and the family with two or more children a "C"-type. It is not always possible to allot quarters to this scale and a soldier who has a home larger than his entitlement

●SOLDIER welcomes letters.

There is not space, however, to print every letter of interest received; all correspondents must therefore give their full names and addresses. Answers cannot be sent to collective addresses.

Anonymous or insufficiently addressed letters are not published.

● Please do not ask for information which you can get in your own orderly room or from your own officer, thus saving time and postage.

pays quartering charges according to his entitlement. A soldier with a home smaller than his entitlement pays the charges appropriate to that accommodation. For electricity, occupants of quarters are charged fourpence a unit for a certain number of units, depending on the size of the accommodation, and a penny for each unit above this number. These charges operate from 1 October 1951. Charges before this date were threepence and three-farthings a unit respectively.

HOSTEL PROBLEMS

In a few months I am due back in Britain with my family. (1) Where can I find a list of families camps? (2) If the necessary accommodation is not vacant for, say, two months, can my family go with me and use that time to visit relatives? If so, is my wife notified before leaving Austria or on arrival in Britain that accommodation has been allotted her from a certain date? (3) Is there any truth in the story that there is no provision for a soldier to spend his leave with his family when they are living in a camp? — Sjt. A. W. Hall, Austria.

★ There is a temporary ban on families from Rhine Army, Austria and Trieste being allotted hostel accommodation in family camps, owing to heavy demands from families returning from the Middle and Far East. It is hoped the position will be easier in a few months time.

(1) In appendix to ACI 495/51. (2) It rests with overseas commands whether families return with their husbands. There is no objection to a family reserving accommodation in advance and moving into a families camp after leave is over. While on leave the husband or wife would be told which camp to go to. (3) While no special accommodation is provided for husbands to spend leave with their families in a camp, there is no objection to them doing so.

RESERVE PAY

When I leave the Colours to go on to the Reserve I shall have to buy a house. Is it possible to draw any of my Reserve pay in a lump sum to help towards the deposit? — Cpl. G. Murray (address supplied).

★ Reservists receive pay because of liability to recall to the Colours. It is paid in arrears, and advance payment is never authorised.

Answers

(from page 31)

How Much Do You Know?

- 8.3 horse-power. 2. 52nd. 3. (c).
- Asti, a wine; the others are names of printers' types. 5. Worcester. 6. (a) horse-chestnut, (b) horseplay, (c) horse-marine, (d) horse-radish. 7. (a) coal, (b) workmen who serve a master whose men are on strike, (c) magic.
- "I," said the Sparrow, "with my bow and arrow." 9. Bernard Montgomery. 10. (a) Dusty, (b) Spud, (c) Tug, (d) Chalky, (e) Nobby. 11. (b).

GLASS BOTTOMS

In an antique shop I found two pewter beer mugs with glass bottoms. I have heard that in the 17th and 18th centuries recruiting officers used to offer beer to men after they had dropped the King's Shilling in the mug. Anyone who took a drink was then supposed to have accepted the shilling. For this reason, goes the story, the glass was put in so that the drinker could look straight through the beer. Is this true? — **Lieut. H. Muller, Koninklyke Marechaussee, D de Karthuizerstraat 9, Eindhoven, Netherlands.**

★ The War Office recruiting branch say they have never heard of this theory. They believe that the glass bottoms were instituted merely in order that drinkers could see what they were drinking.

BOOTS IN PERIL

I deeply regret the passing of the Army cobbler, as it is not without a certain amount of trepidation that I entrust my best "bulled" boots to the civilian contractor, who seems to delight in treating them with utmost savagery. — **"Corporal" (name and address supplied).**

★ The Army still employs military boot repairers, but mostly in overseas stations. It is now the custom for units in Britain to place the work with civilian contractors. Some troops bind protective cloth round the toe-caps of their boots to remind the

Scottish Infantry regiments, may wear brown shoes with battledress when off duty or working in offices. Suede shoes are not allowed with uniform at any time. However, when Number One dress is generally issued brown shoes will be banned for non-commissioned officers and men (See ACI 126/50).

THAT GAP

I am worried about the gap of over 12 years between my two periods of Colour Service. I was in the Army until 1926 and then went on to the Reserve until 1931. I joined the Supplementary Reserve in 1933 and was mobilised in 1939. Will that gap prevent me counting my previous service towards pension? — **Cpl. J. Turner, 21 Field Regiment, RE, BAOR.**

★ Pension rules state that service preceding a five-years interval may not be included for reckonable service unless specially allowed. However, where a soldier spends the interval as a member of a Reserve or Territorial Force in which he is liable for annual training, then such membership will not count as an interval of service. Corporal Turner will thus be able to count service with the Colours before 1926 as reckonable for pension.

CANNOT EXTEND

I am serving a 21-years engagement which ends next June. I have also two years boy's service, which will give me a total of 23 years. Owing to my medical category I shall be unable to extend my service to 22 years. Shall I be entitled to the terminal grant of £150? — **Corporal A. Auld, Roslin Street, Aberdeen.**

★ Provided this soldier completes 21 years continuous unforfeited full pay service after the age of 18, he will be eligible

for pension and terminal grant under the 1950 pension code. Boy's service does not count.

— HE CAN

I have served 17 of my 21-years engagement and wish to extend my service to complete 22 years. I am now informed that I cannot do this until I am in the last month of my 21-years service. — **"JB" (name and address supplied).**

★ A soldier may re-engage to complete 22 years service any time after nine years service on a current engagement.



repairer that a scratch may spoil a polish which has taken months to achieve.

BROWN SHOES

Can you tell me the official ruling on shoes worn by men when walking out in uniform? We have been told that only officers and class one warrant officers may wear brown shoes, and that the men must wear only black when off duty. Is there an ACI on the subject? — **"Serjeant" (name and address supplied).**

★ All troops, except those serving with the Royal Tank Regiment and

More Letters Overleaf

2 minute sermon

"If God made the world—who made God?" That old question haunts the minds of men. Deep down in our hearts we sense the dark mystery that surrounds the beginning of things. Men of old said, "In the beginning God..." but all they had done was to use a word they did not understand. The world considered—and shrugged—and thought of something else.

Two thousand years ago something happened to set the world thinking again. In a stable in the backyard of a village inn a child was born. He lived for 33 years. His life was not marked by what is usually called success. He died—not as a hero—but as a criminal in disgrace. But he had lived a life of such shining integrity that after his death the light of it remained. Men thought of the mysterious darkness that surrounds the beginning of things. And they saw that the light was shining—not into that darkness—but out of it. Because all that they had ever meant by the word God was here in the flesh—made real in the life of a man. Here was a grace tender enough to be human and strong enough to be divine: here was a truth simple enough for a child and great enough for eternity.

When Christmas comes men will still say, "In the beginning God..." But now the world should know what it means.



"Poor old 'Erb. The little blonde has given him the Air."

"He ought to know that girls like bright things. We'd better wise him up about Cherry Blossom Boot Polish."

CB/X 12/2.

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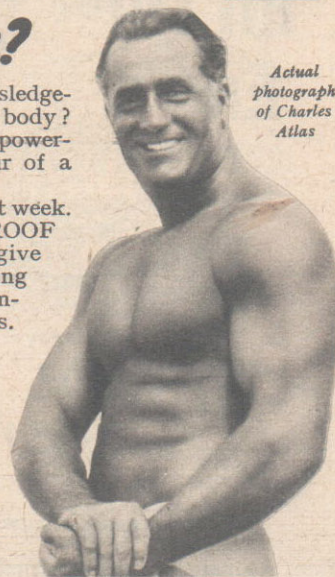
DO you want big, smashing, sledgehammer muscles all over your body? Husky, broad shoulders? A deep, powerful chest? All the pep and vigour of a "hard as nails" athlete?

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Actual photograph of Charles Atlas

CHARLES ATLAS (Dept. 148/Z), 2 Dean Street, London, W. 1.

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(Please print or write clearly)

ADDRESS

The Sergeant Major

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MORE LETTERS

OFFICERS' RETIREMENT

Is a Regular officer on an engagement of five years with the Colours and seven with the Reserve able to leave the Army at the end of his five years under the present national emergency? Can he leave by purchase before that period is completed, and how much would it cost? I have an appointment in civilian life waiting for me but I have still two years to serve. — "Second-Lieutenant" (name and address supplied).

★ It is assumed that this officer, while at the Royal Military Academy, signed an undertaking to serve for a minimum of five years. He will have to serve for that period, after which he is free to apply for retirement. The present ban on retirement is to be lifted on 1 January 1952, after which officers whose retirement is approved by the Retirement Board may retire when their services can be spared by their own arm of the Service.

Discharge by purchase is in abeyance for men. It never applies to officers.

THAT MEDAL

You state in the October SOLDIER that the United Nations Medal for Korea is three-eighths of an inch in diameter. This would make the inscription you reproduce microscopically small. — Sjt. T. Felton, Royal Signals, The Airfield, Pocklington, Yorks.

★ SOLDIER accidentally lost a word. The size is one and three-eighths inches.

MEDAL GRATUITY

How can an ex-soldier ensure that his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal gratuity has been paid? As far as I know the medal is not awarded without a gratuity. — N. Codd, Peover Hall, Knutsford, Cheshire.

★ The medal is awarded without a gratuity to soldiers holding the rank of warrant officer class one at the time of the award. When awarded to a warrant officer class two, non-commissioned officer or man it carries a gratuity of £5, payable at the time of the recipient's discharge. Any former soldier entitled to the gratuity, if in doubt, may ask his regimental paymaster whether the gratuity has been paid.

SANDHURST "EYESORE"

Can nothing be done about Sandhurst's chimney?

Anyone who has seen the Old College will know what I mean: that black square smoke stack which rises, in invincible ugliness, high above the gracefully designed white building.

Needless to say, the chimney was not erected in the age of elegance in which the Old College was planned. It was added by Victorian vandals when the system of heating, or cooking, was reorganised. Possibly

there was some reason then why such a high chimney had to be erected; today, surely, it is not beyond the ingenuity of man to dispose of smoke and gases without erecting an eyesore of such proportions. Public opinion would never have permitted a chimney like this to sprout amid the Houses of Parliament, or at St. James's Palace, or at Holyrood.

Throughout the recent Public Day at Sandhurst, while bands played on the parade-ground, the chimney smoked like that of a hard-worked crematorium. It is the despair of photographers, who go to extreme pains, as a rule, to hide it behind the branch of a tree.

I would suggest that another Public Day be held to raise funds to demolish the chimney; alternatively, the Sappers might be given the task of destruction as a military exercise. — "Down With It" (name and address supplied).

COMBAT TEAM

What is a regimental combat team in the United States Army? — R. Kitchin, St. Michael's College, Hitchin.

★ In make-up it is rather on the lines of a British brigade group, in that it has three battalions, each with three rifle companies and a heavy weapons company equipped with such arms as rocket-launchers. Supporting companies of tanks and mortars are included in the team, but heavy artillery support is provided by the division.

"KING'S CORPORAL"

I have read with interest various articles and letters on the subject of the King's Corporal which have appeared from time to time in SOLDIER. I remember seeing in Italy about 1945 a Royal Air Force NCO wearing two stripes and a crown — the only one I have ever seen. Recently I asked an airman about this and he told me the man was a King's Corporal. I was about to argue but he explained that the individual belonged to the King's Flight. Perhaps someone can confirm this? — Sjt. A. Moore, The King's Regiment, 22 Married Families Camp, Royal Pavillion Hotel, Folkestone.

★ The Air Ministry say that there is no rank of King's Corporal in the RAF and that the airmen employed in the King's Flight wear no distinctions. Furthermore, there is no rank which carries two stripes and a crown in the RAF.

STELLENBOSCH

During a recent trip through England I stumbled over the expression "to Stellenbosch an officer." Can you tell me what Stellenbosch has to do with an incompetent officer and how the expression came into use? As Stellenbosch is a village in South Africa I presume it has something to do with the Boer War. — R. Chr. Vonk, Graaf Willem de Oudelaan 58, Naarden, Netherlands.

★ Can any reader help?



Should the chimney in this picture be felled? See letter "Sandhurst Eyesore."

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