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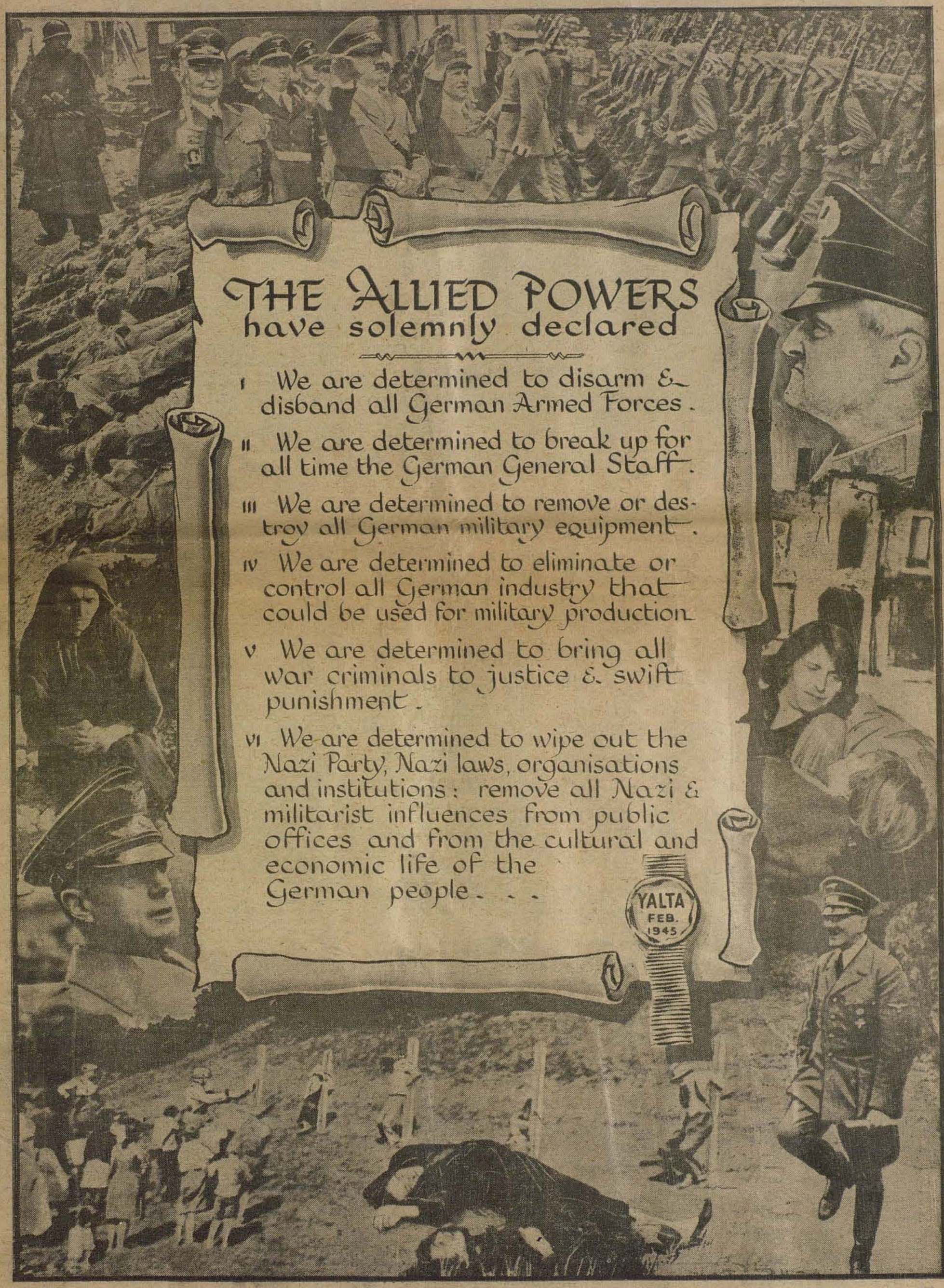


Montage specially designed for Crusader by JAY.

Lovely Face

To-day's Page Two Girl comes from Yugoslavia, dancer Maria Markuza, whom many of you have seen in the Rome area. She came to Italy at the age of sixteen and worked in films until the Italian movie industry closed down. She has been dancing for Allied troops since the liberation of the capital. Says one hundred thousand of you have seen her so far; is rehearsing for a new show.

INSIDE OF A NUDE

by William Sansom

SHE powdered the body all over and then began to dress.

On her head she placed a pink and blue hat, small and dressed with roses, such as might have been worn by a shepherdess of the eighteenth century. She took her crook from behind the door and, first careful to throw a wrap over herself, went downstairs to the wings.

The chorus clattering upwards passed her on the stairs. The curtains were drawn, the stage empty—one of the comedians was telling a story out in front. So with the wardrobe mistress she hurried straight across the stage to a plaster erection that stood against the centre of the backcloth. It was a giant candlestick, moulded in the shape of an oaktree embedded in a mound of pastoral grass, garlanded with roses.

Naked but for her hat and shepherdess' crook, Miss Potozzi climbed the steps to the candlestick, and assumed there the pose of a porcelain shepherdess.

A burst of invisible applause told them that the comedian was making his bow. Simultaneously four arc lamps illuminated the stage with a soft blue radiance. The small working lights above went out, the stage was all blue, the glazed candlestick began to shine dully like porcelain in a dim light, vague but distinguishable. A tenor in a powdered wig walked on to the side of the stage and taking a position with his back to Miss Potozzi pouted towards the closed curtains. Then the invisible orchestra jazzed into a pastorale air, the tenor began to sing, the curtains parted.

Throughout this long song Miss Potozzi had to stand quite still, like the statuette she represented, her face and body half-turned towards the audience. The backcloth was painted to represent the top of a mantelpiece and the tenor sang the story of a lonely old bachelor's love, of his desire to become small as a manikin so that he could climb up to the mantelpiece and court his lovely Dresden shepherdess, who would then magically come to life.

Meanwhile a cold draught played around Miss Potozzi's ankles.

But her body, poised and feeling itself beautiful, remained in that satisfaction warm; for Miss Potozzi's sentiments upon the candlestick were an extenuation of an old theme, the chemical play between man and woman where the woman invites yet pretends to forbid, and the man advances, but pretends to retreat. An eternal process, and only the prevailing conventions decide how naked shall be the enticement or how swift the advance. The rule states only: "She is lovely, but cannot be touched."

True, Miss Potozzi had thrown off all her clothes, whereas others in other society might reveal only a shoulder. But in her mind this drastic immodesty was counterbalanced by a barrier of footlights more formidable even than a slap of the hand. Her admirers must sit baffled by some thirty feet, by a dimness of light, by a sense of the fiction of the theatre.

Offstage the street door opened and a draught of cold air blew in through the wings.

But other thoughts were there to warm Miss Potozzi. She thought suddenly of her husband and. "Brute," she thought, "Why should he object so? Men were so selfish, so *possessive*. If they'd an ounce of sense, they'd want everyone to see how beautiful their women were!"

The song was ending. A white beam struck through the darkness and suddenly Miss Potozzi's figure was circled with hard light. The tenor raised his arm towards the candlestick. His voice swelled higher, shaking free and rising with a musical radiance that settled like a halo of sound upon the dazzling lonely figure.

Miss Potozzi raised her chin proudly. No one moved. The house sat tense, nearly a thousand male eyes strained towards the stage, none daring to blink for fear of losing for a second the passing revelation, each studying every intimacy of Miss Potozzi's ephemeral curves, each wishing deeply that the porcelain figure would spring to life.

And suddenly it did!

A scream cut across the stage, one hand clutched a porcelain breast, the crook waved wildly at the wings . . . the audience saw their china figure dissolve into womanhood, into a woman standing flat on her feet, her shoulders hunched forward, her knees crouched in shame.

Then the curtains rushed together. Miss Potozzi scrambled down from her rocking candlestick and screamed for her wrap. The tenor still sang on, munching his words at the curtain as if he had been disturbed eating stolen food. Then the working lights snapped on. Tears of indignation had pooled Miss Potozzi's mascara, it looked as if she had two black eyes, and all the time she kept screaming above the tenor: "It was the carpenter; I saw him in the wings! The carpenter."

Then, as the stage manager came running up: "Mr. Freiscutz, Mr. Freiscutz—it's disgraceful! There was a *man* watching me."

N.G., Esq. is BACK at the NEST

IN the Sparrow's Nest the Sparrow's wife was building a tiny Morrison shelter with matchsticks she had picked up in the garden.

The Sparrow put down his little bit of newspaper and stared at her with the speculative detachment one reserves for the antics of idiots and children. His wife put the last matchstick in place and said:

"There. Now we can laugh at the silly old Germans, can't we?"

The Sparrow sighed and resumed the reading of his little bit of newspaper, running a beady eye down the small ads.

"All through the bombing we never had a shelter," said his wife, "and now we've got one at last. And it ought to be ever so comfortable for both of us. What do you think?"

"I think," said the Sparrow, "that you're either mad or drunk."

"Oh," said his wife, "how could you say such a thing when never a drop of alcohol passes my beak except at Christmas."

"In that case," said the Sparrow, "the flimsy fragment you call your mind has gone at last, though I don't suppose it will make much difference."

"Difference to what?" asked his wife.

"To the quality of our conversation," said the Sparrow. "May I ask if you seriously believe that a matchstick shelter gives any protection?"

"It's better than nothing," said his wife. "Something's always better than nothing."

"If there's any truth in that remark," said the Sparrow, "you might as well say that a cobweb is better than nothing as a protection against thunderbolts. Or that a mound of eggshells is better than nothing as a protection against rifle fire."

"Now you're talking nonsense," said his wife.

"We're both talking nonsense," said the Sparrow; "the only difference is that I know I'm talking it."

"There's no occasion to be rude," said his wife. "I suppose I can have my own opinions."

"It's a free country," said the Sparrow, "as you have often so tritely remarked."

"And I suppose I can build myself a shelter if I want to," said his wife, "even if you do think it's silly."

"Silly," said the Sparrow, "is a gross understatement. It is a perfect example of sublime idiocy."

"You always put a damp blanket on everything I do," said his wife, a tear starting in her eye, "as if I could never do anything right."

"You can't," said the Sparrow.

"You never thought so when we were first married," said his wife, the tear rolling down her beak.

"Stupidity allied to beauty can be tolerable, even charming," said the Sparrow, "but stupidity alone is unbearable."

"I'm not going to stand here and be insulted," said his wife.

"Then sit down and be insulted," said the Sparrow, preparing to leave.

"I don't know what's come over you lately," said his wife, brushing the tear from the tip of her beak.

"I do," said the Sparrow.

"What?" asked his wife.

"A great thirst and a desire for grown-up conversation," said the Sparrow, flying away to the Tree Tops Club.

In A Safe Hotel

"WELL, Muriel, what are the miners up to now?"

"Up to?"

"You know perfectly well what I mean, Muriel, so don't pretend to be sillier than you are. Are they striking or not striking, or threatening to strike, or what?"

"I don't know anything about a strike."

"Don't you read the newspapers?"

"Yes."

"And there's nothing about a miners' strike in them?"

"No."

"Well, I know there's something fishy going on in the mines. There always is. And I suppose it means that we can't put another lump of coal on the fire."

"There isn't another lump to put on."

"Then poke the fire into a blaze before we freeze to death."

"I can't. They've taken the poker away."

"What, again?"

"The manager said that only the lounge waiter was to poke the fire, because the guests were wasting coal."

"All right, Muriel. If the manager is going to behave like Hitler I know what to do. You know there's a poker in our bedroom?"

"Yes."

"Well, go and get it."

"But I can't carry it through the hotel without somebody noticing it."

"You can wrap it up in paper."

"The waiters will know what it is."

"Why should the waiters know? Have they got X-ray eyes?"

"But they might see me poking the fire."

"What if they do?"

"Well, I should feel rather foolish and mean."

"So that's it, is it? Putting your own feelings before the feelings of others. I suppose you'll tell me next that you don't feel the cold in here?"

"Not very much."

"That's because you eat more than anybody else in the place. I noticed that you were lucky again with your portion of beef at dinner."

"I didn't know I was particularly lucky."

"When you're always lucky you don't notice it, Muriel. The more you get the more you expect. Like the miners."

"I can't remember that the miners ever had very much."

"I don't want any Socialist propaganda from you, Muriel. Every day you go further over to the Left. I suppose it won't be long now before you're a raving Communist."

"I don't know anything about Communism."

"And you don't know anything about the miners either. If you asked me I should say the miners are the most pampered class in this community."

"You can hardly call them pampered when they work all day underground, and sometimes have to walk miles to the pit and back again."

"Nonsense, Muriel, nonsense. They have their ponies."

Party Conversation

"SINCE the Russian offensive Margaret's father's drunk so much vodka that he hasn't had time to eat."

"All the clever people who said it would be over by Christmas are now shaking their heads and saying the Russians can't keep it up."

"Brenda's husband's dreading the end of the war when he'll come out of the Army to face her cooking again."

"I suppose it's silly of me, but I always feel sorry for nervous old ladies in Moscow when the victory salutes are being fired."

"When you haven't any coal it's no consolation to say a hard winter means a fine summer."

"As Margaret's father toasts all the Russian marshals every night and drinks a double for every Russian order of the day, his stocks of vodka are getting low again."

"The newspapers never seem to agree about the distance the Russians are from Berlin. On the same day one paper made it 150 miles, another 155, and another 160. And one Smart Alec made it 159."

"My husband says Stalin is hurrying to the relief of the Channel Islands."

"If Joe Stalin gets Hitler first there'll be no nonsense about trials and whether he is guilty or not."

"If I were Hitler I'd give myself up to the British and live in luxury for the rest of my life."

"Margaret's father would like to see the British, Americans and Russians meet in Berlin on the same day. Then he could mix all his Scotch, rye and vodka into one vast cocktail."

Pte. W. DEE

by Phil Colman

Remember the Good Old Days . . . before we got browned off in the Army?

Introducing a New CRUSADER Feature

War or no war, the crocuses peep through in just the same old way back home. Place, Kensington Gardens. Time, seven days ago.

THE harshest winter of the century is over, and back at home they are basking in the first warm sunshine and the first soft breezes of a spring to come.

There may be bad weather ahead yet. But just now the mauve and golden crocus blooms are giving the first dash of colour to the gardens. The whiteness of real snow has given place to the tiny, white snowdrops. And daffodils are beginning to push their way warily through.

Britain intends to be gay this year. The new issue of clothing coupons has just come in, and the thoughts of men and women alike are turning to new clothes.

But the men are using up their coupons more rapidly than the women.

"They are spending more coupons now than they have ever done," said a London store representative.

The most acute shortage is in handkerchiefs; the biggest glut, short socks. Men won't buy utility socks at any price.

Good tidings for men and women alike are contained in the announcement that Britain may soon expect substantial imports of wines, perfumes and glassware. They will come from liberated France, that country's first pre-war market to be reopened.

But in this sixth year of war the folk at home are finding that the country's manpower is so occupied with war-time jobs that life is full of delays in getting ordinary requirements fulfilled.

Shoe repairs take anything up to six weeks, laundry up to a month. Renovation and cleaning of clothes take about four weeks, and to have a suit or frock tailored means a wait of from four to six months.

If you get your photograph taken it may be two months before the proofs are ready and up to six months before the finished picture is delivered.

Yet the drama and comedy, and romance of everyday life continue as always . . .

EVER-WEDS

MARRIAGE is still the world's greatest institution, and there is a controversy going on over Britain's longest-married couple.

A claim was put in for Mr. and Mrs. John Capel, of John-street, Newport (Mon), who recently celebrated their 72nd anniversary.

The claim was immediately contested, and at the moment the record goes to Mr. and Mrs. J. Wade, of Thorne, near Doncaster, Yorkshire. Mr. Wade is 99, his wife one year younger, and they have been married more than 77 years.

Then there are the Joneses—Mr. and Mrs. John Jones, of Dymock Top, Gloucestershire, aged 94 and 95 respectively. They have just celebrated their 74th anniversary.

And Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Wigmore, of Malmesbury, Wiltshire—96 and 95—have had over 73 years of wedded life.

So if you think the war has separated you from your missus for a long time, don't worry. There is plenty of time ahead!

REMEMBERED

SIR WILLIAM FREDERICK JURY was one of the founders of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's London company, a filmland veteran of the early silent days.

He began with nothing, a determined Cockney with plenty of drive. To him in his early days came a 21-year-old girl, Florence Mary Cook. She began as a shorthand-typist, but before long was his confidential secretary.

Bill Jury relied on her implicitly and discussed all his plans with her. She helped him to become one of the most important men in the British film industry. The great Jury-Metro-Goldwyn releasing firm was built up. Later his name was dropped from the title and the firm came into line with his American parent, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Jury retired, and Miss Cook went with him as his personal secretary. She found herself running the house because of the illness in the last years of her life, of Lady Jury.

Bill Jury died last year. Last week the secretary who had remained loyal for 35 years, became a rich woman. She inherited 100,000 pounds on trust for life from her former employer.

DEAR DOGGIE

THIS is the story of the most expensive dog living.

And he is living only because a British dog-lover is paying for him to do so.

"Bobby" is a fourteen-year-old greyhound.

Three and a half years ago he killed a cat. The case reached a Sheffield police-court and the magistrate condemned Bobby to death.

But his owner, Mr. C. H. S. Parsons, a consulting ophthalmic physician, of Riverdale-road, Sheffield, refused to have Bobby destroyed. He preferred to pay fines.

Every six months Mr. Parsons faces the courts and pays another fine. So far Bobby has cost him 632 pounds in fines and about 200 pounds in law costs. The latest fine of 165 pounds, was last week.

It looks as though Bobby will be allowed to die of old age—as a prisoner. He is still in the "condemned cell," to which he was committed in 1941, comfortable and plump and well out of the way of cats.

GIRL GUIDES

HOW do you like your girl?

If you go for glamour you are out of date. A national contest just run in Britain has produced some surprising results.

Film star Phyllis Calvert was asked to judge the entries. She compiled a list of her own, and the prizes were awarded to those whose lists most nearly coincided with hers.

The qualities listed were: companionship, homeliness, beauty, glamour, patience, gentleness, vivacity, thriftiness.

Companionship, homeliness, patience and vivacity romped home ahead of beauty and glamour, which, almost without exception, were last on the lists.

★

At home they are:

Reading: "One More Shake," a cocktail of amusing reminiscences by Fleet - street publicist W. Buchanan-Taylor; "Colcorton," a novel by Edith Pope; "Fossett's Memory," a sequel to "Death of a Gentleman," by Christopher Hollis; Miles Burton's mystery story, "Not a Leg to Stand On"; "Britain's Home Guard," by John Brophy. And a slice of history, "The Naval Heritage," by David Mathew.

Seeing: "Guest in the House," a grim but brilliant psychological screen drama with Anne Baxter and Ralph Bellamy; "Winged Victory," an authentic story of half a dozen American youths who join the Air Corps; "Frenchman's Creek," the film of Daphne du Maurier's novel, starring Joan Fontaine; "A Song to Remember," with Paul Muni and Merle Oberon, now entering its fourth month in London; "Henry V," the most-praised British picture in years, with Laurence Olivier; "Waterloo Road," a cameo of London life, with John Mills.

Hearing: "As Long as I Live" heads the gramophone record list, played by Benny Goodman, and sending the swing fans dizzy; "Lumby" — curious title and equally curious in its range, played by Charlie Burnett's band; "Needle Nose," a hot number played by Harry Hayes and his orchestra, and the same combination playing "Five Flat Flurry"; and a Jean Cooper recording of "The Big Do."

Two Service Sisters

MAISIE

BETTY

NOTICE anything about these two girls? Yes, they are sisters. And both are in the ATS.

One is Sjt. Betty Stockdale. The other (commissioned since the photograph was taken) is Subaltern Maisie Grindrod. They come from Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex. Their father is a headmaster.

Sjt. Betty is in Italy, and it was on her recommendation that her sister joined the ATS. Betty was doing clerical work in London in the early part of the war and then volunteered for the ATS. She liked it so much that her sister, married to a QMS now in Egypt, followed in her footsteps.

Sjt. Betty came overseas last year; Subaltern Maisie is with Ordnance in England, but anxious to serve overseas as well.

LONDON CALLING

O LONDON once my home but now so far,
You shine before me brighter than a star;
By night I dream of you, by day I long
To be the humblest even of your throng.
Happy, however poor, however sore,
Merely because a Londoner once more.
Your sights, your sounds, your scents—I miss them all:
Your coloured buses racing down Whitehall;
The fruit stalls in the New Cut all aflare;
The Oval with its thousands gathered there;
The Thames at evening in a mist of blue;
Old Drury with a hundred yards of queue
Your sausage shops, your roads of gleaming mud,
Your pea-soup fogs—they're in my very blood;
And there's no music to my ears so sweet
As all the noisy discord of the street—
That's my dear London, that's my old home,
I'll never forget it wherever I roam.

★

And ah! the London pleasure parties too—
The steamboat up to Hampton Court or Kew;
The walk among the deer in Richmond Park;
The journey back, all jolly, in the dark!
To Epping Forest up the Mile End Road,
Passing the donkey barrows' merry load;
Or nearer home, to Hampstead for a blow;
To watch old London smouldering below;
Between the Spaniard's and Jack Straw's to pace
And feel the northern breezes in one's face;
Then at the Bull and Bush perhaps to dine
And taste again their famous barley wine!
Ah me! I wonder is it all the same?
Is Easter Monday still the good old game?
I hear it yet, though years have rolled away,
The maddening medley of Bank Holiday—
That's my dear London, that's my true home,
I'll never forget it wherever I roam.

E. V. LUCAS

The STRANGE CASE of

(continued)

The existence or non-existence of the King's Corporal, discussed by Jack Alldridge in last Sunday's CRUSADER, has brought a number of varying opinions and facts from readers. Here is a selection:

SIR,—I beg to differ completely with Mr. Jack Alldridge regarding the King's Corporal.

My father was appointed a King's Corporal during the last war and holds a certificate to that effect. He was mentioned in dispatches by Earl Haig and the certificate is signed by Mr. Winston Churchill.

Any person going to Blighty can see this certificate at 63, Bellevue-road, Northolt, Middlesex. To my knowledge there were only four such persons made up during the last war and their names are mentioned in one of the volumes of "The Great War, 1914-1918."—154205 C. R. STANFORD, RASC.

* * *

SIR,—While making no claim to being a King's Corporal, I wore such badges for some months in 1940 during service in the Middlesex Yeomanry as a lance-corporal. It was the regimental custom that all NCOs wore a crown above their stripes—an honour granted, I understand, by Queen Victoria.

I also knew soldiers in the Royal Gloucester Hussars who wore similar badges.

During this period I received innumerable enquiries, often from Service personnel, as to my rank, and I usually had great difficulty in persuading people that I was not a King's Corporal.—83347 S/LDR. D. B. DRAGE, RAF.

* * *

SIR,—As a Household Cavalryman and a corporal wearing two chevrons and a crown, I have been often asked if I am a King's Corporal. At least once a week I

reply that there is no such rank and the person who began the myth must have been the same fellow who saw the Indian rope trick.

I have also told them that in my regiment we have no serjeants nor serjeant-majors. They are, of course known by the ranks of Corporal of the Horse and Corporal-Major.

Incidentally, your article states that only the Household Cavalry wears two chevrons and a crown. Three yeomanry regiments also have this honour, and there may be others.

In the Royal Gloucester Hussars corporals wear two chevrons and a crown, but only on one arm, and lance-corporals wear two chevrons but no crown.

In the Household Cavalry there is no visible difference between corporals and lance-corporals.

Another "two chevrons and a crown" regiment is the Middlesex Yeomanry. — 305783 CPL. H. REVELL, HCR.

* * *

Further information on this elusive rank has appeared in newspapers back home. The following is from a recent issue of The Times:—

SIR,—I see that the Secretary of State for War said: "Extensive investigations have failed to disclose any factual basis for the suggestions made from time to time that there is, or has been within living memory, any such rank as King's Corporal."

While I was serving in the Rifle Brigade, No. 295 Rifleman Hedges was promoted a King's Corporal by Lord Kitchener on December 8, 1901. This fact can easily be verified.

Yours faithfully,
V. PRESCOTT-WESTCAR,
Lieut.-Col., late RB.
Two Trees, Sandwich, Kent.

Weekly Commentary

BY WILLIAM CONNOR

OF all the German rulers Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels stands pre-eminent in the diseased and fascinating brilliance of his intellect. This little lawyer, from the Catholic Rhineland, planned and built the greatest propaganda machine in history. The guns, tanks and aircraft of the Reich attacked the homes and bodies of the people of Europe. Goebbels invaded their minds. In the realm of persuasion, deception and confusion there was nothing too subtle or obscure to escape the probing analysis of this sinister and clever man.

He perfected the technique of the big lie which hypnotised the German people. He evolved the art of creating a burning sense of injustice which made possible the policy of Lebensraum, the consequences of which brought about the return of the Rhineland, the assimilation of Austria, and the enslavement of Czechoslovakia. His Herrenvolk myth restored a sense of confidence to a nation torn by doubt and a feeling of inferiority after the Treaty of Versailles. The idea of the New Order, born in his twisted brain, conferred upon the German people the feeling that they were reorganising and helping Europe instead of just looting it.

All these immense frauds were sold completely to the German people by Goebbels, the self-styled Minister for National Enlightenment No field of German mental life was immune from the taint of the Doktor's fertile mind. The Press was under an iron control that made editors into messenger boys. It was subjected to a discipline that was not content with censoring the news, but went so far as to supervise the display of the specified headlines. The theatre, the cinema, music and art were all exposed to a searching scrutiny based on the principle that everything should further the interests of the National Socialist German Workers' Party.

The daring of Goebbels's mind is quite extraordinary. His complete disregard for facts is breath-taking. The end always justifies the means. In his latest article in the paper *Das Reich*, for instance, Goebbels has written a memorable paragraph that, for magnificent insolence, almost commands respect. The background for his remarks is Germany at her darkest hour. Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin have just come to an agreement that, within the limits of human prediction, inevitably spells the complete destruction of Nazism and the extermination of Germany's present rulers—including the Minister for National Enlightenment.

Germany's soldiers are retreating everywhere. German cities are laid waste and the armies of five avenging nations are on her soil. Germany has sacked and robbed Europe from end to end and has earned the hatred of millions. It is at this tragic moment that Goebbels writes:

"We fight and work, we wander and trek, suffer and endure with a silent dignity which in the end will earn the deepest admiration of the entire world. Europe may call itself fortunate still to possess such a people. To-day they are its salvation and therefore to-morrow they will be its pride. We have not the slightest doubt that we shall succeed in overcoming the danger from the East . . . we shall be victorious in the end. No power on earth can dissuade us from this belief which lies in the conviction of the right for which we are fighting and in our confidence in the moral order of the world. We shall come out of this war as a people of heroes."

Old Brandy Bottle

ELEVEN thousand Germans are still in Dunkirk. The perimeter of their defences is about forty-five miles long and encloses the beaches from which the British were evacuated in 1940. The possibility of the German Navy coming to the rescue must be disconcertingly remote.

Desertion to the Allied lines is almost non-existent. An added inspiration to German loyalty is the fact that flooded fields and belts of mines separate the garrison from the besieging armies. As a further precaution to ensure a feeling of confidence in ultimate German victory, the plans of the minefields are known only to higher officers.

In command of the Dunkirk pocket is an old salt by the name of Admiral Frisius, assisted by a ferocious character called Tuerke. Tuerke amuses himself by running a battle school. Candidates, before they pass out, must do a one-man patrol through the Allied lines. They then receive a diploma signed by Tuerke. No promotion is possible until the patrol has been successfully accomplished.

Tuerke's personal habits are interesting. His command of uncomplimentary language is famous throughout Dunkirk. He is known to his men as "old brandy bottle" because of his habit of inspecting the defences with a brandy bottle under one arm and a bazooka under the other. His performance with either item is said to be impressive.

Tuerke has a hundred guns under his command, ranging from French 75's to 11-in. railway guns originally built for German battleships. They are well sited and difficult to locate. During the winter months he nearly succeeded in establishing an aerodrome behind his lines, but was prevented by harassing artillery fire from Czech batteries.

It has been the custom of the British Press to refer to people like Tuerke as "Mad Majors" or "Mad Colonels." The German High Command, in my opinion, are to be congratulated, from a purely military point of view, in cultivating this form of insanity.

Inside France

FRANCE, sealed off from the rest of the world for four years by the Nazis, has now begun the great task of reconstruction. Some idea of the damage that France suffered and the tremendous difficulties that lie ahead have been given by the Paris correspondent of *The Times*.

Reconstruction is governed by a series of bottlenecks which must be broken. These are: (1) Ports, (2) Shipping, (3) Internal transport, (4) Coal and Power, (5) Raw materials, (6) Labour.

The problem of the ports was first tackled by the Allied Military and Naval authorities. Destruction was on a far greater scale than at Naples. In spite of demolitions the French ports—other than those still held by the Germans—are now working nearly to peacetime capacity.

The shipping situation is bad. France cannot build ships because none of her yards is in working order. Her merchant fleet has been reduced by the war from 2,900,000 tons to 900,000 tons, which are now pooled with the rest of the United Nations shipping. Military requirements are still so great that only twelve Liberty ships are available for the month of February.

On the other hand, internal transport is improving now that the colossal task of repairing bridges has been nearly completed. When the Germans left there were 3,125 bridges destroyed or damaged. One thousand of these have been repaired and fifteen hundred temporary bridges have been installed. Vehicles, however, are extremely scarce. The pre-war number of lorries has been reduced from 480,000 to 180,000, and motor-coaches have dwindled from 20,000 to less than 6,000. Canal traffic is crippled by lack of barges and tugs—now less than a third of what was available in 1939. The railways are working almost all over France. Seven hundred and fifty miles of track have been relaid, and 1,250 bridges have been rebuilt, but fifty per cent. of all haulage is reserved for military use.

Fuel is scarce. Coal production is only seven per cent. of normal output. As France before the war imported 22,700,000 of the 68,100,000 tons of coal she used, her industry cannot work again until part of the production of British and German mines is available.

The building trade is at a standstill for lack of materials. Half a million people from Normandy and Brittany are utterly destitute—only eight houses are left standing in Brest. Out of the 9,000,000 buildings of all sorts that France counted on before the war, nearly a million are damaged and 180,000 are totally wrecked.

Labour is available, but it is the labour of a mounting total of unemployed who now exceed 750,000.

The problem of France is also the problem of Europe. Six years of war have battered and broken the Continent almost beyond recognition. The peace that follows the war will be almost as difficult as the prosecution of the battle itself.

Stop Thief!

I SUPPOSE that there are few inventions more insanely diabolical than the flying-bomb. It is the symbol of idiot destruction, the zenith of scientific barbarism. Yet there is acute competition to be recognised as the inventor of this atrocious device. A Frenchman has already claimed that he was the originator of the flying-bomb. Now there is another candidate for the notoriety of being the author of this blind horror. He is an American, Mr. George F. Russell. I have before me a photograph of Mr. Russell and his winged wireless-controlled bomb taken thirty years ago. He was granted a US Patent for it in 1916. Mr. Russell now indignantly *"charges the Nazis with stealing his patented plans for the flying-bomb."*

I am sure that the scores of thousands of Londoners whose homes were wrecked by flying-bombs will sympathise with Mr. Russell and the grave injustice that has been done to him.

Benediction, by Goebbels

★

"We fight and work, we wander and trek, suffer and endure with a silent dignity which in the end will earn the deepest admiration of the entire world." — *Dr. Goebbels.*

★

★ ★ ★ THIS STORY NEEDS NO HEADLINE

IT IS A DIFFERENT KIND OF BATTLE STORY—IT TELLS JUST WHAT ONE MAN SAW AND HOW ONE MAN FOUGHT THROUGH THE EIGHT DRAMATIC DAYS OF ARNHEM.

OUR glider's load consisted of one jeep with a trailer and three chaps of the Parachute Brigade.

We made a perfect landing.

The crackle of machine-guns reminded us forcibly that this time we were not on an exercise.

The paratroop driver drove straight out of the glider to join a terrific assembly of jeeps, trailers, light artillery, and groups of parachutists.

Burdened with our tremendously heavy rucksacks, we started moving off towards Arnhem. About two o'clock in the morning we had to walk back half the way we had advanced.

Next day we were told that it was our job now to clear a wood and hill of the enemy.

We reached the fringe of the wood. In front on the rise were the Germans.

Loud German voices were heard, motor engines were running, and constant machine-gun and rifle fire was directed towards us. Bullets were whizzing about us from all directions.

I felt I could not wait. I got up and ran upright, fell behind cover, then up again and on. I vaguely noticed the intense fire, but all I wanted was just to get there. I could not have been more than 20 yards from their line, and I could understand every word the Germans were saying. They were quarrelling and swearing at each other.

TRAPPED

But they raked the ground all around me. I was sure this was the end and kicked myself for trying to take a strong German position on my own.

The Germans were arguing again. I realised what a badly disciplined crowd they were and how easily a properly planned attack would succeed.

I threw a hand grenade to the left, dropped my rifle and ran.

They were still firing at me from the Jerry lines, and now our chaps also opened up on me. Down I went again. I tried to shout, but the moment I moved they let go again. I tried again and again, and nearly panicked.

At last one of the parachute officers realised that something was wrong and stopped firing. I joined them, and told the parachute officer about the bad morale of the Germans. But in the end we had to retire to our original position.

Just before four o'clock our bombers appeared. They came slowly towards us in a seemingly never-ending stream, with gliders in tow. They whole sky was filled.

Then scores of ack-ack batteries opened up. The stately procession carried on for a few seconds, then these giants began lumbering out of the way; diving, banking, climbing. It seemed so undignified.

They were so helpless: I have never seen anything to illustrate the word "helpless" more horribly. Now the sky was chaos: puffs of exploding shells, bombers alight, bombers plunging towards the earth, gliders casting off, and an irregular thick pattern of parachutes; men and supplies floating down.

THE PATROL

The order came to move back. Most of the chaps made for Wolfhaze and I never saw them again.

Only Dodd, one of the pilots of my flight, stayed with me and we walked on just inside the woods, never losing sight of the main road. Just as it was getting dusk a string of jeeps came racing along, and they were glad to take us with them. We raced to the Recce HQ, where I got myself a Sten gun, and had a whole night's sleep in a slit trench.

On the third day they called for a patrol to push forward on to Arnhem railway bridge; Dodd and myself were asked to go. Off we raced, and after ten minutes the first jeep encountered fire and pulled into the side. From here our advance was very slow. On one side was a thick wood and on the other houses with gardens in front of them.

Two officers and twelve of us moved into the wood on the right. The others advanced through the gardens on the left. We heard German voices shouting and bawling just on the right of us.

Then I heard a German tank moving forward and firing into the houses across the road on our left.

At the same time the German infantry was working round us, obviously screening the tank. The voices and shouts seemed to be all about us. The Recce men went off in the jeeps and only a Piat gunner, his number two, Dodd and myself were left.

We got back as far as about four miles from our HQ. Here we heard German voices from all directions.

There was nothing to do but hide. We were in the back gardens of some houses. I spotted a rubbish dump, a little pit four feet deep, nearly hidden by some shrubs. Dodd and I crouched in it. The Germans came in, looked into the shed and through the house, and, after satisfying themselves that none of us was hiding there, they just stood about talking and giving orders which no one obeyed.

ESCAPE

Most of the time they stood two or three feet from us. It was terrible in this dug-out. The decaying garbage stank and gradually seeped through our trousers. After what seemed like ten years, the Jerries left. We scrambled back through the garden to find the Recce blokes. We crawled in and lay down exhausted. After about two hours a patrol of ten men approached us; their quiet and disciplined movements betrayed them straight away as British. It was Lieutenant W with ten glider pilots. We joined them.

Fortunately Mr. W knew the geography and, following his compass, led us through the woods. We came upon the Germans about 100 yards in front of us. They were filing into an isolated house. We let go and several fell down injured. The others started rushing out from the house, colliding with the ones trying to get in. I asked Mr. W if he and the others could cover me.

I got up and walked straight towards the Jerries, clutching my Sten gun, and shouted, "Hande hoch!" and told them that the Second Army was just coming up and that they were hopelessly surrounded. Very slowly they started filing out of the house; suddenly an officer appeared and ordered them back.

We started firing, but they fired from the windows of the house, and as there must have been about 50 inside, we could not hope to beat them now the officer was organising the defence.

We decided to withdraw.

Eventually we reached an outskirt of Arnhem called Oosterbeek. It was glorious to see British troops again. They were making tea and that was heaven.

Next day the most intense mortaring started. A party of us advanced through the gardens of houses, with the KOSBs on the other side of the row. And in the end we stayed in this street until the whole division withdrew on the Monday.

We worked out a plan to occupy at least every second house until we got enough reinforcements to defend every house in the street.

We barricaded the front windows so that Jerry could not throw grenades into them. We dug communication trenches from one house to another.

During the morning the first German self-propelled gun started moving around the top cross-road.

With our Piat gun firing through a little hole in the roof of an attic we forced it to retire.

Suddenly from our three hospital buildings on the lower cross-roads just outside our perimeter, appeared two of our jeeps with large Red Cross flags.

Whatever I personally feel about the Germans, I must admit that in this Arnhem action they kept strictly to the Geneva Convention.

Not once did I hear of any Red Cross men or jeeps being deliberately fired on, even in the midst of the heaviest fighting. And several of our men taken prisoner were allowed to go back to our lines with a kind of slap on the back.

We felt like a rest, when the now familiar but still ghastly sound of engines and tracks was heard again.

With the aid of binoculars we could just see a mass of branches and trees with movement behind it.

Slowly the mass of foliage drew nearer and started to fire down the street at the lower houses. We thought this was probably a self-propelled gun. Waiting and watching the gun approach was almost unbearable.

Our first fire proved pretty inaccurate. Our Piat gun bomb must have hit the corner of the house next door, where it exploded with a terrific blast. I continued firing bomb after bomb and in the end the SP stopped and withdrew.

We went into the only still completely furnished room, called "The Officers' Room," because in there the CO, who had been wounded in the arm, was usually lying in a luxurious heavy Continental bed, with sheets and pillowcase covered with a quilted eiderdown.

He lay fully dressed in kilt, sporran, boots and beret. He received everyone on this bed, full of confidence, and it was difficult to know how far he realised the danger of our position.

I was having my supper when Lieutenant X came in to send patrols out to discover the assembly point of the German armour, and also which of the houses were occupied by Germans.

We crossed the plantation over the street to the next block of houses.

We worked our way through the maze of the back gardens and emerged into a large open space, bounded on one side by a hedge and on the other by what looked like the outbuildings of a big country house. We saw two Germans digging. They looked quite unreal, as if they were on top of some high fairy castle.

REFUGEES

Here was obviously the German strongpoint.

Under normal conditions our report would have been of immense value, for now we could pin-point the German position accurately. But as we had no mortars or artillery there was nothing we could do about it.

Only on Saturday, a comparatively quiet morning, did we realise that we were not the only occupants of these houses in the front line. Pale, quiet, frightened people appeared from the cellars, asking for water and blankets and food.

There was one large house just outside our perimeter in which there were supposed to be 20 Dutch Nazis.

We began our systematic search in the cellars. Here we found the feminine members of the family huddled together in the dark. They were so terrified of us that there was no doubt about their connection with the Germans.

Only when we reached the attic did we find anything that might corroborate our information. A German radio transmitter with an aerial, still connected to batteries, was there. We left, taking the radio.

I went to the top house, where in the cellar was one candle shedding a very faint light. There were eight people in the cellar. A very pale young woman lay on an improvised bed. She had been shot three days before, but they had not been able to come out to get help because of the firing.

SHEER HELL

I made a dash to one of our hospital buildings. The entire floor space was covered with stretcher casualties.

The MO was a big, cheerful man, and he said to me: "You're watching medical history being made, my boy." He explained that it was quite impossible for him, single-handed as he was, to operate on any of the casualties; all he could do for most of his patients was to smother them with penicillin powder and leave it at that.

He also informed me that I was in German territory, as the hospitals were now outside our perimeter. The enemy had taken them two days before, and he himself, and all its occupants, were prisoners on parole.

It was sheer hell for the wounded; they were right in the front line. The German mortar barrage was hitting our perimeter just across the road 24 hours a day. The vibration of each explosion made them catch their breath and groan, yet they all asked me how we were doing and for news of the Second Army.

The MO chose an experienced medical orderly to go with me. He gave the woman morphia to put her out of pain.

That afternoon, another fleet of supply planes came over to drop urgently needed ammo and food. The pluck and heroism of the pilots was incredible.

They came in in their lumbering four-engined machines at 1,500 feet, searching for our position. The German gunners were firing at point-blank range, and the supply planes were more or less sitting targets.

The sky filled with flashes and puffs of exploding shells, burning planes diving towards the ground, and hundreds and hundreds of red, white, yellow and blue supply parachutes dropping looked more like a crazy illustration to a child's book.

How those pilots could have gone into it with their eyes open is beyond my imagination. Later on I was told of their tremendous losses.

The greatest tragedy of all, I think, is that hardly any of these supplies reached us.

By Sunday morning the small arms fire and sniping was worse than anything we had had before. Then it suddenly became a pleasant Sunday morning. Our regular Arnhem hot-pot was simmering, the Red Cross appeared, and everyone came for a breather. The food made us quite gay. Everybody had a good story to tell.

But none of us could hold a candle to our private miracle man. This glider pilot was the pride of our street, because by all the laws of nature he ought to have been dead.

A bullet had entered his right temple and exited through his left, leaving behind it a couple of neat little holes. He wasn't even knocked out of the fight by this, and had to be ordered sternly not to take part in combatant duties. Not only did he work in the kitchen, but he was able to retreat with us across the Rhine.

An MO, whom we told about it later, said that this was possible. This part of the brain governs the emotions only. He explained that the work done by the damaged part of the brain would be taken on temporarily by another part. And he added that quite often people injured in this way become very cheerful to start with and feel stimulated, but not for long.

Towards dusk the firing increased sharply. Before we knew what was happening it developed into the first direct assault on our position. I saw German helmets moving along the space between the two houses.

Right underneath me next door, only about three yards away, a window was pushed open as it began to get dark, and I saw people moving inside the room. So the Germans were here! I ran from my attic to a side window on the second floor to lob a grenade into the room. I heard it explode, lobbed another grenade, and still I could see movement in the room after it had exploded. I could not make out why I had not killed anyone in there, and threw, one after another, my remaining store of grenades.

I was just going to run down and fetch some more hand grenades when a controlled and quiet voice called up to me: "What do you think you are doing? Trying to kill us all?"

My heart stood still. I was certain I had killed and injured many of our men, and I wished I was dead myself. I jumped down the stairs and into the room. Everything looked quite normal there, the lieutenant and the others sitting on the floor. I told them that it was I who had thrown the grenades, and the lieutenant said: "Oh, it was you, was it? Thank God you didn't know your job—at such short distance you should have waited four seconds until you threw; that gives another three seconds until the grenade explodes. As it was, we lobbed them out of the window as fast as you threw them."

RETREAT

We were all desperately tired by now.

At last, early on Monday, exactly one week after we had landed, we were told to go for the night's orders. A large map was spread on the table.

In a confident voice, Captain Z began the briefing. We were going to retreat across the Rhine.

He pointed out the route that we were going to take, through woods and along little paths.

We moved off. Captain Z and myself leading. Behind us a silent file of about 60 glider pilots.

Captain Z seemed pretty sure of the route he was taking, but the denser the woods and undergrowth became the more difficult it was to follow the path.

Machine-guns could be heard ahead of us, and a breathless officer appeared and told us to turn round as his column had run straight into a German Spandau, and he thought he was the only survivor.

We turned round, everyone remarkably silent and disciplined.

This was the most dangerous part of our journey; we might run into the enemy at any moment. At last we emerged from the wood, and in front of us was a wide plain. A white tape stretched across it, leading us to a hedge and running alongside of it, eventually passing through to the other side, on to a path running to the river.

We reached the banks of the Rhine and joined a long queue of men waiting to be ferried across. There were at least 100 men in front of us. A small rowing boat was approaching at last. It took ten men across.

PARADISE

Then we realised our desperate position. Any moment the mortaring might start again. There was no cover, we were frozen and soaked from the rain.

I told Captain Z I was going to try and swim for it.

He agreed. The opposite bank did not look too far, we judged about 100 yards. "We will do it again, you and me!" he said.

The water was pleasantly warm. I felt happy and full of confidence. Captain Z was about 20 yards in front of me, but drifting fast down stream.

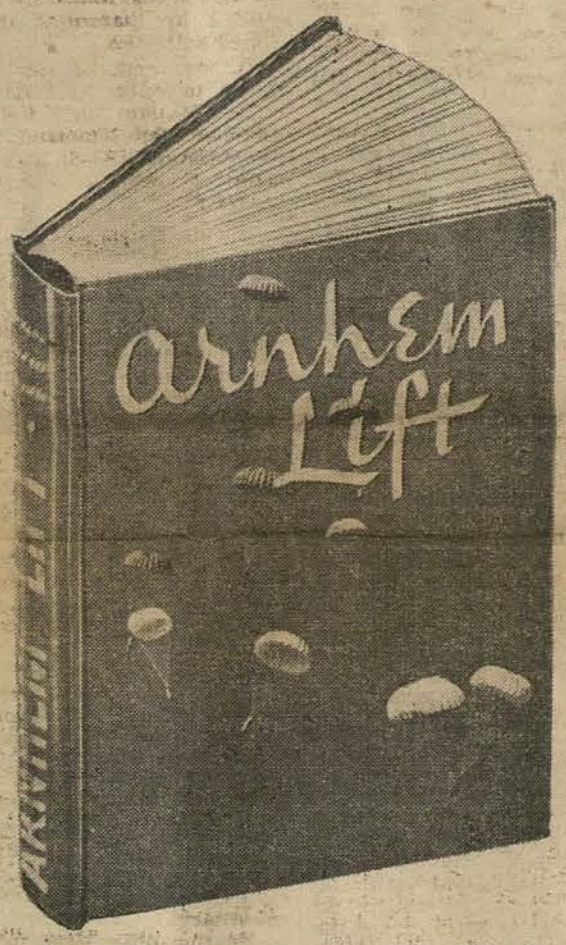
I turned over on my back to rest and got rid of my Sten gun, all the impedimenta that my battle smock contained, also my boots and steel helmet.

The difference was marvellous. I looked round for Captain Z, but there was no sign of him at all. I shouted, but there was no reply. I swam on alone.

I was about 20 yards from land when I heard shouting: "Hold on, mate, hold on, we'll be there in a moment. Don't panic, it's OK, you're safe now."

Our men pulled me out.

They wrapped me in blankets, gave me a cup of very sweet tea, sat me on a chair and lit a little oil stove underneath me. Then they put a cigarette in my mouth. I was in paradise.



This is an extract from "Arnhem Lift, the Diary of a Glider Pilot." Published by the Pilot Press, Ltd., 5s. net.

THE PROPOSALS

First a Bungalow, then a House

I HAD a letter this week from Corporal W. Bagshaw RE. Now Corporal Bagshaw is the father of Serjeant Fred Bagshaw, who is serving in MEF. His letter is typical of many.

"What I want to know is simply this," he writes. "What chance has my son Fred of getting a house when he is demobilised? He has married since he joined the Army and has two small children. He writes to me for advice, but frankly I'm stumped. I can only fall back on my experience after the last war.

"When I came back last time I had a nice little gratuity and so I got married. I was lucky. I had my old job back. Well, first we got a furnished house which was expensive, but I didn't mind that. Then we tried furnished rooms for a bit. I got a better job in London—and along came Fred. So I took a gamble and bought a house through a building society. And now that house, freehold and all, is mine.

TWO PROBLEMS

"But things are different now. They say we need a million new houses; I read the other day that one house in five has been damaged. It makes you think, doesn't it?

"Seems to me we have two housing problems to solve. First, we must build new houses and while they are being built we must find accommodation for the folk who are waiting to move in. That seems common sense. But is anything constructive being done about it?

"Two problems—now right he is! A million new houses? Well, he is not far out.

London and Glasgow say they want 100,000 each after the war. Manchester wants 2,000 in the first year and 74,000 to follow. Leeds needs 25,000 and another 28,000 eight years later. Plymouth aims at 1,000, while Birmingham is prepared to spend 250,000,000 pounds in replan and rebuild.

It all adds up to a tremendous lot of houses—and a tremendous lot of bricks and mortar and bricklayers and surveyors and plumbers and carpenters will be needed. At the same time a tremendous number of families will be waiting to get a roof over their heads.

Corporal Bagshaw asks what is being done about it. Well, last November the Government published a memorandum on temporary accommodation which aims to put in simple form the terms of the Housing (Temporary Accommodation) Act 1944. It is a readable little sixpennyworth. You can order it through your local bookseller at home. It gives the Government's policy on solving one of Corporal Bagshaw's two housing problems.

Let me quote from the opening paragraphs:

"It is essential that temporary accommodation should not be considered in isolation, but in relation to the whole housing programme.

"The use of temporary accommodation will, the Government believe, make it possible approximately to double the number of dwellings which could otherwise be provided with the limited amount of skilled labour available in the first year.

"The types of temporary factory-made houses approved by the Government have been specially selected on account of the small proportion of ordinary building labour required for their erection. The temporary scheme must not be allowed to stand in the way of the permanent scheme, and it will be for each authority to whom temporary houses are allotted to ensure that both sections of their programme can proceed side by side ..."

So the general idea is this. The Government is to provide temporary houses which will remain the property of the Government. Two Government departments and the local authority will co-operate.

The local authority — your borough council, for instance—has powers now to acquire and develop the sites, the Ministry of Health will supply the temporary houses and the Ministry of Works will put them up.

HOW LONG?

The local authority will choose the tenants, fix and receive the rents and generally manage the property and keep it in repair. The Act also provides that as the building industry solves the problem of building permanent houses the bungalows will be gradually pulled down and replaced.

How long are these temporary houses likely to remain temporary? Well, the Act gives the local authority power to insist on the Ministry removing the houses at any time after ten years unless the Ministry is satisfied that housing conditions make it necessary for them to remain.

Where are they going to be built, these bungalows? Let me quote again:

"The bungalows may be built on either sites or parts of sites which will ultimately be used for the erection of permanent houses; on parts of housing sites on which it is not intended to build permanent structures, e.g., the temporary use of part of an open space which is not likely to be required for playing fields or recreational purposes during the ten-year period; land intended by the authority to be used ultimately for some purpose other than housing, including sites in devastated areas, or undeveloped land such as marginal strips of agricultural land adjacent to existing houses, or war-time sites which may be relinquished by the Services."

The main difficulty, of course, lies in congested areas. Each big city has its own particular problem. And there have already been some pretty loud outcries.

Some citizens of Bristol, for instance, do not like the Ministry's suggestion that bungalows should be put up in the city's parks. And in other places there has been some prejudice against the siting of bungalows on disused cemeteries.

So much for the paper side of it. How far have they got with the business at home?

Many local authorities—Manchester is a particularly good example—have followed out the Government's advice to get the ground work prepared within six months from the time the Act became law—that is, last October. You can follow home town progress in your local paper.

Once the site has been decided upon the next stage arises—the lay-out—which is the responsibility again of the local authority, but only with the permission of the Ministry of Health. Lay-out plans have to be submitted for approval.

Here are a few points which the Government has put down for guidance:

"As the bungalows may have a life of ten years every effort must be made to ensure that their surroundings are as pleasant as possible.

"The lay-out and their colour scheme will require even more skill and care than with permanent buildings . . . roads should be designed to discourage traffic not connected with the dwellings . . . tenants should be required to keep their gardens in satisfactory condition . . . a sunny aspect for the living-room should be secured."

Now a very important question—perhaps the most important of all. Who is going to occupy these bungalows? What sort of priority has the returning Serviceman?

According to the Act "the bungalows are designed to provide accommodation for three or four persons according to age or sex. The local authority will, therefore, look to the permanent houses which will in general be in course of erection concurrently to meet the needs of those families for whom the amount of their accommodation is suited.

LOCAL CHOICE

"In the immediate period after the war it is likely that there will be only too many families where the wife or husband or both have been serving in the Forces.

"The selection of tenants for the bungalows . . . is a matter for the local authority . . . but they will no doubt give special consideration to the claims of men and women who have been on war service and are unable to obtain a separate home for themselves and in particular for those who have been disabled.

"The outstanding factor will be that the family is without a home and such families may be of all types."

So the actual selection of tenants rests with the local authority. And I think this is an admirable decision, because a local organisation working on the spot is in a much better position to solve these problems than a Whitehall department working at long range.

It is nice to note that local authorities are already co-operating. Take the words of Alderman Walter Greaves. Alderman Greaves is chairman of Wembley's post-war housing committee, and he says:

"First-line benefit in Wembley is for the Forces and we are mindful of young people who will be returning from the war to start new homes and families.

"A boy from Burma and a girl who has had overseas service with the ATS will, if they want to marry and settle down, have precedence over people who can 'make do'."

FIXED RENTS

The next question is obvious. What about rent?

Well, I do not want to prophesy. But it does seem to me that rents for bungalows will be approximately what you would pay for a permanent house in the same district. Perhaps that sounds a bit inconsistent, since a bungalow is half the size of a permanent house.

But the Government's view of rents is this. The bungalows are intended for temporary use only, so that families living in them will in course of time be transferring to permanent houses.

Now, if the rents are fixed to a low level tenants may be unwilling to accept a permanent house carrying with it a necessarily higher rent when their chance comes.

At the same time, it points out, we are not trying to find homes for people who cannot afford to pay an average rent. The new tenants will, in fact, represent a very fair cross-section of the community, because the housing shortage is going to affect all sorts of people.

Which means, for example, that the junior cashier, moving into his new bungalow, may find that his next-door-neighbour is his boss.

There is a third point in the Government's argument. Part of the standard equipment in all bungalows will be expensive items, such as refrigerators, gas or electric cookers and washing boilers — items which are normally "tenant's fixtures." The Government will instal them free of charge with the bungalow.

And now something about these bungalows themselves. What will they look like?

You may remember that there were originally four approved types—the pressed steel house (better known as the Portal), the Arcon Mk. V, the Uni-Seco, and the Tarran. All these types were selected because of the small amount of skilled labour needed to erect them—hence the introduction of that horrible word "prefabrication," which simply means that they are built in sections in a number of factories and quickly assembled on the site.

The pressed steel house has recently been withdrawn. When the Government asked the building trade to submit specimens manufacturers were given a number of essentials which had to be embodied in the design.

As a result all of the approved types—and there will shortly be others—are very similar.

For instance, they are all bungalows, rectangular in shape, measuring roughly in plan 32ft. x 21ft. They all have a living-room (the Arcon being the largest, 17ft. 2½in. x 19ft. 3in.), two smallish bedrooms, kitchen, bathroom, WC, hall and an outside shed for storing coal and the family bicycle.

FITTINGS

All are fitted with steel kitchen and bathroom equipment, including refrigerator, copper, cooker (either gas or electric), hot-water cylinder, electric immersion heater, heated towel rack and airing cupboard. There is also a remarkable amount of fitted cupboard space.

Finally, a personal question. Would I mind living in one myself?

Well, I saw the prototypes on exhibition in London last year. I confess I was impressed. They were better than anything I had expected.

Some people may find it rather like living in a doll's house at first.

But I have lived in a two-roomed flat in my time. And, frankly, as a temporary home I prefer one of these bungalows.

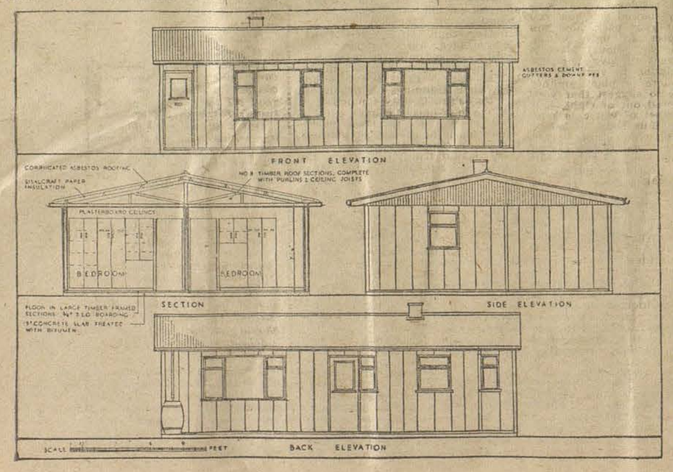
I do not say that they are ideal, and most people will want a little time to get used to them.

Jack Alldridge is at your service to answer your post-war problem, whether personal or general. Address your letters to Jack Alldridge, "At Your Service," "E" British Army Newspaper Unit, CMF.

Just Where am I Going to Live?

The problem of post-war accommodation is on many a serving man's mind. To-day CRUSADER'S "At Your Service" bureau, run by Jack Alldridge, analyses the Government plans for housing you and your family in peace-time Britain. But there is more than one side to this question, and John Betjeman reminds us of the over-zealous planning which between the two wars ruined many an English village.

Three phases of modern building—a newly-built street of houses near Manchester, a block of up-to-date flats in Glasgow, and a comfortable, yet simple, interior.



AND A WARNING

A Garden, NOT a Garden City

NOTHING is right today unless it is planned. Planned meals, planned sinks, planned farms, planned towns, planned economics, the five-year plan: blue print for this, blue print for that: post-war plans, pre-war lack of planning.

To the average man "planning" so far as it means anything, stands for opening up vistas where vistas were never intended, pulling down streets and erecting blocks of flats in their place. In fact, it is another word for destruction. When the Germans destroy a place it is described as a blitz. When we destroy one of our towns or villages, it is a plan.

Before the war we always called it "Town Planning," when we allowed agricultural land to receive a sprinkling of villas or drove a main road through a park or pulled down a street of mellow old houses. Town planning stood for developing towns, i.e., destroying their texture in the interests of the big insurance companies and the multiple stores. Town planning was a phrase used by a Government which catered for the townsman and left the countryman to fend for himself.

Then people began to realise that Britain was very small, that as you could cross the island in a motor-car in a day, to think of planning in terms of towns only would soon be to turn all of Britain into one town. So Town Planning was re-named Town and Country Planning. The Town Planning Association called itself the Town and Country Planning Association. A Ministry of Town and Country Planning was set up, though no one yet knew the full extent of its power.

So the crimes that were committed in the name of "planning" in towns may now be committed in the country as well. They have a Government blessing with the new phrase Town *and Country* planning.

It is not the concern of this article to adjudicate between the various schools of thought on how we ought to re-plan Britain: to discriminate between those who prefer the central town and satellites round it. All of us who love the country will want to emphasise that planning does not only mean destruction but also preservation. But since the word preservation suggests reaction, is not Left enough for the times, and is not associated in people's minds with planning, we must use a new phrase for it. I suggest landscape gardening, for the moment. It is too long a phrase to catch on. But it will serve to illustrate my point, and I hope that a reader who finds himself in agreement with what follows here, will invent a phrase.

OUR DEBT

For Town and Country Planning is really English genius for landscape gardening, famous in the 18th century, applied to Britain as a whole. You have probably seen those coloured aquatint books by Repton written at the turn of the 18th century, without which no gentleman's residence was complete. They showed you how you should plant your park, how you could disguise an ugly potting shed, where you should place a clump of trees to give emphasis to an undulation in your flattish demesne, where to plant another group so as to suggest that your lands wandered out of sight, how to place a sheet of water so that, viewed from your house, it looked like a strip of wide, winding river. To them we owe the timbered parks planted for us by our past: to them we owe our appreciation of the old cottages grouped around the church tower; to them we owe that sense of groups of buildings, hills or trees, which makes our country (where it survives) still the most beautiful and varied agricultural scenery in Europe.

Extend this idea of groups of trees and distant views of thatched roofs around the church tower as seen from the park, beyond the park fence and include all England in your vision. See a street in terms of a row of buildings instead of a series of individual houses of which you prefer one, rather than others, because it is old or new, or in a style of architecture which appeals to you. See a village in terms not of single cottages, but a cluster of them through which winding roads and footpaths lead to green and church. Then, when you see the place as a whole, consider it in detail. You will notice that certain sorts of building prevail. In downland villages chalk, sarsen and brick. In limestone districts, stone houses, stone roofs, and when the stone is soft and timber rare, stone hood-moulds and stone mullions for the windows. In slate or granite districts, slate or granite is used for building, and so on. The groups of houses reflect the geology of their district.

Only one type of house looks well in all districts: this is the small, simple, late Georgian brick box of two storeys, sometimes covered with stucco and washed yellow or pink or white or cream. This is the only type of house we have so far invented which fits into any landscape. It fits in because it is in texture and in scale with everything, because it is perfectly proportioned. You will notice that the windows are not too big for the wall space, that the ground floor openings are higher than those on the upper storey, and that the panes of glass are proportioned correctly to the windows, oblong in the oblong windows, squarer in the smaller ones above. The bars dividing the panes, called glazing bars, are neither too thick nor too thin. The roof is low-pitched and unbroken by gables, the eaves project widely.

SAD CASE

So now we have discovered that what makes a group of buildings pleasant to look at in the country is this texture and proportion to one another. This is not to say that they must all be the same, but that each bears some relation to its neighbours and to the village as a whole.

Now let us see what has happened under the baneful influence of planning in a single village, the village of Uffington, Berks, where I live.

Uffington is in the Vale of the White Horse near Faringdon and in that corner of Berkshire which abuts on Wiltshire and Gloucestershire: "The villages are straggling, queer, old-fashioned places, the houses being dropped down without the least regularity, in nooks and out of the way corners, by the sides of shadowy lanes and footpaths, each with its patch of garden." As Thomas Hughes described it in *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857) which opens in Uffington, it still in part remains.

Here, then, is the living texture of our country, something which is part of our civilisation, which has grown up very slowly and which can never be replaced. Zealous women in Government offices, keen young architects who live in flats for choice, unthinking orators on public platforms may, for one motive or another, decry us as sentimental for loving this sort of England.

In the mid-wars period, a local council, egged on by pseudo-progressives from the big towns, allowed the following crimes to be committed in Uffington:

1. More than half a dozen of the old cottages were destroyed, including two specially recommended for preservation in a report made by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings on behalf of the Berkshire County Council.

2. Three groups of council houses were erected in a clayey field which floods at certain seasons of the year. This site, while sufficiently distant from the village to segregate its inhabitants from the nearness to neighbours they had known, was yet near enough architecturally to ruin the appearance of one end of the place. The council houses themselves were in three periods of building.

None of them pays any regard to the prevailing colours and textures of the district, all of them are out of scale with the surrounding older cottages, most of them are so badly planned that the stubborn-soiled back gardens are littered with sheds and out-houses.

Despite the devastating damage done in those bad years 1919-1938, the local council has since condemned, according to village rumour, thirty-four more of the old cottages in the village. So if the council gets its way, the village will be almost wiped out and a cheery little bit of Swindon real estate will replace it. And the same will happen, to almost every old village in the Vale of the White Horse.

It is too easy simply to cry "Rural Slums" in some centrally-heated Whitehall office. MPs love such a phrase. It catches votes. It is humanitarian.

But is it humanitarian? Most of the old cottages in Uffington are warmer and drier than the council houses. They *are* the village. They can be saved as surely as water or light can be laid on to them.

Before the war the landlord could take advantage of the Rural Workers' Housing Acts, *if he were so inclined.* But these Acts, besides being voluntary, only partially financed the repairs he would have to make. To a big landlord, owning a hundred or more cottages from which the average rent was half-a-crown a week, they must have seemed a doubtful advantage when 70 out of a 100 of his houses had been condemned. And once a house was condemned before the war, there was no means of getting that condemnation reconsidered.

And this is where landscape gardening—the preservation side of planning—comes in. The Ministry of Health regards it as a duty to condemn old cottages according to perfectly open rules, though they may seem arbitrary in some cases. We have seen that only a few village landlords can afford to avail themselves of the Rural Workers' Housing Acts. We are therefore faced with the destruction of countless old villages which as groups of buildings of various dates are as much a part of England as Westminster Abbey, as much national property as Stonehenge. There is a Ministry of Town and County Planning. It is the job of all of us who are interested in the preservation of English villages to see that powers are given to this Ministry to schedule all unspoiled villages of England threatened with destruction, so that the local Council is compelled to recondition all old cottages capable of repair, and when rebuilding is essential, to rebuild on the old sites with local material or at least in scale and proportion and texture with the village as a group.

A Builder Wants to Know

By an officer who intends to return to the building trade when he leaves the Army.

BEFORE the war I was a building contractor. To-day I am a member of the Forces.

My business, like many others, is closed down, and when the war ends I shall have to start again from scratch.

As I intend to build quite a lot of houses I am trying to get a grip on what is going on in the building industry.

If the war should end, say, next month, is there a place where we would-be builders can take a "refresher-course" and see, hear and read all that is new in the trade? There should be.

One reads of a scheme for apprentices, but what about starting at the top and getting employers up to date?

Labour has got to be handled better than it has been during the war. Equality and payment on results must be harmonised. Team-work is essential.

We have many training centres which, after the war, will become available for training both sexes. These should be utilised at the earliest opportunity, and should include training in machinery.

The aim is also to make machinery easily available to all building contractors, and the Government should possess a pool of machinery with which to launch such a scheme.

A New Liberal Revival?

SPECTATOR

LIBERALS are professing a growing confidence that a notable revival of their party is in sight, and that an intensive effort in the constituencies will yield striking results at the General Election.

It is with this conviction that they have launched a public appeal for an election fighting fund of 200,000 pounds, and are intending to put between 400 and 500 candidates in the field.

It one asks what are the grounds for this confidence, many replies have been given. It is held to be not without significance that among the candidates already adopted 128 are young men serving in the Forces.

Perhaps the circumstance which tells most in favour of Liberals is the intense eagerness apparent in all classes of the community for a progressive policy of social reform and reconstruction which exists side by side with diminished interest in ordinary party politics.

The war has accustomed people to think in terms of the nation, and has stimulated them to demand generous measures of reform which many people will not expect from the Conservative Party, nor yet from a Labour Party which, as now organised, is too subservient to the sectional interests of the trade unions.

If one asks what is it that has captured the imagination of hundreds of thousands of men serving in the Forces or the workshop, the answer is "Beveridge" and all that that stands for: and it is significant that Sir William Beveridge himself is a Liberal Member of Parliament, and that the Security and Full Employment policies that he has framed are exactly in the tradition of the great social reforms which were initiated and carried out by the Liberal Party from 1906 to 1914.

Sir William Beveridge is manifestly a substantial asset to the party, not merely by reason of his constructive and ingenious mind, but because he is the spokesman of a school of constructive thinkers which has always been with us.

Those thinkers are Liberals, and it is arguable that they have always stood for the characteristic British mode of progressive democracy, though they have been eclipsed during the last 20 years owing to the mistaken impression that all their objectives had been won and that their work was no longer needed.

Hitlerism has proved that there is always a need for a militant Liberal Party.

Dirty Linen

By JANUS

"THE primary obligation of the laundry," said the Master of the Rolls in the Court of Appeal, "is not merely to take due care to launder but to launder."

A little like "an archdeacon is a dignitary who discharges archidiaconal functions" perhaps; but actually the words formed part of a very interesting judgment, of considerable importance to anyone whoever sends garments to be washed—a common and quite desirable practice.

In this case someone sent a dozen particularly good linen handkerchiefs to the laundry and got none of them back. The laundry, relying on the usual clause in its contract with customers, to the effect that liability for loss or damage is limited to 20 times the charge made for laundering the article in question, offered 11s. 5½d.

The County Court judge ruled against them, and awarded the owner of the handkerchiefs five pounds and costs. The Court of Appeal has now reserved that, holding that the clause in the laundry contract is valid in all ordinary cases.

So we now know where we stand with the laundries—unless the case goes to the House of Lords.

* * *

HAVING occasion to take an oath the other day in connection with a function I was called on to fulfil, I could not help wondering why the alternative, and equally legal, method of affirmation is not resorted to more commonly. I am bound to say I dislike the oath procedure. I am no more impelled to tell the truth through holding a Bible in my hand than if I held the Oxford Dictionary.

The Bible, indeed, in words which come with the highest of all authorities, tells me to swear not at all. Apart from that, people in the habit of telling the truth more often than not should not need to invoke the help of God for the purpose of making a simple statement.

The plain and dignified words of the affirmation "I, X Y Z, do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that . . ." seem to me very much preferable.

But when I told the Commissioner for Oaths who was handing me that I wanted to affirm, he was completely undone. Such a thing had never happened to him before, he wasn't familiar with the formula, the little book that had it in was in another room.

In the end, to save time and trouble, and not regarding the matter as a major moral issue, I took the oath, with the usual (to me) empty symbolism.

But I should like to put in a word for affirmation—in courts of law and anywhere else where the occasion arises.

STATESMAN AND NATION

A Test Case

WHAT Finland seriously lacks is political education.

Though the Germans have left few happy memories in Finland (their attitude to women was particularly objectionable) they refrained from major outrages, and Finland knows little and believes still less of what Germans did elsewhere.

American films were shown throughout the war, but only films of entertainment.

Only now are Soviet and British films coming in—mostly in driblets, though Coward's "In Which We Serve" has already had tremendous effect among those who have seen it.

Small quantities of British books, papers and magazines reach Finland thanks to the efforts of our authorities in Sweden, but many of these publications are little more than "leftovers" from what the Swedes didn't want.

Since English is the widely read language in Finland, here is a first-class opportunity of explaining to the Finns not only Britain but also British-Soviet relations, about which there still seem to be many misconceptions.

Altogether one has the impression that most Finns would welcome the opportunity to become useful members of a better Europe, but that their minds are still full of an accumulation of old rubbish.

Only, unlike probably most Germans, they are willing to learn if they are given the opportunity. Here is a case where the MoI, for example, could do a first-class and full-time job.

Not just a sideline, because Finland is something of a test case for our ability to eradicate past errors among Hitler's satellites.

Criminals

By CRITIC

I KNOW few more awkward problems than that of war criminals. Mr. Pell speaks for millions when he says that Nazis who have tortured and murdered Germans are just as criminal as those whose victims have been Poles or Frenchmen or Russians. A right principle we should stick to. He also says that Hitler and his gang and all the SS leaders and Gestapo thugs, amounting perhaps to hundreds of thousands, should be executed. How? That is the point. If they are killed in the war or by Germans we shall all be glad. If not, the problem of killing thousands in cold blood, whether it is called punishment or justice, is so disgusting that I doubt very much if it can be done. I am not surprised that the Foreign Office boggles, though I think it should make up its mind and not force Sir Cecil Hurst into resigning by simply not answering his letters for many months together. The best formula for Hitler and the leading Nazis might be "shot while attempting to escape." The familiar Nazi fiction would be less unpleasant than a public trial . . .

Mr. Churchill summed it up when he wrote, in one of the best phrases he ever coined, that "the grass grows quickly over the battlefield, but over the scaffold, never."

* * *

WHEN men discuss Progress, with a big P, they always make the mistake of talking as if it all happened together or did not happen at all.

Actually, moments and bits of improvement coincide with moments and bits or decadence. Just now the problem is to find the bits of improvement and chalk them up.

For instance, when I was a child in a market town I used daily to watch horrified, while men flogged cattle through the streets and stood up in carts so that they could hit their horses harder.

To-day most animals are killed with comparitively little barbarity (at any rate with much less barbarity), while horses which have surrendered to the internal combustion engine the privilege of pulling the heaviest loads are treated with the greatest affection and consideration when they do condescend to pull a cart or railway van.

It is years since I saw anyone hit a horse. Progress, I said to myself, as I walked up a steep street with a frozen surface by the side of a milkman who was coaxing and helping his horse like an old friend, and cursing the stupidity of those who had failed to sprinkle the road with gravel.

CRUSADER DIGEST

Week by week this review of the reviews puts you in touch with what is being thought and said about important matters in Britain to-day.

★

THE ECONOMIST

Lost Chance?

IN the House of Commons an attempt to introduce a new clause into the Representation of the People Bill—a clause to provide local authorities with opportunities to experiment in their elections with a system of Proportional Representation—was defeated by a large majority.

The provisions of the new clause seemed so reasonable and moderate that one must ascribe its rejection either to the narrow self-interest of the two main political parties or to obtuseness conjured up by the very term Proportional Representation.

It may be sensible to sit tight when new steps would modify a basic principle of government—and the adoption of PR in Parliamentary elections might have that effect—but where the seat is becoming increasingly uncomfortable it is not unduly reckless to explore the possibilities of movement. And hat is precisely what the supporters of the scheme had in mind.

It would have given local authorities permissive powers to experiment, for a limited period of six years, with a system that could do very little harm and might do much good.

As Sir William Beveridge said: . . . it would increase the power of the voter and therefore his interest in elections. It would also help to improve the quality of candidates.

The argument against PR in Parliamentary elections is that a strong Government with a firm majority is to be preferred as an aim to the mathematically exact reproduction of the electorate.

But the argument does not in the least apply to local authorities which, though they have parties, rarely operate on a strictly party basis—if only because they are nowadays so tightly circumscribed by the central government.

The greatest need of municipal government, by universal consent, is to get more good men and women into it, regardless of party. It is hard to believe that the experiment of PR, to be tried only where the local authorities wanted it, would not have a stimulating effect.

Twenty-six years have passed since the Speaker's Conference recommended the introduction of PR in large boroughs and the Alternative Vote elsewhere.

The resumption of electoral activity would provide an excellent opportunity to give these recommendations a belated try-out under local conditions.

It is regrettable that the opportunity will be missed because of gross self-seeking by the two larger parties.

Salvage

AN exhibition with the imposing title "Wealth from Waste" has been held in London to show industrialists the part played in the war effort by the salving of waste materials arising in the course of production.

There is no doubt that in ordinary industrial use much material was, needlessly wasted. Research time has been devoted to salving and saving methods, with good effect; in some cases, entirely new uses for waste materials have been discovered.

For example, sawdust is now considered not waste, but raw material. Obviously a great many of the new processes can be applied in peace-time, but there is a certain danger in believing that lessons of war can be learned like a multiplication table.

Waste is always a bad thing, but it is relative. The reconversion of leather scrap or the recovery of tin from used cans may be necessary in war-time, but in peace-time new material may be cheaper.

TRIBUNE

Mr. Pickup

THE election of Arthur Pickup as President of the Co-operative Wholesale Society will be welcomed in the Co-operative Movement and particularly by Socialists.

The new President of the CWS is not only one of the best administrative officials in the country; he is also a thorough-going Socialist who believes in Socialism as a faith as well as a policy.

In his new and powerful position he may play an important role in the post-war period. A few men like Pickup in leading positions in the Trade Union Movement would make all the difference to the political prospects of the country.

The CWS is to be heartily congratulated on its choice.

Forecasts

By GEORGE ORWELL

I HAVE just been re-reading with great interest, an old favourite of my boyhood, *The Green Curve*, by "Ole Luk-Oie." "Ole Luk-Oie" was the pseudonym of Major Swinton (afterwards General Swinton), who was, I believe, one of the rather numerous people credited with the invention of the tank.

The stories in this book, written about 1908, are the forecasts of an intelligent professional soldier who had learned the lessons of the Boer War and the Russo-Japanese War, and it is interesting to compare them with what actually happened a few years later.

One story, written as early as 1907 (at which date no aeroplane had actually risen off the ground for more than a few seconds), describes an air raid. The aeroplanes carry eight-pounder bombs!

False Prophets

Why Football is not a Sport at all

"AS concerning football playing I protest unto you that it may rather be called a bloody and murthering practice than a felowlye sport or pastime. For dooth not everyone lye in waight for his adversarie, seeking to overthrowe him and picke him on his nose, though it be on hard stones, on ditch or dale, valley or hill, or whatever place soever it be he careth not, so he have him downe; and he that can serve the most of this fashion he is counted the only felow, and who but he?"

Stubbes," Anatomie of Abuses in the Realme of England," 1583.

* * *

Why Tobacco won't be Popular

"A custom loathsome to the eye, harmfull to the braine, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black stinking fume thereof nearest resembling the horrible stygian smoke of the pit that is bottomless."

James I, "A Counterblaste to Tobacco," 1604.

* * *

Why Milton Stinks

"John Milton was one whose natural parts might deservedly give him a place amongst the principal of our English Poets, having writting two Heroick Poems and a Tragedy; namely Paradise Lost, Paradise Regain'd and Sampson Agonistes; but his Fame is gone out like a Candle in a snuff, and his Memory will always Stink, which might have lived in honourable repute, had he not been a notorious Trayter, and most impiously and villainously bely'd that blessed Martyr, King Charles the First."

William Winstanley, "Lives of the Most Famous English Poets," 1687.

* * *

Why Napoleon won't go Anywhere

"If we may credit persons who in general are pretty well informed of the state of affairs, a misunderstanding has broken out between Bonaparte and the other generals of the Army of Italy, headed by Berthier. The soldiers embrace the cause of the different Generals as affection bids them, and the public service suffers. Several administrators have given in their resignation, and no one wishes to replace them. Thus, then, terminates the rapid and brilliant campaign of that famous Corsican."

The Times, January 6th, 1797.

* * *

Why Women Must Shut Up

". . . Nor would the conferring of the vote upon women carry with it any advantages from the point of view of finding a way out of the material entanglements in which woman is enmeshed, and thus ending the war between man and woman. . . . One has only to ask oneself whether or not it would help the legislator in remodelling the divorce or the bastardy laws if he had conjoined with him an unmitigated, militant, suffragist assessor.

". . . Peace will come again. It will come when woman ceases to believe and to teach all manner of evil of man dis-spitefully. It will come when she ceases to impute to him as a crime her own natural disabilities, when she ceases to resent the fact that man cannot and does not wish to work side by side with her."

Letter to *The Times,* March 27th, 1912.

* * *

Why Railways mustn't be Allowed

"We denounce the *mania* as distinctive of the country in a thousand particulars—the whole face of the Kingdom is to be tattoed with these odious deformities; huge mounds are to intersect our beautiful valleys; the noise and stench of locomotive steam-engines are to disturb the quietude of the peasant, the farmer and the gentleman; and roaring of bullocks, the bleating of sheep and the grunting of pigs to keep up one continued uproar through the night along the lines of these most dangerous and disfiguring abominations."

John Bull, November 18th, 1835.

Last Article on Ballet

Before the Curtain Goes up

YOU are sitting in your comfortable seat in the dress circle. The house lights have just gone down. The conductor raises his baton, and the orchestra begins to play, very softly, some music you have never heard before. The curtain is about to go up on a new ballet.

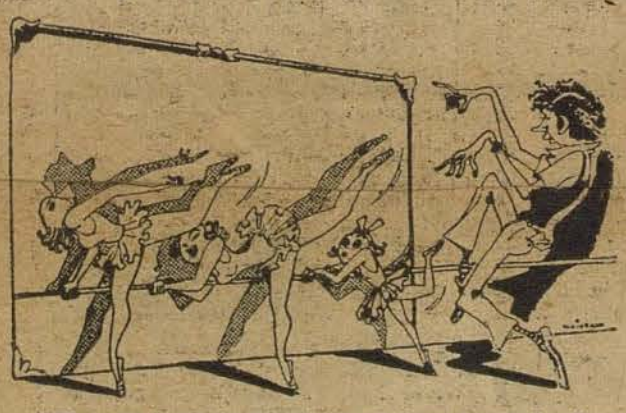
Will you like it? So much depends on that. Consider, in the few seconds that remain, what has gone to make up the new work.

Of the forty dancers taking part, most started their training before the age of ten. Since then they have gone through a more rigorous course of instruction than any athlete or prize-fighter. Even to-day they go back to school for an hour every morning and run through their exercises till the *maitre-de-ballet* is satisfied. This daily class takes place before rehearsals begin. Dancers are not paid overtime like the orchestra: and some of them who remain all their lives in the *corps-de-ballet* may never earn more than six pounds and two pair of dancing shoes a week. No wonder they tend to desert ballet for musical comedy or matrimony!

Every new play has a different cast: but a new ballet is performed by an already existing company. A ballet company never breaks up till it ceases to exist altogether. It depends for drawing an audience on presenting a varied repertoire: so each dancer must know at least thirty parts, and as he stays longer in the company will come to know hundreds.

There is no way of writing down the movements of a ballet; they are handed down from dancer to dancer. *Giselle*, a hundred years old, has been kept alive in this way. Kill off all the ballet dancers in the world and you have killed ballet. It would have to start afresh.

Consider the expense and organisation necessary for keeping together a big, permanent company. At some time during the year they must be rested, say for a month; and while they are performing eight shows a week, time must be found to create and rehearse new ballets, for without them both dancers and audiences grow stale.



"They go back to school for an hour every day."

"The chariot with winged horses would be extra."

If the company goes on tour the musical director must rehearse a fresh orchestra at every town. Poor man! He has to keep a hundred dancers and musicians in time with each other! Enormous trainloads of scenery and dresses must be transported. In each new theatre the lighting has to be carefully arranged, for a wrong lighting effect may ruin the atmosphere of a ballet.

In addition, the dancers must rehearse afresh wherever they go, for stages are all different sizes. Ballets may have to be adapted for this reason.

So much for the general difficulties of ballet presentation. What about this new ballet you are seeing to-night?

Six months ago, somebody—perhaps the artistic director of the company—got an idea from a poem by Dryden, which suggested a ballet to him. He decided he would like to mount it in such and such a way. Mr. "A" was approached to write the music. He agreed but stipulated for 500 pounds.

He saw the ballet as a series of variations on a theme by Scarlatti and suggested an eighteenth century setting. This was quite in keeping with the original idea; so Mr. "B," the celebrated authority on the Roccoco style, was asked to do the [illegible] and scenery.

Mr. "B" was so pleased to have the chance of staging a gorgeous production that he refused to take a penny more than 100 pounds for the designs; but he pointed out that the six backcloths and the 120 costumes, if executed in suitable material, would cost 2,000 pounds.

The chariot with winged horses that came down from Heaven in the last act, would, of course, be extra.

The artistic director now decided it was time to find a backer. Lady "X," the famous patroness of the arts, gave a cocktail party for him to meet Sir George "Y," the banker.

"Scene-painters balanced on ladders."

Sir George forgot to come to the party; but he rang up a week later to say he did not like ballet, but he would finance this new work if his wife could design the dresses. Whereupon the artistic director was very rude.

Just as it looked as if the idea from Dryden's poem would never reach the ballet public, Lord "Z," an admirer of the prima ballerina, came forward and offered to bear the whole cost of production.

Things began to move. The musical score and the choreography were completed. The orchestra and dancers began to rehearse. Scene-painters balanced on ladders; dressmakers cut and stitched. Mr. "B" made sketches of a special new make-up he wanted the dancers to use and invented some extraordinary wigs made of feathers. Announcements went to press. Interviews were given. The first performance was advertised and bookings were taken.

But the Monday before last, the star, whose boy-friend was financing the new ballet for her, had a row with the management and accepted an offer from a film company at twenty times her present wage.

Luckily, however, she is not the only ballerina on the beach; and luckily, too, her boy-friend loves ballet as well as ballet dancers and does not withdraw his support. Rehearsals continue with another leading lady. The first night approaches. Difficulties are nearly over. It was hard work. Will it be worth it?

That is for you to judge. Lean back in your comfortable seat. Never mind all these bothers. You are here to enjoy yourself. If the new ballet is no good they must try to please you better another day. You have paid your five-and-six.

The strings take up Scarlatti's theme. The music swells into an elegant thunderstorm. The curtain goes up. There, gleaming in white and gold, with a background of arches, fountains and pale morning sky, alone on the great, bright stage, stands our beloved Markova. The music pauses, stops.

Motionless she stands, as the conductor's arms are slowly raised and lowered: then the tender theme is repeated and she begins to dance.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE EMPIRE?

HOW much do you know about the British Empire? This week's questions all relate to the Dominions and Colonies. See how many of them you can answer.

1. What is the total area, in square miles, of the British Empire?

2. What is the estimated population? What proportion of the world's population does it represent?

3. Out of the total population of the Empire, what proportion is white?

4. There is no fundamental law upon which the Constitution of the British Empire rests, but there are three main principles underlying its administration. What are they?

5. Dominions are "Autonomous Communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." Can you name the Dominions?

6. What was the origin of the Imperial Conference?

7. Under the will of Cecil John Rhodes, scholarships were founded at Oxford for students from the British Dominions and Colonies, the United States of America and Germany. Which country had the number of its scholarships increased from one to three in 1942, and for what reason?

8. How many languages, exclusive of dialects, are spoken in India? And what is the "common tongue?"

9. Who discovered Canada, and when?

10. Who first took possession of Canada?

11. What is the Federal Capital of Canada?

12. Which is the oldest English colony? When was it discovered and by whom?

13. Which Dominion has the highest per capita external trade in the world?

14. What are the capitals of the following Australian states; (a) New South Wales, (b) Queensland, (c) South Australia, (d) Tasmania, (e) Victoria, (f) Western Australia?

15. New Zealand owes its wealth to its farming industry. What are the most highly-prized animals in the country? And why?

16. What was the original name of Jamaica and what did it mean?

17. Which is the largest and most valuable of the British West Indian islands?

18. What British colony was awarded the George Cross for its heroism in this war?

19. Tristan da Cunha, Gough, Nightingale and Inaccessible Islands became Dependencies of what island in 1938?

20. Approximately how many islands are there in the Bermudas group and how many of them are inhabited?

21. From what does Natal derive its name?

22. How many Indian States are there? But don't trouble to name them all!

23. What is the area of Australia?

24. What are the Virgin Islands and to whom do they belong?

25. By what other name are the Tonga islands known?

26. And what is another name for the Bermudas?

27. What religion in the British Empire has the greatest number of adherents?

28. In what proportion is the British Empire distributed over: (a) the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, (b) Eastern and Western Hemispheres?

29. The chief magistrates of certain cities of the British Empire are designated Lord Mayor (in Scotland, Lord Provost) Can you name the cities which possess Lord Mayors outside the British Isles? And to what prefix are they entitled?

Wangling Words

1. Insert consonants in . . A . . . E . . Y and . O . E . . A . A . E and get two fruits.

2. Insert consonants in . . O . O . E . . . O . and . E . . E . I . and get two flowering shrubs.

3. Here are two fastenings whose syllables, and the letters in them, have been shuffled. What are they?

NOTOTOB — ELACTUB

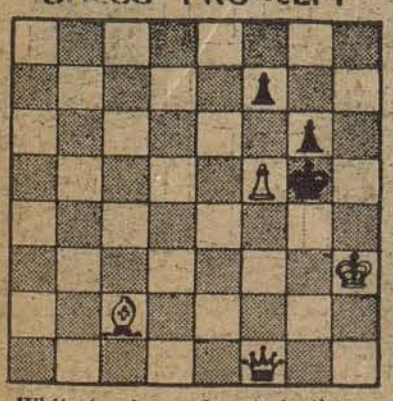
4. Here are two tags whose syllables, and the letters in them, have been shuffled. What are they?

OTBLA — LETOM

5. If "legible" is the "leg" of writing, what is the leg of (a) the Diplomatic Corps; (b) the Law?

6. If "baton" is the "ton" of a Field Marshal, what is the ton of (a) Explosives; (b) Surprise?

CHESS PROBLEM

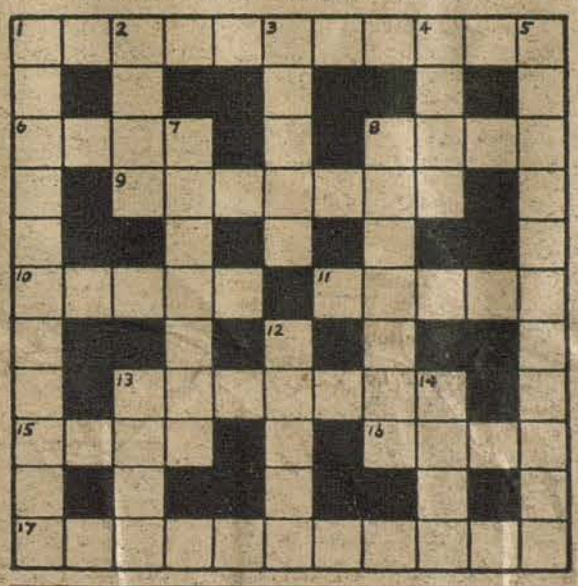


White to play and mate in three.

This is a Reader's Crossword

CRUSADER Crossword for this week is set by Lt. M. H. Brown, RAC.

Across — 1, Approximate circulation figure (two words, 5, 6). 6, Workers. 8, Court fifty in sheep's clothing. 9, Piece of furniture. 10, It's prickly and apparently unpopular. 11, Silence carpet. 13, Curing a fish end. 15, You can't say it isn't done. 16, A lag turns round. 17, Ideal residences —or toy ones? (two words, 5, 6). **Down**—1, ROARING DOME (anagram) (two words, 7, 4). 2, If this comes before you it means that it's your business (two words, 2, 2). 3, Off (two words, 3, 2). 4, Favour a boxer. 5, Governing body in a school for draughtsmen (two words, 6, 5). 7, SEA TERM (anagram). 8, Ash in wing. 12, Bone covering. 13, Flock to give her a penny. 14, Openings.



Probe for these Proverbs

SOME people love to wrap up a simple sentence in a mass of flowery language. We put one of our champion word-spinners on to rewriting some of the better-known English proverbs. Can you put them back into their original form?

1. The overweening of one's own qualities, accompanied by arrogance in conduct, is invariably an augur of a sharp and sometimes calamitous descent.

2. The ability successfully to conduct the solid-hoofed quadruped to such a place as he may best quench his thirst is not, and has not been, doubted; what is disputed is the ability to compel him to take advantage of the opportunities afforded.

3. It is always considered advisable to collect and store during the period of solar proximity the grass mown and dried for fodder.

4. In dealing with Mars and Venus the same rules apply as in **all-in-wrestling.**

FILMS YOU WILL BE SEEING

by John K. Newnham

YOU want to laugh. That is Ensa's summing-up of current troop tastes in the matter of film fare. Comedies predominate in the latest list of films sent out to Italy for Allied troops, with musicals as runners-up.

* * *

"THE IMPATIENT YEARS" heads the list and from all accounts it is ideal screen fare, so long as you are willing to accept a completely unbelievable plot. It stars Jean Arthur in another of those gay comedies which she does so well—this time about a war-time marriage.

A young couple marry in haste, separate at once, and then when the husband returns on leave they meet again as complete strangers. They seek a divorce, but the judge persuades them to re-enact their first meeting, marriage and brief honeymoon.

It takes some swallowing to believe that any couple could marry and then not know one another eighteen months later, especially as a bonny, bouncing babe blessed the marriage.

Nevertheless, the film is light-hearted, witty, and amusingly acted, with Jean Arthur supported by Lee Bowman, Charles Coburn, Frank Jenks and a bunch of other first-rate artists.

* * *

"SHOW BUSINESS" is one of the funniest of the new musicals with Eddie Cantor at his pop-eyed best, ably assisted by George Murphy, Constance Moore and Joan Davis. The story is slight one of those back-stage affairs, taking place during and after the last war—but the stars romp through it with infectious good humour. And there are some tuneful numbers.

* * *

"SAN DIEGO, I LOVE YOU" is another comedy—and a completely hilarious one. And it makes film history, for Buster Keaton smiles on the screen for the first time.

The famous silent-day comedian (who has been doing script work for the past few years) makes a successful come-back as a bus driver who is yearning to break away from the monotonous, back-alley run which he has been doing for ten years.

He gets a chance when a crazy blonde (Louise Allbritton) persuades him to go off his route.

In a film full of riotous situations, Edward Everett Horton appears as the blonde's father, the inventor of a one-man life-saving belt. Eric Blore as a handyman butler, and Jon Hall as a city man.

* * *

"YOU CAN'T DO THAT TO ME" is another of the "Maisie" stories; a lively comedy which is just as funny as its predecessors and with Ann Sothern at her amusing best. This time she goes on holiday for a fortnight and succeeds in frustrating a plot to separate an Army serjeant from his wealthy wife—a worthy piece of work which will win the approval of serjeants, no doubt, but not perhaps of lower ranks!

* * *

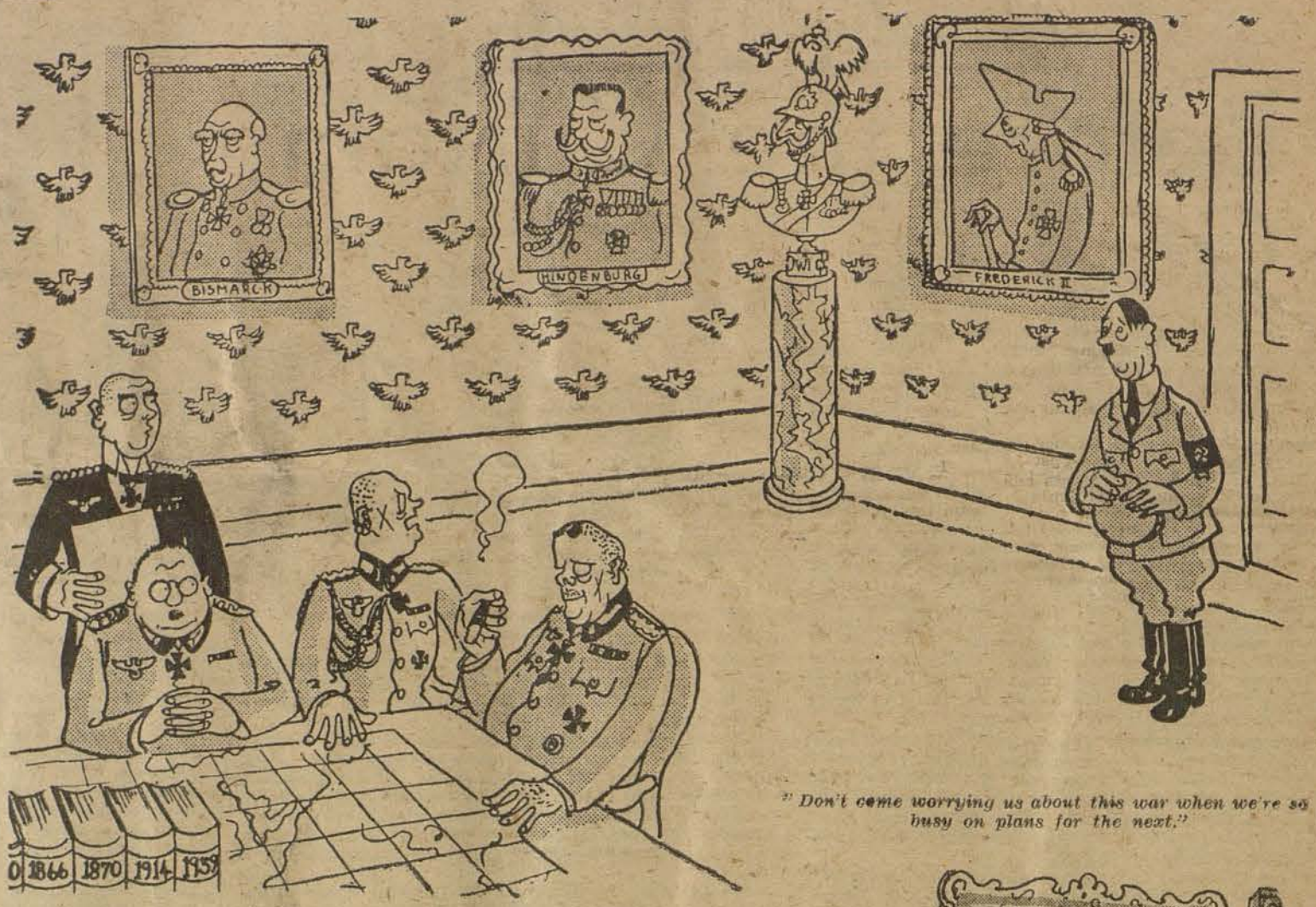
"HAIL THE CONQUERING HERO," one of the most technically perfect pictures ever made, is a subtle satire directed by Preston Sturges, in which he takes a knock at the American passion for feting heroes.

There is sentiment as well as humour, but one needs to understand the American small-town mentality to appreciate all its points.

Eddie Bracken (remember him in "Miracle of Morgan's Creek"?) gives a superb performance as a would-be marine who finds himself wrongfully hailed as a returning hero.

* * *

"BOWERY TO BROADWAY" speaks for itself. It's another musical, made worth seeing because of Jack Oakie's genial, wise-cracking humour and that packet of glamour named Maria Montez.



" Don't come worrying us about this war when we're so busy on plans for the next."

"And here we have the third duchess, a well-known—er—pin-up girl of the period."

OSBERT'S FOLLY

This week's cartoon selection is from the work of Osbert Lancaster.

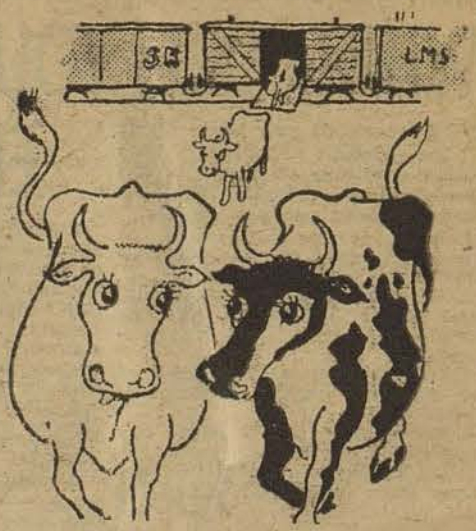
Mr. Lancaster writes: "The past year has been one of great and resounding successes . . . nevertheless for the cartoonist these very triumphs have involved sad deprivations.

"One by one the joke nations have deserted the role of enemy for that of co-belligerent, and while rejoicing in the defection one cannot always suppress a slight feeling of chagrin that it is no longer politic or polite fully to exploit such familiar sources of simple fun."

" I can't quite see the number, but it's either 'Mother o' Mine' or 'Lieut.-General T. N. Horseferry-Hamstrung, CB, MVO, etc.,'"

" Heavens! I've been directed into the ATS!"

" But, Mother dear, you must realise that this is rather different from Mr. Stephenson's Rocket."



" My dear, it was simply ghastly! We were herded together like human beings."

" Excuse me, Canon, but I rather think you've liberated my matches."

Another Demobilisation Plan.

Brains Challenged by Beef

BY STEVE ROBERTS

MENTION of all-in-wrestling invariably brings a flood of letters complaining that it should never be referred to as a sport.

I agree that, in the main, these all-in merchants merely "grunt and groan," but there are some genuine wrestlers among them who don't bite opponents, throw referees out of the ring or threaten to run berserk among the crowd.

One of these is Athol Oakley, of Slough. He is about the best in Britain and in his 2,000 fights has taken on and beaten opponents of all sizes.

Oakley is news this week, because he challenges a most formidable opponent—the Brains Trust. And his challenge appears as a letter in *The Times*.

Two members of the Brains Trust recently suggested that: (a) giant men were necessarily weak and (b) men suffering from acromegaly were unable to run.

NB.—Dictionary definition of acromegaly: over-development of the extremities.

Says Oakley: Let me assure the lady and gentleman concerned that both statements are quite incorrect. The most startling case of acromegaly seen in England was probably "The Angel."

This wrestler, at 5ft. 8in. weighs 23 stones. His head is two to three times larger than the head of the ordinary man; his fingers are like a bunch of bananas; his chest colossal.

He is extremely active, plays Rugger, can run much faster than all my business friends, and is endowed with a strength which, even among heavyweight wrestlers, is considered fantastic.

Giants are frequently strong: others are deplorably weak. I wrestled with one who was 9ft. high, and when I put on the half-Nelson he bent in the middle and remained so when he tried to stand up. Several wrestlers sat on him to straighten him out, and he recovered his upright stance.

Others giants like the 7ft. wrestler known as "Carver Doone," the Russian 7ft. 6in. Gregori Kascheff, or the 10ft. giant I was bringing to Britain for my 1940 wrestling championships in Manchester, are all men of vast proportions, weight and strength.

Japanese super-heavyweights go to 50 stones and are gorilla-like in their huge strength. No white has any chance against such size. Small giants like Primo Carnera (6ft. 8in.) are also frequently of great strength and suppleness.

Well, Oakley can definitely speak as one who knows, although we have never heard of those Jap gorillas entering any boxing or wrestling ring as we know it.

I remember the furore "The Angel" caused when he first appeared in England in May, 1938—Oakley had brought him over from Paris and turned him loose against Cliff Attenborough formerly the strongest man in the British Army.

With his ribs on the point of breaking under a terrific lock, Attenborough soon gave up, afterwards declaring: "I declined to continue the bout."

Fight Fans' Round-up

Grimsby: Bert Jackson (Fleetwood) WKO Johnny Higgins (Scotland), eighth round. Featherweights.

Dennis Skidmore (Rawmarsh) W Ret Dave Cameron (Manchester), seventh round.

Billy Pattison (Sheffield) D Dick Escott (Parkgate), eight rounds.

Liverpool: Mickie Colbert (Belfast) WP Danny Nagle (Ireland), eight rounds.

Noel Wagener (Keighley) WKO Jim Herlihy (Ireland), second round.

Joe Merryweather (Liverpool) W Ret Benny Green (Chester), fifth round.

Chris Kelly (Liverpool) RST Mick Donovan (Buxton), fifth round.

Glasgow: Ted Duffy (Bradford) W Ret Johnny Smith (Clydebank), seventh round.

Danny Cunningham (Methil) WP Danny Mack (Glasgow), ten rounds.

Billy Boyd (Biantyre) WKO Colon McIver (Hamilton), fourth round.

MATCH of the DECADE

THE greatest match I have ever played in was the last England-Scotland international at Hampden Park before the war, April 15, 1939.

Not for twelve years had England won at Hampden, and I figured our lads had a sort of inferiority complex when they went to Glasgow.

English teams which had been beaten were, on paper, good enough to hold their own, but not since gallant Jack Hill and his lads had snatched an odd goal win in 1927 had proud Scotland been humbled on her own soil.

This, then, was the setting for the match, and as captain I was determined that if it were humanly possible, we were going to come home with the spoils this time.

Going up in the train, I used all my eloquence on the rest of the team and told them the Scots weren't supermen.

In the hotel I continued my pep talk and carried on in the dressing-room until I must have hypnotised the team into thinking the match was as good as won.

We followed Scotland on to the field, getting the backwash of the tremendous welcome which had lifted itself to the skies.

There is no other Soccer roar on earth like that of Hampden. It smashes back and forth across the world's largest stadium, stuns you, and leaves you gasping for breath.

★

We won that day, we won as I knew we could, the better side, and with no hard luck stories. Scotland scored the first goal through Dougal, but young Pat Beasley, bless his heart, banged in the equaliser twenty minutes from time.

And that is how the score stood until three minutes from time.

Then Len Goulden sends a long pass up the right touchline. Stan Matthews is there. A bewildering juggle beats McNab, and he is away. The other England forwards run into position while the Scots' defenders drop back to cover this new danger.

Still Matthews goes on. Cummings is in attendance now, but Stanley takes the ball right down to the corner flag. Cummings tackles desperately, but Matthews, evading the outflung boot, cracks the ball into the middle.

IT'S A GOAL

Big Tom Lawton is there, and his head flashes the ball into the top corner of the net. It's a goal . . . and we've beaten Scotland.

It was against the Scots that I gave away my only penalty in forty-three international games. It was also the first penalty ever awarded at Wembley. I don't make excuses, but it was a pure accident.

It was three years before that great Hampden victory. We were leading Scotland 1—0 ten minutes from the end, when young John Crum, playing in his first international, chased after a ball near the edge of the penalty area.

I made him to be offside, and appealed to the referee, but kept moving all the same. I saw that Crum was trying to gather an awkward ball with his left foot.

He shot a split second before my out-thrust foot touched his ankle. The ball went outside, and Crum went down. Technically, it was a penalty, but I still think I was unlucky!

Do you remember the famous "over-the-line" incident in the Arsenal-Newcastle Cup Final at Wembley in 1932?

Richardson, the Newcastle inside-right, chased the ball. I could see it would be a desperately close thing if he were to catch it although, travelling at top speed, he drew up to it and centred first time.

By now we were appealing for an "over-the-line" ball, and at the same time Allen cracked the centre into the net. But although we protested strongly to the referee (Mr. W. P. Harper, of Stourbridge), he allowed the goal to stand.

But my greatest Cup Final thrill was my first, in 1930. I had been in the Arsenal first team only a little over a year. We beat mighty Huddersfield that day.

There was a lot of controversy about our first goal. Alec James was fouled near the penalty area, and, almost before the ball had stopped rolling, had taken the free-kick.

He sent a short pass to Cliff Bastin, moved into position to take a perfect return, and banged the ball into the Huddersfield net for the all-important first goal.

Tom Crew, the referee, told me later that James made a silent appeal for permission to take the kick, and he waved him on.

I contend that it was fair tactics; for if Alex had waited a few seconds for the whistle, the Huddersfield defence would have been in position, and the advantage of the free-kick would have been lost.

During the second half there occurred one of those incidents which make a match of this kind even more dramatic.

MY RECORD

There is always a lot of noise in a Cup Final, but, above the hubbub, we heard a deep resonant booming, and over our heads there floated into view the German airship, Graf Zeppelin.

It flew the length of the Stadium and dipped in salute to King George V. The players took one quick look and then went on playing.

On the day that I set up the record for English international caps and was presented to the King at Wembley I must have been the happiest man alive.

Some months after that match—my last appearance for England—I had a letter from Mr. S. F. Rous, the FA secretary, saying that the FA had decided to award me a 100-pound testimonial as a memento of the record, and for my services to the game.

When I joined the Air Force I found myself in an entirely new life. Gone was the Eddie Hapgood, Arsenal and England captain, and, in his place, A/C "two plonks" Hapgood, E. A.

On my first day a corporal calling the roll, barked:

"Hapgood, E. A. Any relation to the Arsenal player?" "The same," I said, rather self-consciously.

"Well, you played for a classy team, we'll give you a classy job. Just get down and polish this floor."

With that he pitched a tin of polish at me. Instinctively, I trapped the tin as it scudded across the floor . . . and banged it back, left foot, at him!

I am not going to give away anybody by stating the name of the camp at which the following incident happened.

I was confined to barracks—on a Saturday morning a few hours before I was due to play for Arsenal against Tottenham at White Hart-lane.

ESCORT

I asked the serjeant who was "in charge" of me, couldn't something be done about it, and vaguely muttered something about parole. He explained, at great length, what being on a charge meant, and also that being confined to barracks did not mean being allowed to travel outside to play football! But I wasn't satisfied and asked to see the duty officer.

Naturally, he was not very interested in my request for a few hours' leave that afternoon, but he was a sport and said, "If you promise to go to the match under escort, I'll let you out this afternoon."

Later, two warrant-officers presented themselves at the guard-room, and I was led away to a Service car, in which we drove to Tottenham. At the gate I "vouched" for my two "friends," who accompanied me to the dressing-room.

My two shadows were on either side when I picked up the ball to lead Arsenal on to the field. And they left me only at the end of the tunnel on the touchline.

They were there at half-time and again at the finish.

I might add the charge against me was dismissed on the following Monday.

I was once asked what was the greatest game I ever saw Stanley Matthews play.

My answer was that I could not separate his performances (a) v. Ireland at Old Trafford, November 16, 1938, when his wing partner, Billy Hall, scored five times in a row; (b) v. Czechoslovakia at Tottenham, 1937; (c) his grand exhibition when we laid the Hampden bogey in April, 1939; or (d) his dogged brilliance in that incident-laden match against Italy at Milan the following month.

GREAT WINGER

Stan really is one of the greatest wingers I have ever seen or played against, and I always enjoyed our clashes.

Early in my career I realised that the only way to play him properly was to make sure *he never got the ball*. He likes the slow rolling pass, and is at his most dangerous when standing still.

So if the pass to him is blocked Matthews's effectiveness is cut down to nil.

But Matthews really offered only a simple problem, because he treats the matter of beating a full-back as a challenge to his own skill, and he would sooner beat a man than get rid of the ball straight away.

Whereas it is the less experienced winger who sets the harder problem, for he often cracks the ball straight back in the middle, or passes to a colleague before you've time to get in and tackle him. That makes you think and also run about.

Having had a fair chance to assess the merits of the leading players of the last three decades, I'll attempt to name the team I should like to have played in if it were possible to muster them in the same club jerseys.

My goalkeeper is Harry Hibbs, my choice for partner at full-back is Male, with whom I worked up a grand combination for Arsenal and England.

My right-half is Willis Edwards, of Leeds United, an ideal half-back, who could go forward or back at any time.

For centre-half I choose the player to whom I handed over the England captaincy at the end of my long run—Stanley Cullis, of Wolverhampton Wanderers. An intelligent, defensive centre-half, who varied his play by attacking when the situation warranted.

DEADLY SHOT

At left-half I look no farther than Bob John, my Arsenal colleague for so many years. The forwards, forgive me, with one exception, wore an Arsenal shirt. Here they are — Hulme, Jack, James and Bastin.

But the centre-forward position is tricky. Here are three nominees I cannot separate . . . Dixie Dean, a wizard with his feet, but just as deadly with his head, as strong as a horse, and just as hard to knock off the ball.

Hughie Gallacher, greatest centre-forward ever to come over the Border, who hunched himself over the ball in a way that made it almost impossible to dispossess him.

And George Camsell. Rather like Dixie Dean, perhaps not quite as good with his head, but a deadly shot from anywhere near the penalty area and terrifically fast.

Well, there you are, that's my choice. Have another look at them and then argue.

Eddie Hapgood Tells it All

THIS feature for Soccer fans is written by one of the game's greatest stars. To-day Eddie Hapgood describes the last pre-war England-Scotland international—a game of thrills from kick-off to climax.

Quiz Answers

WHAT DID YOU KNOW?

1. 13,909,782. 2. 500,870,000—approximately one-quarter of the world's population. 3. Approximately 70,000,000. 4. Self-government, self-support and self-defence. 5. Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand and the Union of South Africa. 6. The presence in London (in 1887) of the Prime Minister of the various Dominions at the celebrations of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. 7. Malta, in recognition of the island's heroic struggle. 8. 225, Hindustani. 9. Cabot, in 1497. 10. The French. 11. Ottawa. 12. Newfoundland, discovered by John Cabot in 1497. 13. New Zealand. 14. (a) Sydney, (b) Brisbane, (c) Adelaide, (d) Hobart, (e) Melbourne, (f) Perth. 15. Cows and sheep (for dairy products, mutton and wool). 16. Xaymaca, or Land of Wood and Water. 17. Jamaica. 18. Malta. 19. St. Helena. 20. 100—mostly mere rocks; only 15 or 16 are inhabited. 21. The fact that it was discovered on Christmas Day (1497, by Vasco da Gama). 22. About 570. 23. 2,974,581 square miles. 24. A group of islands in the West Indies belonging chiefly to Great Britain and the USA. 25. The Friendly Islands. 26. Somers Islands. 27. Hindu (210,000,000). 28. (a) equally; (b) more than two-thirds in the Eastern Hemisphere, less than one-third in the Western Hemisphere. 29. Adelaide, Brisbane, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth (W. Australia) and Sydney; entitled to prefix "Right Honourable."

CROSSWORD

Across—1, Round number. 6, Ants. 8, Wool. 9, Ottoman. 10, Nopal. 11, Shrug. 13, Healing. 15, Over. 16, Gala. 17, Model houses. *Down*—1, Reading room. 2, Up to. 3, Not on. 4, Boon. 5, Ruling class. 7, Steamer. 8, Washing. 12, Flesh. 13, Herd. 14, Gaps.

CHESS

1, Q—QR1. If 1 . . . P x P; 2, Q—Kt7 (ch); 1 . . . K—R3 or R4; 2, Q—KR8 (ch); 1 . . . K—B5; 2, Q—Q4 (ch); 1 . . . P—B3; 2, Q—QB1 (ch).

WANGLING WORDS

1, Blackberry, Pomegranate. 2, Rhododendron, Berberis. 3, Bootlace, Button. 4, Label, Motto. 5, (a) LEGation; (b) LEGitimate (or LEGal). 6, (a) DeTONate; (b) AsTONish.

PROVERBS

1, Pride goes before a fall. 2, You can take a horse to the water, but you can't make him drink. 3, Make hay while the sun shines. 4, All's fair in love and war.

EIGHTH ARMY DIARY

By CYRIL JAMES

HERE is this week's topical quiz for Eighth Army readers.

QUESTION: What is worse than a hard frost?

ANSWER: Mud.

QUESTION: What is more disagreeable than the low temperature that slaps a film of ice on the snow and starts the jeeps jitterbugging?

ANSWER: The thaw that turns the whole terrain into a gooey mixture of slush, mud and water, that lays bare the shell-craters on the roads, that adds the last depressing touch to a landscape which, even at its best, is scarcely exhilarating.

QUESTION: What has all this to do with "Eighth Army Diary?"

ANSWER: Nothing, except that it expresses the thoughts of every one up forward at this time of the year.

Strange Signs

AFTER which meteorological introduction I shall proceed with the job in hand.

A soldier in transit through forward areas finds that his life is dominated and directed by signs. In Corps territory these signs are handsome affairs with a yellow background, a blue border and red lettering. There are hundreds upon hundreds of them.

Some island sites on road junctions have sprouted such a crop of Corps, Div., Brigade and Unit signs of all sizes and shapes that there literally is not enough room left to plant a match-stick in the soil.

It was this multiplicity and confusion that probably prompted Corps to standardise their signs, to make them clear and easily recognisable.

Now who paints these signs? Who cuts and shapes the wood? Who maintains and repairs them?

Seeking the answer to these questions, I made my way to a workshop in a forward town where L/Cpl. F. Bloxam, of Leicester, was engaged in adorning a piece of wood with the following thrilling legend:

POSTOJ KOLUMN TYLKO W REJONIE WYZNACZONYM.

"The words are hard enough," sighed L/Cpl. Bloxam, putting aside his paint-brush, "but the real trouble starts with all the ticks and accents I have to put in. And then that Indian writing—it's more tricky than Arabic."

L/Cpl. Bloxam, who was a painter, sign-writer and decorator before the war, has been painting military road signs all the way from Souk el Arba to Ravenna.

He is in the 101 Provost Company—These are the people who provide the familiar yellow, red and blue signs that tell the troops in English, Indian, Polish and Italian, not to halt, not to brew-up, to avoid dangerous corners, to turn left, to carry straight on, to beware of icy surfaces, to go slow, to get cracking—or whatever the situation demands.

Warning Note

THERE is a waggish note in many of the signs erected by the 101 Provost Company.

For example, in order to speed supplies they painted a sign with a flight of stairs and the slogan "GET UP THEM STORES!" Then again they invented the series of signs spaced at intervals along the road which reads like this:

First sign: IF YOU STOP ALONG THIS ROAD . . .

Second sign: TRAFFIC STOPS . . .

Third sign: SUPPLIES STOP . . .

Fourth sign: THE WAR STOPS . . .

Fifth sign: AND YOU STOP IN THE ARMY UNTIL 1950.

Sixth sign: ROLL ON!

"It isn't just a joke," said RSM J. Nattress, "if you could see what can happen when even one driver stops for a few moments on a busy road you would realise how necessary these signs are."

RSM Nattress, who before the war was in the City of London police force, is very proud of the 101 "Paintshop" and is by way of becoming a connoisseur in signs.

He showed me a selection, ranging from the route signs and place names to the ones which said "NO DUST," "UNDER OBSERVATION," "THIS ROAD IS REGULARLY SHELLED," and finally "TURN BACK," which is getting very near the sharp end indeed.

"In Africa," said RSM Nattress—who, by the way, also served in the Royal Horse Guards—"we put out our first humorous sign which read 'FAMOUS LAST WORDS—IT'S ONLY A SPIT.' One of our latest was inspired by the snowy roads of Italy. It reads 'THIS IS THE ROAD HOME—DON'T WEAR IT OUT. NO CHAINS.' When we move forward we collect most of our signs and take them on with us, but of course, many place names, map references and danger signs are left behind, so that we have a train of our work stretching all the way back to Africa."

In case you are thinking that all these humorous signs must mean a waste of material, I hasten to point out that the CMPs have to find most of their wood and metal from salvage, bombed buildings and other sources.

Their Motto

ONCE they were reduced to using corrugated iron for signs. They painfully hammered it flat with wooden mallets until some bright spark had a good idea. They rang up the REs, who sent along a steam-roller which rolled scores of sheets flat.

The demand for signs grew until it was no longer possible for the 101 Provost Company to do the work unaided. So to-day Italian workmen shape and construct the signs; paint the background and help with the stencilling, leaving L/Cpl. Bloxam free to concentrate on the more ambitious jobs and such novelties as illuminated night signs saying "NO HEADLIGHTS."

To-day they are turning out about 50 signs daily and in the past couple of months they have produced more than 1,400.

"And our motto remains," said the RSM—"bigger and better signs."

L/Cpl. Bloxam's right-hand man has been L/Cpl. P. Naumann, the Company carpenter, but I don't suppose he will read these words immediately because he is among the lucky ones who have gone home to the UK on the leave scheme and is, no doubt, thinking not of road-signs, but of reunion with his family in Crouch End, London.

Capt. F. Tuplin, in peace-time a North Riding policeman, was a great signs-fan when he was OC of this Company. The present OC, Capt. W. S. H. Betts, is carrying on and extending the good work.

Incidentally, Capt. Betts told me one of the best stories I have heard since I have been in the Eighth Army area.

At Forli there has been showing an exhibition of captured enemy equipment. Troops have enjoyed clambering over Tiger tanks, Mark IV specials, Jerry SP guns and the formidable 88mm anti-tank guns. So Capt. Betts got the "paint-shop" working on a big sign showing Jon's "Two Types" with the inscription "It's a knock-out, old man," and "EXHIBITION OF ENEMY EQUIPMENT."

Well, one night some joker from up forward constructed a second sign and set it up near the exhibition. Next morning's light revealed this sign with the legend:

"EXHIBITION OF WORKING ENEMY EQUIPMENT. DEMONSTRATED BY EXPERTS; TWENTY-FOUR HOURS EVERY DAY. A FEW MILES UP THE ROAD."

The 101 Provost Company has a record in this war which it is justifiably proud.

The Company went to France in September, 1939, and was the Provost Company at GHQ, BEF. They evacuated through Dunkirk and during the fighting which preceded Dunkirk, Sjt. Rounce gained the MM.

The Company re-formed and became part of Five Corps and eventually landed in North Africa with the First Army in November, 1942. These CMPs guided the troops and controlled traffic throughout the Tunisian campaign and on into Italy.

It was during the Sangro battle that Cpl. F. L. Clark, of 101, gained the MM. One of the Company officers, Capt. P. B. Rowe, was awarded the MBE.

They have, inevitably, had their casualties, but there are still present many of the veterans who were together in Tidworth before the unit started on its long trek.

Before I left I looked in again at the "paint-shop."

L/Cpl. Bloxam was working on a sign which said simply and splendidly:

"NIEBEZPIECZENSTWO."

"It is Polish," he explained; "Polish for 'danger'."

"Well," I said, "keep up the good work and Nie Zatrzymuj sie."

"Thank you," he replied, "and Powoli ostry zjazd to you."

"But before you go," said RSM Nattress, "I'd like you to see our canteen—the Sangro Arms.'"

"Delighted," I said.

Iron Men

I LOOKED in on one of the Indian Divisions the other day.

We all know what splendid combat troops the men of this famous Division are. But the physical toughness of these Indians took my breath away.

It was a bitter day, roads frozen, leaden sky and a wind that cut like a knife.

Yet there were some of the Indians doing their washing in a stream that was almost completely frozen.

And just to show the elements that this Indian Division doesn't care, they were stripped down to PT shorts.

I know that some parts of India can be very cold indeed, but the weather this morning was enough to discourage an Eskimo.

If ever troops deserved to be called "men of iron," I think the term might be applied to these 10th Indian Division troops.

Party Spirit

SJT. W. WINTER, of the Welch Regiment, was on patrol along the Eighth Army front the other night when he heard strange noises coming from an isolated house in enemy territory.

Not the noise of mortars or machine-guns, but very voices raised in song. And women's voices joining in music that owed a lot of its erratic harmony to vino.

Sjt. Winter, whose home is at 50, Dunraven-street, Cwmgwrach, South Wales, was, like a good Welshman, horrified at such goings-on in the front-line. So were his comrades.

They decided to break up the party.

They had not been invited to take a friendly glass of vino and meet the signorinas, so the only thing to do was to crash the party.

The word was sent back to battalion HQ, and the Welch Regiment provided a free accompaniment to the singing, noisily and neatly arranged for artillery and mortar.

The party broke up.

There was no more close harmony from the isolated house in the snow-covered field.

The Two Types— by JON

"But I distinctly remember issuing you with a mug, enamel, at Sidi Barrani."

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