

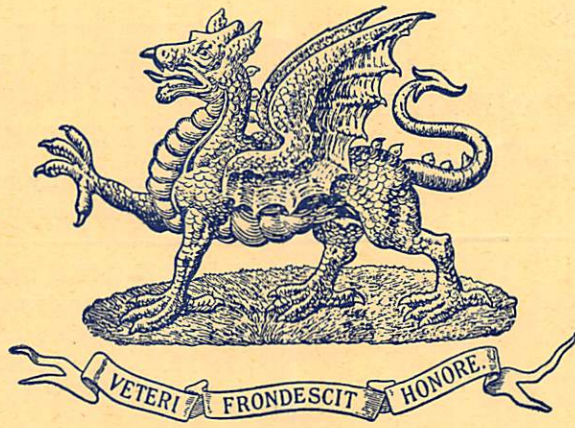
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# THE DRAGON

THE REGIMENTAL PAPER  
OF THE BUFFS.



No. 498

May, 1941

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No. 498

MAY, 1941.

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## Personalia.

Colonel and Mrs. Bradley Dyne are now at Sextries, Parkfield, Sevenoaks, having left their old house last summer. Mrs. Dyne is much occupied with A.R.P. duties, drives an ambulance and practices First Aid. Their daughter joined the A.T.S. in October, 1939 and is now a Company Commander, quartered at Leeds.

Colonel J. Crookenden was home (Green Bank, Barham, near Canterbury) before Easter, as was his son George, who now quite dwarfs his father, being well over 6 feet.

Brigadier J. F. Whitacre-Allen has had many moves since he came back from Norway and is now senior A/Q. of a corps. Mrs. Allen has taken a cottage, but where we do not know; whilst their daughter, Betty, is a V.A.D. orderly at Fulmer Chase.

Not long ago Major F. G. Verlander transferred to the R.A.O.C., after serving 41 years and 5 months in the Regiment. He writes that he is very fit and enjoys his new work.

We congratulate Captain and Mrs. T. Wheler on the birth of a son.

We are sorry to hear from Major F. G. Crozier that his leg is not shewing the improvement he had hoped for and that he may have to go into hospital again.

We are glad to hear again of Lieut. A. J. Turner, who served with "B" Company (Whitstable Detachment), 4th Battalion, The Buffs, from 1923 to 1930, when he left the district.

The following officers are now at Stalag XXI D, Germany:—Prisoner of War No. 47028 Lieut. H. C. F. Harwood; P. of W. No. 33119 Lieut. M. B. Kingsford; P. of W. No. 419 2/Lieut. J. Morley; 2/Lieut. J. Colyer-Fergusson.

In a letter received by his parents recently, Pte. H. H. Janes, a prisoner of war at Stalag XX B, stated that he had received several cards from them and a Red Cross parcel containing food and 50 cigarettes which arrived on January 10th.

At Christmas, he wrote, they had a good time at the camp "with little extra tit-bits and a concert arranged by the lads".

Mrs. Shorter writes from South Africa to say that the married families of the 1st Battalion are comfortably housed and in good heart.

We have been informed that the B.B.C. is broadcasting on the Regiment on May 3rd. The time at which this will take place is not known as we go to press.

We have received a welcome report that none of our in-pensioners were injured in the recent attack on the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

## Births, Marriages and Deaths.

### BIRTH.

**Wheler.**—On February 20th, 1941, at Winstar, Tintern Avenue, Toorak, Victoria, Australia, to Enid (*née* Stokes), wife of Captain Trevor Wheler, late The Buffs—a son.

### MARRIAGE.

**Longsdon—Studd.**—On April 18th, 1941, at St. Andrew's Church, Kenn, Lieut. S. J. Longsdon, D.S.C., R.N.V.R., elder son of Mr. and Mrs. Longsdon, of Wield, Hampshire, to Edith Meriel, only daughter of the late Lieut.-Colonel F. C. R. Studd and Mrs. K. F. Fradgley, of Bickham, Kennford, Devon.

## The Regimental Gazette.

SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF TUESDAY, MARCH 18TH, 1941, DATED FRIDAY, MARCH 21ST, 1941.

### REGULAR ARMY.

#### EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS, ETC.

The undermentioned to be 2nd Lts. :—

**THE BUFFS.**—Maurice Bernhard Baron (173614) (February 12th, 1941); L/Cpl. Wolfgang Charles Werner Arnold-Baker (175843) (February 25th, 1941); Actg. R.S.M. Walter Molton (173129) to be Lt. (Qr.-Mr.) (February 13th, 1941).

SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF FRIDAY, MARCH 21ST, 1941, DATED TUESDAY, MARCH 25TH, 1941.

### REGULAR ARMY.

#### EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS, ETC.

**THE BUFFS.**—Sgt. Instr. Sidney John Stanislaus Moore (58811) from A.P.T.S. to be Lt. (August 7th, 1940). (Substituted for notfn. in Gazette (Supplement) dated August 6th, 1940.)

W.O. Cl. II Herbert Reginald Tracey (171127) to be Lt. (February 4th, 1941).

**GENERAL LIST.**—Arthur Harold Pellow Lisle (171572) to be 2nd Lt. (October 20th, 1940). (Substituted for notfn. in Gazette (Supplement) dated March 10th, 1941, under "The Buffs".)

SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF TUESDAY, MARCH 25TH, 1941, DATED FRIDAY, MARCH 28TH, 1941.

### REGULAR ARMY RESERVE OF OFFICERS.

The undermentioned, having attained the age limit of liability to recall, ceases to belong to the Res. of Off. :

**THE BUFFS.**—Lt. C. A. B. Barton, D.C.M. (175433) (March 12th, 1941).

### REGULAR ARMY.

#### EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS, ETC.

The undermentioned Cadets, from 161st and 163rd O.C.T.U.'s, to be 2nd Lts. (March 8th, 1941) :—

**THE BUFFS.**—William Barrie Breaden (176794), George Charles Greenfield (176795), George Friend Hatton (176796), William Douglas Home (176797), Peter Mallinson Kellett (176798).

SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF FRIDAY, MARCH 28TH, 1941, DATED TUESDAY, APRIL 1ST, 1941.

### REGULAR ARMY.

#### EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS, ETC.

**THE BUFFS.**—Actg. Sgt. Thomas Alexander Keele (171690) to be 2nd Lt. (February 11th, 1941).

### REGULAR ARMY.

#### EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS (CADETS).

The undermentioned Cadets, from 162nd, 164th, 165th, and 166th O.C.T.U.'s, to be 2nd Lts. (March 15th, 1941) :—

**THE BUFFS.**—Harold Joffre Amiel (177500), Paul Bertram Baker (177501), Michael Temple Corrie (177502), David Duncan-Smith (177503), Michael Leicester James Gilbert-Lodge (177504), Edgar Godfrey (177505), Gordon Alan Scott (177506), Francis Joseph John Worth (177507), John Evelyn West (177508).

SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF FRIDAY, MARCH 28TH, 1941, DATED TUESDAY, APRIL 1ST, 1941. To be Additional Members of the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

Capt. (acting Major) John Richard Pigot Williams (30707), The Buffs.

### WAR OFFICE, APRIL 1ST, 1941.

The King has been graciously pleased to approve that the following be Mentioned for distinguished services in the Middle East during the period August, 1939, to November, 1940 :—

**THE BUFFS.**—Lt.-Col. D. A. Wilkins, M.B.E. (5252); Capt. (actg. Major) N. R. Reeves (39376).

**THE CYPRUS REGIMENT.**—Major. R. J. P. Thorne-Thorne (15980).

SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF FRIDAY, APRIL 4TH, 1941, DATED MONDAY, APRIL 7TH, 1941.

### REGULAR ARMY.

#### EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS, ETC.

**THE BUFFS.**—Capt. Laurence Dupont Hammond (139003) to be Lt. (June 26th, 1940). (Substituted for notfn in Gazette (Supplement) dated August 13th, 1940.)

Lt. H. Dowsett (142297) relinquishes his commn. on account of ill-health (April 5th, 1941).

SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF FRIDAY, APRIL 4TH, 1941, DATED TUESDAY, APRIL 8TH, 1941.

### REGULAR ARMY.

#### EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS, ETC.

The undermentioned to be Lts. :—

**THE BUFFS.**—R.Q.M.S. Frederick George Crossman Papworth (171453) (Feb. 5th, 1941); W.O. Cl. II Alfred Henry Gurney (174264) (March 7th, 1941).

SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF FRIDAY, APRIL 11TH, 1941, DATED TUESDAY, APRIL 15TH, 1941.

### REGULAR ARMY.

The undermentioned to be supernumerary to estab. : Col. A. B. Thomson, M.B.E. (4001) (April 7th, 1941).

### REGULAR ARMY.

#### EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS, ETC.

**THE BUFFS.**—2nd Lt. W. Suthers (125455) resigns his commn. (March 25th, 1941).

### REGULAR ARMY.

#### EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS (CADETS).

The undermentioned Cadets, from 163rd, 167th and 168th O.C.T.U.'s, to be 2nd Lts. (March 29th, 1941) :—

**THE BUFFS.**—Paul Dullea (180046), Frederick George Barroclough Hills (180047), Anthony Erskine Money (180048), Frederick William Aries Pender (180049), Michael John St. Brelade Seale (180050), Jeffery Austen Harrison (180051), Basil Leonard Ramshaw (180052), Cyril Noel Stephens (180053).

SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF TUESDAY, APRIL 8TH, 1941, DATED FRIDAY, APRIL 11TH, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS (CADETS).

The undermentioned Cadets, from 162nd O.C.T.U., to be 2nd Lts. (March 22nd, 1941) :—

THE BUFFS.—Donald Harry Hurry (179740), Alfred Caius Powell Hyde (179741), David Christopher Gwynne Lewis (179742).

WAR OFFICE ORDERS.

No. 12 ISSUED ON MARCH 20TH, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS.

The undermentioned Lts. (actg. Cpts.) to be temp. Cpts. :—

THE BUFFS.—W. H. Adams (142147) (October 29th, 1940). (Substituted for the notifi. in War Office Orders No. 7/1941.) K. G. Hollebhone (146570) (Feb. 11th, 1941).

The undermentioned 2nd Lts. (actg. Cpts.) to be temp Cpts. and War Subs. Lts. :—

THE BUFFS.—E. E. Phillips (137730) (February 4th, 1941); D. A. I. Ardizzone (117087) (March 10th, 1941).

The undermentioned Capt. (temp. Maj.) relinquishes the temp. rank of Maj. :—

THE BUFFS.—(Bt. Maj.) E. B. Backhouse (1175) (July 1st, 1940).

THE BUFFS.—Capt. and Bt. Maj. E. B. Backhouse (1175) is re-granted the temp. rank of Maj. October 13th to November 21st, 1940, incl.

The initials of the undermentioned Lt. (temp. Capt.) are as now stated and not as in War Office Orders No. 6/1941 :—

THE BUFFS.—G. C. M. Brown, M.C. (22590).

WAR OFFICE ORDERS.

No. 13 ISSUED ON MARCH 27TH, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

The undermentioned Lt. (temp. Capt.) relinquishes the temp. rank of Capt. :—

THE BUFFS.—P. W. G. Kann (125049) (January 9th, 1941).

CYPRUS REGIMENT.

EMERGENCY COMMISSION.

Maj. (actg. Lt.-Col.) R. J. P. Thorne-Thorne (15980) to be temp. Lt.-Col. (January 23rd, 1941).

REGULAR ARMY RESERVE OF OFFICERS.

The undermentioned Lt. (actg. Maj.) to be temp. Maj. and War Subs. Capt. :—

THE BUFFS.—(Temp. Capt.) A. A. J. N. Fearnside-Speed (2058) (February 10th, 1941).

The notifi. regarding the undermentioned in War Office Orders, is cancelled :—

THE BUFFS.—No. 44/1940 :—2nd Lt. A. D. Harrison (90294).

WAR OFFICE ORDERS.

No. 14 ISSUED ON APRIL 3RD, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

The undermentioned Maj. (actg. Lt.-Col.) to be temp. Lt.-Col. :—

THE BUFFS.—W. H. Rowe, D.S.O. (11942) (March 21st, 1941).

The undermentioned Lt. (actg. Capt.) to be temp. Capt. :—

THE BUFFS.—C. V. Stray (142297) (March 26th, 1941).

The undermentioned 2nd Lts. to be War Subs. Lts. (April 1st, 1941) :—

THE BUFFS.—A. G. Simon (99736), M. C. Bollon (99786), H. U. L. Norfolk (99724).

PIONEER CORPS.—Capt. and Bt. Maj. (temp. Maj.) (actg. Lt.-Col.) C. R. B. Knight (13709) to be temp. Lt.-Col. and War Subs. Maj. (March 24th, 1941).

WAR OFFICE ORDERS.

No. 15 ISSUED ON APRIL 10TH, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

The undermentioned Lt. (temp. Capt.) relinquishes the temp. rank of Capt. :—

THE BUFFS.—G. R. Dorrien-Smith (69101) (December 18th, 1940).

The undermentioned 2nd Lt. (actg. Capt.) to be temp. Capt. and War Subs. Lt. :—

THE BUFFS.—J. Thorpe (137428) (April 6th, 1941).

The notifns. regarding the undermentioned in War Office Orders, are cancelled :—

THE BUFFS.—Nos. 7 and 12/1941 :—Lt. (now temp. Capt.) W. H. Adams (142147).

The undermentioned Cpts. (actg. Majs.) to be temp. Majs. :—

THE BUFFS.—C. E. A. Terry (45657) (August 25th, 1940). (Substituted for the notifi. in War Office Orders No. 10/1941.) E. V. Argles (8552) (December 1st, 1940).

TERRITORIAL ARMY.

The undermentioned 2nd Lts. to be War Subs. Lts. :

THE BUFFS.—K. P. Carver (91734) (January 5th, 1941); J. S. W. Willey (93981) (February 1st, 1941); W. A. Wotton (94239) (February 2nd, 1941); R. H. Haselden (96489) (March 2nd, 1941).

TERRITORIAL ARMY RESERVE OF OFFICERS.

The undermentioned 2nd Lt. to be War Subs. Lt. :—

THE BUFFS.—D. F. Knight (39969) (February 19th, 1941).

Golf.

The Buffs v Faversham Golf Club.

SINGLES—Morning.

FOURSOMES (or GREENSOMES)—Afternoon.

( $\frac{3}{4}$  Diff. hcp. Singles,  $\frac{3}{4}$  Diff. Foursomes.)

	Bufs	F.G.C.
J. L. Williams (6) v —, Sommerville (2)	3 up	—
B. E. Hammond-Davies (10) v Eustace Neame (9)	2 & 1	—
R. A. C. Ravenhill (11) v J. F. Jackson (12)	—	2 up
J. M. Beazley (12) v D. R. Savage (12) ...	6 & 5	—
R. J. Murphy (17) v G. Somerville (14) ...	2 & 1	—
J. E. Clark (18) v J. Davis (18) ...	1 up	—
Total ...	5	1
J. L. Williams and B. E. Hammond-Davies (16) v L. Joy and Eustace Neame (17) ...	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
R. A. C. Ravenhill and J. M. Beazley (23) v Dr. Cannon and A. R. Savage (30) ...	7 & 6	—
R. J. Murphy and J. E. Clarke (35) v Michael Sherwin and J. Davies (36) ...	2 & 1	—
Total ...	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$

**2nd Bn., The Buffs v H.M.S. "Wildflower"**

Played at Faversham on Sunday, April 13th, 1941.

## 4-BALL MATCHES.

	<i>Buffs</i>	<i>H.M.S.</i>
J. L. Williams (6) v Capt. Coleridge (15) ...	—	2 up
B. E. Hammond-Davies (10) v Pay Capt. Annerham (14) ...	...	...
J. E. Clarke (14) v Capt. Smith (6) ...	2 & 1	—
R. A. C. Ravenhill (11) v Lt.-Comdr. Hill (11) ...	...	...
C. G. Sharpe (14) v Eng. Comdr. Wallace (8) ...	—	6 & 5
T. A. Wilkins (14) v Sub.-Lt. Lowes (14) ...	...	...
Total ...	1	2

**The Last of the Romans.**

**R**OMANO's restaurant in the Strand closed its doors on January 31st, and, but for the accident of its being the subject of a lawsuit now in progress, no one would have noticed. The end of Romano's, though it came "because of the war," cannot be charged to the destructive present. It happened in the past; according to an old frequenter and lively chronicler, Mr. J. B. Booth, the end of Romano's came as long ago as 1910, when the famous bar was closed. Thereafter, as thousands know, it was a very good restaurant; but it had been more, or other, than that. It has been rather a club than a restaurant, the capital of "clean-shirted Bohemia," the meeting-place of the men about town, men of all ranks and callings, united by an interest in racing, boxing, billiards, any kind of sport, and in the variety and the music-hall stages.

In 1874 Alfonso Nicolino Romano, head waiter at the Cafe Royal, bought a fried-fish shop in the Strand and turned it into a bar and the sort of restaurant that has a chop, a lettuce, and two tomatoes in the window. The food was found to be good, the proprietor an amusing character with whom clients, as was the way those days, were glad to become familiar. One day D'Oyly Carte, busy with *The Sorcerer* at the Old Opera Comique, took one Edward Spencer Mott to taste Romano's macaroni. Now Mott was "Nathaniel Gubbins" of the *Sporting Times*; and the *Sporting Times* was the official but never mentioned name of the *Pink 'Un*. The macaroni, and the liqueur brandy, proved so good that Gubbins took the glad tidings to the pink paper's office. Romano's fortune was made.

Dropping into lunch at Romano's any Friday, the visitor might see the pick of the editorial staff at their table, fortifying themselves for the labours of press day and planning for the week ahead—a set of men so widely known by pseudonym, and such masters at the art of hiding behind their professional disguise of raffish ruffians, that they were worth looking at in person. First and foremost, huge and rugged John Corlett, "The Master" and owner. Next, Arthur Binstead, "The Tale Pitcher", or "Pitcher" for short, fastidious, very carefully dressed, warm-hearted, sharp-witted, and a too little valued satirist of the ways of woman and of Hebrew. Next to him, or hovering about him, will be his devoted "Shifter," Willie Goldberg, the only one whose weekly doings in the *Pink 'Un* bore any resemblance to those of the none too prudent original. There, too, sits Lieutenant-Colonel Newnham-Davis, in his time an active soldier in India and South Africa, now a smiling gourmet who is inducing every restaurant in London to improve its cooking;

a lover and critic of the drama, and a designer of ballets for the Alhambra. It was Miss Bessie Bellwood of "the halls" who fastened on this imposing figure of a soldier and a gentleman the name of "The Dwarf of Blood," above which he writes weekly in the *Pink 'Un* on life in London, translating himself into "Le Nang de Sang" when he wrote one week from Paris. Who else? Mr. Booth ("Costs") for certain, and Horace Lennard ("Roi d'Atout") and perhaps "Peter Blobbs," who was Shirley Brooks—and many another who will certainly be found before lunch in the famous bar.

These amusing, hard-working people wrote so much about the Roman and his restaurant that Romano's became the type and the hearth of that queer, remote Victorian life about town. It flourished in the London of the hansom; of tight-waisted, full-skirted women; of men in frock coats, rather curly top hats, and stiff white shirts and collars both morning and evening (except that some of the more pronounced of the sporting men favoured pink). It was a London on which Stewart Headlam's efforts to reconcile the home and the place of public entertainment had yet made no impression; and the lady friends whom the man about town might entertain at Romano's were not such as he could introduce to his mother or his sisters—unless and until he had (as more than one of them did to his advantage) decided to marry the lady of the chorus or the ballet. In that white-shirted Bohemia at its best there was much more fun than vice.

(With acknowledgments to *The Times*).

**NOTE.**—It may be noted that John Corlett's son, 2/Lieut. A. J. Corlett, joined The Buffs during the South African War and was killed at Bakenlaagte on 30th October, 1901.

Colonel N. Newnham-Davis served for many years in the Regiment. He was a prominent member of the Old Stagers. (*Ed.*)

**Correspondence.**

To the Editor of "The Dragon".

Back in 1904.

Sir,

In the April number of *The Dragon* when reading the account of a rather serious reverse of the I.T.C. at the hands of the — Royal Tank Regiment, R.A., I find the following:—

"About the score we prefer to remain silent."

This reminds me of another rather serious reverse, this time by the 2nd Battalion hockey team at the hands of Folkestone in those happy old days of 1904. Then we were beaten by 24 goals to nothing, and when telling the mournful result to a friend the following day, his reply was:—"Oh, how interesting. Was it a two-day match?"

Yours, etc.,

H. H. C. BAIRD,  
Captain.

**Our Contemporaries**

**WE** acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following journals:—

"The Lion and the Rose." "The Queen's Own Gazette." "The China Dragon." "Our Empire." "The London Scottish Regimental Journal." "The Springbok." "Suffolk Regimental Gazette." "The Tank." "The Snapper." "The Glen Howards' Gazette."



## "Ancient Lore."

CULLED from a book of remembrances by J. B. Booth, recently in my possession, was the following:—"in a dissertation on nicknames of most of the regiments of the army": shortly after the declaration of war (1914), I, (J.B.B.) sat one day smoking with my friend, Edgar Wallace, once a private in The Buffs. For a time we talked of war, and then we began to speak of his old regiment. As he spoke, he drew a sheet of paper towards him, and began to scribble in pencil: for a few moments he was silent, and then he tossed the draft to me. I have it before me, those pencilled verses, breathing the old pride in his old regiment:—

When Pontius Pilate's body-guard were more or less recruits;

They learnt the game from our instruction classes;  
An' Hannibal, he came an' took a "dekk" at our boots,  
Before he marched his army through the passes.

Buffs! Buffs! The never had enoughts,  
The fellows with the ochre on their cuffs;  
When Adam ate his apple, an' let on he didn't know  
Who was the angel on the gate, a-doing sentry go,  
'Twas the first blooming private, with his bay'nt all  
a-glow—

Private Michael—Ist Battalion of The Buffs."

If this statement could only be verified, the regimental claim to antiquity would be unassailable. Reverting then to the talk on regimental nicknames, it transpired "that all regiments had one, a few others two, but the 3rd, 5th and 20th had three. Those of The Buffs were "Old Buffs", "Nutcrackers" and "Resurrectionists"—believing in an occasional recapitulation of regimental tradition; would the regimental historian give us an account of the origin and circumstance of the two latter names?

The author of the book (J. B. Booth), being an old member of the Staff of the *Sporting Times*—*The Pink 'Un*—it was not surprising that eventually the name of one of his old confreres, Colonel N. Newnham Davis, cropped up. Col. N.N.D. was one of John Corlett's dramatic critics; the signature of his contribution in the *Pink 'Un* was certainly distinctive—a squat figure of a dwarf, clothed with but a short apron, with outstretched hand grasping a dagger dripping with gore—"The Dwarf of Blood".

Colonel Nathaniel Newnham Davis was a great Buff; soldier, traveller, journalist, author, actor, producer, and editor—*The Man About Town*, *The Blue 'Un*, and for a short period edited *The Dragon* (between '88-'92); and what he didn't know about dining and wining wouldn't be worth knowing; it was said he had sampled all the reputable foods and wines of every country, continental and father afield, the merits of which were set forth in the *Gourmet's Guide*, of which he was the author. Stout fella, N.N.D.!

HUGH BORLAND.

## Lloyds' Patriotic Fund.

THE Trustees of Lloyd's Patriotic Fund in issuing their Report for 1940 mention how the Fund raised at Lloyd's Coffee House in 1803 for the relief of sufferers from the Napoleonic Wars and their dependents had been augmented from time to time so as to include later wars, and sufferers from the present war are now engaging the attention of the Trustees. Recently a collection on a most generous scale was made at Lloyd's for the purpose of giving assistance, where necessary, to the Air Fighting Forces and their dependents, and it is intended that this collection shall be handed over

at an early date to the Trustees of Lloyd's Patriotic Fund for administration.

Lloyd's Patriotic Fund, in addition to its General Fund, which has, since its inception, distributed nearly £1,000,000, deals with various supplemental Funds formed for special purposes. Among these are the South African Fund, which has to date expended over £147,000, and the Great War Naval and Military Funds, established in 1915 from a collection at Lloyd's amounting to £116,000. The latter now embrace the present war as well as the war of 1914-18. The Naval Fund, which has received most generous help from King George's Fund for Sailors, has distributed to date over £172,000, and the Military Fund over £24,000.

It is interesting to note that among the donors to Lloyd's Patriotic Fund in 1940 are the British Communities in the Argentine and Uruguayan Republics, who both sent substantial contributions.

The Fund suffered a great loss last year by the death through enemy action of their indefatigable Secretary, Brigadier-General W. H. Usher Smith, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O. He has been succeeded by Mr. S. W. Burghes, who recently retired from the office of Principal Clerk to the Corporation of Lloyd's.

Members of the general public are encouraged to subscribe to this old established charity, in the knowledge that their gifts will be ably administered by a capable body of business men.

Full particulars of the work of the Fund can be obtained from:—

The Secretary,  
Lloyd's Patriotic Fund,  
Lloyd's Building,  
3 Lime Street, London, E.C.3.

## Air Mail Postcard Service to Middle East Forces.

A MEANS of communicating quickly and cheaply by air mail with members of His Majesty's Army and Royal Air Force in the Middle East (including Greece), East Africa, and at Malta, and with personnel of H.M. Ships (including vessels on Government service whose address is c/o General Post Office, London) in the Eastern Mediterranean, has been announced by the Postmaster General. With the co-operation of the Service Departments and British Overseas Airways Corporation, the Post Office has introduced an air mail postcard service, and the cards will be forwarded all the way by air from this country to the respective bases. The charge is 3d.

In order to secure the most economical use of such aircraft space as there is, the new service is strictly limited to the transmission of thin postcards. The ordinary thin postcard impressed with a 2d. stamp sold at Post Offices, or any other postcard of similar size and weight is suitable. In the former case an additional 1d. stamp should be affixed to make up the postage to 3d. In the latter case stamps to the value of 3d. must be affixed.

A blue AIR MAIL label (obtainable free at any Post Office) must be stuck in the top left-hand corner of the address part of the postcard, or, alternatively, the words "BY AIR MAIL" may be written prominently in the same position.

This new service will be much quicker and cheaper than the present air mail letter service, as, owing to the limited aircraft accommodation available, it is not possible to forward air mail letters all the way by air.

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## Some Adventures with Armoured Cars on Active Service (Continued).

### CHAPTER VIII.

About January, 1918, it was learnt that a Military Mission was to be sent through Persia to Tiflis, capital of the Southern Caucasus; the object being to organize an army of Russian and Armenian troops for the purpose of stopping any move by the Turks in that area.

The Mission consisted of about 200 Officers, and 200 Warrant and Non-Commissioned Officers drawn mostly from the Dominion and Colonial Forces, and were selected for their special ability as instructors.

Under the command of Major-General L. C. Dunsterville, C.B., C.S.I., the Mission was officially known as "Dunsterforce", but unofficially it was called the "Hush-Hush" Army.

How and why the Mission failed in its object to reach Tiflis is not within the scope of this narrative; nor is the part played by our armoured cars during the first two or three months of their stay in Persia, for the very good reason that the writer fell a victim to enteric fever, which necessitated a trip to Basra and Mohammerah to recuperate, followed by the inevitable long and trying journey back to Baghdad by river transport, during which time touch with the battery was lost.

Owing to unforeseen circumstances the Mission was never able to assemble as one complete body, and had instead to operate in small parties 40 or 50 strong. Thus there were eventually parties at Hamadan, Kasvin, Zinjan, Bijar, and so on.

It is true to say too, I believe that it was never intended our particular battery should accompany the Mission. This was to be the job of a special force of double-turreted armoured cars, some 48 strong. For some reason unknown to me these cars were late in arriving, and when they did so, proved to be unsuitable for the country over which they had to operate; back-axle trouble being so persistent, and causing so many breakdowns that we nick-named them the "milestones".

Eventually, after super-human efforts, some of them did reach Persia, but in the meantime No. 6 L.A.M.V. was called upon to fill the breach at short notice.

About the end of March, 1918, after returning from hospital, I found myself at the battery base camp, then situated at Khanikin, about 100 miles beyond Baghdad. The battery, less one section of two armoured cars, was already well up into Persia.

We at the base were having a quiet time, our only spot of real enjoyment being an occasional day's pig-sticking with some Australian troopers. Personally, I did little in the matter of sticking the pigs; more often than not they made a bee-line for me, and it was more by good luck than judgment on my part, that my horse managed to get out of the infuriated beast's way. My lance seemed to have a most unhappy knack of sticking in the ground, or between the horse's legs, causing the butt end to nearly knock me out of the saddle. My best recollection of these jaunts is of being seated on a frolicsome steed, my legs tucked well under its belly, and hanging on to the pommel of the saddle like grim death, allowing the animal to follow the other horses at its own sweet will. However, it was great fun, and certainly provided us with plenty of exercise, and some greatly appreciated pig meat.

Early one morning the Battery Commander unexpectedly arrived from Persia on urgent business, and to take back with him the remaining section of armoured cars. He brought, too, the sad news of the

death of Pte. Haddingham, his batman, who had succumbed to a mysterious illness at Hamadan.

As previously mentioned, our O.C. was a great believer in making an early start, and before the first streaks of dawn the next morning he had our small column of 1 Ford tourer, 2 armoured cars, 3 Ford vans, the Clement-Talbot lorry, and 1 motor-cycle, drawn up ready to move off on its long and arduous journey; the personnel comprised the O.C. and 17 other ranks.

All the vehicles were loaded to capacity, including certain crates, and boxes of luxuries for those of the battery already in Persia, and who had had a rather tough time. The armoured cars had to carry many gallons of extra petrol and oil in drums on their running boards, and about half-a-dozen spare tyre covers strapped to the tops of the turrets.

As soon as it was light enough we moved off, our destination being Hamadan, 240 miles distant, situated about 25 miles beyond the Asadabad Pass, and some 7,000 to 8,000 feet above sea level. The O.C. wanted to do the journey in two days, which, despite the improved weather conditions (the main party took over a fortnight!) was rather a tall order over such country. It is one thing to plan, but an entirely different matter to accomplish any journey with mechanical vehicles; all sorts of difficulties crop up, and each in turn must be overcome, thereby causing delay, and plans to come unstuck.

To enable the reader to form some idea of the difficulties before us (and previously overcome by the main party in midwinter, snow and ice) it will not be out of place to mention some of the factors governing not only this particular journey, but travelling generally in Persia, and to outline briefly the geography of the country as far as the Caspian Sea. A map should prove useful.

From Khanikin the approach to the mountains starts with the usual foothills, or Jebels, as they are termed locally. These begin to break the ground almost immediately after leaving Khanikin, and become more pronounced as we near Kasri-Chirin, about 20 miles out. From Kasri-Chirin to the Caspian Sea is about 400 miles as the crow flies, the country being a succession of barren mountain ranges and fertile valleys. The passes over the numerous mountain ranges vary between 4,000 and 9,000 feet above sea level. Few wild trees are to be seen until we cross the Karanga River at Menjil, where we come to the huge Elburz range of mountains, which runs almost to the shores of the Caspian Sea, a distance of 70 to 80 miles. This range of mountains and the surrounding country are almost covered with exceptionally dense forests, and provides a most striking contrast to the hundreds of miles of almost barren country leading up to Menjil.

Regarding the actual road between Khanikin and Hamadan, little which is good can be said about it, although it had been improved by the Russians and made, on the whole, passable for motor vehicles. Even so, it was difficult in good weather, and definitely impassable in bad. Fortunately for our party, the worst of the winter was over, and most of the snow had disappeared from the road, although the mountains were still white, whilst icicles as thick as a man's arm festooned some of the rocks.

From Hamadan to Kasvin, and thence to the Caspian Sea, the road was fairly good and solid, although the surface was in most places rough and hard on our tyres.

The attitude of the Persians and Kurds had to be considered. We had been told that the former were not friendly disposed towards us, and were well-armed.

They certainly were fierce-looking customers with their shaggy moustaches and bearded chins, to say nothing of their rifles, pistols, daggers and belts of ammunition hanging over their shoulders and around their waists. As for the Kurds, they had the reputation of being rather blood-thirsty and fond of highway robbery, so it was possible our small party might seem easy meat to them, especially during the hours of darkness. There were a number of other factors which will be mentioned later, but I think the foregoing will give the reader some sort of a picture of our tiny column's prospects before wending its way over these huge mountain ranges with their towering snow-clad peaks, rugged cliffs and deep gorges, and across wild, desolate muddy plains.

Leaving Khanikin, our route lay over a fairly hard-beaten track, intersected with small irrigation channels, and a number of shallow water-courses, until we reached Kasri-Chirin, about 20 miles, where we met our first real obstacle, a rather deep, wide and boulder-strewn wadi, with a considerable amount of water in it. One by one the cars bumped, bounced and splashed their way across under the supervision of the O.C. Most of the vehicles required plenty of man-handling, but in about an hour all were got safely across and we proceeded on our way. Just as we had passed through Kasri-Chirin we ran into a terrific hail-storm accompanied by heavy thunder and vivid forked lightning. The hailstones were really lumps of ice, some as large as fowls' eggs, and came down with such intensity that we had to halt and take cover. Sharp and sudden, the storm lasted only about half-an-hour, when once again we were able to push along. When I say "push" along, I mean literally; the going, especially after the storm, was so bad that the vehicles had to be propelled along almost as much by hand as by their own motive power. Hour after hour, mile after mile, shoving, pushing, heaving, and sometimes digging, we plodded along, occasionally getting a ride of a few miles, until at last, just before nightfall, we reached the vicinity of the village of Pai-Tak, at the foot of the Taq-i-Giri (or Pai-Tak) Pass, having covered in the day's run a distance of about 60 miles, or an average of about 5 miles per hour!

Here we stopped for the night, the vehicles being parked in a rough circle for defensive purposes, and whilst the cooks were preparing a meal, with the aid of primus stoves, several of which were in every section, the remainder of the men set about servicing the cars ready for the following day. Cars, I have often thought, require more care and attention than a cavalryman's horse. Certainly there's *always* something to be attended to at the end of a hard day's run, apart from the usual filling up with petrol, oil and water.

The O.C. and I shared the night i/c guard, and having posted the sentries, made ourselves and the men as comfortable as possible in the vehicles; but it *was* cold! Dawn came cold and cheerless, but as the sun gained more power our spirits rose, and with prospects of a fine day ahead we set off after breakfast to tackle the Pai-Tak Pass, a truly formidable obstacle.

The Pass rises very steeply for three or four miles, being cut in the face of a cliff which rises sheer on the left, with, in most places, an almost perpendicular drop on the right. The road is narrow, too narrow in fact for two large vehicles to pass with any margin of safety; it also has numerous hairpin bends around which it was impossible to drive the armoured cars on a single lock. We soon discovered also that the cars were far too heavily laden, and much of our luggage had to be dumped by the side of the road until it could be brought up a little at a time in the Ford vans. Even so, the Fords, only partially loaded, had to be turned around,

and, strange as it may seem, taken up in reverse gear, assisted by a number of strong and willing hands. The armoured cars, with only a quarter of their original load abroad, and their engines all out, in low gear, had to be man-handled. Although this very difficult stage of our journey extended only a few miles, it took us until the early afternoon to get our vehicles and baggage past it. I have purposely refrained from saying, to the top, because, before we could reach the watershed, a further three or four miles of extremely bad going had to be overcome.

Having mastered the Pai-Tak Pass, we halted for refreshments, and then, after a quick examination of the cars, we pushed off again, our immediate object being to get along as quickly and as far as possible before nightfall.

We frequently passed the dead bodies of horses and human beings, the latter victims of the famine then prevalent throughout the land. No one ever thought of burying them; they simply remained there until they decomposed, or until the vultures and jackals picked their bones.

At this part of our journey travelling was somewhat better, and we soon came to Karind, about 20 miles from the village of Pai-Tak. As we still had several hours of daylight before us, the column was kept going, and we pushed on across the Karind Plain. This was a bit sticky in places, causing some of the cars to become bogged, necessitating the usual employment of man-power plus horse-power to get them going again. Towards nightfall we halted near a Kurd village, Harunabad, 20 miles from Karind, having thus completed about 40 miles that day.

Our camping arrangements and dispositions were similar to those of the previous night.

From Harunabad to Kermanshah is approximately 40 miles, and we were hoping to cover the distance in better time, thus giving the men most of the afternoon to overhaul their cars, especially the Fords, which had begun to rattle a bit.

The road crossed several small plains, one of which, the Mahi-Dasht, proved to be very muddy and provided us with more than one ticklish problem. The Ford vans were getting "tired" and required constant nursing and attention. Following the customary pulling, pushing and digging, we eventually got through to firmer ground, and started our gradual climb to Kermanshah along a very narrow, stony lane. A broken Ford spring delayed us for some time, and it was obvious we could not reach our destination in daylight.

However, the prospects of a night's rest in good billets, with hot food, encouraged us to make every effort to get through. The strain of driving hour after hour was particularly severe on the drivers, but they persevered, until, about 10 p.m., we were cheered by the sight of a lantern being waved a little way ahead, and an English voice calling out: "This way, follow me!". The owner of the voice proved to be a member of the British Consulate, who soon fixed us up with a parking place for the cars and clean, comfortable billets, where we were all soon enjoying an excellent hot meal. So ended our third day, during which we had covered about 40 miles, and a total of 142 miles since leaving Khanikin.

Our start the next morning had to be delayed for two or three hours, in order that the drivers could give their cars some sort of an overhaul, and tune them up a bit before setting forth to tackle the remaining high ground which lay between us and Hamadan, 103 miles further on. In excellent weather we made a start at

8.30 a.m., and found the going much better, and progress was good. About 20 miles out we came to the rock of Darius I at Bisitun. I must confess that I know little of the history of Darius, but I believe it was here, in Biblical times, that he addressed a huge crowd of his followers. The rock is of interest because very high up on it are carved in the solid stone, huge life-like figures and various inscriptions. Out of curiosity we halted here for a few minutes, then on once again over a single span partly demolished bridge (blown up by the Turks) where there was just, and only just, enough of the arch remaining to enable our cars to cross.

Another 20 miles further on (it's somewhat remarkable how our journey was covered in stages of approximately 20 miles) we came up against another of nature's doorsteps to the higher regions, the short but very steep Sahneh Pass. Here, for a distance of about a mile, our efforts were reminiscent of those when tackling the Pai-Tak.

We were doing much better to-day, and passing the town of Kangavar, 57 miles from Kermanshah, we reached the foot of the Asadabad Pass in the late afternoon, and after servicing the cars once again, settled down for the night. Just before dawn, when visiting one of the sentries, we saw a group of horsemen riding around our camping ground. The O.C. must have sensed them, for he was already rousing the men by the time I got to his sleeping-bag, and in next to no time everybody was standing to. Nothing happened, however, and after circling us a couple of times, they rode away, it being too dark to distinguish who or what they were.

The Asadabad Pass, rising to a height of nearly 8,000 feet above sea level, was to provide us with another exacting day's work. Whilst it was not actually so steep as Pai-Tak Pass, it was nevertheless a very long, stiff climb, necessitating the use of tow ropes and a considerable amount of man-handling to get the cars over particularly bad stretches of the road. As on the Pai-Tak, the road was cut in the face of the cliff, to the left being the snow-clad mountain-top, and icicle-covered rocks; and to the right an enormous gorge, the bottom of which must have been hundreds of feet down below—just how deep it is impossible to say, as it was shrouded with mist.

The exertion of man-handling the cars in the rarefied atmosphere made breathing somewhat laborious, causing us to halt frequently. Looking back during these enforced halts, the view presented to us was one of awe inspiring grandeur. For hundreds of miles, as far as the eyes could see, the scene unfolded like some huge, gigantic panorama; a scene of wild, rugged, indescribable beauty. Range after range of high snow-clad peaks, which, as the sun rose and shone upon them, caused reflections of colours unsurpassed even by the most brilliant of rainbows. The clouds, too, gradually discarded their cold, drab, grey-looking cloaks as the rays of the rising sun bore upon them, causing them to change colour minute by minute, as though some hidden artist was at work with an enormous invisible paint brush.

Far away, thousands of feet below, as the mists cleared, one could see the small villages of the natives nestling in the valleys, and the roads and tracks leading out to the vast open, muddy plains from which we had so recently come. Truly a magnificent spectacle, yet, behind it all lay the horrors and tragedy of war, for up and down this very road the Russians and Turks had fought each other for months, until at last the Russians, gaining the upper hand, chased the Turks away, leaving behind them nothing but starvation and famine, as witness the dead bodies of those poor beggars who had

*Continued on p. 110.*

## Past and Present Association.

NEW MEMBERS.

*Life Members.*—6516558 L/Cpl. J. Godden, 6291089 Pte. J. Godden.

### London Branch.

We have received from Mrs. Harry Forward a nice appreciation for the sympathy expressed by the members in her recent sad bereavement. As a member of the London Branch, the late Major Forwood never missed any important function and his loss will be keenly felt.

Buffy Ward, one of the old 1914 7th Battalion originals, has, we regret to say, had a rough time. Firstly, his firm was blotted out beyond repair, and secondly, it was some while before he found his feet. We understand that now, all is well.

Our best wishes to our President, Mr. Gordon Lindley, who became a year older on the 13th April last.

No. 25163 Mr. A. Millman is living at Hornchurch and sends his best. Millman served in the 1st, 3rd and 7th Battalions.

We were pleased to hear from Mr. J. V. Philpot, late 6th Battalion, and a staunch member of the branch. We understand that war work keeps both himself and Mrs. Philpot very busy.

We have heard from Mrs. Wittering, the widow of the late Sgt. Bobby Wittering, and she asks to be mentioned to all old Buffs who know her. Many will remember Mrs. Wittering when she joined the 1st Battalion as a young bride at Aden.

Mr. R. Bampton, 2/5th Battalion, tells us that he recently met Mr. F. G. Skinner in town and they had quite a nice talk. Pity that Captain R. V. Rice was not there—a rendering of "The Farmer's Boy" would certainly have enlivened the gathering.

Mr. A. H. Barber sends his kind regards to all 2/5th members, and we feel sure that he, like the remainder of his old comrades, is looking forward to a happy re-union with his Lordship, the Viscount Goschen imparting a few words of wisdom.

We are pleased to know that Major Charles Vaughan is making good progress and trust it will continue.

Our reference to Major Jock Verlander prompted someone to a query: "What about Bandmaster Hewitt?" In our notes last month we said "continuous" Colour Service, and see no reason to retract. To the best of our belief, the Bandmaster ceased his Colour Service when he left The Buffs for pension.

We do, however, think that Major Verlander is not far in front of General Sir Arthur Lynden-Bell. The General joined The Buffs on May 9th, 1885, but we are not certain of the date he retired after the war, to give a definite decision.

Our congratulations to Miss Vera Lynden-Bell on being gazetted to a commission in her particular sphere of occupation.

We recently had a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Cotton, and both are now keeping very well.

We should very much appreciate it if all members who receive *The Dragon* through the London Branch, and who have not yet settled their accounts for the financial year ended March 31st, 1941, would kindly remit without delay, otherwise it will be impossible to continue posting the journal. This would mean a reduction in the number of copies ordered from Canterbury, which any Buff having the interests of the Regiment at heart would loathe to do.

We recently had a telephone message from Mrs. Lamb conveying on behalf of herself and Mr. Lamb good wishes to Captain Enright on the anniversary of his birthday, which was very much appreciated.

We are sorry to say that Reg. No. 5450 Chippy Norton, who unfortunately lost a leg during the last war, has been ill in hospital, but is now on the mend. Buck up, Chippy!

Bob Waby visited the local Home Guard at — on Sunday, April 6th, where he met Captain Enright, who took him over the building, including the armoury, miniature range, etc., and introduced him to many new weapons. Immediately afterwards, Captain Enright left for — to try out a new weapon, whilst Bob paid a visit to Oswald Road. His best to Eddy Shute and Mr. Gordon Lindley; whilst Mrs. Waby, who is in Scotland, sends her love to the Ladies' Guild.

The London Branch regrets to hear that Major A. J. Peareth has had a touch of ill-health, and sincerely trust that he is now fit and well.

We recently heard from Colonel L. C. R. Messell and thank him for offering a vacancy which, unfortunately, we were unable to fill. We were pleased to know that the Colonel is keeping fit, and trust it will continue.

Our thanks to Mr. J. E. M. Knight for advising us of a vacancy which we were also unable to fill. We hear that his business has suffered from enemy action and that he is at the moment in the country with his wife and family. Mr. Knight served with the 7th Battalion and is a great friend of our Vice-Chairman, Mr. J. C. Neale Dalton.

R.S.M. Love has suffered from enemy action also. Both he and Mrs. Love send their best to all. They are now at Hayes, Middlesex.

Spud Austin, Ernie Carter, Molly Marshall and the writer met recently for a little talk, when the name of Colonel Sir Courtney Vyvyan cropped up. All were unanimous in wishing the Colonel in his advanced years the best of luck and many more birthday anniversaries.

Spud Austin informs us that he recently had a visit from Miss Rennie Smith, and we are glad to know that her mother is keeping up her spirits notwithstanding heavy enemy action surrounding her area. The name of Captain Ernie Smith will never fade out of our memory, and at this time of the year we remember him.

Our congratulations to Captain Arthur Barton on the anniversary of his birthday. May you have many more! Remember the tin hut at Balmoral when as R.S.M. you had only two names on your smiling lips when the line was blown up or a distant shot was fired? I hear it now: "Corporal —" or "Corporal Long". Happy days, Arthur!

We recently had an enquiry concerning R.S.M. Darcy Warchus. We hear occasionally from Darcy, who is residing Reading way and, we think, is in good pecker.

We were very pleased to have a letter from Captain (Dan) Duffy and to hear that he is keeping very fit, also Mrs. Duffy and the two children. His chin-chin to all old friends.

Captain George Johnson and Mrs. Johnson are staying at Cambridge, and although both are advanced in years, are keeping fairly well. They would be pleased to hear from Captain Slattery and other old-timers.

Our best wishes to Hughie Borland, Nobby Clarke, Joe Green, Bill Elvey and Zulu Brown, and we trust to see their smiling faces ere long.

*Continued on p. 114.*



THE 19th of the month comes round again with incredible speed, and finds me wrestling once more with *Dragon* notes.

"Battles and still more battles" have been fought and won (we hope) by the battalion during recent exercises, while training within the battalion continues unchecked. In fact, one has great difficulty in finding companies in billets these days.

A Drill Cadre (for one week only) is in progress for officers and N.C.O.'s, while, as an interlude in the evenings, the officers are further entertained in a series of lectures by the Intelligence Officer, fresh from a course. We are all beginning to feel highly intelligent. Added to all this, C.O.'s Inspections are in progress—companies are whitewashed beyond recognition, even the coal in one company being garnished with same, truly the "outward sign of inward grace". Alas! poor Company Commanders, and woe! poor Quartermaster, was any man more tried than this last mentioned and much maligned gentleman, who manages to refrain (even with the Messing Officer under the same roof) from losing his reason.

In the field of sport both codes of football have been played by the battalion with some success. Soccer has been run almost entirely on a company basis, but we did join forces on one occasion to beat a team of the Queen's. Inter-company matches have been played. "C" and "D" Companies met twice with a different result each time. Both games were marked by the fierceness of the last quarter of an hour, and the eagerness of the players to assist the referee in case he should have missed something. The rugger team wound up the season with an unbeaten record, adding the highly prized scalp of the depot to an imposing string of victories. H.Q. Company have been seen strung out on frequent runs, officers and all, and other companies are following suit.

The Colonel manages during his brief moments of leisure to "tear off" a game of golf on the beautiful course situated so conveniently near Battalion Headquarters.

The battalion has been honoured by a short visit from Sir Arthur Lynden-Bell, who stayed for lunch. Sir Arthur is keenly interested in the progress of the battalion and has a remarkable memory for names and faces.

Lieut. N— has left us to take up new duties at Brigade. We all unite in wishing him success in his new appointment. 2/Lieut. S— recently returned from a long course and is now enjoying a well-earned leave. The Sub-Editor of *Dragon* notes has just returned from a Messing Course, and what he does not know about Messing, well—he asks the Q.M.

#### Sergeants' Mess.

I must apologise once more for the non-appearance of our notes, but it has been very difficult as we are very split up and it is seldom we get an opportunity of getting together as a Mess, which used to enable me to listen to scandals and doings of the month.

Since last writing we have moved, and again we find ourselves rustivating amongst the pleasant surroundings of foliage and still more foliage. There is but one local tavern where occasionally we wend our weary bodies to partake of that foaming tankard which allays that dulness of mind and life. R.S.M. "Woo" Martin is amongst his kinsmen at last and how he enjoys telling "Old Jarge" about the time when he was a "young fellow" about the place. Shove-apenny is the game of the district and even in this alleged simple game there is a technique which calls for concentrated skill.

We must congratulate Tom Hurley and Buffy Howe on their really excellent reports from the Brigade of Guards. They must have worked jolly hard to obtain such fine recommendations and we trust we shall soon see a bursting of buttons throughout the battalion.

At the moment we are running a short course for Officers and N.C.O.'s which is proving quite a success to some, but others, after long months of absence, are finding it a little strain and may be seen making their way "local-wards" after the morning parade for gargle. Well, Ted, you are not on this parade, but you must do a lot of shouting elsewhere!

We have had one or two visits from ex-members of the Mess now sojourning under Bell Harry. In fact it is nice to see old faces, but we would have liked a visit as a whole Mess and to have taken the Depot on at a series of games or even a pow-wow with old Joe Richards would have been something.

During the Easter week-end, H.Q. Company arranged an inter-platoon football competition, which was jolly good fun. Cook-Sergeant Stiff nobly did his stuff but, sad to relate, he is quickly developing that outward and visible sign of the *chef des rissoles*. "Doggie" Mitchell had a recent visit from the man with the bowler and spats which must have been the cause of him letting *nine* goals go through in the final. He gave his team full instructions beforehand in real Howard Marshall style—words are no good, *mon ami*. General Wavell thought well before and had his team well trained and hardened.

"Cab" Callaway has developed a perfect Gable smile with his new ivories—in fact I have never seen a fellow produce such smiles in such a short time. Still, Roger, they look *tres bon*, and competition should not be too tough next trip across the Channel.

We were very sorry to lose two of our oldest war veterans, Taffy Surridge and Dusty Miller of "Speed, Action and Accuracy" fame. Although sad to part, we wish them the best of good luck and congratulate them both on their well-deserved promotion to warrant rank. I wonder has Elizabeth been reinstated from the "Y" List yet—anyway she looked very nice in the

photo and I imagine she had those blue eyes and hair that rippled like the wind-blown ears of corn. No! I must not let the cat out of the bag, and spring has almost gone, though it is in that freshest of fresh seasons that a young man's head, and heart, turn to love—others have a few more extra ales, as it is not so cold as in winter.

"B" Echelon had a surprise inspection one afternoon and it was fun, I understand, to see the two R.A.O.C. Sergeants, Tiffy and Ginger, endeavouring to put a fire out with the pump-handle in the water and the spout under their feet. Still, they saved the day by a prompt action and kept to the old maxim, right or wrong, keep still.

Leave is still the primary thought, after training, for us all and it is amazing to what a degree one can forecast periods of next leave—people even base calculations on the dates, *i.e.* ten days after my leave, etc.

S.

#### H.Q. Company.

##### SPORT.

On Good Friday a highly successful football competition was held by H.Q. Company. The final, watched by a large crowd of supporters, was played off on Saturday afternoon. The competition, arranged as an inter-platoon knock-out, proved to be very popular with all ranks, and all the players of both the winning and losing teams must be congratulated, for some of the teams had to play as many as two or three matches in one day. The teams that lined up for the final on Saturday were Signals "A" Team *v* Intelligence, the result being Signals 9, Intelligence 0.

THE SIGNALS were presented by Sgt. Herbert (captain), Ptes. Burly, Thompson, Yates, McCoy, Gates, Harris, Finnis, McFarlane, Greenstreet, Wiggs.

THE INTELLIGENCE by Sgt. Mitchell (captain), L/Cpl. Chapman, L/Cpl. Henson, Ptes. Bacon, Taylor, Hobbs, Willis, J., Willis, L., Crossley, Cpl. Crout, Pte. Maylam.

#### Signal Section.

This issue of *Dragon* notes finds the section still busily preoccupied in intensive training. Classification day is drawing near and we look to those taking part to give a good account of themselves. A series of exacting "schemes" have also been dealt with creditably.

Training has not permitted of great developments in the field of sport. A keen struggle with the Mortars resulted in a draw, but we are confidently expecting to triumph when a replay is held, so be prepared, you Mortarmen! Cross-country runs have also been a regular feature, at which Hammond has proved a most consistent entry. While in the realm of physical fitness, mention must be made of L/Cpl. Davis and Gates, who are attending a P.T. Course. We understand they are enjoying it tremendously; their inclination towards "unarmed combat" has also noticeably increased.

Our congratulations to "Darky" on getting his third. That word of command certainly deserved it. He, and the other veterans, ask to be remembered to their pals in the 1st, particularly "Pinky", "Tich", Bevan and "Dry".

Congratulations also to Sgt. Herbert on his success at Catterick. We hope that "Curly" will have a similar tale to tell on his return to the field.

### M.T. Section.

The section is glad to welcome back L/Cpl. Cutress to their midst, and have been continually examining the scars that the surgeon left on him; but we are sorry to have lost the services of L/Cpl. Hodges, who has recently gone to "C" Company. Never mind, soldier on, Gus!

It has been noticed that the M.T. have been going about with another spare wheel. This, by the way, is with the kind permission of the Commanding Officer.

Stinker comes down at times to see how we are getting along, but he always finds us very busy. Is he disappointed? All of us here are wondering who's so interested in flowers lately (especially violets)—is it Mike?

The section says cheerio, and hopes that everyone else is as happy in their work as they are.

NEW WHEELS.

### Mortar Platoon.

A communique on the month's activities would read "Slight successful engagements". This chiefly concerns the world of sport, and our No. 1 runner, Cpl. Penn, is still showing the rest of us a good pair of heels.

Our football team, although slightly affected by personnel on leave, has given a good account of itself. Our latest venture was to challenge "C" Company, who we "beat up" to the tune of 7-3.

Mancœuvres, so-called by the higher authorities, have been getting under our skin again. The last "do" was a bit of a "snorter" and although we all finished up wet and cold, we all maintained our good spirits, and that is something which Jerry cannot beat. The little bit of Russia in the platoon still wants to know, "Why do we have to keep on doin' 'em?"

The two Romeos, Arthur and Freddy, are still breaking hearts amongst the fair damsels. Freddy, by the way, is looking around for a sparring partner for some of his heart throbs. "Ten Tonners," please notice.

Mr. Middleton has left the B.B.C. and joined the Army. His presence has been felt amongst the platoon as the companies have got busy and have transformed a flower bed into a potato bed. You now see people with tape measures running across the garden measuring their own particular "spud".

Our congratulations to Ptes. Day and Glossop on receiving their first stripe.

### The Carriers.

One of our members recently found that he and sheep didn't mix at all well. The latter, realising this, sent to the rest of the tribe an A.C.I. instructing them to avoid Cpl. P—, otherwise they'd all be mutton.

Ex-No. 19 Platoon is slowly diminishing and the battalion will soon have to depend upon pigeons in lieu of D.R.'s.

Our trabadour three stripes has been elevated to learn the low-down on the "Q" Bloke's job; we hope he likes it.

Confidentially, we hear that the Wops are as jealous as the rest of this battalion of our prowess at cross-country running. The platoon might justifiably challenge the former, after all this trouble is over.

We have accustomed ourselves to our new environment, and are digging ourselves in—so deep, in fact, that L/Cpl. Marden will vouch that we have reached the chalk on six or seven occasions.

The blokes continue to keep their vehicles in quite good health, and by now those same vehicles, like good little puppy dogs, have sorted out their own trees from amongst the remainder.

We were sorry to lose Sgt. Ronnie recently. He preferred to transfer his services to one of our rival firms, the R.A.F., in spite of tales of sticky finishes thrown to him on every occasion. Anyway, everyone here wishes him the best of luck.

### Pioneer Platoon.

We welcome L/Cpl. (Cherry) Orchard, who has joined us from the depot. Our bald or partially bald members, known as "Barber-Starvers", now number three. "Cherry" is very popular, is a bit of a contortionist, and is good at P.T.

Pte. Gouldstone has of late been working in the Sergeants' Mess. He looks quite fat since being there.

Pte. Weight has left us and is working in the Company Store. His place on salvage work has been taken by Pte. (Darkie) Hinds.

Our most important sporting event was our football match with the Signals, whom we managed to beat two goals to one.

We have heard that Pte. Hissey did a spell of fire watching while he was home on pass recently.

We congratulate Ptes. Gates and Pritchard, who have recently passed courses on water duties.

### "A" Company.

Never has any month produced so many departures of old friends and the arrival of new ones. We have said good-bye to Sgts. Harris, Pull and Mileham, fortunately only transferred to other companies, so perhaps we shall still see them occasionally. Sgt. Brabham and L/Cpl. Olifent, however, have gone further afield to try their hands in added mobility. Cpl. Berry has left us for Brigade, and L/Cpl. Rooney has gone to the Carriers. But our greatest loss has been that of P.S.M. Surridge, who has gone to make his energetic presence felt as C.S.M. to another battalion.

But these changes have not all been on the debit side, for we have been glad to welcome to the company L/Sgts. Miles, Keam and White, together with Cpl. Read and L/Cpls. Mahoney, Burford and Jamieson, who have come up from the depot.

It was good to see our Company Commander, Captain P—, and 2/Lieut. S— back from their courses. But 2/Lieut. S— blew in very hurriedly, only to rush off the following day on leave; and now we hear that he also is to leave us for H.Q. This news was followed up by the sudden departure to Brigade of Lieut. N—, to whom we wish good luck in his new surroundings.

Training this month has been fast and furious and has involved considerable tests of endurance, showing that "we can take it". Indeed, there has been little time for sport. However, No. 7 Platoon has found time to put it over Nos. 8 and 9 Platoons on the soccer field, whilst cross-country running has been well to the fore.

Once more the company is adding to its knowledge of farming, the pigs at present being a considerable source of interest to everybody. Even morning drill amidst the noises of the farm certainly has its lighter moments. The C.S.M., just back from a drill course, has much to compete with and not even he can curb the enthusiasm of the inmates of the farmyard.

**"B" Company.**

Training still occupies us fully, although we still always get our full ration of recreation.

A very successful dance was run on Easter Monday, which attracted more people to the village than had been known in living memory. There was such a run on the local bar that the landlord's supply of glass was totally inadequate, and unless you could grab a glass you just had to stay thirsty.

Another event of the month was a battle between the Cooks and the Company Office Staff. Casualties among the Cooks were heavy and after a sharp encounter they retreated in disorder. There are rumours however, that the last has not been heard of this friendly "warfare".

There have been many changes in the company. We welcome yet another officer, 2/Lieut. W. B. B—, to whom we wish every success. At the present rate we shall soon have an officer to every man. Some new N.C.O.'s have also joined us—Sgts. Mitcham and Pall and L/Cpls. Rye and Guyver. We congratulate L/Cpls. Goldpink, Cook and Kaufman upon their first step up the ladder. The last-named has achieved the P.T. Course for which he has been yearning so long.

**"B" Echelon.**

Stunts—we love 'em! When the glad tidings flash around that a stunt is forthcoming, faces light up with gleeful anticipation—even Tappett smiles, and when it rains for three days and nights the laughter becomes almost hysterical. Never mind, we get there!

We are sorry to have lost our one and only "Pop"—an acquisition for Civvy Street though. Since he has left us, we notice that the sick parade daily increases. We wonder why?

"Nobby" came back from leave and with him came the usual stack of photographs. This time, however, they were all the same person—a most astonishing change.

We are requested to state that all tools "borrowed" from the fitter's shop would be welcomed back. This also applies to the person using the 3-inch screwdriver (A.E.S. 415) as a walking-stick.

One damaged radiator, now as new, will soon be in our possession again. No doubt "Wrecker" will once more smile again.

Congratulations to L/Cpls. Boorman, Skinner, Dalton, White and Cpl. Squibb on their recent promotion, and no doubt "Dersey" should be mentioned also.

We understand that the "Professor" is working on a permanent Blanco especially for the benefit of the M.T. non-rustable rifles, and permanent trousers creases are next.

Our indefatigable M.T.O., 2/Lieut. R—, spurs the section to greater efforts, so carry on, M.T.!

As a last effort we should like to extend our heartiest congratulations to L/Cpl. Boorman and Pte. Clarke on their recent marriages. Many happy events to come, lads!

**"C" Company.**

The company has put up a fine show in the very little sport that has been played, and the results speak for themselves:—"C" Company 3 v 1/6th Queens 1; "C" Company 2 v R.A.S.C. 1; "C" Company 2 v "D" Company 2.

On Good Friday the rest of the company played a team composed of the Officers and Sergeants. The first half, after a great struggle, remained a draw, but in the second half our one and only "Chick" sprained his ankle and is now in hospital. We hope he will soon recover. Our C.S.M. still thinks that outside-right means right outside and that two kicks is not so bad, even though one was in the pants. The final result was a win by the close margin of 7—0 for the Rest. The result might have been different had Lieut. B— has his glasses on, but the less said about this incident the better.

The last month has seen many changes in fresh faces to the company. We welcome Sgt. Harris and hope his stay with us will make amends for our losses. Congratulations to Captain C— on his recent promotion; the weight on his shoulders must now be a trifle heavy. And to the N.C.O.'s and men who have recently left us we wish good luck and bags of fighting in their new spheres.

**"D" Company.**

The activities of the company during the last month have been of a rather more practical nature than has been the case for some time past: we have had, in fact, quite a number of schemes, stunts, exercises, etc., and as the weather has been unkind on several occasions, we are all feeling a little bit sadder and wiser men.

We have had our lighter moments though, in which we played a local girls' school at hockey and managed to win comfortably but not embarrassingly, and did full justice to a magnificent tea afterwards. "C" Company avenged their former defeats by beating us at football, and Pte. Madden won a cross-country run and a hundred cigarettes and beat the C.S.M. into the bargain. The latter has just returned from a Guards' Drill Course where he earned the congratulations of our Commanding Officer by coming out first. It would be uncharitable to say he is a new man, but we are all rather nervously awaiting the first company drill parade.

Well, leave is coming round soon and there is an inspection by the Commanding Officer soon (you always have to pay for your pleasure). There is an orgy of blanching going on (I wonder if we shall ever exhaust all supplies) and my own equipment can wait no longer, or rather I can think of no excuse to put it off.

Congratulations to the new Lance-Corporals on their promotion, though we hope L/Cpl. Parker won't take the job too seriously.

**Some Adventures—continued from p. 106.**

given up the struggle to live, fallen by the wayside, and died. However, this is no place to soliloquise, and we must perforce get on our way.

I think it was about noon when at long last we got over the top of the pass, and after a brief halt to fill up with petrol and water, we set out to cover the last 25 miles, easy travelling, to Hamadan, where we drew into a compound occupied by another section of the battery.

Here also, we came across some of the Hugh-Hush Army, a number of Russian troops, principally Cossacks, and a few Persian levees in the pay of the British.

So, after five days of real hard work, during which we covered 240 odd miles in the face of considerable difficulties, we were glad to reach a place where we could rest and relax somewhat.

(To be continued.)



## Beneath Bell Harry.

### Rugger.

Only three matches have been played since these notes were last written. We beat the R.A.F. and lost to the 2nd Battalion and the Royal West Kents. A match with the Navy was scratched, but three Buffs were included in a Garrison team against the R.A.F.

It has always been difficult to raise a regular team and so our play has suffered from lack of practice in playing together. Nevertheless, we all tried our hardest, although our efforts were a little unco-ordinated, to get the ball out to "that young officer" on the left wing, and when the ball was safely in his hands we were almost certain of a try.

The game against the 2nd Battalion was very hard-fought, but their greater weight in the scrum and more skilful play in the line-outs proved too much for the depot side.

The Royal West Kents avenged their defeat of the previous month rather unexpectedly. Our forwards missed their leader, who, appropriately enough, was away on a young leader's course, and there was some difference of opinion as to whether the ball should be heeled or taken on. Thus the three-quarters did not have very much chance and the game was rather scrappy.

The final match of the season was played against the R.A.F. The sight of three enormous opposing forwards in the changing room did not deter our team. Much under-strength, we won 9—3. It was a very open game. The forwards were apt to kick too far ahead with the result that the ball was picked up from their feet and a movement by the opposing outsidemen begun. Fortunately for us these outsidemen were very slow and failed to exploit the situation. The three enormous forwards occasionally got the ball and looked dangerous. However, they did not get very far as our entire pack sprang on their backs as one man, the resulting crash being not unlike that of the Crystal Palace tower. The forwards got through a lot of work and Davis played well at centre three-quarter. A return match was arranged but had to be cancelled owing to the hard ground.

On the whole it has been a very successful season in spite of the many changes which have prevented the formation of a regular team used to playing together. Beevers was, of course, the mainstay of the side. Arnold, Emms and Browning worked very hard, often doing the work of the forwards at critical moments.

### THIS MONTH'S SAYING.

Well-known cricket enthusiast to Sports Officer: "When are you going to take down those blue pencil goalposts?"

### Soccer.

The 1940/41 season has been a very successful one both from the number of games between platoons and companies and the results of the matches played by the I.T.C. team. The grounds are now having a much earned rest and next season—even Hitler cannot interfere with football.

The I.T.C. team were invariably much too strong for the opposition and the two highlights were eight goals in one match by Sgt. Roberts and later nine by L/Cpl. Wilson.

Our team, of course, was always changing, but we were lucky to have the nucleus of a good side permanently and plenty of talent to fill in the other places. One very pleasing thing was the sporting way that some of our opponents played against our team's habit of scoring three or four goals in the opening stages. Our friends from the other half of the county were well-beaten twice, but unfortunately our home match with the Navy did not materialise. The Band kept a good team going and had a successful season, and "S" Company managed to defeat "R" Company just at the end of the season.

Lastly, a vote of thanks to those who made all the arrangements and to our leading supporter, whose combination of leg and crutch often did many a little dribble on the touch line by way of demonstration.

### Hockey.

Since our last notes, the I.T.C. have continued what has been a most successful and enjoyable season. On the 22nd March we played the 8th Tank Regiment and suffered our second defeat of the season by 1 goal to 5. The game was more even than the score suggests, and it was only in the last quarter of an hour that our opponents scored three goals. Captain Lindsay, a Scottish centre-half, was a tower of strength for the Tank Regiment.

On the 29th March we made the journey to Sittingbourne, who fielded quite the best all round side we have yet met. We suffered an early reverse, Pte. Judd meeting with an accident on the way to catch the bus. Bandsman Parsons deputised at the last moment, but our attack was thrown out of gear in consequence of Judd's absence. Since then Parsons has improved in every game as a wing-half and we shall expect good things of him another year. This game proved to be a great struggle, everybody on both sides pulling every ounce of his weight. The score at the end was 1—1. The return game on our ground was to have been played on the 19th April, but was scratched on account of weather. It has been re-arranged and we shall hope to report it next month.

On the 30th March we played the return game against the 8th Tank Regiment, and this time we were the winners by 6—1. Both sides were considerably weakened by absence of regular players, but it was nevertheless good fun.

The I.T.C., Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment returned our visit on the 5th April, when rugger, soccer and hockey were again played. We enjoyed this game more than our previous one. Our ground was in almost perfect condition and we were again winners by 5—0.

We have been pleased to see our old outside-right, J. A. Harrison, now commissioned, back in our side again. But, alas! no sooner do we get him than he is posted away. Poor staff work!

Before I finished the month's jottings, I should like to mention L/Cpl. Burt, who has played so consistently well throughout the season and has made gigantic progress as a hockey player; also Bandsmen Hiatt and Rhead, who are both rapidly gaining in confidence. In fact, the Band have recently superseded "B" Company in supplying players for the eleven. The "Bandsman-in-Chief" continues to show his versatility by lending a hand in nearly every position on the field, on-side and off-side!

### Depot Company.

Many things have happened since our last contribution went to print, but I am pleased to say we are now all settling down once again. Notable among the events of the month was the fact that the C.S.M. went mountaineering in Wales whilst partaking of a short holiday, and he even found time to attend the local church three times in one day (or so he tells me). It is rumoured that Sgt. Richardson, then A/C.S.M., swears he heard a familiar voice yodelling over the radio very early one morning. C.S.M. Richards stoutly denies all knowledge of same, but the company is not a bit convinced of his innocence.

We once again congratulate Sgt. Richardson on the way he handled the job of A/C.S.M. He is still holding the position very ably for H.Q. Company, though judging by the innumerable grey hairs he has accumulated during the past month, we begin to wonder if he will regret his departure from our happy throng.

L/Cpl. Hubbard is making a very good show as Orderly Corporal and is certainly very keen on his job. L/Cpl. Godden as Company Orderly Sergeant has also been doing wonders, having been on the spot now for several months. We are pleased that our C.Q.M.S., who recently had a bout of influenza, has now fully recovered and is once again carrying on the good work, i.e. we still get our pay.

The C.S.M. has also been greatly concerned of late at the number of crates of pigeons we have sent so far away, only to return once again, proving to one and all what good homers they are. Better luck next time, Sergeant-Major!

Section "E" admirers will be pleased to hear that their hero has fully recovered from the effects of his slight accident, namely a smack over his left eye (the wound has now fully healed, and only the scar is visible). It has at last been decided that the most satisfactory explanation of the accident is that the C.S.M., on returning from his leave, went to bed very early one night and in his sleep he dreamed he was back among the glories of Wales. In fact he was one of those awful animals, a Welsh mountain goat. Whilst he was indulging in a playful butting he unfortunately butted his head on the wall.

Before going further, we must welcome that grand flier, C.Q.M.S. Twist, who is very well-known to all ex-4th Battalion men, especially for the way he handled things during their continental tour last year.

We must congratulate the choir at the "Brewer's Delight" for the efficient way they rendered Mendelssohn's "Spring Song". It was truly delightful. Even so, they very nearly came up to the high standard of the one and only soloist, Sgt. Richardson, who was in great form and sang that delightful ditty about a little fly. Anyone wishing to know the words of the chorus may apply to him c/o H.Q. Company.

Several N.C.O.'s were recently invited to a whist drive at a little village not far from here. I can hardly express their disappointment at not being able to attend. The cross-country run which had been arranged to the last detail also had to be cancelled. They did, however, accept the C.S.M.'s offer of two aspirins for breakfast.

Our O.C., Major Terry, at the moment seems mainly concerned in agriculture. It is rumoured that he is seriously contemplating taking it up as a career at the close of hostilities. We all wish him success in his great effort to create either a bean or potato plantation near the Old Park. We also hope that his efforts to obtain a plough will not be without success, though several of us are wondering which the wireworms prefer, beans or potatoes.

### "A" Company.

Inadequacy of material should apparently prove to be no difficulty to the experienced columnist, but is one which chills the soul of the unfortunate amateur reviewing the events of a month singularly devoid of suitable copy.

Last month something was mentioned about a depleted company. To-day the same remark would be a miracle of understatement. There remains but the shadow of our former greatness, a poor skeleton, a company in name only. Some work is evidently being done somewhere, however. At least, the businesslike manner in which certain of our officers are to be seen pursuing their ways, maps under arms, notebooks in hand, and an expression of deadly earnestness on their faces, seems to indicate that something of the kind is afoot.

For two brief days we were permitted to contribute towards the war effort by hauling the red air raid flag up and down at the appropriate times. This noteworthy duty we performed with our usual tireless zeal and efficiency and it was a rare occurrence to see the flag waving merrily at the mast-head some time after the All Clear had sounded. Alas for the frailty of human endeavour—the said flag continues to float in the breeze, but raised by less worthy hands than our own.

The "usually well-informed circles" and "authoritative sources" are strangely silent on all matters pertaining to scandal and rumour in the company. Probably this is just as well, as it would be a pity either to be blue-pencilled before going to press, or accused of making slanderous statements, but from the present contributor's point of view it is a deplorable circumstance and one not easily overcome except by the more unscrupulous and hard-boiled. Even sporting events provide very little in the way of inspiration. Casting my mind back, this description strikes me as a trifle over-impressive and includes only a soccer match against "B" Company, in which rain did not actually stop play, but made everything very damp for both players and spectators.

Quite an epidemic of leave is breaking out at present while business is slack. Even the Company Commander has succumbed to the prevalent malady and has gone off for seven well-earned days. During his absence, 2/Lieut. Dullea, late of the company, and who we recently welcomed back from O.C.T.U., assumes the throne of office.

Congratulations to all those who have been promoted during the month, and it is to be hoped that by the time these notes are due again there will be some recruits to be impressed and intimidated by the array of stripes.

### "B" Company.

Again our Company Commander, A/C.S.M., two Sergeants and the Orderly Sergeant had to remind me that my notes for *The Dragon* were, as usual, late. So here I am once more racking my brains to think of something of interest to keep our flag flying, but owing to the lack of subjects and personnel, this is an extremely difficult matter.

Before going any further, let me, on behalf of everyone here, send our good wishes to Sgt. "Whit" Dighton and our "civvy attached", Bill Dymond, who recently left us for fresh surroundings. Now I shall have to find someone else to take over the honourable title of the latter. Already I have had several suggestions, including our C.S.M.'s name, as possible candidates, so I have plenty of food for thought, and how!

The only company sport so far was with "A" Company, whom we beat 6—1, Sgt. Clark shewing himself to be a genius at heading the ball into the net. No longer do we call him "Nobby," but have bestowed upon him the nickname of "Nodder" Clark. Normally there is a fanfare of trumpets, but we'll take that as done. Also we must not forget our Company Commander, 2/Lieut. Hatcher, Sgt. Copley (sorry, A/C.S.M.) and our Tubby, who all played outstanding games.

It now looks if the highly successful Gas Tour has come to an end, so some of our recently made up Corporals who have been on this will be relieving us permanent Orderly Sergeants.

Owing to a misunderstanding last month, when referring to our "Wobbler" I forgot about our Quarter-Block, so in future they will be numbered 1 and 2. A tip when entering the C.Q.M.S.'s Office, look for the "Crown" before speaking. It saves a lot of trouble and argument.

At last we hear wedding bells in the distance again. Once more one of our Corporals has gone overboard. Anyway, nice going, "Banger", and don't forget to save me at least a piece of cake.

Our N.C.O.'s, including Sergeants, are now doing P.T. every morning under the watchful and eagle eye of Sgt. Last. Now! now! He's a nice fellow, our Dougie—? Last week our Ernie put us through Stick Drill, so we can all now confidently wield a nifty cane.

By the time this goes to press our Tubby will probably be back with the — Battalion, "doing his nut" in the "Q" Office. We understand that all the junior N.C.O.'s at his battalion will attend a series of 57 lectures on "How to face the Nazi hordes". He may find time, we trust, to address the Senate from a chair in the Sergeants' Mess.

### "I" Company.

It has been mentioned on more than one occasion in these notes that "I" Company is continually in a state of movement; that comings and goings are the order of the day and that if the company remains intact for more than four weeks at a stretch grave doubts are expressed as to the maintenance of our war effort. These facts are now more than true, they are established facts. The original "I" (2) Company having been dispersed to various units, a new company has been formed and all energies are directed towards the common goal—that of training men to take their part in Britain's epic struggle.

Many N.C.O.'s too have gone the way of all from "I" Company. We mention in passing Cpl. Smith, R/L/Cpl. Prebble and Pte. Burditt, who have proceeded to O.C.T.U. Congratulations on their success, and may they return with their long cherished wish fulfilled. The few more O.C.T.U. candidates not yet posted await the terse paragraph in Part I Orders indicating their move, with as much patience as can be mustered.

The company pianist, Pte. Cushion, has departed for realms unknown. He will certainly be missed by all lovers of music, who will remember his many renderings of well-known pieces. Some unit has certainly made a good haul!

The new company has already proved that they possess talent in football and some very interesting games can be looked forward to. Some good table tennis has been played and in a series of games with "S" Company, "I" Company were the winners by a short head.

As soon as the new company have settled down and forgotten their inoculations and the many other trials and tribulations of the new recruit, we look forward to their participation in inter-company sport. May their short stay with us be a pleasant one. Already they are proving their worth—let it continue.

### "R" Company.

This month has seen our company diminishing in size once again. Slowly but surely the old faces are gradually fading away. That much awed subject in the form of leave also adds to the reasons for the disappearance and sudden return of many of the company's well-known personnel. We hear a whisper that a certain high person in the company contemplates a week's leave. We are wondering if there will be invasion bells for him.

We greatly miss our short portly singer and handy-man, who took it into his head to go to Bristol of all places for seven days. Yes, seven days indeed! We hope he'll come back singing, without a harp. (A.R.P.) we believe.

Well! Well!! Well!!! "S" Company again! At last they have achieved their great ambition—they actually scored three goals to our two! Still, what with the super-charged M.T. Section, and the craft of a Signal Platoon, urged on to greater effort by their O.C., who can wonder! Modest in victory, generous in defeat, remember!

Sgt. H— has left us to take up a position in a higher sphere. Good luck, "Wonga"! The locals miss you, and your walking directory for thirsty men is greatly missed too.

Bouncing Billy will soon give us some information on the new "One, two, three, up". We want to know if "Dig, dig, dig" came from "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" or the Chelsea Pensioners.

Lieut. P— has returned to us with the confirmed theory of what to do with German obstacles. Does that tough Sergeant—yes, tough—believe him yet?

We must now close, and our final theme song to "S" Company is "We'll meet again".

### "S" Company.

At the time of going to press we have to record the indisposition of the Company Commander, who has just entered hospital. We send him our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

An event which a short time ago would have been described as epoch-making has passed by with surprisingly little comment, probably not because unnoticed but rather because unexpected, unannounced and seemingly impossible. But it's true. In short, L/Cpl. M— has a new hat. Further comment would be both impertinent and superfluous. But we must add that this event caused considerable consternation to this proud acquirer and to "Sarah", for the latter had simultaneously provided himself with an Aryan bonnet (being piqued at being unable to join the C.M.P. and comforting himself with an attempt to look like Gestapo Chief Himmler). The two appeared newly arrayed on the same early morning parade, and each had stolen the other's thunder, and became even as foils to that exalted gem Sgt. P—y, whose appearance thus arrayed is not new, but ever glorious and awe-inspiring. But even the mighty shall be put down from their seat, and he that exalteth himself hath been lately abased, whereat he is still smarting sorely.

We are able to announce the result of the race between "Jumbo" and "Bambino". "Bambino" has won, but both are now proud fathers.

Congratulations to L/Sgt. Perrior upon his promotion and to L/Sgt. Woodfine for having survived (though barely) a Signal Course. His gospel is now "Four Square".

It has often been said that the value of press criticism is to stimulate progress and to get things done. Suffice it to say that Lieut. Bruce has a new watch.

Although we are now sadly depleted, we can claim that "S" Company has kept rigger going (awfully sporty), but we are also rather ashamed to admit that we have supplied the soccer team with two officers. Our feelings are rather neutral about Lieut. D—'s contribution to the hockey team.

Finally, can one insulate, isolate or inoculate magnetism? This is the sort of thing that crops up when "Jumbo" goes on to brown ale! Anyway, who knows? Who cares?

### Intelligence Section.

The Intelligence Section has been in a rather fluid state this month. Lieut. Beevers went on an Intelligence Course, and his place was taken by Lieut. Worth, who is no stranger, having been in the section in its infancy. We soon found that although both he and the section have "grown up", memories of those early days still lingered! Cave!!!

Owing to recent O.C.T.U. postings, we have had to say good-bye to several of our members. We particularly miss "Uncle", upon whose counsel we have depended for so long, and whose place as section encyclopædia is still vacant! We wish all of them every success in their future careers.

People in the City may have been somewhat shaken by the sudden appearance of a column of cyclists, mounted on an amazing variety of machines, who proceeded through the main street at a furious pace. The Intelligence Section certainly was! "Half a league . . . . .!"

The strength of the section having been increased, we are finding it rather difficult to accommodate the I.O. and Lieut. Worth, 20 men, 4 tables, several forms, masses of books, files and maps, "spare parts" of bombs and shells, 2 fire-buckets, 1 glass-fronted bookcase, a coal-scuttle, and Lieut. Beevers's pipe and tobacco tins. When we and all these very necessary accessories to our profession are assembled here, great difficulty is experienced in opening the door from the inside, and we have seriously considered requesting the Signals to establish line communication to the P.R.I. office across the hall, so that Captain Dawson could come to our assistance if necessary!

Congratulations from the older members of the section to Captain Dawson on his recent promotion. We who knew him when he was our I.O. feel sure that this is only the beginning of a successful Army career.

### The Band and Boys.

News for the month has been scarce. Anyway, we will start by wishing all ex-Bandsmen all the best of luck, and we shall be glad to see any of them if they are passing the depot at any time.

In the world of sport we have beaten all the local teams at football. L/Cpl. Burt, Hiatt and Parsons play in the depot hockey team. Tusky Parsons sometimes has great difficulty in seeing.

The two bandmasters have for the past few weeks been indulging in a "Dig for Victory" campaign. At all odd hours you will see them with fork and spade digging the good earth, hoping to raise prize onions, etc. We hope extra practice is not substituted for gardening, although later we have a consolation as the garden is adjacent to the practice-room.

As for musical activities, we are still forging ahead with concerts, playing drafts away, and at parades. At Easter, besides the usual show to the troops, a classical concert was held in the church, with Knox giving an excellent rendering of the Weber Concertina, and Law playing the organ.

Last but not least, we were honoured by a visit from the dance band of the — Battalion, who augmented the Band and made it feel like old times.

Now, to close, our best wishes go out to all those who uphold the tradition of crochets and quavers in the outposts of Empire and Homeland.

### Air Mail Postcard Service to the Middle East— *Continued from p. 103.*

Such letters for these destinations, prepaid at 1/3 per ½ ounce, will continue to be despatched by sea to Africa for onward conveyance by air.

The object of the new service is to enable the Forces to receive speedy family news from home.

### P. & P. Association, London Branch—*Continued from p. 107.*

We sincerely trust that our old friend Major H. G. James is keeping well after all the serious setbacks he has recently had both in health and business, the latter through enemy action.

We have heard from Mr. A. E. Grant, late 6th Battalion, who tells us that he is doing Home Guard duties and that he, Mrs. Grant and family are very well. His best wishes to all in London, and other old friends.

Our congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Tutt, who recently celebrated their respective 70th and 69th birthday anniversaries on the same date. South African War veterans will well remember Tommy.

### Ramsgate Branch.

I may be too late to be in this month's notes, but one cannot find a lot of news, and having no meetings, the business is left to our energetic Secretary. Ahem! We must really try and have a social so as to meet the members. It would be like the old days.

During the month I personally meet several Buffs. Every one of us carries on cheerfully, and quite a lot of us meet when "Screaming Lizzie" sounds the "Alert" ready to do any little service that may be needed. Albert Ansell, Walter Cook and Fred Hammon, all late 1/4th Buffs, through your columns wish to be remembered to old comrades, and are all doing well in their civilian employment. There are heaps of others one could mention. I must close. Excuse briefness. We at Ramsgate send our good wishes to all battalions and branches, looking forward to a victorious climax.

### Just So.

THE German leaders were much ruffled by the non-success of all the Italian efforts in Africa, Albania and the Mediterranean, and Hitler was severely critical of Musso's ventures. "Why didn't you take Malta?" said he. But Musso still had a little kick left. "Malta! Malta! Oh, yes—that's an island too!"



THE sky is growing steadily bluer and the antics of very new lambs excite many a laugh during the longest Brigade Scheme. Less rarely does one walk along the front bent into a right-angle against the wind. Mechanization is popular, but our marching capabilities are kept up to scratch. Boxing continues successfully, and we were pleased to beat a R.W.K. battalion by 7 fights to 3.

We were all sorry to lose Captain A. C. J. V— A—, who has gone as mentor to budding company commanders.

#### Sergeants' Mess.

The Mess has at last avenged itself against the officers by beating them two-nil at soccer. We now stand level, the two Messes have won a game each, the score on both occasions being two-nil.

2/Lieut. J. M— was injured towards the end of the game and the officers strove valiantly to overcome this handicap. Honours, I think, go to Sgt. Campbell, who as right-back kept the officers away from the goal on numerous occasions. After the match we entertained the officers at our abode on the Esplanade and the evening was a great success, the officers being seen to pass covetous glances at our balcony and sea view.

Our other success of the month was a dance, which commenced two hours after we returned from a two-day scheme. We are indebted to the "lame, sick and lazy" for the very fine decorations with which the hall was resplendent. A silent vote of thanks was passed to S.I. (now C.S.M.I.) Kelsen, who supervised the decorations. The dance itself was a great success and two days' marching did not deter us from treading a stately (or otherwise) measure. Unfortunately there was a shortage of doughnuts, but this did not in any way lessen the enjoyment of the evening.

Congratulations are extended to all members of the Mess who have been promoted during the last month.

We offer our heartiest congratulations to C.S.M. Wase, M.M., who went to London during the month to receive his decoration from His Majesty the King.

There is one item of battalion news which deserves mention in these notes, particularly as the man responsible is a member of this Mess, and that is the boxing tournament. Our lads put up a very fine show to beat the R.W.K. by 7 bouts to 3. That accounts for the R.A.'s and the R.W.K.'s. Who's next?

#### H.Q. (1) Company.

Since writing our last notes, winter has been left behind and we are now in the middle of spring. Everybody (including the C.S.M.) seems to have that "spring feeling" and, generally speaking, spirits are high in the company, especially those of the "Quarter Bloke", who is getting spliced a week or two hence. Congratulations, Quarter! You ought to be generous with the credits that week.

Our congratulations to C.S.M.I. Kelson (A.P.T.S. attd.), Cpl. Champs and L/Cpl. Perry on their appointments. Best of luck to them all!

We were all very sorry to lose Cpl. "Luscious" Townsend, but wish him every success in his new job.

ODDMENT.—We wonder if the bank book started by a certain N.C.O. towards the war effort has now found its way towards Matrimonial effort?

#### H.Q. (2) Company.

Since last month's notes, we are sorry to announce the departure of Captain V— A— from the company, and wish him every success in his new appointment.

We welcome our new Company Commander, Captain P. W. P—, to the company; also 2/Lieut. W— to the M.T. Platoon.

Congratulations to Sgt. Pitt on his promotion to Colour-Sergeant. He is now demonstrating what he learnt in the Q.M. Stores.

We are sorry to lose C/Sgt. Ransley, who has gone back to his old hunting grounds. We wish him every success for the future.

Owing to intensive training, nothing of any importance has taken place, but with the inter-platoon football competition taking place in the near future, we hope to add to our laurels by retaining the inter-platoon challenge cup. Carriers and M.T., good hunting!

Our best wishes go to all men in our company who have made a plunge into matrimony.

#### "A" Company.

This time I have some really startling news. "A" Company has *actually* won a football match. We played the R.A.F. and beat them 2 goals to nil. Good work, "A"! Perhaps the free tea at the end made a difference.

Major E. S. S— is in the news again. He hurt his shoulder whilst taking part in a hockey match. We noticed, however, that he took no time off for the injury, and is still leading his company through beautiful black, slimy mud on the numerous country walks that are now taking place. Some witty chap calls these walks "Brigade Mobile Schemes". I know what I call them!

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome 2/Lieut. D. G. P—, and hope that his stay with us will be a long and happy one.

We are sorry to report that Captain K. Mc— and 2/Lieut. M— have forsaken us, the former to command "D" Company, the latter a platoon in H.Q. (1) Company.

Sgt. Fountain has wandered off to "Civvy Street", Sgt. Ashby to the Sergeants' Mess as Mess Caterer, and L/Sgt. Pullen to Dartford (No, not Dartmoor!) on leave.

We congratulate Cpl. Thompson on his recent promotion.

#### "B" Company.

First let us congratulate 2/Lieut. D— and 2/Lieut. D— C— on the splendid way they have settled down in our company. We all hope their stay with us will be a long and happy one.

This has been our promotion month, and we congratulate C.S.M. Pinnock, C/Sgt. Francis, Cpls. Baitup, Chapman and Files on their well-earned promotion. Also we congratulate L/Cpl. Wilcox on his appointment to Lance-Corporal, and wish him every success.

We have our C.S.M. on leave at present and C/Sgt. Francis on a course, but everybody is left in the capable hands of Sgt. Ryan and Sgt. Lovejoy.

We have had only one company football match this month, when we beat H.Q. (1) 3—0. Pte. Curtis's fine goal was outstanding. We are only just beginning the battalion inter-platoon cup competition, and a great rivalry has sprung up between Nos. 10, 11 and 12 Platoons.

"B" Company has been well-represented in the battalion boxing team by L/Cpl. Higglesden, who had a very good win.

We all congratulate our ex-C.S.M. Paramour on his speedy recovery, and hope that when next he is near us, he will honour us with a visit.

#### "C" Company.

There are no outstanding events to report during the last month.

The savings campaign was opened and the first week resulted in the sale of stamps to the value of £4 12s. 0d.

A recent company exercise as arranged which might be described as a tactical comedy. The tactical side of it was definitely a success, both armies being commanded by N.C.O.'s, who devised and executed sound plans. The battle raged over an area of some six or more square miles, and many were the perilous incidents that occurred. It must be emphasised that tactically the exercise was a great success.

#### "D" Company.

At last signs of good weather appear and so large scale exercises continue with unabated speed, and we realise how mechanisation has affected us; in fact, our legs are now quite mechanical!

We have had numerous changes of Company Commanders, and we were very sorry to lose Captain A. C. J. Van A—, who we gather has reached an exalted position, but we welcome Captain Mc—, who has taken his place. We also welcome 2/Lieut. F— and 2/Lieut. N—, who have arrived from the Depot, and hope they will find "D" Company to their liking. Sgt. Uden has left us for the Intelligence Section, and we will look for him on dangerous corners with his motor-cycle.

C.S.M. Pointer's diplomacy is still very evident especially at meal-times, and I believe his garden is a model of how to dig for victory.

We congratulate Pte. Hanson on his continuous appearance for the battalion football team, and we gather he was an exponent of the game in peace-time, but we wonder if he could play as well if Ptes. Coker and Poke were not there to support his efforts.

Now one word of thanks to C.Q.M.S. Phillpot for his untiring efforts at producing food from "B" Echelon, even if he does murmur sometimes, "I'm lost!"

#### Rusty Wrt.

THE big-wig, returning to the village after a long absence, heard that an old resident had lost his wife. Calling next day to offer condolences, he said: "Sorry to hear you buried your wife." "Eh!" "Sorry to hear you buried your wife!" "Had to—she died!"

## News from the Veterans.

"HERE we are, like birds in the wilderness," but like all good Buff, full of good cheer and *esprit de corps*. Again we are having changes in our personnel, and amongst those who have departed are 2/Lieut. E. J. C—, our Messing Officer, who has gone to a higher sphere as a reward for putting this battalion right in the front line as far as Messing is concerned; and also C.Q.M.S. Paine, one of our original stalwarts who will be much missed as the treasurer to the Sergeants' Mess. However, he will still have some contact with the Regiment in civil life, not unconnected with *The Dragon*.

We are now receiving a new type of recruit. To them we extend a very hearty welcome.

The new Messing Officer is 2/Lieut. T. A. K—, whose fame as a comper to our various entertainments is widespread. In conjunction with a neighbouring unit he recently organised a very successful concert at our headquarters. One of our officers played the violin with such zest that he must have incurred the envy, hatred and malice of the Huns. They are not gentlemen, but fortunately their reprisals were very wide of the mark.

Last week the officers at headquarters went to the Sergeants' Mess to play a darts match. Owing to the fog of war, nobody seems to have the haziest idea as to which team had won the battle.

Our R.S.M., a noted Buff, is our leading gardening expert. When he talks to you about his onion bed, it is like a tear-gas attack—it makes your eyes water. We are looking forward to eating his surprise item—strawberries, even without sugar or cream.

It was very pleasant to meet the Commanding Officer of another Buff battalion who are stationed not very far away from ourselves and where once we had a considerable post.

#### "D" Coy.—continued from p. 123

Among the other ranks we welcome Sgts. Ford and Foreman to the company. "Isn't it?" No one in the company knows yet what "it" is, but Sgt. Ford persists in asking "Isn't it?". Perhaps he means isn't it a lovely colour he's got.

We wish to extend our gratitude to the Signal Platoon for the loan of Pte. English, our operator. This youth is probably a blood brother of the Laughing Policeman and was evidently instructed by Minnie Ha Ha on the shores of Laughing Water (not Maymyo).

At the sound of the gong it will be exactly time to pack up, there being no further scandal to discuss. Cheerio till next month.

## Somewhere in the South-West.

THE impression given by the company notes this month will tend to make the reader think that this battalion is nothing more than a hive of social activity. This, however, is very far from being the case, for training has been well to the fore in the past month, culminating yesterday. The resultant lack of sleep has dimmed my senses even more than usual and it seems harder than ever to think of what to put in these notes.

With the weather taking a distinct turn for the better, games have come well to the fore this month and numerous inter-platoon football and hockey matches have been played. There have been no battalion fixtures, but Brigade rugger and soccer teams were selected to play against a local representative R.A.F. side. Congratulations to Pte. Satterley, who represented the Brigade at rugger and soccer, and to Captain A. E. M—, Cpl. Slumen and L/Cpl. Gore, who also played in the soccer team.

Numerous dances and concerts have been held, and our thanks for these are due to Lieut. C. H. B—, who has worked tirelessly and efficiently in this direction.

Leave has been prevalent this month and among others the Colonel, the Second-in-Command and the Q.M. have all benefited, returning to us looking much better for it and fit to take up the unequal struggle once more.

We are now the proud possessor of a C.R.S. of our own, ably staffed by five V.A.D.'s. Since their arrival the number of sick has increased noticeably; the reason for this I leave to the readers to discover!

Officers under 40 are now forbidden to go sick at all. This seems rather unfair, as I could name quite a few officers here over 40 who are just as "dangerous" as us younger ones. However, no names, no pack drill!

Officers' cars seem to figure very largely in these notes, and I should like to take the opportunity to refute certain allegations about my car made in these notes by my substitute during my absence last month. Old and ancient it may be, but like the old soldier it never dies. In fact, during my seven days, it covered 775 miles. The latest addition to our private M.T. is a small Fiat owned by 2/Lieut. D— H—, which will probably prove a fit companion for those other midget wonders of ours—Major M. P. E. H—'s car and the Padre's car.

There is to be a War Weapons Week in this area next month, at which the battalion will do its best to assist in various ways.

The bell-like (Big Ben) voice of the R.S.M. is already to be heard in the early morning coaching our prize guards, which are to mount every evening in the town square. More, I hope, will be told of this next month. Until then, *au revoir*.

## H.Q. Company.

During the month much has been accomplished in the way of Specialist Training. Platoons in turn have been excused (?) all duties in order to undergo a period of intensive training. In turn the Mortars, Ack Acks, Pioneers and Stretcher Bearers have been through the mill and have all come out feeling a good deal more confident of their abilities and with a much better idea of their place in the scheme of things.

In the realm of sport we have been very busy. Having beaten the R.A.F. at soccer, we had to let them beat us at hockey just to make things even. Then to show how really good we are at the latter game, we licked the R.I.A.S.C., who played extremely well. Pte. Satterley played for the brigade at both soccer and rugger, but, however well he acquitted himself, we feel that he came off second best in his most recent engagement, for he is now paying marriage allowance. We offer him our congratulations and sympathies respectively.

Is it possible that the setting of rat traps in the Sergeants' Mess can account for the lack of Guard Commanders? Talking of Sergeants, these nobles are now in the process of moving into new and spacious premises with their Mess. We were given to understand that the air space was insufficient in the old quarters, but we still did not understand until we had shared the same room with a certain W.O. II for a few minutes.

The weekly dances have been very successful and popular, not only with our own troops, but with neighbouring detachments and the inhabitants of "our own" town. A recent concert brought in a goodly sum to aid in the work of relief and reconstruction after Goering had been playing one of his away engagements.

We were very glad to welcome back with us the late Corporal (now 2/Lieut.) H—. His breezy manner is specially designed to dispel early morning blues on P.T. Parades.

We close by taking off our hats to the Signal Platoon, those super-tough he-men who have braved the vagaries of the weather in an English spring and built for themselves a canvas town.

## "A" Company.

Since the ruthless bombing of Plymouth, more dances have been held, the proceeds being sent to a relief fund.

The N.A.A.F.I. has now opened, and here the lads have put it out over the dart board. Alleyway of No. 9 Platoon usually averages a century every time. I hope he's as good with a rifle, for javelins are out of fashion now! It is quite customary to see the officers and N.C.O.'s having a tussle on the board too. I suppose the N.C.O.'s want to make up for their defeat on the firing range.

The Londoners in the company can't get accustomed to the way in which the people in the district speak of villages as towns, and this has been the cause of quite

a bit of argument in the "locals". For our lads there is only one place that matters—London and the Old Kent Road.

No. 7 Platoon has proved itself against the rest of the company at football in every encounter.

In a recent game with a local Indian detachment we drew 1—1.

Our Romeos, and they are many, have quite a liking for the country Juliets.

Congratulations to L/Cpls. Westcott and Lewin and Pte. Hull, who have passed for the Royal Air Force; and also to Lieut. G—, who has now another pip.

We have visions of L/Cpl. Askew in the Palestine Police Force, running about in shorts. It's almost like being at school again. When some of the lads turned out on a night stunt with blacked faces, one or two people thought a troupe of nigger minstrels had arrived. Even so, we are not without talent, when one has in mind "Dreaming of thee" (Bayfield, and Prime Minister Jones.

The batmen have been rumbled at last, and are now obliged to turn up on parades. Nothing like a parade or two under the C.S.M. to smarten these batmen and signallers up!

#### "B" Company.

The social functions of "B" Company have been going with a distinct swing during the past few weeks, and as a result of our efforts quite a large sum has been collected for the local distress fund. The first event of the month was a dance at the Golf Club-House, and this was followed shortly afterwards by a dance in the ballroom of the L— Hotel. This function was a great success and the profits, which were put aside for the distress fund, were considerable. Several turns by men of the battalion and also Captain H— added to the attraction of the evening.

Another dance at the Golf Club-House was combined with a whist drive. On this occasion Pte. Bailey, contrary to his usual practice, did not win a prize, although he missed the booby prize by a very narrow margin.

We have played one football match against the Home Guard this month, which resulted in a win for us, the score being 3—1. Being unable to conquer us on the football field, they tried out their skill against us at dart throwing, but again without success. Two matches were played, both of which were won by us in spite of the fact that we loaned them our Sergeant-Major on one occasion to make up their numbers.

The golf course is still being patronized by our few golf enthusiasts. Occasionally the Sergeant-Major can be seen hacking his way out of bunkers or gazing over fences into one of the gardens which back on to the course, looking for balls which have gone astray. But his play has greatly improved of recent weeks and it is no longer necessary for him to drive six balls off the tee to make sure of a good start. Captain B—has also been seen on the course chasing a golf ball with an iron, no doubt giving vent to his feelings on the ball until such time as he comes in contact with the Hun.

Rounders is the most popular game with No. 12 Platoon, and visiting teams sent by No. 11 Platoon were unable to defeat them. The second match, however, was brought to an early close just when No. 11 Platoon were getting into the swing of it. Pte. Bush hit the ball with such force that the club snapped in two and the game then had to be abandoned.

On Easter Monday we endeavoured to capture the holiday spirit as far as possible. In the afternoon No. 11 Platoon formed football teams to represent London and Kent. The Sergeant-Major agreed to give his legs an airing and being a Faversham man played right-back for Kent. In spite of his presence on the field, London won 5—4. After tea, No. 11 Platoon and Company H.Q. gathered together in the Golf Club-House for a jar of ale and a social evening. We had an exceedingly jolly time with little outside assistance. Songs were rendered by Sgt. Crouch and the Company Gardener (Pte. Groaves) and Cpl. Burton, Pte. Jones, Pte. Humphreys and Paddy McGing assisted with community singing. The Sergeant-Major also performed his party pieces, which consisted of club swinging with two bayonets, and a repetition of "The Bloomin' Great Blackbird", which caused such a great deal of amusement at our Christmas Party. Mr. Burroughs also entertained us with a funny story and a song. Once again we are obliged to Pte. Bailey for his assistance at the piano.

No. 12 Platoon report that they held a very successful social evening during the month. 2/Lieut. T— apparently caused some heartache by stealing a very popular young lady for the last waltz. No. 10 Platoon also arranged a whist drive and dance in their village hall and they carried out the only cross-country run this month, the winners being L/Cpl. Waters and Pte. Taylor.

We have seen very little of our new officer, 2/Lieut. H— as he has been attached to "C" Company, but we hope he will soon return so that he can get to know us. We also welcome Cpl. Guthrie from H.Q. Company as M.T. Corporal, and L/Cpl. Burgess from the depot.

#### "C" Company.

The weather is behaving very well, and "C" Company's "tanned torsos" will soon become the envy of the battalion.

Our dances have turned out to be the talk of the town, folks actually travelling from miles around to attend them. From our last two we were able to contribute nearly £12 to the Lord Mayor of —'s Distress Fund.

We had an exciting incident several weeks ago when a D.A. bomb was reputed to have dropped, above all places, in the centre of our miniature range, which lies very close to our billet. We were ordered to move, or I should say, make a strategic withdrawal, to a field nearby, where we spent the first night in the open. We were rather upset about leaving our comfortable billet for such a reason, but our remarks when we were informed that there *wasn't* any bomb are unprintable.

The C.S.M. had the bright idea of holding a sweep-stake as to what time the bomb would explode. He secured a few "bob", which (keep it dark!) he still has.

In common with many others, I would like to know the feelings of a certain Sergeant who, on receiving the order "Slope Arms", did a graceful "Slow March"?

Incidentally, this is my first feeble attempt at writing the company notes, and should it be my last, it will probably be due to the fact that I have joined the ranks of the "janker wallahs"!

The Company Commander has just returned from leave, and appears to have had an enjoyable time, for which we are all truly thankful. Who knows what would have happened if he hadn't?

We welcome 2/Lieut. H. J. A— to "C" Company. He is very fortunate in being posted to the crack company of the battalion.

Continued on p. vi.



## The Villa Rose Battalion

WE are getting to know our part of the West Country pretty well: every short cut that will get us into billets before the hour strikes, every little shop where a fellow with jovial eyes can get the ten Players that "we have to keep for our regular customers". When all is said, it is not a bad slice of country, now that April's here—though we don't really want to see it quite so early in the morning.

As we are getting to know the place, it is getting to know us. We have been congratulated by no less a person than General Lord Gort on the smartness we showed in the streets of T—. We modestly think that for some time after we have gone the citizens of these parts will talk of "the days when The Buffs were here"; and we hope that perhaps, if one day they read of our deeds upon other shores, they may talk of us as "Our Buffs".

But if, as a whole, we are stationary, taken by parts we are very much what the French call *mouvementé*. New officers arrive in shoals, and are catapulted off to courses. Our C.O. himself takes courses as less conscientious men take "gin and it's". Throughout the night the P.U.'s hum back and forth as The Mighty (sometimes in false whiskers and sometimes disguised as a Small Yellow Bomb) pursue the sheep that has gone astray, properly ignoring the ninety-and-nine just persons that need no repentance. Companies play "Postman's Knock" at such a pace that you never know whom will you find where "X" Company was this morning. The battalion sub-editor runs madly after the company correspondents from post to post; and he offers here, with humility and pride, the results of the chase.

### Sports.

When last we left you, much training was in progress, both rugby and soccer, so that the Army teams could assert their superiority over the R.A.F. in the long-awaited matches to be played in this area. Actually, at rugby, the Army, including several Buffs, beat the R.A.F. by 9 points to 3, whilst at soccer a slight reverse was experienced, the R.A.F. winning by 5 goals to 1. At Soccer the team consisted of nearly all Buffs, but this fact has no bearing on the result. Both games drew many spectators, and added increased revenue to the war weapons drive.

A very interesting game of soccer, consisting of an all-Buffs eleven, drawn from four battalions, took place on Saturday, April 12th, 1941, against the R.A.F. This was a charity match in aid of Buffs prisoners of war, and after a very exciting game, during which an appreciable amount of money was collected for the great cause, The Buffs beat the R.A.F. by 3 goals to 1.

The battalion cross-country run for the Prestige Cup was run on Saturday, April 5th, 1941, and after a race which displayed brilliant team-work, "A" Company

wrested the trophy from the holders, "C" Company. A thoroughly well-deserved win over a very arduous course.

Boxing training goes on in readiness for the big tournament v R.A.F. on April 25th, 1941, when we hope to see The Buffs acquit themselves splendidly in the noble art, with a special eye on the battalion bull-baiter, Sgt. P—.

And now, thoughts of green pitches and white flannels send our hopes soaring. We are ready to hear that melodious sound of leather on willow. We will keep a fixture open for the Panzer-troupen.

Headquarter Company has been attacked by spring fever. The trouble started when Company Headquarters, led by the Quartermaster and his staff, with the Company Commander faint but pursuing, went birdnesting. They have been feathering the nest ever since. The A.A. and G.D. Platoon (usually as sober a group of bachelors as you could find) were caught by the wandering spirit and hurried off to take up residence in a holiday camp. The Carriers took the hint and scrounged the whole of another camp for themselves. Mortars and Pioneers had already migrated. The Signals Officer, inspired to the point of ecstasy, laid hands upon what our M.T. people insist on calling a "vehicle" and tore it into shreds. The Carriers, to show what they could do, took a short cut to company office straight through a hawthorn hedge. The A.A. and G.D., not to be outdone, set light to their camp. And finally the company soccer team, in their own brilliant form, achieved a convincing victory over the winners of the Prestige Cup. But between these excitements we get through a lot of work, muscular and mental.

We offer our sympathy to the R.S.M. It was particularly bad luck to have such an accident so soon after his appointment. We welcome Lieut. B—, who has taken over command of No. 2 Platoon vice the Messing and Dossing Officer. Our apologies to the Medical Section and others for a chilly Sunday morning. Our congratulations to the M.T.O. on his captaincy; to the Intelligence Section on their interpretation of "*Ars est celare artem*"; and to the Orderly Room, which really belongs to us, on publishing the classic Order: "Soldiers will not be allowed to proceed on Privilege Leave last Friday".

### "A" Company.

The J.P. Cup is ours. Our cross-country team, ably trained and led by Lieut. L—, won the cup by a handsome margin. The team was Cpl. Faultey, L/Cpl. Sampson, Ptes. Hart, Hutchings, Dickinson, Sargood, McLoughlin, Draper, Green, Cordingley, Treatman, Fels, Brazil and Davis.

Not only on the sports front have we led the other companies, but in most of our other activities. Our Guard at Battalion Headquarters was judged the best, and we were selected to show the battalion how a "Platoon in the Attack" should be carried out.

There is no boredom in "A" Company. The rivalry between platoons became more intense and even route marches were the scenes of hastily prepared ambushes; villages being evacuated owing to the large scale use of gas—how quickly did those idle spectators move! but on one occasion we did feel sorry for the cows.

It is with regret that we leave L—, particularly since Harry Tate, that wily old pheasant, is still at large despite the fact that he has been stalked and peppered at dawn and dusk. While talking of shooting, it is

worth recording the fact that we beat the local Constitutional Club in a match one afternoon. We shall not forget it because it was the very day the electric plant failed and the match was held by candle-light; even so two possibles were registered by us.

Time is short, paper is scarce, therefore we will finish our training notes, although reams could be written of how one section outwitted a whole platoon; the incidents that occurred during our various night operations, etc. It has been a great month and every man was imbued with the proper spirit.

Before closing, we take this opportunity of welcoming Lieut. G— and congratulate Cpl. Faultey on his promotion.

### "B" Company.

Hi! Buffs! This is Frills and Frippery speaking (in poison).

Congratulations to the Company Commander on attaining his majority. They got so tired of giving him the pip that they decided to crown him instead!

Welcome to 2/Lieut. B— and 2/Lieut. W—, who have joined us in our muddy breeches—er—reaches! It's good to see the "young Buffs" graduate as the "old boys" come back with their brown boots!

L/Cpl. Hearn has got another dog-leg. That should "ginger" him up!

Dash it, cads! Frills and Frippery (F. and F.) are at it again! Under the title of "The two saucy soldiers" (did you ever?) they've broken all records by doing three shows in one day for war weapons, and only collecting four oranges, two bad eggs, one tomato, and a couple of cheesing rows!

A big hand to the company team for coming in second in the battalion cross-country run. This must be the result of the early morning "gunfire" and the exercise derived from (a) climbing a precipice every time you want a square meal (what! bully-beef again?), and (b) running to catch the last bus home.

Splash! Ouch! That's them there drains at it again. You're smelling me!

Who's the fellow who walked into our new home-by-the-sea and asked if he was on the right platform for the Morden-Edgeware line? Hi! Buffs!

Post scribed flash. Imminent financial crash stop Influential city interests ready to promote Dormie House Sewage Co. Ltd. stop Business pends approval Medical Officer of Health stop Ground nicely prepared.

### "D" Company.

We were dismayed when we looked at the calendar and found that we were due to send in a further report of our comings and goings for the month of March; more so when we realised that our contributor was, and still is, away on a course. However, the entire office staff has pooled its brain-power, made notes on 2/Lieut. H—d's literary style from reading up back copies, and hopes to get away with it.

Subalterns come and go in a bewildering procession, and the Company Clerk (again contemplating the Orderly Officer roster) was heard to remark about the way a certain lady felt when she interviewed Solomon and all his glory. We welcome 2/Lieut. H—n to our midst, and have proved our good nature by sending him to represent us in the battalion cross-country run, which we unfortunately failed to win. It is a case of hail and farewell with 2/Lieut. W—, who was, however,

with us long enough to realise what a good company we are. Our contributor, apparently having taken his *Dragon* notes away with him, has left us uncertain whether we have mentioned all the officers who have entered and retired from "D" Company ring during the past few weeks.

We extend our greetings to L/Cpl. Burton, who bewildered the men in his platoon by disappearing at 0900 hours one day, as a Private, and returning half-an-hour later with one stripe on each arm.

Our Tuesday night dances at the Co-operative Hall are, of course, still the mainstay of mid-week night-life in this town. We received a wonderful ovation as our platoon marched past in the War Weapons Week Parade. Our contributor, who has, no doubt, a store of War Weapons Week anecdotes to relate, headed the platoon, and we understand from the C.Q.M.S. (who was lucky enough to be visiting the billets on an Accommodation Store check at the time of the march past) that 2/Lieut. H—d was considered the smartest officer present. We noticed his batman standing on the sidewalk, watching with critical eye, and making mental notes of chance remarks from the crowd. Only a "D" Company batman would take such admirable interest in his work.

Here is our news in brief. The garden at Company Headquarters has been ploughed, trimmed and sown by a man of Wiltshire, who presented the Company Office with the first-born flowers. Only the clerk refused to have a bunch on his desk, though we tried to impress upon him that they were merely a sign that the soil of Britain is still giving us the goods. In a week or so we hope to consolidate our positions in the garden, and look forward to the time when ration parade will be at the Maycliffe Hotel. If anyone knows of a good cow going fairly cheaply, we will purchase it out of the Comforts Fund, and provide milk and vegetables for sale to the P.R.I.

Company Headquarters now have a mascot, if 2/Lieut. E. H—s will allow us to show a certain possessiveness towards his young fox-terrier. "Asta" has a pedigree as long as the leave roster, and as full of intriguing names. He has already been under open arrest, close arrest and before a Field General Court Martial for offences under the Sanitary Regulations, but remains, at present, unimpressed. We hope he gets "browned off" in a week or two, and shows more aptitude for assisting the man of Wiltshire—digging for victory.

The Officers' Mess (officially) and the Men's Mess (unofficially) said good-bye to the Local Concert Artistes, now on tour, who have done so much for the comfort of the troops. We now rely on the weekly repertory companies—The Epicure, and Jose of the Gibbons.

Our Captain noticed that "B" Company takes pride in the fact that something happened to their Company Commander by torchlight. Trousers were mentioned. He has therefore insured for All Risks, and in the mornings when he appears on "Stand To" the radio-gramophone is heard playing "Light Cavalry" as a salute.

The platoons have been guarding, training, playing, patrolling, begging, borrowing and stealing; the Company Commander has scrounged everything (surely everything?) it is possible to scrounge in the town; the Company Clerk goes for a constitutional each morning, and finds the rest very beneficial (we understand there is a lovely view from Rock Walk); the secretary of the Comforts Fund closed the accounts, and was seen looking all over the place for the "difference"; the C.Q.M.S. and the C.S.M. both work until late at night on various jobs, and platoon commanders are not—like

## Somewhere in Kent.

LAST month we were pale and wan, snatching for a few moments a day gulps of fresh air and diving back like moles into the clammy, cold crepuscule that was our home. Now we dodge about with lightened step, smiling at the morning, the trees, the sea; singing in our baths like the Adjutant (only with more melody); arriving punctually to breakfast like the Mortar Officer; and generally feeling that life is worth while. The secret of the mystery?—"Spring?"; you say hopefully. Tchach! No, we are in the open—free—uncabined—de profundis. But, as in the Pied Piper, which you have all forgotten, there is one little boy who stayed outside. Yet even he has been here earlier, so, unlike the boy in the poem, he can't really complain.

And yesterday, were we dreaming, or did we really hear the sound of bat on ball again? and feel turf under our studs, and smell the scent of new-cut grass? This is a happy place and promises well for the future.

The C.O. went away on leave to find Rosemary stricken with measles. Now that she has recovered we would like to point out that she'll never get it again, though we believe that Major Leslie once knew a man who had it nine times.

Major Robin is now on leave and Captain Clive is acting as his "stand-in" in the Dungeon. He rang up the other night to ask about a dance, "Not for myself, you understand, but in case my subalterns want to go". We weren't deceived!

The Adjutant has gone on leave, praise be, so the Signal Officer can now get his early morning bath without either having to get up at an unreasonable hour, or being late for breakfast.

Adolf has joined us from the Dungeon and the Mess is itself again. The Audit Board has come and gone, and Little Francis was in time for breakfast again.

### Sergeants' Mess.

Mr. Middleton's very own season has arrived at last (we hope), and, although we have some very keen gardeners, we are bound to record that we occasionally see the more intelligent of our members slinking along the pathways to the Mess whenever the aforementioned are slaving around the lawn.

The Mess gardens have received special attention over the past couple of days, and members arriving for meals have been entertained by the efforts of those unfortunate enough to have been lured to the toilsome work.

The R.S.M. usually leads the attack, closely followed by the second-in-command, Sgt. Barnett, armed with the Mess Accounts under one arm and a blue print of the area under the other. He wouldn't be complete without his binoculars, without which he would never be able to inform his audience that Spitfires are overhead just before they shower us with bombs. We don't mind really, and take it as good clean fun, but we fear that if he plants any cabbages or suchlike they'll probably grow up to be King Edward incendiaries or something.

Despite rationing, tea drinking continues as a practiced art. After great competition the title of "Walking Cesspool" is shared by Sgts. Brown and Davis. Sgt. Kelly dropped out in the fourth round with the impression that he could beat the capacity of the adjacent Channel. Sgt. Marriott remains unchallenged as the best trencherman. It's an education to watch him do the disappearing trick with food of any type or quantity, but it is feared that with the advent of Chalky Wright, Marriott will lose his long-held distinction and we more ordinary folk will have to be more punctual to meals if we wish to survive.

Of course you all know that Spellman is getting married soon. If you don't, you are either a hermit or have just arrived from foreign parts. In my capacity as a "Well informed circle" I was led to a map and shewn the exact position of the church where the pact will be signed. A little flag marks the spot where Battalion Orderly Room and the Records Office make unprecedented history.

Sgt. Curnick is still at our old position some six miles away and manages to hide himself pretty well. The last time he was seen he was trying to encourage some hideous sort of sound out of an old prehistoric trumpet that he'd probably dug out of the cliff during his many leisure moments. News has reached us that he can now blow the "Short Reveille". It is easy to imagine that, whatever it sounds like, it will undoubtedly get people out of bed. Even if it is only to see who let the cow loose. Anyway, if he does show a little more keenness we shall have to see to it that he has a chance to begin his boy's service. (I shall have to get back the sixpence he borrowed before he sees this!)

Blower Brown has been trying his hand at football recently. We assume that this is because his boots refuse to touch leather these days. Chalky Wright refuses to play in goal and give us a clue as to why Derby County lost so many matches.

Sgt. Jeffery has returned to the fold after a long absence and we welcome him back to the Mess, hoping that he is now a small eater and tea abstainer.

We also welcome to the Mess with congratulations, Sgts. Worms, Standing and Bowra, and hope their stay with us is a long and happy one.

### H.Q. Company.

After our terrifying escapade, which was related to readers last month, we gallantly endeavoured to accustom ourselves to a subterranean existence. This can be most discomforting at the best of times; but when the blessings of spring have been let loose, and all that romantic poets worship come showering down upon us, then life underground is decidedly agonizing—we were, in fact, desperate.

We compared the articiality of glowing Osrams with the friendly rays of a brilliant sun; the dank, impure atmosphere, with a fresh, gentle breeze; gloomy, unending passages and tortuous stairways, with leafy lanes and mossy banks. The result was one of utter disconsolation.

We tapped our typewriters mechanically, pushed pens indifferently, and ate hardly at all. Even the Q.M.'s canary, a blithesome creature, eventually went off song after a praiseworthy effort of cheerfulness; refusing to partake what little seed is now obtainable. The Company Commander's dog had his problems, too. How he yearned to romp in the green fields once more, and perhaps chase some wretched cat. Unfortunately, also, lamp-posts, indeed posts of any shape or form, are non-existent in the bowels of the earth.

Occasionally we emerged into the upper world, blinking before the incandescence of the sun, and almost suffocating with fresh air! But time, when precious soon goes, and dismally we would return to our land far below.

It was about the same time as the Messing Officer was attempting to obtain for us a miner's ration of cheese, and the Intelligence Section were receiving practical classes on strata formations, that deliverance came—we were to move. So from the gloomy catacombs we cheerfully removed our belongings, depositing them some time later in the most delightful residences, situated on a picturesque cliff of a tiny bay. All those things we had yearned for were here in abundance. The gentle breezes from the sparkling sea, wafted through the open windows, bringing with them delicate scents of hosts of spring flowers blooming outside. Streets were lined with evergreens and conifers; primroses perched precariously in niches of a wall, or blossomed impudently on the very grass verge of the side-walk. We glanced about appreciably—life was once more worth living.

These idyllic conditions especially suited Sgt. Marriott, for at the moment he sees the world through coloured glasses. He meanders blissfully along, happily meditating on the glorious day when he and his choice enter upon holy matrimony. His love for Army forms and A.C.I.'s has been temporarily surmounted by a keen interest taken in banns, receptions and honeymoons. The remaining staff of the Orderly Room have constantly commented upon his now cheerful, pleasant nature. Cpl. Roper has been so impressed by this virtuous effect of the approaching event, that he has already ordered a copy of the *Matrimonial Post*. Pte. Galvin, through his charming personality, abhors such artificial aid; whilst Sgt. Lent, sagaciously and with great wisdom, smiles faintly at the folly of his friends, for he is the one married man of the four!

In the same building, the R.S.O., Lieut. S—, and his clan, have established their telephone exchange. The telephonic virtuoso may be found here at almost any time, usually entangled in the midst of wires and switches, looking rather like a modern Edison working a marionette show. However, business is apparently flourishing, for he has just opened another office.

This act may annoy the I.O., Lieut. C—, next door. His office always appears so frightfully over-crammed with maps and pretty silhouettes of British and Nazi aircraft, that probably he had had this room in mind as a possible annexe to his also thriving concern. Sgt. Barnett is alternately Intelligence Sergeant and Property green renovator vendor. As last mentioned, he pays frequent trips to London on behalf of the P.R.I. in quest of this soldier's nightmare. Being a Londoner, he welcomes these visits enthusiastically, urging people to buy more and more Property, in order that stocks may fast diminish. The amazing part is, that he still receives week-end passes!

Across the hallway, the P.R.I., Major E—, waits, amidst his coloured pencils and gaudy inks, for money to flow into the vast treasuries of the fund from companies and other sources. He has recently sponsored a

pastime in which willing able-bodied, perhaps over-energetic people, are invited to indulge in a little horticulture. The results, however, have been most encouraging, for the weed-ridden wilderness which once surfringed battalion headquarters has been transformed into a most commendable vegetable garden. Apparently the four square plots are tended respectively by the C.O., Second-in-Command, Adjutant and the Orderly Room. A friendly competition seems to have developed to discover which one of them cultivates the largest crop. The Second-in-Command leads at the moment with six rows of early peas, two rows of potatoes and a reputed marrow bed. Confirmation of this fact is unobtainable, but the surreptitious manner in which weeds and other undesirable material are dumped on the "bed" suggests that it is merely a glorified rubbish heap. A point worth mentioning on this matter is, that the police claim half the praise for this noble enterprise, as they executed the primary digging.

Thus, if perchance you may wander one day into our area, either on pleasure or as a face amongst many on a route march, you will find us profoundly contented. You see, we feel as did Edmund Dantes upon his escape from the dreaded Chateau D'if. The fearful memories of our previous station are already fading,—whirled into obscurity by the placid beauty and tranquility of "our Bay".

### Signal Platoon.

#### GOSSIP AND FLASHES.

Riotous exultation broke out in the rank and file of the platoon on the welcome news that heralded the departure from the dungeon to the bay. It reached crescendo on the first sight of elegance and elaboration of the cables flowing from the exchange—a veritable signallers' reverie.

At the bay the platoon is becoming more intimate with the test "with one known good potato" and has forgotten the other less important lamp test.

It is said that one member of the platoon is about to ask Sgt. Kelly for the infamous Army book on "How to become a first class fatiguer". He waits breathlessly and courageously by the notice board for the latest news of his next fatigue.

The football team has found its strength and beaten both the rest of H.Q. and "C" Company. They are shortly to have a smack at the Royal Marines. The team is masterfully managed by Pte. Somerwell these days, and he uses his men like "pawns"—he can't forget his civvie job!

Is it true that Sgt. Kelly is training a contingent to swim the Channel? Anyway, a guard reported that five pink-blue naked bodies were diving into the sea and diving out pronto. The leader and the rest of the huskies were making such frantic gestures with arms and legs and facial contortions that he (the guard) thought a new system of signalling had been perfected.

A reward will be given by a certain officer to any Buffian at the bay who can give information leading to the discovery of any unattached and presentable female in the vicinity. The search has reached hysterical fervour with no claimable results so far.

### "B" Company.

Our heartiest congratulations to "Roger" on his well-earned promotion to "Quarter-Block". We were sorry to lose him to "A" Company and wish him all the very best of luck in his new position. Other promotions in the latest "Daffy" include L/Sgt. Hulks (the Blonde

Bomber) to Sergeant; Cpl. Worms to Lance-Sergeant; L/Cpls. Chitty and Ray to Corporal. U/L/Cpls. Whitbread, Worby and Smith earned pay of their rank. Congratulations to you all, and may you continue to climb the ladder. Unfortunately, we also had to lose L/Sgt. Worms and Cpl. Chitty.

Our Company Commander, Captain J. S. B—, has just returned from a course, and we are pleased to have him back with us once more. Unfortunately he came in poor health and we all wish him a speedy recovery.

L/Cpl. Webley, of Orderly Corporal fame, has recently left us for an O.C.T.U., and we wish him the best of luck, "Pip", "pip", Dennis!

With open arms we welcome to the fold Cpls. Brunton and Herbert (the latter is at the moment still attached to H.Q. Company) and L/Cpl. Wrangles.

During the past month we have given a good account of ourselves on the football field, drawing with H.Q. Company 2—2 and beating "D" and "C" Companies 2 and 3 to nil respectively. We have now only to beat "A" Company to become League Champions.

An inter-platoon cross-country run was recently organised and No. 12 Platoon not only won it but did so at a very steady trot. Cpl. Burt (No. 11 Platoon) was first home, with Sgt. Baird (No. 12 Platoon) close on his heels. "Simmo" managed to get mixed up with "D" Company's run and finished last, creating a record—2 hours 10 minutes.

That, I'm afraid, concludes the month's news, and as these notes are being compiled during a practice "Action Stations", they must necessarily come to an early close. Who knows but that the umpire will soon be round to find out why there is a lull in the battle—so "let battle commence".

PEST.

### "C" Company.

"Up and down, in and out." "Just like a ruddy game of draughts." That was the way one of the company was heard to describe our last station, and now, having finished our leg muscle course, we hope to show the after effects in the sports field in the near future.

Tweedledum's circus is now on the sands again and all the old acts are being produced with fresh vigour. Everyone appears to be enjoying their surroundings and are settling down to "hobbies" in their spare time, viz., gardening and salvaging. Congratulations to No. 13 Platoon on winning the Salvaging Competition, and it is hoped that the beer went down well. They nearly went to the extent of borrowing a barrow and touring the village shouting "Rags, bottles and bones". Anyway, they made a really good effort to put a nail in "Nasty's Coffin". The rest of the company, however, think it was rather unfair to take out one of the M.T.O.'s older cars as salvage and say that had they known this, they would have taken the R.S.M.'s motor-bike. Cpl. Ray really did find some seed potatoes, but the Signals' attempt to equal this feat by sprucing "Michael" that sandbags full of chalk were just as good, was not received with great enthusiasm by him and his recent association with the fair sex has not improved his language.

Company H.Q. have now taken over an A/A. post and woe betide any "Uncles" or "Mrs. Smiths" that get in the way when Landymore and Jennings are behind the gun.

Talking of sports, Company H.Q. is training hard, and led by the C.Q.M.S. in his little flimsy pink shorts, the Company H.Q. tag along behind, their grunts echoing to the C.Q.M.S.'s groans.

"Tweedledee" finds that a course of unarmed combat is a good preliminary to taking over the canteen. He can now master even the largest "Rat" (nearly).

2/Lieut. J— is terrified of the telephone, after having a terrific shock in once getting a "phoney message". All leave cancelled on the night prior to his leaving for seven days.

2/Lieut. D— S— takes the "Light-er" side of life seriously, but even so he has so far failed to "lighten" our darkness (much).

The return of Driver Beale and his "pram" was a triumphant success, nearly bringing the house down and Cpl. King with it, and now Cpl. King decides that hospital is the safer place.

### "D" Company.

During one of the intervals of our fight hither and yon, two words of fire appear on the Company Office wall, i.e. *Dragon* notes. By a crafty process of elimination (known only to Company Commanders and some old soldier subalterns?) some miserable being is selected. His orders are brief. "Write 'em!"

This "Being" then proceeds to try and remember the which, why and wherefore and how (with apologies to "Monday Night at Eight"). Herewith one effort, and it isn't Alvar Liddell telling it.

To begin, the main topic in the company these days is our success at soccer. I'm a conservative sort of a bloke, but with one match to play against H.Q., and only having dropped one point so far, I think we can safely say that "It's in the bag". Mind you, we could lose the league if H.Q. beat us 39—0—they'd pip us on goal average. However, we'll take the chance and I know the whole company will join me in saying "Well done, the team!", and a special vote of thanks to L/Cpl. Butler, who has skippered.

The soccer has got to be finished by the 30th April. We then turn our attention to that much maligned sport, cross-country running. We've had a look round. There is some material in the company, so they tell me. I believe they even went for a trot one day. It was most instructive to hear the Company Commander's remarks when they came back. "Runners!" he said (and spat sarcastically into No. 16 Platoon's cabbage patch. Query, can one spit sarcastically?). "Runners, I've ———!", and here I'll put in the word censored, and save the editor his blue pencil. However, the Company Commander hides a heart of gold beneath that rough exterior, and has his own ideas about encouragement.

We wish to take this opportunity to wish good luck and success to Sgts. Pulestone and Pattison and Cpl. Fairweather, who have left us for O.C.T.U.'s in various parts of the country. We also congratulate Sgt. Foreman, L/Sgts. Loke and Dalton, and L/Cpl.s Humphries, Hawkins, Fuller and Turner on their respective promotions.

Faces are continually changing in the company. Captain M— divides his attention between Bedfords and beds. Captain P— had a basin at that too. Don't get me wrong, folks! I mean that bed of onions at the back of the Officers' Mess.

2/Lieut. P— has recently arrived. His platoon quietly chant "Where's that Tiger?" when the "Alert" sounds. 2/Lieut. M— is the only officer who seems to stick around. Perhaps he thinks he may "see sump'n".

*Continued on p. 116.*

## Young Soldiers' Battalion.

**M**OST columnists these days bewail shortage of paper, which, coupled with excess news, makes the life of a columnist bugbear. Hickey or Cassandra would find *The Dragon* correspondent's job a picnic—three columns to fill once monthly and thirty-one days of epoch-making routine only as material. But outlying companies frequently over-estimate a correspondent's imagination and fail to return details of company affairs.

One middle-month, sun-drenched Tuesday saw the visit of an Army Commander. All stars left dressing-rooms and weeks of rehearsal blossomed into fire-fighting demonstration, wire-flattening demonstration and general barrack search. Our private stooge notifies us that the Army Commander and high-ups were much impressed by wire crossing and congratulated all concerned on excellent demonstrations and in fact on whole battalion generally.

Ack! Ack! concert party from —rd Light A.A. Battery, R.A., arrived one evening and gave best show of year. Unfortunately, the concert party members are also soldiers and were being broken up to return to duty. Members found the last show together rather sad. Large, rotund, jolly Major Waley, R.A., who brought the house down, closely connected with Buffs, has a son in O.C.T.U. Platoon. Son's shares rose rapidly above par. Florrie Fandango, niftiest blonde in show, left the footlights for 2/Lieut. B—'s lap and left kiss on said 2/Loot's cheek. Result: 2/Lieut. B— transferred to R.A.S.C.

Folkestone submerged during the month with a glut of London stage stars. The Pleasure Garden Theatre opened to give floor-board space to Nat Ayer's show, "You've asked for it", starring Constance Cummings, Michael Redgrave, Ursula Jeans and Roger Livesey. The following week found inimitable Beatrice (There-are-fairies-at-the-bottom-of-your garden) Lillie and Vic Oliver rocking packed houses. Admitted we certainly asked for it (see April *Dragon*), but we never thought we'd get it. Things are looking up!

During the month our indefatigable Padre arranged a series of visits to Canterbury Cathedral. The troops were shown the cathedral which the Luftwaffe failed to blitz last summer, and moving ceremony of turning a page of the Book.

### Sergeants' Mess.

Since our last notes, few changes have taken place in the Mess.

We have to congratulate Sergeants Cox and Mitchell on being promoted C.S.M.'s; also Cpl. Warne on attaining his third stripe and the appointment of Provost Sergeant.

Members of the Mess would like to know the name of the C.S.M. who saluted the R.S.M. (Water does run off a duck's back!)

Tennis is now being played on the Mess courts, although to date very few members are exhibiting their prowess. We expect to get out in large numbers as soon as the weather settles.

Several members have now become keen disciples of Monopoly, a game which is bringing into the Mess Foot streets of House Property.

Billiards is still being played with keenness and it is hoped to arrange a series of games in the near future.

### Corporals' Mess.

The N.C.O.'s of — Company (deleted by Censor) have recently left us for the wilds of — (that perishing Censor again! It looks as though we shan't get a word of real information in edgeways!). Anyhow, the chaps have gone, and although some say this is unfortunate, others have been heard to declare roundly, in the best N.C.O. tradition, that, well, that it really is a treat to sit in an easy chair by the fire, or get a game of snooker without queuing up. Incredible as it may seem, nourishment may now be obtained from the proud Venus behind the bar in something—not much—under half-an-hour. The age of miracles, it appears, has not passed.

With our numbers thus sadly reduced, and the radio officially silenced before 17.30 hours, the sepulchral silence of the Mess is sometimes only disturbed by the ticking of the clock. This, however, rarely records the correct time (Mr. Secretary, please note!). Those who are rash enough to rely on it have been known to appear late on parade, the repercussions of which heinous offence have reached as far as our normally imperturbable R.S.M. Quietly, but firmly, he has requested them, for the sake of appearances, to be good enough not to do it again.

Into the dignified atmosphere that now permeates the Mess a number of games have recently been introduced. Full Corporals may now be discovered deep in the throes of dominoes or draughts, while the lesser fry seek to master the intricacies of shove-halfpenny.

But let no one imagine that our beloved Mess has sunk to the level of a St. James's Street Club. Far from it. The ancient and deadening game of chess has not yet made its appearance and the youthful prattle and wisecracks of George still make the rafters ring. Cpl. Budd, too, still performs on the piano with noticeable enthusiasm. Even the fact that he has recently become a father (upon which we congratulate him) has done nothing to restrain him.

While the bouquets are being handed out, we must not forget Cpls. "Bulldog" Diamond and Warne, both of whom are now airing another stripe. In their case we say unhesitatingly that the Sergeants' Mess's gain is our loss.

And now a request, for the love of Pete and the honour of the battalion, get busy and do something, Corporals! or else, how the heck are we going to fill this clumn next month? Your numbers may be small, but that's no reason why your deeds should not be great. Let's have a spot of really smashing copy.

## A Battalion Abroad.

*Note. The following notes were written in December, 1940, and reached us at the time of going to press.—Ed.*

"D" Coy.—continued from p. 120.

Cæsar's wife—above reproach; free tickets are to be had at the — Cinema if you go about it in the right way; A.F.N. 1531 and 1508 are still conspicuous by their absence; the rum ration is still intact. In fact, everything runs like clock-work (with the exception of the Orderly Officer roster)—even the Mob. Stores remain in a state of unsullied splendour, despite the determined efforts of the Q.M. and R.Q.M.S., who play hide-and-seek with gum-boots.

### EVENT OF THE MONTH.

The Company Commander disappeared mysteriously for several days. It is rumoured that he was granted leave. It is also rumoured that he spent most of the time with his doctor, being treated for shock.

### "Z" Company.

As we forecast in our last month's notes, we have now arrived at our town residence, having let our "cottage" in the country to "A" Company, who, we understand, are fully taking to heart that behest which so often smote our eyes in days of yore, namely to "See the countryside in spring-time". Having ourselves seen it in winter-time, we were inclined to think that they had acquired a remarkably good bargain, but now that we have sorted ourselves out, and settled who is to have which room and who is to get any sleep and when, we are inclined to think that town has many advantages over country, even though a certain amount of difficulty is experienced in coping with the local dialect. It has been noted that certain members of the company find it necessary to carry with them one of those handy little books entitled "What to say, and how to say it in—". Even so, all difficulty is not overcome, for as one of our members was heard to say: "This d— book is all very well, but it doesn't tell me how to ask for what I want".

Despite our multitudinous duties, the priority of which seem to change, on the average, twice daily, we have found time to raise not only one football team, but two. It must be confessed that the sight of our driver hurling himself through the air, instead of the truck, is something to be seen to be realised. Both teams are now very anxious to meet all-comers.

To celebrate our arrival in town, we had a house-warming in the form of a dance. We think it sufficient to say that "a good time was had by all", so much so, that we are now committed to having one every week, if only to keep up the supply for the ever-growing appetites of the company, whose staple diet would seem to be buns and coffee.

We have taken into our midst one 2/Lieut. K—, whose presence amongst us is appreciated. We hope that he will have a happy and lengthy stay with us.

We congratulate Sgt. Scott on his recent marriage, and we wish all happiness to him and his wife.

We also congratulate "D" Company on easily overcoming their difficulties, and coining a new alphabet.



ONCE again, as I sit down to relate the monthly doings of the battalion, I am thinking of all the things that used to be related in *The Dragon* and how it could be far more interesting if peace and quiet rules in the world. However, there's quite enough of that stuff talked about these days, so I will not start here—to return to our "muttons" in the shape of "non - blue - pencilerable" news.

December naturally recalls Christmas, and in spite of the war, I think everyone enjoyed themselves to the full. Owing to inevitable duties, the arrangements, dinners, etc., were "staggered" from 25th-28th of the month. The Commanding Officer visited all the dinners, where he announced that he had got another job, and so our customary toasting was tinged with both regret at his leaving and our gladness at his promotion. We all wish him the very best of luck in his new job and we extend our wishes that he may be our next Brigadier.

Major W—, our Second-in-Command, is also off on another job soon, and we wish him the very best of luck and good fortune wherever fate may lead him. I cannot help feeling that he will be back with us soon—his sense of humour and *bonhomie* will make the Mess seem strangely quiet.

Major S— has taken over command and we wish him the very best and congratulate him. His personality is a tonic to those who have served with him, and with him at the helm the ship cannot go far wrong.

The weather during December has been magnificent and not the usual stormy business at this time of the year and in these parts. Blue skies and sun has been largely the order of the day and the storms have really been few and far between.

This month we had the pleasure of the company of the G.O.C. and our Area Commander at dinner at the first guest night for a long time.

During the month we held a Mess Cocktail Party to repay all the hospitality (which has been bountiful) shown to us during our stay in the station. It was a great success, judging from the opinion given the following day, and if all the guests enjoyed themselves as much as the officers, everyone must have had an enjoyable evening. Thus passed off the first Mess Cocktail Party since Army Cup Week of 1937 at Lucknow—of happy memory.

The battalion won the local hockey league cup and we offer the team our congratulations. They play together extraordinarily well, and Peter L— and Paddy H— are to be congratulated on the result. Their final match was against "The Rest" team picked from all the local units, which was drawn after an exciting game. The cup was presented to Peter L— by a distinguished naval officer, and medals were given to all the team. Johnnie B— had luckily arrived back with the battalion just in time to earn a well-merited place in the side.

All good months draw to a close with a bang, and with New Year's Eve and a fancy dress dance at the Club, this was no exception. The fancy dress-ites were bidden to show themselves off in the Mess before going, but John S— and Paddy H— never came. I hear that many fairest of all the pippins were at the dance that night and that they tried to outshine each other in a blaze of glamour with a capital "G". However, be that as it may, Johnnie B— and The Mole amply made up for it—the former as an enormous (breadth = length) L.D.V. with a billycock hat and the latter as a Naughty Ninety motoring belle! I thought Major W— was going to choke at Johnny's entrance, but after pressing a "Burra peg" into his hand, things looked all right again! Dennis B— and Edgar K— from darkest Africa chose the occasion to have one of their nights out and "House" did a roaring trade! Dennis and Banana M— appeared at breakfast the next morning in terrific form, but became rather piano about lunch-time!!

However, I am becoming rather locquacious myself, so I will close. All our best wishes to all our other battalions, wherever they may be, and if their December was as good as ours—well, it must have been good!

#### Band Platoon.

We congratulate Sgt. Evans on his promotion, which means another member of the Band soon to leave our ranks. As can be expected, the Band is very much split up on various duties.

Sport, etc., has dropped into the background, so we cannot record any items for this month (yet).

Butler, our super-man, was actually caught burning the candle at both ends, and we are led to believe that he is still having strenuous exercise for the waistline.

We welcome Eddie Young to our fold and hope he will enjoy his stay, even if he doesn't see any pianos.

#### The Drums.

This news still comes from "Out East", although we have left our "cushy" billet and for our front garden we have sand and more sand. The platoon is split up and the P.S.M. is back in charge of the greater part. Guards are still very much in evidence and any old Drummers who like doing "Bugle Guards" would be mighty welcome.

Many heartbreaks were witnessed on — Station, but as the old saying goes, "out of sight, out of mind". "There's a lot more fish in the sea."

We have to pay to play football—Alf is still trying to raise the "Ackers". Ask the Drum-Major to see the ground manager, Alf! He should get it "bucks".

The Drums were represented on a recent route march by the Drum-Major, Alf, Charlie, Rosy and Dick. Charlie would make a good Drum-Major if he could salute, and Alf might make a Salvation Army bass drummer.

News is short this month, and we hope to send more in our next notes. We wish our fellow-Drummers the best of luck and don't forget our offer.

I forgot to mention that we left "Woddler" behind. He's looking after the girls we left behind us.

#### Signal Platoon.

Being a considerably young and recent member of the "Flag Bashers", I am afraid that this month's *Dragon* notes will not be quite up to standard, notwithstanding the fact that I have had to "take over" at short notice from our very able and competent ex-notes *Dragon*, writer of—Paul Whiteman, in fact, who is now far too busy "bugging the blokes" in H.Q. Company office. The boys can't help thinking a lot of old Paul these days.

L/Sgt. Stead is in the headlines again. Don't ask him why, but he was to be seen hanging out his shirt on a tent-rope one windy night.

The boys are all gradually getting settled down, or should I say being settled down? (you know what this sand is like), and in spite of the good old Signal "moaning tradition", they have yet the same old spark of humour which comes to light at regular intervals. Flash, for instance, with his million-dollar grin (they say he hails from Cheshire), and Blackie, who was telling us about a Nazi plane "hitting someone with a machine gun".

We congratulate Cecil on his promotion. Gone are the days when he had to sign his name as Lance-Corporal, instead of Corporal, as he is now. Cpl. Sudderdean has risen to fame overnight. He actually missed lighting one fag from the other for the first time on record, because fag ration was a day later than usual. And, of course, he had to "push the drinks".

L/Cpls. Dryden and Bristow have developed the "D.R." complex. Crouched over the handlebars, these be-goggled gents roar along the dirt track with important-looking documents protruding from various pockets, at different angles—side caps securely battened down and jaws clamped at a rakish angle. They roar along, as I said, at a maximum speed of about 10 m.p.h.



Chopper still reigns supreme in his D.R. guise. He's inclined to get tough, though, and when his clockwork scooter goes wrong he's apt to chew iron bolts and washers. (Oh, they're tough, mighty tough, in the M.E.F.)

Some of the lads are now "Hello Girls. Some adorn the saddles of the afore-mentioned cycles, and the rest—well, you know what it is like—two on and four off. Wonger and Clara were telling me how difficult it is to do the jobs that they didn't do whilst they did them. Being old soldiers, they have probably worked a flanker on me because I can't see the point yet. Can you?

Jock Hart, not satisfied with a slit trench bust, tried to dig himself in. He was rescued when the whole thing collapsed, and luckily escaped what might have been serious injury. Don't be so ambitious next time, Jock!

On behalf of the platoon we (Pinky and I) send our best greetings to "Anna's Gang"—roll on when we get together again. Brick, Smudger and young Hamblin say that they are deciphering, but there is another name for that, "scrounging".

The R.S.O. is gradually greying at the temples. He is really very busy, and besides that, he has a great deal of running about to do, on and off duty.

So that is all for this month, toffs! Cheerio and all the best!

J.E.D.J. (BUSHWHACKER).

I take this opportunity of wishing the writer of the above notes, and in fact the whole of the Rhodesian Contingent, a good trip and happy landings at the other end. I think I am justified in saying that during the time that we—The Buffs and the Rhodesians—spent together, we had on the whole a jolly good time, and a better "gang" we couldn't find.

So long, blokes, and don't forget to drop us a line now and again.

#### M.T. Section.

I am requested to act as scribe for the section once again, and I can only begin by saying that Christmas was spent quite enjoyably by all, in spite of the fact that it was somewhat disjointed by being spread over a period of three days in order that everyone might have a day off to celebrate, even though duties were very heavy. We all hope that the drivers of the section at home also had a very merry Christmas.

Congratulations to L/Sgt. Rawle on his appointment to Lance-Sergeant, and we all hope that he will continue his upward climb on the promotion ladder.

Crack-up Hannaway, of "On the Avenue" fame, is on the road again, and much to his annoyance, Ron Coleman will insist that it is definitely a case of pay four pounds.

Our M.T.O. and everyone on the section is very pleased with our *New* vehicles, and our two Ordnance fitters are overjoyed at having next to nothing to do other than numerous "circles". It is very gratifying to see them standing in the unit workshops with thumbs tucked under armpits and hear them remark that with a bit of flooding and cranking, plus a couple of hundred yards on tow, this one might be fit for the road. At present they are busily engaged on the mystery of the leaking water pump.

Chinny and Maggie are always in complete agreement these days, and the former can often be heard threatening to "clang" the latter. The word "clang" has been marked as "X" so far, because up to the present it is an unknown quantity, but I have great hopes of solving this very soon.

#### Mortar Platoon.

It only seems a week ago that we were pondering over last month's notes, so we really have not much of what we are allowed to put in our notes.

We can at least tell you of our Christmas here. This we spent with "C" Company. The day before, the well-known voice of "C" Company Quarter Bloke (Ding Dong) was heard to shout for help in decorating the Mess Room. Once again the Mortars came to the rescue, and by the laughter that was heard to come from there on Christmas Day, the efforts were well appreciated. The dinner was enjoyed by everybody, and the Mortars wish to thank all who helped to give us that "Christmas feeling" under the conditions of the present day. The Commanding Officer visited us during dinner and bade us farewell. Best wishes in your new sphere of life, and good luck, Sir! We were also visited by our Company Commander and other officers of the battalion.

We welcome back to our fold our one and only Shalomer No. 1, and we hope that you have returned with that baton in your pack!

The runners-up of the Shalomer's League will have to protect their laurels or they will be well out of the picture as the P.S.M. is once again on the hunting ground.

Butch, Roy and Charlie are applying to the head Shalomer for entrance (result next edition).

#### Carrier Platoon.

Having celebrated Christmas a few days ago, I am afraid that these notes will be a trifle jumbled, as my mind is still on the hectic time that was spent by myself and many others. I hope that all readers of *The Dragon* spent as good a time this Christmas as we did out here.

Quite a number of the old Carrier Platoon were seen visiting certain cafes, and many other well-known places, during the Christmas festivities; and when questioned about it the next morning, were quite indignant (Oh, Tubby and Co., what big eyes you've got!).

We welcome to the platoon quite a number of fresh faces, and sincerely hope that they will develop into fully fledged Carrier drivers.

Our platoon is once again commanded by Lieut. S—, and I feel sure that we will once again take our place as the platoon of platoons.

#### Pioneer Platoon.

Cpl. Bradley still looks at the Post Corporal with expectancy; he is not collecting the goods, as was his custom; Britain may be delivering the goods O.K., probably at the expense of the Postmaster's shipping space allotments. But I must say that during the past week or so, Company Orderly N.C.O.'s have been doing some good time with people's correspondence; even the Platoon Commander collected.

The fair sex in town seem to have taken a stranglehold on brother Garnett; any night about 2330 hours he can be observed staggering along Kingsway and the stories related next morning during working hours are not good for our younger members.

We have quite a fair amount of work to get through usually, but the Platoon Commander thinks a change of scene would be a spur to greater efforts; the person who decided that the Pioneers' Shop should occupy a site facing a tea-shop manned by brunettes and red-

heads, could not have had his "loaf" screwed on. The only time you don't see a couple of the handsome blighters gazing across the road is when the "fruit train" is about due.

Our Rhodesian brother also has his moments; I believe he found that certain members of the fair sex were not so hard to get on with, after a couple in the Kit-Kat, and he camouflaged himself pretty well during the Christmas festivities.

Collins, Simmonds and "Heart Throb" Holden found the Maccabi Gyms more enticing than other forms of entertainment.

Although Smiler Bryant is not with us, we think about him a lot and wish him a speedy recovery.

News is very scarce these uninteresting days, but before long we hope to be able to enlarge our notes with some interesting incidents. So, for the time being, cheerio, everybody! Wishing all readers all they wish themselves for the New Year.

### No. 6 Platoon.

Only to-day we said good-bye to our friends the Rhodesian Contingent, and we sincerely hope that they have enjoyed their stay with us, and we hope to be seeing them again one day.

We congratulate Captain H. B. Shorter on his recent promotion and wish him the best of good luck in his new job.

We also wish the one and only Spike a fond farewell, and trust that he will not try out his new carrier in the vicinity of the Company Office. At the same time we extend a welcome to Sgt. Friedman, new "Q" of H.Q., and hope that he settles down once again in his old position.

At the moment I am deputising for the Smudger (long hair and pencil wallah), so this is probably the first and last time that I will be called upon to write the notes for No. 6 Platoon. Therefore I will say hello and so-long, No. 6. I really would like to stay, but the Signal Platoon is so sadly deteriorating that I feel that it is my duty to go and help them out.

### "A" Company.

To start with we will inform you of the happenings on Christmas Day. They started with "gunfire" delivered by capable Sgt. Douglas and the willing Colour-Sergeant. The remaining Sergeants arrived almost in time for coffee and biscuits, looking very bedraggled, having, we presume, spent the Christmas Eve in the company of those given to hard drinking. After breakfast—a really good feed—the company attended Church Service and came back looking forward to the big event—Christmas dinner. The dinner was ably prepared by the company cooks assisted by Tulip and the Mess orderlies. We were served by the officers, W.O.'s and Sergeants, not to mention the attention given by the "Q" Bloke. The Commanding Officer visited us during dinner to wish us a happy Christmas and to shock us by saying good-bye. The Second-in-Command, our late Company Commander, was with the C.O. In his speech he stated that although he was not now in the company, his heart was still with us and he wished us every success during the coming year. The Adjutant, our Company Commander, the Quartermaster and the R.S.M. were also there to drink our health and pray that the M.C. would not call upon them to perform in either song or speech. The dinner was consumed in no uncertain manner. Beer was plentiful and was flowing even before the eats arrived—some said they wanted an appetite with which to face the good

stuff to come, others were more honest and confessed that they liked good beer at any time. The company officers were prevailed upon to give a song, and, surprisingly, they did. They all performed with honours and we were surprised at the talent shown.

During the month we said good-bye to Lieut. B— and Sgt. Abel. Lieut. B— we may have with us again shortly—the boys sincerely hope so. Sgt. Abel has gone on a shallowing course near the hills of —.

Now for "Oska". "Oska" is a bird-like affair, lays big eggs and has caused vague uneasiness round here. If he drops something on you, don't expect luck—you've had it, for good. There is a reward of 50 pt. for him, dead or alive, offered by the Company Commander. Anyone knowing of his whereabouts should communicate with extension 18 straight away. A further and more detailed description will be given to all at a later date (we hope).

In the meantime, we extend our deepest sympathy to the contractor whom "Oska" caused to nose-dive into a lot of barbed wire, where he remained until retrieved by our rescue party.

### "B" Company.

After a particularly onerous tour of duty at a station where guards were so numerous that it was always a struggle to find even a billet orderly, it was with mixed feelings that we heard that our nomadic life was to be continued and once more we were to move. Our feelings were much more definite when we reached our destination, for once again we had no sooner arrived than we were called upon to produce an amazing number of guards and inlying picquets, etc. In addition, once again we are on detachment and we seem to have (with the exception of Lieut. M— and his platoon) picked one of the worst places possible. Luckily our duties are so many that the time spent out of camp is more than that spent in, so we, I suppose, must not really grumble, for perhaps after the luxurious billets we have had during the past few months no comparison is really possible with our present station.

The past month has been somewhat uneventful except for certain duties which I cannot chronicle, for I know they would not pass the censor.

Considering the difficult times through which we are all passing at the moment, it was indeed a most pleasant surprise to see the well-laden tables and the excellent fare which was produced for us on Christmas Day. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all who assisted in the production of this magnificent array for all the hard work which they must have done to make the day the success it undoubtedly was.

Sport has occupied a minor place in our programme for the past month, but we have hopes now (men of course being available) to make up for lost time. For some considerable time we have been used to playing on fields which have been denuded of grass, so how our players will shape on the grass pitch adjacent to our new camp remains to be seen.

It is with great regret that we have bidden farewell to Lieut.-Colonel W—, who has left us on promotion to a higher appointment. During his tour of command he has done all in his power to make us the efficient battalion which we are, but has always at the same time studied the individual troubles and tribulations of us all. We can only wish him all the luck in his new job and sincerely hope that we may meet again under more favourable conditions than are at present prevailing.

We have also bidden farewell to Lieut. J—, who has taken up a more adventurous kind of life. With him have gone Cpl. Scheidat and L/Cpl. Kemp, the latter rather surprisingly, as he had become to be somewhat of an institution as Company Clerk.

To counteract these departures, we have to extend a welcome to Lieut. L—, recently posted to the company, and also the recent arrivals from the U.K.

We offer our congratulations to Sgt. Bailey on his recent promotion and hope that he will live long to enjoy the comforts of the Sergeants' Mess.

On the lighter side. It seems as if the move has at least done some little good for the glowing health displayed by one or two of the senior members of the company, namely P.S.M. Kille and the C.Q.M.S. speaks volumes for what a night's sleep can do for one when they have been used to constantly coming home with the milk. It must, I feel sure, be hard to part with those whom we hold near and dear, but in the delights which are offered in the nearby town, I feel sure their sore hearts will soon be assuaged. Luckily there is a curfew here, and they will be forced to find their bedcots at a really respectable hour, so their general health should not suffer unduly.

In closing, we wish good luck to the married families, who have been evacuated to a more pleasant and less dangerous spot. It should offer no end of amusement in the future travelling round the world to collect one's family.

#### "C" Company.

Once again it has been found very difficult to compile the monthly notes, but nevertheless there are a few outstanding items which I am sure will be of interest.

First and foremost we offer heartiest congratulations to our Commanding Officer on his promotion, and all are sorry to lose him, but our loss is certainly another's gain. We welcome back our O.C., Captain K—, who has again taken command. It was good to see him again and we hope he has now fully recovered from his recent operation and that he will have a long stay.

It is almost impossible to write here of the many who have left since the last notes, but it would be discourteous not to mention Lieut. W—, Lieut. W—, P.S.M. Hanson, Sgts. Carr and Berry and Cpls. Underwood and Payne, all of whom had been with us for some considerable time. Some of them will be rejoining the company later on, but to those who have gone for good we wish the best of luck and every success in their various missions. All the gaps in the ranks have not yet been filled, but we are glad to welcome Lieut. D— S— and Sgt. O'Keefe, both from "B" Company.

A very enjoyable time was had by all over Christmas. Despite the handicap of duties over the holiday, everybody was able to get a certain amount of time off, of which the most possible use was made. Special thanks go out to the C.Q.M.S. and the cooks, to the former for providing such generous "big weeks", and to the latter for putting up such a good show for the Christmas dinner. It was very pleasant to see the cooks enjoying themselves in traditional fashion after their work was over, though one is a little perplexed as to what Bonce Fordham meant when he said that he was finished with Chalky for ever. Perhaps this has some special significance in the cookhouse?

We were very sorry to leave our last station, and judging by the crowd that came to see us off, they were very sorry to see us go. There is no doubt that all ranks made plenty of friends in the town, and judging by the number of letters that come up for censorship,

it seems that these friendships are being kept up. We notice that already certain individuals are starting the same game here, and it looks as though the sailors will have to look to their reputation of having a wife in every port while we are on the move.

Unfortunately there are not quite the same facilities for sport here, though every effort is being made to get things going. However, we have now taken to fishing and nearly everyone is by now a more or less efficient fisherman and a thoroughly accomplished liar. Tinkle Bell is the leading light, and after trying bait of all descriptions, he has landed (or says he has) a really good catch. Most of us are wondering how much it cost him, but anyway we have to thank him for some excellent suppers. Before leaving the subject of sport, we must congratulate DeVos, Price and Woodman on winning their respective finals in the boxing tournament. The two latter have also distinguished themselves on the football field as have a number of others. In fact this is a very sporty company altogether; it is even whispered that certain members of the Sergeants' Mess very often have a quiet game of solo in the evenings, but that is only hearsay.

#### "D" Company.

Always the festival of Christmas lights up the days of the dying year, and this year was no exception. Owing to the call of duty, the company was unable to celebrate on Christmas Day itself, but no time was lost on succeeding days. The Commanding Officer paid a visit to the company assembled for the Christmas dinner, and on this occasion he bade us farewell. The C.S.M. replied on behalf of the company, and he expressed in well-chosen words both our regret at his departure and our good wishes for the future.

For many of the company the past month has been spoilt by the outbreak of disease, which necessitated the isolation of the platoons concerned. Fortunately the ban was lifted before Christmas, and the personnel of the affected platoons fully appreciated their newly-found freedom and celebrated in no uncertain manner. Our genial C.Q.M.S. was inundated by "big week chitties", and as a result many bought their way to high spirits. We have two queries concerning this period of the company's history. Firstly, we would like to know if the man who spent the night in a slit-trench prefers this method of taking his rest, and secondly we would like to know if the man who was seen to be fishing in a pail of muddy water ever found that which he sought.

As regards sport, we have rarely been able to field a truly representative side owing to the isolation of two platoons, but whenever we have been able to place our best side in the field, it has always given a good account of itself.

MAGISTER.

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## "C" Coy.—Continued from p. 118.

We had an interesting shooting match with the Home Guard, the result of which was to win for us by 221 points to 212. If any other company has any first class shots, we are prepared to take them on at any time.

Two games of soccer have been played—between Nos. 13 and 15 Platoons. No. 13 winning the first game by 8—2, and No. 15 winning the second game, strangely enough, by the same score.

The company's bouquets this month are awarded to Pte. Hastings and L/Cpl. Pinsey for winning the battalion's first and second prizes respectively in the Churchill Essay Competition. We expected to collar one prize, but are very bucked at winning both.

FANACKAPAN.

## "D" Company.

We take the opportunity of congratulating Sgt. Cox on his marriage, and extend our "sympathies" to Mrs. Cox, and hope that they will both be very, very happy.

We have once again had a dance in aid of the Mayor of —'s Air Raid Relief Fund, which was a complete success. Officers from Battalion H.Q. attended *en masse* and had a really enjoyable evening—especially in view of the large refreshment accounts distributed afterwards! which goes to prove that the ancient adage "After the Lord Mayor's Show comes the headache" was no exception.

Over Easter we indulged in strenuous games of soccer, baseball and darts. A film show—"Somewhere in England"—wound up a very welcome holiday for the hard work soldiering of B—.

We welcome 2/Lieut. E—, late of the Palestine Police, to the company, and wish him every success; and congratulate Cpl. Sluman on scoring for the brigade against the R.A.F.

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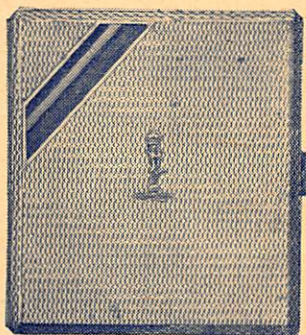
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