

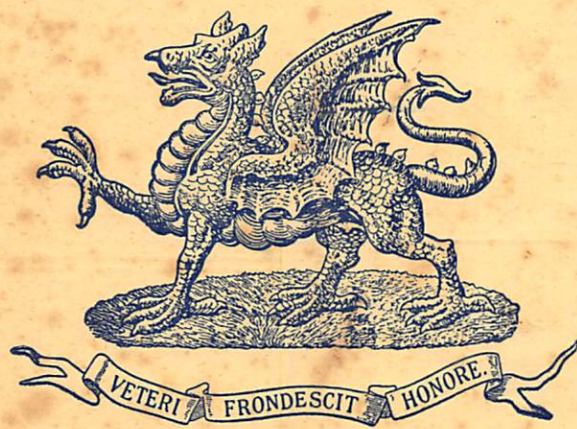
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No. 500

July, 1941

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JULY, 1941.

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Personalia.

THE Dowager Countess of Ypres, whose death occurred this month was the widow of the famous Field Marshal, the 1st Earl of Ypres. Colonel John French, as he was then, lived in the Depot Mess in 1896 and 1897 when in command of the Cavalry Brigade at Canterbury, and always took a great interest in the Buffs. One of his sisters married Colonel Harley who commanded the 1st Battalion in the Chitral Expedition.

We congratulate the Hon. J. H. S. Richardson, who was, in the Birthday Honours, awarded a Knighthood for his great services with the firm of Messrs. Andrew Yule and Co., Ltd. Calcutta.

Sir J. H. S. Richardson enlisted in the 5th Battalion The Buffs, in August, 1914 and was with the 1/5th Battalion in India and Mesopotamia.

He was recommended by the Commanding Officer for a commission in the Indian Army R. O. and was posted to Rajput Battalion.

Lieut. Col. Miles Beevor paid the Depot a surprise visit lately. His quartering duties have brought him nearer to us and we hope to see him more often now. Meanwhile his family remains at his house in Farnborough.

Lieut. Col. T. N. Penlington and Mrs. Penlington were staying in Canterbury lately and looked up many old friends in the neighbourhood during their short visit.

We are glad to have news of the following, and their activities in Oflag VII C.

George Hamilton has gathered round him a company of colonels, padres, dentists and doctors; "Trucky" Bruce and Joe Parry have been giving lessons in bridge; Raymond Grace sings in most of the shows with the dance band and has also started to give lessons in golf. George Denne and Maurice Hart are violinists in the orchestra; Bill Rawlings boxes and acts; Ernest Edlmann acts and Stephenson sings. Bertie Harwood used to act but has been transferred to a camp in Poland. West runs the library; Tony Green's chief pastime is that of acting and he has been asked to produce a show.

Lieut. Col. H. P. P. Robertson is at home, on leave from West Africa; Major R. W. M. Webster and Lieut. G. R. Dorrien-Smith have returned home for duty.

It is with great regret that we record the death of Lieut. Col. R. B. Sandilands, who died of wounds in June. We offer our deep sympathy to his relatives in their loss.

We regret to record the death, at the age of 26 years, of 2/Lieut. George P. West, who was killed in action in the Middle East, on May 26th. Formerly he served in the 4/5th Battalion and a few months before the outbreak of war rejoined the 4/5th Battalion from which he obtained a commission in the Leicestershire Regiment.

Before the war he held an appointment with the L. C. C. and in the Ministry of Transport as a Civil engineer Surveyor.

2/Lieut. S. G. Robinson at one time Weapon Training officer at the I.T.C., and now serving with a battalion of the N. Rhodesia Regt., writes that he is in hospital with a bullet wound in his left foot. We wish him a speedy recovery.

The proposal that Danish nationals of military age might come to the Regiment of which their King is Colonel-in-Chief, has lately received favourable comment in a leading article in *The Times* newspaper. We understand that the proposal is receiving consideration in high quarters.

6285414 L/Cpl. J. Thompson, Prisoner of War No. 5382 writes from Stalag XXA (107) on behalf of the men of the 2nd Battalion who are prisoners of war in the camp.

We are glad to hear that they are reasonably happy in their surroundings.

L/Cpl. Thompson would like to hear from his friends in the 2nd Battalion.

Births, Marriages and Deaths.

MARRIAGE.

Howard—Sharp.—On November 9th, 1940, at St. Austin's Church, Nairobi, Kenya, Captain Frederick Henry Howard, M.C., The Buffs, eldest son of Captain W. G. Howard, R.N., and Hon. Mrs. W. G. Howard, to Estelle Georgette, younger daughter of Mrs. W. B. Atkinson, of Londiani, Kenya, and the late Mr. Sharp.

DEATH.

McDouall.—On May 31st, 1941, at 46 Sturges Road, Wokingham, Brigadier-General Robert McDouall (The Buffs), husband of Mabel Constance (*nee* Pennington).

Mudd.—No. 1012, late Bandsman Horace Adolphus Mudd, at his home, Vancouver Road, Forrest Hill, aged 72 years.

Obituary.

Brigadier-General R. McDouall.

EDUCATED at Felsted and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, he joined The Buffs as a subaltern on January 9th, 1892, from which point his promotions were: October 4th, 1893, Lieutenant; November 13th, 1899, Captain; August 4th, 1910,

Major; June 3rd, 1915, Brevet-Lieut.-Colonel; April 27th, 1919, Lieut.-Colonel. In August, 1916, he became acting Brigadier-General, which rank he retained on his retirement in 1923. He was afterwards appointed to the command of a Territorial infantry brigade.

With the 1st Battalion The Buffs in 1895 he served with the Chitral Relief Force under Sir Robert Low, for which he held the medal with clasp. He took part in the engagements of Panjkoran River and Mamugai (medal and clasps) and in the South African War, during which he was twice mentioned in despatches and awarded the D.S.O., he was with the 2nd Battalion at the actions at Klip Drift, Paardeberg (including the engagement at Kitchener's Kopje) and Driefontein and at the occupation of Bloemfontein. For this war he held the Queen's Medal with four clasps and the King's Medal with two clasps.

During the Great War, General McDouall was for a time in command of the 1st Battalion before being appointed G.S.O.I. and then a brigade commander. He was six times mentioned in despatches, and received the C.M.G. in 1917, the C.B. in 1919 and the C.B.E. in 1920. He was also an Officer of the Legion d'Honneur and a Knight of the Danish Order of Dannebrog.

Brigadier-General McDouall, who was in his 70th year, was the son of the late John McDouall, of Stranraer, Scotland, and married in 1909 Mabel Constance, daughter of General Sir C. R. Pennington, K.C.B. There is one son, Robin, who is serving as a pilot-officer in the R.A.F., and a daughter, Miss Nan McDouall.

For several years he had lived in the Lower Hardres district and in the Old Dover Road, Canterbury, and had taken a keen interest in the social and sporting life of East Kent. He was a great lover of cricket and attended many of the Kent and St. Lawrence Cricket Club games. An enthusiastic golfer, he was for several years an active member of the Canterbury Golf Club and of The Buffs Golfing Society.

General McDouall was an enthusiastic member of the Past and Present Association, The Buffs and served on the Regimental Committee. He regularly attended the Regiment's Annual Service of Remembrance at Canterbury Cathedral, the Kent War Memorial Services on August Bank Holidays and was a familiar figure at The Buffs enclosure during Cricket Weeks.

Robert McDouall.

It has been said that the worst of growing old is that one loses so many of one's old friends. This has been brought home to me very much of recent years, but never more so than when I heard of the death of my dear friend Robert McDouall. I met him first nearly fifty years ago when he joined the 1st Battalion in Calcutta and I was Adjutant. With him joined Bill Trevor, who became perhaps Robert's closest friend. Robert McDouall and Bill Trevor were from the beginning quite outstanding. Both eventually commanded battalions and both won many decorations.

Very early in his service Robert began to shew himself a leader, for shortly after the 1st Battalion reached Jullundur in 1893, a remarkably fine lot of young officers joined us. R. E. Power, F. S. Reeves, C. L. Porter, Aeneas Perkins—to mention only a few. Quite unobtrusively Robert became their leader, and a very fine leader he proved. He was in no small degree instrumental in the early upbringing of some of the finest officers the Regiment has ever had. In another article I have mentioned what I consider were Robert's main characteristics as I saw them, namely extreme

kindness of heart, superb gallantry in action and a never-failing cheerfulness in all circumstances. But he had another marked characteristic—his great love of horses. He was never so happy as when he had a horse under him. When the 1st Battalion was at Aldershot he became Master of the Aldershot Drag, and I have always heard that he was one of the finest Masters the Aldershot Drag ever had.

It was a particular joy to me that I served with him at the Depot in 1896-97, when he shewed himself an ideal trainer of recruits and was the life and soul of the Mess. It may interest the old brigade to know that his Colour-Sergeant was the present Captain Tom Cook, and mine was the late Major Fred Foster, and that that splendid Buff Tash Bennell was Sergeant-Major of the Depot.

It can be said of very few that they never had an enemy in the world. It can be confidently said of Robert McDouall. It is certain at any rate that everyone in the Regiment who knew him, loved and admired him and I know they will join me in saying that Canterbury, with which he was so closely associated, can never again be the same to us without Robert McDouall.

In our own sorrow, all our hearts will go out in deepest sympathy to Robert's family and especially to the devoted and gracious lady who meant so much to him during their 39 years of married life.

A.L.B.

Brigadier-General Robert McDouall.

May one who served as a very junior officer under Robert McDouall twenty-six years ago add a few words to the tributes which his immediate contemporaries are paying to him.

When I joined the 1st Battalion in February, 1915, McDouall was Second-in-Command to Julian Hasler. I believe that they were great personal friends, having served together in the Regiment for many years.

Hasler left us to command a Brigade and to die in action at Ypres so soon afterwards, and McDouall was faced with the task of succeeding a man who seemed marked for the highest possible military position and who inspired an exceptional degree of affection and respect in all who served under him.

McDouall had one great characteristic in common with Hasler; he was a natural soldier. Nature had given him a gallant spirit, a commanding presence and the saving sense of humour which tempers even martial qualities.

To a young subaltern, McDouall was a towering figure, physically and otherwise. When he assumed severity it was something to quail at. But it was usually assumed. He was as likely as not to meet one off duty an hour or so afterwards and say: "Comment ça va, mon brave?" as if "The Mat" had never been under one's feet.

It is not disparaging to him to say that he had a pronounced histrionic sense. His contemporaries say that he was a born "gaffer". A story will illustrate this. It comes from one who served with him in an even earlier war.

In South Africa McDouall and his command (a M.I. Company, I imagine) captured some 200 Boers. When he brought his prisoners into camp he rode at their head, erect in the saddle, deadly serious, with his rifle butt on his right thigh and held at a jaunty angle. It was a grand moment for him and he relished the drama of it. But as he rode in past some of his friends

they saw a deliberate and almost audible wink flutter an eyelid. One can almost hear him say: "Captives of my bow and spear, old boy!"

When he strode through the streets of Armentières in 1915, I think he often pictured himself with cloak and sword, bent on some D'Artagnan-like quest. He certainly needed little disguise to fill the part.

It would be grievously wrong to assume that this light-hearted make-believe was all the man. This side of him is mentioned because it was an essential part of his endearing nature. He was a thoughtful and serious soldier when it was necessary, but he was never a solemn nor a pompous one.

At the risk of being accused of "praising things that are past", I say that McDouall was conspicuous even in an age when men *did* stand out from their fellows. I fancy he was less comfortable in this internal-combustion, mass-production time.

One can easily imagine the roar of welcome that greeted him when as of right he strode in to join old comrades in Valhalla.

M.

Mr. W. H. Sandom.

William Henry Sandom died recently at the age of 65 years, following an operation at the Kent and Canterbury Hospital. In the days of the 1st Volunteer Battalion, The Buffs, he attained the rank of Colour-Sergeant.

He was Chairman of the Ramsgate Branch of the Past and Present Association from 1933 to 1937.

The Regimental Gazette.

SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF TUESDAY, MAY 27TH, 1941, DATED FRIDAY, MAY 30TH, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

COMMANDS AND STAFF.

Col. (temp. Brig.) H. de R. Morgan, D.S.O. (12009), to be a Comdr. and is granted the actg. rank of Maj.-Gen. (May 8th, 1941).

REGULAR ARMY.

EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS, ETC.

THE BUFFS.—2nd Lt. E. A. H. Collins (138587), from Wilts. R., to be 2nd Lt. (May 31st, 1941), retaining his present seniority.

REGULAR ARMY.

EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS (CADETS).

The undermentioned Cadets, from O.C.T.U.'s, to be 2nd Lts. (May 17th, 1941):—

THE BUFFS.—Kenneth Robert Walker (186957), John Monier Bickersteth (186958), George Henry Cresswell (186959), Alan Bedford Smith (186960).

SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF FRIDAY, MAY 30TH, 1941, DATED TUESDAY, JUNE 3RD, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS, ETC.

THE BUFFS.—C.S.M. Joseph Jones (188108) to be Lt. (October 1st, 1940).

THIRD SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF TUESDAY, JUNE 3RD, 1941, DATED FRIDAY, JUNE 6TH, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS, ETC.

THE BUFFS.—2nd Lt. M. J. Hearn (138202), from R.W. Fus., to be 2nd Lt. (June 7th, 1941), retaining his present seniority. 2nd Lt. A. J. Parish (138284), from R.W. Fus., to be 2nd Lt. (June 7th, 1941), retaining his present seniority.

THIRD SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF FRIDAY, JUNE 6TH, 1941, DATED TUESDAY, JUNE 10TH, 1941.

TERRITORIAL ARMY.

ROYAL ARMY SERVICE CORPS.—Capt. W. Allbeury, M.C. (41495), from The Buffs (T.A.R.O.), to be Capt. (May 25th, 1941), retaining his present seniority.

REGULAR ARMY.

EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS (CADETS).

The undermentioned Cadet, from O.C.T.U., to be 2nd Lt. (May 24th, 1941):—

THE BUFFS.—Norman Frederick Smith (187732).

WAR OFFICE ORDERS.

No. 22 ISSUED ON MAY 29TH, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS.

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

THE BUFFS.—H. de L. Walters (34294) (October 6th, 1940).

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

THE BUFFS.—T. Prentice, M.C. (141533) (October 27th, 1940).

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

THE BUFFS.—R. F. Kemp (102462) (May 25th, 1941).

The undermentioned 2nd Lts. to be War Subs. Lts. (May 27th, 1941):—

THE BUFFS.—R. W. Croucher (103349), D. N. Macleod (110179).

REGULAR ARMY RESERVE OF OFFICERS.

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

THE BUFFS.—C. Haggard (27197) (March 8th, 1941).

TERRITORIAL ARMY.

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

THE BUFFS.—D. A. Boyd (70347) (February 17th, 1940). (Substituted for the notfn. in War Office Orders No. 16/1941.) G. G. Bennett (67220) (February 20th, 1941).

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

THE BUFFS.—A. D. Harrison (90294) (July 13th, 1940).

TERRITORIAL ARMY RESERVE OF OFFICERS.

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

THE BUFFS.—L. A. R. Braddell (5467) (March 8th, 1941).

WAR OFFICE ORDERS.

No. 23 ISSUED ON JUNE 5TH, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

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

THE BUFFS.—P. B. Plumtre (64242) (June 1st, 1941).

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

THE BUFFS.—H. P. Gillilan, M.C. (131722) (June 4th, 1941).

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

THE BUFFS.—C. W. Warren (113919) (September 23rd, 1940); A. R. Heaton, M.C. (119223) (October 5th, 1940); E. D. Fitz-Gerald (120339) (January 2nd, 1941); F. R. M. Palengat (107185) (March 21st, 1941); A. Benzecry, M.C. (142155) (May 28th, 1941).

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

THE BUFFS.—A. V. Lister (103121) (June 4th, 1941).

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

THE BUFFS.—L. B. Critchley (145020) (May 5th, 1941); J. L. Trender (137420) (May 6th, 1941); R. S. Simpson (124122) (June 2nd, 1941).

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

THE BUFFS.—E. C. Hilder (110036) (December 17th, 1940).

REGULAR ARMY RESERVE OF OFFICERS.

THE BUFFS.—Lt. (temp. Capt.) (actg. Maj.) E. A. Wooldridge (10943) to be temp. Maj. and War Subs. Capt. (June 1st, 1941).

SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF FRIDAY, JUNE 13TH, 1941, DATED TUESDAY, JUNE 17TH, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS, ETC.

ARMY CATERING CORPS.

The undermentioned to be 2nd Lt.:—

S/Sgt. Hector Ernest Chambers (188179), from The Buffs (May 24th, 1941).

SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO THE LONDON GAZETTE OF TUESDAY, JUNE 17TH, 1941, DATED FRIDAY, JUNE 20TH, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS (CADETS).

The undermentioned Cadets, from O.C.T.U., to be 2nd Lts. (May 31st, 1941):—

THE BUFFS.—Harry Bailey (189158), Hubert John Nelson (189159), George Martin Amey (189160), Charles Hamish Moreland Greig (189161), Charles Joseph Johnstone (189162), Harold Buxton Symons Julian (189163), Norman Francis Rowlandson (189164), John Courtenay Williams-Treffgarne (189165).

WAR OFFICE ORDERS.

No. 24 ISSUED ON JUNE 12TH, 1941.

REGULAR ARMY.

The undermentioned Colonel (actg. Brig.) to be temp. Brig. :—

H. de R. Morgan, D.S.O. (12009) (August 22nd, 1940).

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

THE BUFFS.—C. Hayward, M.C. (146902) (June 7th, 1941); H. Haymen (146901) (June 8th, 1941).

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

THE BUFFS.—S. J. S. Moore (58811) (June 10th, 1941); J. H. M. Dawson (40632) (June 12th, 1941).

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

THE BUFFS.—G. L. Foster (147173) (February 26th, 1941).

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

THE BUFFS.—W. C. Perkins (136675) (July 15th, 1940). (Substituted for notifi. in War Office Orders No. 17/1941.)

REGULAR ARMY RESERVE OF OFFICERS.

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

THE BUFFS.—H. G. W. Green (74107) (now deceased) (September 25th, 1940). (Substituted for notifi. in War Office Orders No. 20/1931, under "R. North'd Fus.")

TERRITORIAL ARMY.

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

THE BUFFS.—L. H. Dismore (78541) (June 4th, 1941).

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

THE BUFFS.—R. M. V. Marchand (85066) (January 31st, 1941).

TERRITORIAL ARMY RESERVE OF OFFICERS.

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

THE BUFFS.—A. Broadley (16676) (May 24th, 1941).

THE BUFFS.—2nd Lt. (actg. Capt.) W. M. Denham (59695) to be temp. Capt. and War Subs. Lt. (January 18th, 1941).

Our Contemporaries

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

- "The London Scottish Regimental Gazette" (June, 1941).
- "The Oak Tree" (Spring and Summer, 1941).
- "The Green Howards' Gazette" (May).
- "Our Empire" (May).
- "The Sapper" (June, 1941).
- "The Snapper" (June, 1941).
- "The Tank" (June, 1941).
- "The Suffolk Regimental Gazette" (March—April, 1941).
- "The Iron Duke" (June, 1941).

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P.R.I., 9th Battalion, The Buffs	...	1	2	0
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Book Corner.

WAR-TIME READING.

A Few Suggestions.

IT would be interesting if that organisation which undertakes researches into public opinion on any given topic could find out what people read during war-time.

The detective story would certainly come very high in the list. The probable or improbable adventures of some sleuth, amateur for preference, always excite the interest of the average reader and we have seen it proclaimed by several eminent men that they find such literature a pleasant form of relaxation.

I can well believe what they say although I do not fully share their enthusiasm. I occasionally pick up and read with some attention stories of the mystery of this or that; how the great detective solved the problem, usually with greater speed and accuracy than "The Yard" is popularly supposed to display. Detective fiction writers are the most numerous section of all who follow the exacting profession of the novelist. In war-time the sale of their work is doubtless greatly increased because, with violence on the grand scale the common experience, it is not strange that people should turn for escape to the fictional killings of individuals, since the puzzle element is an invariable ingredient of such stories. I cannot claim to have read many detective novels. As a boy, I devoured Edgar Allen Poe's *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*. He and Gaboriau, the Frenchman, were the originators of this school of fiction. I still retain my early affection for Sherlock Holmes. Conan Doyle's craftsmanship and literary skill have stood the test of a good many years, and Holmes's logical processes of reasoning and methods will always fascinate. I have read most of the collections several times. Although the tales were set in the period of hansom cabs and gas-lit streets and are therefore "dated", they still fascinate me and a great many other readers too. E. C. Bentley's *Trent's Last Case*, a much more recent book, established a high reputation for the writer which he was content to rest upon for some years until he wrote, in collaboration with another author, a sort of sequel which was comparatively disappointing. Quite different in form are "The Raffles" stories by E. W. Hornung. Here the theme was not detection of crime but its perpetration by a man in a good social position; "The Amateur Cracksman", as he was so ingeniously styled. A man who could play cricket for the Gentlemen at Lord's by day and pick locks and steal jewels by night was something different. Raffles justifiably became a very popular character. The dice was certainly loaded in his favour by reason of his chivalry; he robbed the unpleasant rich and helped lame dogs in the manner of a modern counterpart of Robin Hood. They are very good yarns, told by a master of the art of story telling. Those who don't know Raffles and Bunny, his often unwilling admirer and confederate, have a treat in store.

The "Tough" School.

In recent years some writers, breaking fresh ground, have concentrated on the criminal and his misdeeds with great effect. The outstanding book in this class is, in my view, *Malice a forethought*, by Francis Iles. This is a subtle psychological study of a murderer as well as an enthralling story. Then from U.S.A. came "tough" books dealing with the criminal. The most impressive of these was one called *The Postman always Rings Twice*, an utterly unsentimental piece of work which is so brutally dispassionate that its effect is at times almost intolerable. English authors entered this field shortly afterwards and one, James Curtis, soon

established a reputation for himself. His first story, *The Gilt Kid*, a study of a cat burglar, was an immediate success, and his later books, *There ain't no Justice*, in which low class pugilism is the main theme, and *They Drive by Night*, which is a study of criminal mentality with a background of long-distance lorry drivers, showed that his first effort was no mere lucky shot.

Travel and Reminiscence.

Tastes differ, and I can vouch only for my own. Personally I find travel and reminiscences excellent "escape". Two books which I have read lately, and which gave me great pleasure and entertainment, are *The Spotted Lion*, by Gandar Dower, and *Kamet Conquered*, by J. S. Smythe. The first is a witty and unpretentious account of how the author went out to Africa to look for a specimen of the spotted lion reputed to be at large there. The other is a vivid record of mountaineering by one of the most famous climbers living. I have never wanted to shoot a lion, or any other animal for that matter, but Gandar Dower's book was real entertainment. As for climbing mountains, I can think of few things I want to do less, and yet I am always interested to read of the adventures of those intrepid and determined men who set themselves the task of reaching the summit of some massive peak. Incidentally, they usually write well about their efforts.

Humour.

There is one other class of book which is a good "escape"—that is the humorous novel. Here Wodehouse is right at the top and his many admirers look forward eagerly to the publication of the book he is said to be writing in a German Concentration Camp. Wodehouse is an artist who really knows his job. His many imitators have shown that it is not easy to produce farcical fiction without appearing to strain after an effect. When a writer's characters are discussed by highbrows, midbrows and lowbrows with enthusiasm, and clubs are formed to honour him, it means he has created something worth while. The name alone of one character, probably the best of the big bunch, I mean Stanley Featherstonehaugh Utridge, is a stroke of genius. Long live Wodehouse, and may the day soon return when he is once more in our midst making us laugh again at the engaging imbecilities of his fascinating fatheads.

Evelyn Waugh is another humorist, as different from Wodehouse as can be, whose work is deservedly popular, but with a smaller public. I cannot remember how often I have read and laughed at *Decline and Fall*. I must, however, sorrowfully admit that one at least of my friends can't stand it at any price. For the third time the other day I read *Vile Bodies* again, and propose to get hold of *Black Mischief* and revel in its delicious irony for the second time. Evelyn Waugh's irony is sometimes bitter to the point of brutality, but it is none the less diverting. It may seem strange to go from Humour to Romance, but I have left for the last what far better judges than I consider to be the best romantic novel of the last fifty years. It is called in its omnibus form *The Penhales*. The author was Crosbie Garstin. It actually consists of three full length books entitled *The Owl's House*, *High Noon* and *The West Wind*. They are the most colourful stories and packed with swift adventure. They are more than that; good writing, great depth of feeling and wide knowledge are all present in them. Something, in fact, for everybody, which is saying a good deal for a novel. Why the film people have not been trampling each other to

With The Buffs During 1940.

HAVING been with The Buffs since July, 1939, when the first batch of Militia were called up, I naturally have had many interesting experiences, but none more so than those with the B.E.F. and later on in England and elsewhere, during 1940. From a few hastily written records which I have kept the following notes have been compiled—they may prove interesting to others—they may not!

JANUARY. N—. Having been in France since the beginning of November, most of the boys could "Parlez vous francais" in a style that made the raw recruits who were constantly coming over really envious. Weather in the town in which we were stationed was bitter and living in garages was not at all pleasant. The only real pleasure we got of life in those days was during the evening when "Midgett" used to come round with the mail—mail was regular in those days, too.

We made many friends from the lads of the N.A.A.F.I., many of whom came from Kent. Nothing to do in the evenings; what could be more welcome than a game of darts before a roaring fire, even if it was not always possible to get "double top" first time?

FEBRUARY. N—. With the advent of a new month a glorious rumour came into being. Someone, goodness alone knows who, said that leave would commence about the middle of the month. Not many rumours turn out true, but this one did and on the 18th of the month the key men of the battalion sailed for home and loved ones. Ten days in England was just the tonic needed to bring most of the fellows up to scratch again and eagerly the return of the first batch was awaited so that yet still more could cross the Channel.

MARCH. N—. During the month of March the writer was fortunate to be included among the lucky ones to enjoy a spell of leave in "Blighty" and his experiences are told here.

Late one Thursday evening a 'phone call from Base H.Q. told us that owing to various changes in train timings, the leave party would be leaving N— a day earlier. It is easy to visualise just what rushes that new order caused. Men had to be paid, presents purchased, rations for the journey drawn and then the packing! It was bad enough coming out with just ordinary kit, but after three months everyone had collected a bit more and together with a few souvenirs the kitbags were more than full. A common phrase to be heard was: "Look after this till I return, Bill". Needless to say, Bill did!

The day for our departure dawned cold but sunny, and with F.S.M.O. all "over us", we walked, not marched, to the large and gloomy station, "G'ar D'Orleans". The train was on time and just after noon we bid good-bye to N— and settled down for a 500-mile ride across France to the coast.

At Le Mans, the great French junction, we drew into a siding and enjoyed "bully and biscuits" for tea, and whilst we were there, welcomed some of "A" Company boys back from England. My word, talk about dismal faces, and probably the most drawn out one of the whole bunch was "Spindle" D—.

We soon forgot them, however, and settled down to spend the night in the train. Sleep was out of the question as station after station flashed by—Amiens, Paris, and then as the grey streaks of dawn appeared we pulled into Boulogne. After walking up to the Rest Camp for a bite and wash, we embarked on the *Maid of Kent* and so to Dover. What mixed feelings we

all experienced when the white chalk cliffs first put in an appearance.

No Customs to worry over—nothing to declare—straight through to the pay desk, where £2 10s. 0d. was given us,—and so HOME. What welcomes were received, and what thrills were experienced cannot be put on paper, and I'm not trying.

Just sufficient to say that the ten days passed by far, far too quickly, and all too soon we were packing again, and going over the same ground, back once more to the boys who were going home. This time we were the ones with dismal faces. "Dougy" I— and Dr. L— were with our party and they were no exception! The common thought was, "And when shall I be seeing them again?"

It's easy to fall into the old routine again. It's easy to march up and down with a rifle on the left shoulder, saluting to the right and to the left, but it's not so easy to forget those you love and have left behind. There's always the thought that away in Germany one man has caused all that pain and suffering, so LET ME GET AT THOSE GERMANS!!!

APRIL. N—. The month opened with us all doing the same old job—one of the companies which had been away on detachment came in to join us, and "A" Company moved down from the coast to be near at hand if wanted. The usual transfers were taking place and almost every day we welcomed new faces to our company. "B" Company were in very comfortable billets and were under the command of Captain Walker, a gentleman to his fingertips. A finer man would be hard to find and the welfare of his men was always his first consideration.

And so the days rolled by—every evening saw another day of war go by and one day NEARER PEACE.

MAY. N—. The month opened with N— just showing its glory. We had seen the town covered in snow, almost washed away by rain and with everyone walking about blue with cold, and so when the real loveliness of the city blossomed forth once again we all felt there was something worth living for. Many of the streets were really avenues, and on either side of the road the trees were turning into leaf when "out of the blue", so to speak, came our move orders.

Hurriedly we packed, and on May 18th, 1941 we bade *au revoir* to our home town and rode away to a large camp in the region of the Seine. Twelve hours in cattle trucks certainly helped to sharpen the appetite and at the camp where we were only destined to stay for a few hours, food certainly tasted as good as in any London Restaurant.

Before the month had passed we have moved almost all over the whole of Normandy and Brittany, had heard our first whistling of shells and had seen a town dive-bombed by enemy planes.

We were lucky, however, and for a fortnight we enjoyed the comforts of a French village. Here we found rest and quietude, because nesting in a small valley, nothing seemed to happen. Here we played billiards and drank new milk straight from the cow and ate eggs by the dozen almost before the poor birds had had time to finish laying them!!

JUNE. When things really started to happen and after the evacuation of D— had taken place, we had to leave this little haven of rest, cows, and chickens and set about doing the job which we were sent to France for. Consequently we moved in the direction of Dieppe and some eight km. outside the town we stopped on

some cross-roads. During the evening Captain Walker and I went for a little trip round the company front to see what was taking place—that was almost the last trip he took, because in the morning he was killed by a mortar bomb. Captain Price took over command and the following morning we moved forward along a railway line. Our "pasting", however, was not over, and with a "spotting" plane overhead all day, some accurate shelling took place. Casualties, for all that, were nil.

In the evening the news came through that we were to withdraw. WE DID.

From there we moved in bits and pieces and after several days of marching we eventually arrived in — and from there moved out even more quickly, and we had walked into an ambush! Here the battalion was split, but nevertheless we all left France through the same port within the week.

JULY. S—. Here we were very happily settled in civvy billets with some of the most homely of English folk. We couldn't stay where we were happy though, and those people that wear red hats moved the pawns on the chess board and away we soared to the Welsh border.

K—, where we were stationed under canvas. K—, where it neither stops raining, nor gives the mud a chance to dry. It was not a large place and we were several miles from the nearest town, which in itself was little better than a large village, but life is what you make it, and after all, it cannot rain for ever!!

SEPTEMBER. K—. Throughout the whole of August and September, life moved along very easily, and until the last week of the month we had great hopes of getting Christmas leave—what hopes! On the 24th we received the news that we should be moving East at any time and in 24 hours we were on our way home to "enjoy" embarkation leave.

Back from leave though and after our extra gear had been issued, we began to get impatient, but nothing further came through and as we moved into winter billets in a neighbouring town, our hopes again rose high of a Christmas in England.

OCTOBER.—Time went by quickly and work and training was in full swing when all our hopes were dashed to the ground and once more packing was very hurriedly done. One Saturday afternoon this packing started and after an exceedingly hectic couple of days we had left the town, seen biggest part of England, and before another Saturday had rolled round the majority of the lads had been seasick.

NOVEMBER. And still the waves roll by. On Armistice Day, after seeing many sights, and many countries, that will for ever live in my mind, we set foot again on dry ground, and this time in —. What a country—stone walls, stone walls and still more stone walls! Never mind, we are under canvas again but for all that very comfortable and we are settling down well to life under new conditions and in a new country.

Our first job on landing was to let our folks on the Home Front know where we were and for many days the cable office did a roaring trade.

DECEMBER. Having become more or less fed up with typing this diary, I can assure all readers that December will be short and sweet!

During the early days of the month and after suffering from the rather strong winds that blow around these parts (the Orderly Room tent having tried on more than one occasion to fly!), we moved into a comfortable house—more comfortable than we were in England.

Continued on p. 183.

25 Years Ago.

Correction.

[In our June issue we inadvertently printed details which should have applied to the 2/5th Battalion under the heading 1/5th Battalion. The latter battalion was, of course, in Mesopotamia at the time and was commanded by Lieut.-Colonel F. N. Thorne.

We are indebted to Colonel John Body for pointing out this error.—*Ed.*]

Extracts from "The War Dragon", July, 1916.

Mentioned in Despatches.

Among those mentioned in Despatches by General Sir Douglas Haig are the following Officers and other ranks of the Regiment:—

Major (temp. Lt.-Col.) H. D. Collison-Morley (Killed)	Lieut. L. A. Lea-Smith (Killed)
Major C. L. Porter	2/Lt. C. G. Jelf (Killed)
Major (temp. Lt.-Col.) L. W. Lucas	Lieut. A. S. Smeltzer
Capt. G. Lee	Capt. F. Phillips
Lt.-Col. E. H. Finch- Hatton, C.M.G., D.S.O.	Lt. E. H. A. Goss (Killed)
Capt. R. A. Pinhey	Pte. G. W. Jenrick
2/Lt. (temp. Lt.) B. E. Davies	L/Cpl. A. Cullen
Major G. A. E. Chapman	Cpl. H. Rose
Major A. Soames, D.S.O. (Killed)	L/Cpl. R. T. Grundlach
Capt. (temp. Maj.) B. E. Furley (Killed)	Pte. E. J. Payne
2/Lt. (temp. Capt.) H. W. Brodie (Killed)	Pte. J. Clancey
	Pte. W. J. Garlinge

(Casualties were heavy and long lists of fallen Buffs appeared in this issue. Some idea of the losses suffered by the Regiment up to July, 1916 can be gained from the Roll of Honour, printed in the July number. It contains the names of eighty-two officers.—*Ed.*)

Prisoners Repatriated.

No. 4545 Cpl. G. A. Tritton, 2nd Battalion, Prisoner of War, was repatriated in August, 1915, his right arm having been amputated. On his return to England he was interviewed by the late Lord Kitchener and was granted the D.C.M. for services rendered under conditions of great personal danger. He was also presented by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty with a gold watch suitably inscribed, and has now been given employment in the War Office.

WHO'S WHO IN THE BUFFS.

Lt. & Q.M. A. Corney.

1st Bn. The Buffs.

Enlisted 7th November, 1893, serving with 2nd Battalion until November, 1895, when he joined the 1st Battalion in India. Has been with the 1st Buffs continuously since then, serving with them abroad in India, Burma and Aden.

CAMPAIGNS.—N.W. Frontier of India, 1897-98. During whole of present campaign has been with his Battalion in B.E.F.

NEWS FROM THE BATTALIONS.

1st Battalion.

(Lieut.-Col. E. H. Finch-Hatton, D.S.O., C.M.G. Commanding.)

Early in the month we had the good fortune to

welcome Col. Finch-Hatton, who rejoined us to take command again after being away since January, owing to illness. We were all very pleased to find his name among the Birthday Honours as "C.M.G." Maj. Green is now Second-in-Command. Among the Company Commanders there have been several changes. Capt. Pinhey has gone home for a rest, Capt. Morley has gone to the Royal Flying Corps as an Observer, and Lieut. Carter has unfortunately been admitted to hospital—we hope only temporarily, and wish him speedy recovery. Capt. Friend, Lieut. Corral and Lieut. Strauss have taken their places as Company Commanders. The following officers have recently joined:—2nd Lieuts. G. H. Smith and P. W. G. Kann from home, and 2nd Lieuts. G. R. Reid, F. Goodheart and J. A. Hoogterp on appointment from the Cadet School.

In addition to the C.M.G. awarded Colonel Finch-Hatton in the Birthday Honours List, Capt. Cattley was awarded a well earned Military Cross, while among the N.C.O.'s and men the award of the Military Medal was made to Sergt. Viggers (whom we much regret did not live to receive it), Sergt. Trigg (who has been our Transport Sergeant during the whole campaign), and L/Corpls. Cullen and Jenrick. All the recipients are heartily congratulated.

On the 19th we said "good-bye" to R.Q.M.S. "Joe" Mills, who has gone to pension after serving for 22 years in the Regiment. He was given a great send-off by everyone, and will be greatly missed. Q.M.S. Martin takes his place as R.Q.M.S.

We have much pleasure in recording below the remarks in Orders by a Major-General at the Front:—

"One point in Discipline which is lacking at the present time is smartness. Smartness means cleanliness, good turn-out, soldier like bearing, alacrity of movement, and correct payment of compliments." This morning as he happened to drive in a closed car through the billets of an Infantry unit their behaviour was so marked that he stopped to enquire who they were, and expressed the pleasure though not surprise which it gave him to know that it was the 1st Battalion of the "Buffs".

"The men of this distinguished Battalion, some of whom were walking about the streets and others sitting down as he drove through, at once sprang to attention and saluted. Several Guards were turned out before his car, which was moving quickly, reached them. It was sufficient for this smart Battalion to see a closed car (and possibly the Divisional Flag) coming for them to get ready to pay the proper compliments. The men were properly dressed, and their buttons and badges glittered in the sun."

The Major-General remarks that he had a similar experience when driving through the billets of the Guards Division.

3rd Battalion.

The following names of Headquarters Staff, Warrant Officers and Senior N.C.O.'s will interest our readers:—

In Command, Lieut.-Col. H. D. Hirst; Second-in-Command, Major R. G. A. Marriott, D.S.O.; Adjutant, Major F. C. R. Studd; Quartermaster, Capt. W. R. Stainforth; Officer in Medical Charge, Capt. J. H. Dancy, R.A.M.C.; Asst.-Adjutant, Capt. L. C. Sargent; P.T. Instructor, Lieut. N. D. Rice; Musketry Officer, Lieut. W. A. Lepper; Mach.-Gun Officer, Lieut. C. R. Fay; Bombing Officer, 2nd-Lieut. J.

Chester. R.S.M. W. H. Cooke; Bandmaster G. W. Elvin; R.Q.M.S. A. Andrews; Acting-R.S.M. W. H. Port; R.S.M. (Attached) J. W. Kesby; Acting-R.Q.M.S. W. Tutt; O.R.S. A. Hatcher; O.R. Clerk, J. Monk; Acting-O.R. Clerk, F. Gilham; Sergt.-Drummer, G. Clayton; Pioneer-Sergt. A. F. Watts; Sergt.-Cook, N. Lane; Master Tailor, H. Wilson; Master Shoemaker, A. Moyes; Signalling Sergt., W. Morton; Machine-Gun Sergeant., C. Prior.

"A" COMPANY.—O.C. 2nd-Lieut. B. E. Davis; C.S.M. J. Marchant; C.Q.M.S. H. Dale.

"B" COMPANY.—O.C. 2nd-Lieut. W. B. Beale; C.S.M. W. Twort; C.Q.M.S. C. Ashby.

"C" COMPANY.—O.C. Capt. M. M. Brice; C.S.M. W. G. Ingram; C.Q.M.S. E. Kelly.

"D" COMPANY.—O.C. Capt. P. S. B. Hall; C.S.M. H. W. Port; C.Q.M.S. W. Tassell.

"E" COMPANY.—O.C. Capt. L. C. Sargent; C.S.M. R. Steptoe; C.Q.M.S. W. J. Barber.

"F" COMPANY.—O.C. Major P. A. S. Crawley; C.S.M. W. Jackson; C.Q.M.S. T. Smith.

"G" COMPANY.—O.C. Major P. A. S. Crawley; C.S.M. G. Fincher; C.Q.M.S. G. Barton.

"H" COMPANY.—O.C. Lieut. N. D. Rice; C.S.M. C. Hollands; C.Q.M.S. Gambrell.

Second 4th Battalion.

(Lieut.-Col. A. Vaughan Cowell. Commanding.)

Our R.S.M. is T. Holloway; R.Q.M.S. C. J. Mullet; C.S.M.s B. Wales ("A" Company), F. Fox ("B" Company), J. Buckley ("C" Company), W. J. Byrne ("D" Company); C.Q.M.S.s J. Beer ("A" Company), B. Wisdom ("B" Company); G. Barton ("C" Company); C. Stephens ("D" Company).

Third 4th Battalion.

(Lieut.-Col. L. C. R. Messell. Commanding.)

The following Officers and N.C.O.'s have left to join the 1/4th Battalion:—2nd Lieuts. Brewer, Russell, Dolben, Edwards, Saunders, Kear and Seale; Sergts. Bugden, Levey, Parry, Eccott, Horan, Chappell; L-Corpls. Green, Hutchings, Hart, Collins, Hancox. They take with them the best wishes of their comrades.

Captain T. S. Emery has been attached for duty to the 4/4th Royal West Kent Regiment.

2nd Lieuts. H. L. Jones and C. J. Watson have joined.

2nd Lieut. Goode, attached to another unit, has been wounded in France.

First 5th Battalion.

(Lieut.-Col. J. Munn Mace, T.D. Commanding.)

All Battalions of the Regiment will read with pride the following address by General Aylmer to our 1/5th Battalion:—

"Men of the 5th Buffs, Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men:—I come here in the first place to thank you all for the valuable assistance you have rendered to me as your Brigade Commander in the Field.

"In the second place to congratulate you on the honour that you have brought to yourselves as a Battalion and to the distinguished Regiment in the Service to which you belong. There is no more distinguished Regiment in the Service than The Buffs and no more distinguished Battalion in it now than the Weald of Kent Battalion.

"No Battalion, no Regular Battalion of seasoned soldiers, could have done better than you have done, and I cannot tell you how much I appreciate what you have done for me and the Forces.

"You are a credit to the Regiment you belong to, a credit to your Country and the Empire, and I thank you very much for all you have done for me."

We may also quote an extract from a letter written home by one of the Company Commanders:—

"Our boys were simply magnificent, were like bulldogs and nothing could stop them, they carried out all orders and were as cool as if on a field day, and shrapnel and machine guns were absolutely terrific and everybody in a regiment (one of the best) that went up with us said very nice things about us."

(The above tributes appear to refer to operations in Mesopotamia, where the 5th Battalion saw some very heavy fighting. *Ed. Dragon.*)

Second 5th Battalion.

(Lieut.-Col. Viscount Goschen, V.D. Commanding.)

Who's Who in the 2/5th Battalion The Buffs.

In Command: Lieut.-Col. The Viscount Goschen.

Adjutant: Capt. R. M. Oliver.

Transport Officer: Lieut. J. E. Spickernell.

Quartermaster: Lieut. G. Simmers.

Machine Gun Officer: Lieut. C. V. Rice.

Company Commanders: Capts. G. L. Lushington, N. G. Wale, R. V. Rice, C. W. Jennett.

R.S.M.: H. Grover.

R.Q.M.S.: L. H. Back.

C.S.M.'s: R. Knott, A. Speakman, R. Martin, H. E. Poncer, R. S. Daw.

C.Q.M.'s: S. H. S. Marchant, E. Bennett, P. W. Ransley, W. Fenwick.

7th Battalion.

(Lieut.-Col. A. L. Ransome. Commanding.)

For the last ten months we have done duty in the trenches with but very rare and short intervals.

Recently we moved back from the trenches and found ourselves in a small camp, the beauty of whose surroundings would have delighted the aesthetic, but we had small chance to appreciate all this, for we worked hard digging during the whole of our stay there.

We subsequently left the camp and continued our journey. On our arrival at our present place of rest we learned with much pleasure that the following day was to be devoted to sports.

Had the Battalion been through much harder times than they had, had they dug harder (which was impossible) yet would they have entered with just as much zeal into all the sports of the day. Naturally, some were rather pessimistic concerning our results, seeing that we had been long out of training. With great surprise and delight, however, the results came out, headed by our Battalion with twenty prizes, 1st, 2nd and 3rd, against the next best, who only received half our total.

9th Battalion.

(Lieut.-Col. R. A. Reith. Commanding.)

The Brigade has also been inspected recently by G.O.C., Eastern Command, and by Major-General Egerton, Inspector-General of Infantry, both of whom reported very favourably on the Battalion.

Promotions and Appointments of N.C.O.'s:—

To be R.Q.M.S.—C.Q.M.S. Andrews.

To be C.Q.M.S.—Sergt. Welburn in place of C.Q.M.S. Golds (transferred).

Corpl. West vice R.Q.M.S. Andrews.

To be Sergts.—L-Sergt. Dear, L-Sergt. A. Smith.

To be unpaid R.S.M.—C.S.M. Way.

To be Acting Corporal—L-Corpl. Wood.

To be paid Lance-Corporal—L-Corpl. Alborough, L-Corpl. Jackson, L-Corpl. Miles, Pte. Withers, Pte. Linegar.

Depot.

(Col. G. V. Daughlish. Commanding.)

Our time is fully occupied with the calling up of Reservists. Men are coming in every day now, are clothed at the Depot and then despatched to various Units all over the country. They have been sent to points as far apart as Saltash (Cornwall) and Edinburgh, so the prospects of some of them for "week-ends" are not too rosy.

One or two obstreperous conscientious objectors have been through, but generally they prove amenable to mild persuasion.

An interesting relic is now hung in the Officers' Mess—a small German flag with the following inscription underneath:—

"At Dickebusch, Belgium, on the 4th June, 1915, the enemy planted a German flag 75 yards in front of 03 trench. During Saturday, the 5th June, our efforts to shoot the flag down proving unsuccessful, No. 9885 Private E. Sedgwick, 2nd Battalion The Buffs, proceeded out alone at dusk, and, after an absence of half-an-hour, managed to capture and bring in the flag in question, an operation fraught with difficulty and danger owing to the presence of ever-watchful enemy patrols and to the nature of our wire entanglement, which prevented an easy passage."

Pte. Sedgwick, unfortunately, was killed not long after this incident.

4555 R.Q.M.S. Mills, 1st Battalion ("Joe" Mills, who is so well known to all old Buffs as Master Cook of the 1st Battalion), has reported at the Depot for discharge, having completed 22 years' service and being over forty-one years of age. During the present war he has been with the Expeditionary Force for about twenty-two months.

R.Q.M.S. Mills (lately discharged) has been appointed Lieut. and Q.M. to Eastern Command Depot.

Book Corner—continued from p. 172.

death to get the "Moving Picture" rights of *The Penhales* is a mystery. Crosbie Garstin, incidentally, perishes some years ago in an accident when his dinghy capsized off the coast of Cornwall. A most promising career was cut short with incalculable loss to thousands of readers.

(To be continued.)

[Keen readers are always anxious for others to share their enjoyment. If you have read a book lately and would like to recommend it, send "The Dragon" a short review of it. Limit your notice to 100 words and give the exact title of the book and the name of the publisher. A selection of the reviews will be published in "The Dragon" and a prize of 5/- awarded every month to the writer of what in the Editor's opinion is the best review. Your name and address must be clearly written and attached to the notice.—Ed.]

"Quick in the Uptake" Department

BELL Harry was chiming the nineteenth hour. Retreat was being sounded on the square. A voice came from a barrack-room, asking with disarming innocence:

"Any idea of the time, Chum?"

The C.S.M. of "D" Company commented briefly and with point:

"Someone from the 'Y' List evidently."

Past and Present Association.

DISBURSEMENT.

May 30. Grant £1 10 0

NEW MEMBERS.

Life Member.—6292146 Cpl. Page, R. *Annual Members.*—2/Lieuts. P. B. Baker, J. M. Bickersteth, A. Bedford Smith, J. Bonham, G. Izmidlian, H. J. Nichols, J. Pym, K. G. Stowell; Lieut. M. R. K. Jerram; Capt. A. C. J. Van Ammel; 2/Lieut. A. J. B. Morris.

MINUTES of the 127th Meeting of the Regimental Committee, The Buffs, held at Canterbury on Saturday, 14th June, 1941.

Present:

Lieut.-Colonel G. R. Howe (Chairman).
Major R. J. Murphy (representing 2nd Battalion).
Lieut.-Colonel F. B. Abbott (representing 6th Bn.).
Lieut.-Colonel J. R. Willows (representing 11th Bn.).
Major J. I. H. Friend (representing 70th Battalion).
Lieut. S. J. F. Maiden (representing 1st, 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th Battalions).
Major F. W. Tomlinson.
Major A. J. Peareth (Hon. Secretary).

In attendance:—

Major-General Sir J. Kennedy, Colonel of The Buffs.
Major-General Hon. P. G. Scarlet

84. THE MINUTES OF THE 126TH MEETING were read and signed by the Chairman.

85. THE ACCOUNTS, 1940—1941, duly audited, were passed, and the Annual Report adopted.

86. INVESTMENTS—The following amounts were authorised for investment:—

	£	s.	d.
Regimental Memorial Fund	10	0	0
Dragon Dinner Club	14	0	0
Canterbury Cricket Week Club	20	0	0
Historical Fund	40	0	0

87. DIVIDENDS FROM CENTRAL FUND, COLONEL OF THE BUFFS.—The Committee lays no claim to such dividends for the financial year 1940—1941.

88. WAR INSURANCE RISKS. R.M.C. CHAPEL.—Letter from Chaplain-in-charge of the Royal Military College Memorial Chapel, dated June, 1941, was read.

The Hon. Secretary was instructed to go further into the matter and to report to the Colonel of the Regiment.

89. WAR INSURANCE RISKS. GENERAL.—The question was discussed and the Hon. Secretary instructed

(a) To consider and report upon the insurance of regimental memorials various.

(b) To obtain from battalions, regular and territorial and the I.T.C. reports upon insurances effected by them.

90. REGIMENTAL FLASHES ON BATTLE HELMETS.—O.C. 11th Battalion asked whether the pattern of the flash should be universal throughout the Regiment. After discussion the Colonel of the Regiment laid down that individual battalions should have their own pattern of combination of the Regimental colours, *i.e.* buff and blue, as opposed to a standard pattern throughout the Regiment.

91. RECORDS OF PROPERTY AND MONIES.—The Colonel of the Regiment drew attention to the importance of such records being maintained in order that the present whereabouts of such property and monies should not be lost sight of. He instructed that battalions and the Training Centre should send copies, giving details of the location of property, and the holders of monies, *i.e.* banks, to the Hon. Secretary, Regimental Committee (*Address*: Past and Present Association, The Buffs, Canterbury) for safe keeping.
92. The Colonel of the Regiment, in thanking the Committee for its work during the previous year, stressed the importance of keeping a careful watch over the interests of battalions in order that no losses should occur as a result of the war.

- 1,206. The Secretary's Travelling Expenses amounting to £11 18s. 0d. were approved.
- 1,207. "THE DRAGON" NEWSPAPER.—A letter from the O.C. 9th Battalion reference the matter produced in *The Dragon* was read and the Editor instructed to examine the points raised therein.
- 1,208. The Committee wishes to place on record its regret at the death of Brigadier-General R. McDouall, late Chairman of the Regimental Committee and Executive Committee, Past and Present Association from 1930—1935, which occurred on May 31st, 1941.
- 1,209. The Colonel of the Regiment, in expressing his satisfaction with the state of the Association, thanked the Committee for its work. He pointed out how important it is that the continuity of the Association's many affairs should be maintained in order that re-construction at the conclusion of the war should readily be undertaken.

MINUTES of the 127th Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Past and Present Association, The Buffs, held at Canterbury on Saturday, June 14th, 1941.

Present :

Lieut.-Colonel G. R. Howe (in the Chair).
 Major R. J. Murphy (representing 2nd Battalion).
 Lieut.-Colonel F. B. Abbott (representing 6th Bn.).
 Lieut.-Colonel J. R. Willows (representing 11th Bn.).
 Major J. I. H. Friend (representing 70th Battalion).
 Lieut. S. J. F. Maiden (representing 1st, 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th Battalions).
 Major F. W. Tomlinson.
 Captain A. Barton.
 Major A. J. Peareth (Secretary).

In attendance :—

Major-General Sir J. Kennedy, Colonel of The Buffs.
 Major-General Hon. P. G. Scarlett.

- 1,200. MINUTES of the 126th Meeting were read and confirmed.
- 1,201. (a) THE BALANCE SHEETS, 1940—1941, duly audited, were passed and the Annual Report adopted.
- (b) BALANCES TO BE TRANSFERRED. Approval was given to the transfer of the following balances :—
- | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|----|
| To Central Fund from P. & P. Assn. ... | £78 | 7 | 1 |
| To Central Fund from <i>The Dragon</i> Newspaper ... | ... | 162 | 1 |
| To P. & P. Assn. from Central Fund ... | ... | 23 | 19 |
| | | 5 | |
- and of the following amounts for investment :—
- Cottage Homes, £60, through U.S.T.
 Benevolent Fund, £300, through U.S.T.
- 1,202. THE PENSION LIST for 1941-42 was confirmed.
- 1,203. Minor damage by enemy action to the Cottage Homes was reported by the Secretary, and the necessary action that had been taken. Letter from the Insurance Company as regards war risks insurance as regards (a) the four cottages, (b) the tenants, was read.
- 1,204. LADIES' GUILD. MEMBERS 40TH KENT PLATOON, A.T.S.—It was agreed that members of the 40th Kent Platoon A.T.S. should be eligible for membership of the Ladies' Guilds of the Association.

Ashford Branch.

Owing to the absence of the Ashford Branch notes from the current issues of *The Dragon*, I trust all will accept my apology, although it is not entirely my fault as other members like myself have been working long hours, and are feeling the strain rather heavily. With the "Dig for Victory" campaign in full operation, it has not given us much spare time for anything but "Work".

As you have not seen any Ashford notes, you must not take it for granted that the branch has closed down. No, not likely! For many of those who served in the last war have very unpleasant memories which can never be forgotten and 90% of them could have been avoided if only there had been some properly organised institution to have given full assistance to those who fought for justice, in order to help them to receive their rewards when returning to civil life. Therefore I must appeal to all Buffs to make it their duty to support the Association, and to all its members to pull their full weight of the burden to keep all branches in full operation to be prepared to undertake the task of giving full assistance to the boys when they come home. To those who have not paid their annual or *Dragon* account, please do so at the earliest possible moment.

As for reports on branch meetings, there is little to say except that the attendance of our last few meetings has greatly improved, but there is still room for more. In spite of "Moaning Lizzie", we carry on with the exception of those who have to report for duty. Some have made arrangements to be relieved until after 9 p.m., which helps a great deal.

Owing to our Assistant Secretary being a full-blown fireman and unable to attend, the branch has elected Mr. Constant in his place. Although Mr. Constant is giving the four score mark a nasty knock, he is a very active member and of great assistance to the branch, for he is able to get about where the younger ones have not the time to spare. We wish to thank Mr. Constant for his great help, and learn with regret that his nephew Pat is reported missing.

PRISONERS OF WAR.—Our late Secretary, C.S.M. G. Wilkins, now a prisoner of war, writes to say that he has been working in a coal mine for the last six months. Sgt. Hillman and his father are in the same camp, Stalag VIII B. We wish them the best of luck and good health. Another Buff is working in a cabinet factory and appears to have a little more freedom than the coal miners—not so black!

Ashford Branch *Dragons* for April went astray in the post, and did not find their way to our *Dragon* Secretary until the end of the month. I am informed that they had been for a run round from Ashford to Ashford, only they found the wrong Ashford first—Ashford, Middlesex!

London Branch.

We were pleased to hear from Captain T. O. Cook and to know that both he, Mrs. Cook and family are all well. Tommy informs us that he is a Home Guard Instructor at Crawley, and all we can say is, Crawley are very lucky to have one with so much experience and ability.

Mr. Henrickson says that he meets quite a lot of Buffs at railway stations who have to wait a long time for trains. Mr. Henrickson would be only too pleased to take them to his place to rest awhile.

We were sorry to hear from that fine Buff Eddy Shute that his firm suffered badly in a recent raid, and that Eddy had a narrow shave. Keep smiling!

We recently had a telegram from Major Charles Vaughan enquiring about Captain Duffy. No doubt both are now in touch again.

It is nice to know that Hughie Borland is keeping fairly well, and we congratulate him on the splendid poem recently published in *The Dragon*. A real masterpiece.

All who soldiered under Brigadier-General McDouall—there are many in the London Branch—will deeply regret to read of his death. A magnificent soldier, a splendid Buff, a thorough gentleman in all his transactions. We shall all miss him deeply.

Another good Buff has passed over in the death of Reg. No. 804 Mr. E. A. Baillie, late 2nd Battalion. Our late comrade enlisted for the Zulu War and was discharged in 1888. He was a regular attendant at branch meetings and had the privilege of driving General Sir Arthur Lynden-Bell to the station with a "Garry Waller Sahib". A wreath was laid on the grave by the London Branch.

We have received a letter from Snowball Manning, who sends his best to all. We trust it will not be long before he receives the chair he so badly needs.

In a letter to Captain Enright, General the Hon. P. G. Scarlett sends his sympathy to all members who have suffered in the recent air-raids, and particularly to the bereaved. He asks all to keep up the traditional spirit of our regiment and do all we can to assist the Old Country to certain victory.

General Sir Arthur Lynden-Bell informs us that both he and her ladyship and family are keeping very fit. Our congratulations were sent on the occasion of the General's wedding anniversary on June 2nd last, and a very appreciative letter of thanks was received.

Captain Phillip Backhouse, being up in London for a visit to the War Office, telephoned his best wishes to all old friends of the branch and Ladies' Guild. What memories the name recalls.

He informs us that the son of his late elder sister—whom many will remember—has been missing since the evacuation of Greece.

Reg. No. 2890 Bob Knott is staying with friends in Cumberland for a few weeks. He feels that the death of Brigadier McDouall is a great loss.

LADIES' GUILD.

The Hon. Lady Lynden-Bell sends best wishes to all members of the Guild.

It is with regret that we hear that Mrs. Redman has been ill again, but we are pleased to know she is making progress towards recovery; also that the daughter of Mrs. Dampier is better.

News of Mrs. Emery and Mrs. Clover through Mrs. Love is much appreciated. We should like more news of members.

Mrs. Cotton also writes. She recently visited Mrs. Millman and Mrs. Richards. All send kind thoughts to the members.

Mrs. Hickey is back in London after a long absence, and is enquiring after old friends.

Mrs. Waters paid a very pleasant surprise visit by calling at 26 Oswald Road. Members will be pleased to know she is in a good situation and keeping well, after being bombed out.

For the benefit of members, the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Lamb, still lives at 31 Somerton Avenue, Richmond, Surrey.

London Ladies' Guild sends best wishes to all guilds, and also to all ranks of battalions wherever they may be.

Medway Branch.

APRIL, 1941.

The monthly meeting of Medway Branch was held at Unity Club, Chatham on Saturday, April 26th, 1941. This being the first official meeting of the branch since September, 1940, the attendance, as expected, was very small.

The meeting opened with Captain Barton at the helm, still looking every inch the R.S.M. we used to know. Considering he has recently celebrated his 75th birthday, I am sure the branch would like to congratulate him on attaining this grand old age. Supporting the Chair was Mr. F. Cox (Vice-Chairman), now in a Staff billet as Quartermaster in the Home Guard; also present was our genial Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary, with about twelve members.

The first item on the agenda was the Hon. Treasurer's Annual Report and Balance Sheet. Branch funds are again shewing the balance to be well on the right side, and on the proposal of Mr. Shirley, seconded by Mr. Mills, they were accepted as read and adopted.

The next item was the annual election of officers and committee. A proposal by Mr. Sales, seconded by Mr. Mills, that officers and committee be asked to serve once again, was accepted. The whole were then elected, with two exceptions as follows—Mr. Seemark and Mr. Sales replacing Mr. Hills and Mr. Daw.

No further business arising, the collection was taken and the meeting declared closed.

NOTES.—A great expression of sympathy was extended to Mr. French in the loss he has sustained by the death of his wife. A member of Medway Ladies' Guild since its formation, she will be greatly missed. Her efforts in all the activities of the Guild were always to the fore and she will always be remembered and appreciated for the hard work put in for the Guild's welfare.

MAY, 1941.

The monthly meeting was held at the Unity Club on Saturday, May 31st, 1941. The Chair was occupied by Captain Barton, supported by Mr. F. Cox (Vice-Chairman), the Hon. Treasurer, the Hon. Secretary and 22 members—the largest attendance since the outbreak of war. We were also gratified to have President Alderman Osborn Taylor with us, looking very fit after his lucky escape in a car accident.

The meeting opened with all standing in silence for two minutes in memory of the late Mr. E. Cooper, who passed away on May 5th, 1941—one of the oldest members of Medway Branch.

MINUTES.—The Minutes of the May meeting were read and signed.

CORRESPONDENCE.—The only letter to read this month was from General Sir Arthur Lynden-Bell—a very interesting account of all the battalions, especially the 1st Battalion, came as a surprise to all. With the General's letter was a parcel of Australian heather. All present greatly appreciated this thoughtful gift, and a proposal by Mr. F. Cox, supported by the President, that a hearty vote of thanks be forwarded to the General, was carried. Some remarks by the Chairman on items in the letter were also much appreciated.

OTHER BUSINESS.—A suggestion by Mr. Daw that the branch should collect books for the 2nd Battalion was turned down as being impracticable.

NEW MEMBERS.—27097 G. Cripps, late Sgt., 1st Battalion; 203511 C. Coombes, late Pte., 6th Battalion; Mr. H. G. Excell.

No further business arising, the collection was taken and the meeting declared closed.

LADIES' GUILD.

The monthly meeting was held on May 23rd, being well-attended. Business was carried out, after which a whist drive was held.

Mrs. King Holt (Chairman), presiding, before asking Mrs. Taunton to present the prizes, said she would like to announce that the proceeds of the drive would go to help a prisoner of war the branch had agreed to adopt. She asked the Secretary to write to Mrs. Crookenden for particulars.

Mrs. Taunton then presented prizes to Mrs. Ramsel, Mrs. Ambler, Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Crouch, Mr. Cope and Mrs. Griffiths. Mrs. Vickery won the lucky number.

A bunch of tulips given by an old Buff was sold to Mrs. Morgan.

Mrs. Holt, in the name of the branch, presented Mrs. Taunton with a work bag. Mrs. Rowland proposed a vote of thanks and Mrs. Sellens seconded.

Mrs. Sellens also proposed a vote of thanks to all who gave the prizes, and to a Buff father who kindly gave milk for tea.

Those present asked when there would be another drive. This will be held in July.

We much regret the passing of our old friend Mr. Cooper, who like Mr. Cope always gave the Ladies' Guild his support. We all regret that the branch was not represented at his funeral. To his family we extend our deep sympathy.

After a very pleasant afternoon, during which Mrs. Sellens had officiated for Mr. French as M.C., the meeting closed.

Continued on p. 183.



SINCE last writing our position on the map has altered once more and our new billets are most comfortable. The Battalion H.Q. mess has grown considerably in size and now includes the officers of "A" Company; representatives of "C" Company were also with us here for a short while before taking up their abode in the precincts of an ancient coastal ruin.

The C.O. is still on leave—a fishing holiday, I understand; Michael S., the Adjutant, has just returned from his country home which has now superseded his former forest one; during his absence John C. was "in the chair".

Some of us still find time to visit the Depot town in spite of the fact that life is very strenuous. Major Alex frequently leads members of his company round the perimeter of this village and his trusty bicycle is still very much in evidence.

Major Ronnie M— is now commanding the battalion while the C.O. is away. He has been tremendously busy and has had no opportunity for wearing his black and white shoes! He has organized some excellent all ranks dances and has also established himself as the leading amateur pianist in the brigade group.

Captain Rex M— (our P.M.C.) is now back from his brief course cum week end—we are relying on him to single out any hostile aircraft and deal with them in the new way; I now feel that our previous ideas on the subject were very "Boer War".

2/Lieut. John C— and 2/Lieut. Colin J— are always commendably cheerful— every now and then they retire behind a nearby copse whence come the most ear-splitting detonations; the former has also instituted a bright idea whereby all officers' out-going movements (in the evenings) are checked up by his O.P.—I take it the observers do not keep a record of their master's movements as this would be indiscreet!

There have been several cross country runs lately which have now developed into bathing parties—in spite of the recent unseasonable weather, the sea is now pleasantly warm.

We are about to say good-bye to Capt. P— This will be a great loss but I hope we shall see him in the future, from time to time.

Now that the shadows are lengthening I must lay down my pen and go in search of a glass of good old English bitter!

Sergeants' Mess.

Well, my friends, having just regaled myself with a good supper and a pint of good, honest English ale, I will endeavour to make up for a lack of notes last month, but as I have mentioned before, it is difficult these days owing to the fact that we are so divided up. However, here goes, but I will not promise you a Winston Churchill effort—how he cheers the saddest of hearts, but let us all follow his words carefully and keep as optimistic and cheerful—he has a bigger and harder job than the lot of us.

We are now well-planted in our old county, and this time we are more comfortable and even have real baths with hot water—rather a change from the "bowl method". A Mess has been instituted at battalion headquarters and we are doing quite well. A small bar lends a little sunshine in the evenings when our toil is o'er and then some play "Monopoly" to make a complete change. Rather good to hear some unfortunate fellow bargaining to buy Park Lane on a Thursday night and not having the price of a box of matches.

We welcome with all our hearts "Muscles" Lloyd, who has come to us as P.T. expert from Wales. He has entered into the old spirit and is practically a real Buff—at least one should have heard the fine tales he told the Lady-in-Blue one Sunday evening about the fine Regiment he was serving. He keeps us going well each morning at the crack of dawn. At first there was a terrific sound of boney-creaks, but now we are getting hard and tough, except Steve, who developed trouble in the back regions from trying too hard!

We have been able to organise a few all-ranks dances in a nearby town and the usual "lads" have been to the fore—R.S.M. Woo Martin, Buffy Howe, Slim Belson (chief drawer of ale), Jack Fletcher, Brickly West. I wonder why they all fight shy of the road-block and seem to keep their faces straight to their front. It will be fun one day to see all the "dates" waiting for their "Beaus" at the same time—what a road block!

Paddy Dixon, our great Irishman of soap-box tendencies, has departed for the life of a real musician at Sandhurst. Well, me auld Oirish Pal, 'tis us entoirely that would be after missing you. But good luck, you "Old Poultrice Walloper"!

Ginger Hollands is now busy learning the intrigues of Quarter Bloke, but then he was always a good business man.

Douglas Mitchell has just returned from Petersfield and he reports all well at our old home. The famous Jimmy Hamer of "Suit to a tin of polish" fame, is still alive and wishes to be remembered to all—how we all remember how he tried to make us a Savile Row Battalion (a la slate)!

The local Air Force people very kindly gave us a jolly nice evening some weeks ago, but we never realised what real agriculturalistic experts we had in our midst though where a fair face is concerned those latent talents usually come to the fore.

Leave and week-ends still come and go regularly, much to our great pleasure. How we look forward to those few delightful days with our families, wives or folks. How marvellous to get away from paper and more paper—still, it is one way of collecting salvage.

Occasionally we hear that some of our old Mess members are doing well in Germany, but roll on the day when we see their faces once more. Chuff Winterbottom must find it hard to refrain from those sudden outbursts and world revolution—we should not be surprised to hear him lecturing a Jerry audience.

I heard from my old colleague, Bill Kille, recently, who says that the 1st Battalion are going great guns abroad, and we wish them all the best of luck.

Good luck to all our readers and other battalions.

Signal Section.

As anticipated, we have left behind our orchards and oast-houses and this month finds us settled comfortably, at least for the majority, in the lesser known villages near the sea. While our co-battalions are once more billeted in their town houses. We envy their good fortune.

The change of scenery has certainly given us the opportunity of emerging from the crystal stage and for the most part the section is engaged in its own particular sphere, although some of our colleagues seem to imagine that all our lines have a cafe at the end and our wanderings over the countryside are merely a thirst for the wide open spaces.

As a section we are somewhat scattered, which lessened the scope for news, but we understand that for a rest cure, attachment to a company is to be strongly recommended and there is much competition for such coveted berths beside the sea. However, there is a current rumour that "Shocks", our worthy D.R., was led astray during his recent seven days, and is now reputed to be seriously contemplating relinquishing the freedom of single bliss, but to all queries he maintains a solid front and refuses to give any advanced information.

Sport still plays a large part in our programme, and in a recent cross-country run, H.Q. Company v "A" Company, the Signals put up a very good show, thereby making sure of H.Q.'s victory over "A" Company, better luck next time, "A" Company! While on the subject of sport, don't lose heart, all you would-be cricketers. I understand every effort is being made to obtain the necessary kit and any delay must be considered unavoidable.

We are still favoured with a fair share of "schemes" and one in particular, most aptly named Nelson, really kept the Signals on their toes, and although unfortunately we made a bad start, thereby losing some of our prestige, we managed to weather the storm despite the inundation of messages.

Our early morning "physical jerks" is now an established routine and our P.T. Sergeant, "Muscles", seems to take a fiendish delight in putting Battalion Headquarters through its paces. So much so, that there seems to have been a falling off in the attendance among the privileged, but possibly duty calls and unknown circumstances may prevail.

The coming month simply abounds with new ideas for training, and it is reputed that the cooks have already received a liberal supply of carrots, and the R.A.F. have plenty of sticking-plaster, but sufficient unto the day. More news next month.

M.T. Section.

The section is settling down to routine life in this part of —, and welcome cross-country runs and route marches with glee.

A few moans and groans are heard when the field officer needs a vehicle at night, otherwise things are smooth.

The section are wondering why a certain chap is so anxious to take the Band to — every time they play there. Is it because of a fair lady with blue eyes?

Stinker seems quite pleased when he comes down and sees the lads busy with maintenance, *i.e.* legs protruding from under the vehicle or a head poked well down into the engine.

Anyhow, the section look forward to H.Q. guards, and hope you do likewise.

It falls to my lot this month to write of the doings, etc., of that hub of the M.T. Section, "B" Echelon, the baby having been passed to me, as is usual in a certain office that I wot of.

SPORT.—Having dusted the cobwebs and the mildew from our football boots, we essayed forth to try our skill against the R.A.F. After a good game, we emerged victorious by 3—2. A return game, which was very keenly contested, resulted in a draw 4—4. In both these games the team was captained by that Blackburn wizard, Young Cecil.

We welcome to the section all the recent arrivals, and hope that they have come to stay.

Since the shot-gun episode, our Georgie had seemingly retired from public life. However, he sprung into prominence last week over what seems, to the uninitiated, a mere trifle—a packet of potato crisps. What is the low-down, George?

We are glad to say that the fitters were in splendid form on the brigade route march. Well done, the civvies! We notice that the famous "Dersey" of Indian fame, managed to scrounge this.

The Professor has at last returned from somewhere out West, armed with a fresh supply of No Laughter jokes. Where do you get them, Professor?

We are also pleased to see that the G1098 frown has at last disappeared from the mighty brow of the M.T. Sergeant. What price Jerkins, Sergeant?

NOTICE.—Old cars or motor-cycles wanted for cash. Write to Whip for your bargains.

It seems that the local A.F.S. have made one of our party an Honorary Member, the time that he spends in there. What is the real reason, Wendell? It's too late for a reserved occupation now.

The members of the Three Towns have declared themselves open to take on all comers at the ancient game of billiards. What handicap are you making against Blyth and Blackburn?

With these brief notes, our news column closes down for another month, when a chosen scribe will emerge from our ranks.

A.A. Platoon.

The platoon welcome back Sgt. Edwards, who has once again demonstrated the A.A.'s versatility by taking A/C.S.M.'s job in his stride. Apparently everyone knows of our ability to tackle any work, and at present we are making a fine show of the company's "wiring".

I think everyone enjoyed last Friday's little muscle-loosener, although it seems strange that old soldiers who marched prodigious distances in foreign lands should find it difficult to last the distance. Perhaps the Army never marched well until the militia came and set the pace.

Our best wishes for a quick recovery to L/Cpl. Butler, who was taken ill on the march and is at present

in hospital. We wonder if it was those "nigging" pains that did it, Bert?

There is no news from such a quiet place as this, so hoping that the chief rumour as to our next move will be correct, we'll pipe down.

Mortar Platoon.

The platoon has now settled down in its new billet and everyone seems to be enjoying themselves, in spite of guards and the large number of "spuds" requiring peeling.

The platoon commander's table is stacked high with passes, showing that famous resorts still have their attractions.

Congratulations to Cpl. G— and L/Cpl. E— on doing so well on their courses.

The Rev. "Bloodhound" F— has now been without his iron steed for several weeks, and he may be considered cured of any tendency to "Petrol Feet". G.1098 is his new hobby.

For the present, the platoon is busily engaged on "wiring". Of the future, who can tell—not even Madame P— and her crystal.

Carrier Platoon.

Since our last notes, we have left our very modest dwelling and find ourselves not far from the sea again. We must say the sea air is very bracing (in fact it is said to be too bracing at 3 o'clock in the morning by the guards), and our billet is the best yet, having inside (actually working), H. & C., W.C.'s and one long bath, which even the "Quarters" find relaxing at times.

Up to the present we have not yet been able to dabble in any sports, with the exception of cross-country runs, and in these we are glad to say Lysander gets home for us in the first three.

Fortunately before Sgt. Cas and his boys left us for "D" Company, they were able to join us in a stirring route march which ended at the double; we are quite sure that if our ex-member Ronnie, now with the R.A.F., had been aloft, he could never have mistaken us, owing to the brightness of our brasses. Before Sgt. Cas left he was able to pass on to his drinking partner (Uncle Ben) the best house in the village.

We have often wondered how "Swan Vestas" can push the pedals home to the "Nest" on our nights out and still do P.T. next morning.

We are also happy to announce that two more of our tribe have taken steps to the altar, namely Bonzo and Chidy, and are both doing fine.

Pioneer Platoon.

At the moment we are shut off from the unit and the rest of the world. This has been brought about by Pte. "Admiral" H—, who managed to contract measles. We are the joke of the battalion. White crosses and the word "unclean" have been chalked on our doors to warn all-comers of our misfortune. What we want to know is, what bit the "Admiral"?

We congratulate Cpl. Cook and his team on getting fourth and fifth places in a recent Assault Boat Competition. They worked very hard under trying conditions at short notice.

Although we are isolated, work must go on. The "sano" squad are still on their daily rounds with broom

and bucket; our carpenters have been busy making, amongst numerous other things, basket ball nets and goal-posts, also several notice boards indicating at what speed traffic should travel.

The two "long" members of our platoon, Ptes. Lofty G— and Ginger H—, are not sharing our isolation, as they are still with the M.T. Section, busily painting. We miss them a lot and hope they will be back with us shortly.

We welcome back our drivers, Pte. Hendrie, after his stay in hospital.

Next month we shall have more news, as we shall be out of isolation.

"A" Company.

Once again we have bowed to the whims of the powers-that-be. By a casual flip of some "War House" pen we have emerged from being "troops, oasted", and blossomed out as "troops billeted, bunked". We no longer stagger forth in the morning drugged with the all-pervading smell of hops and fumes, but breathe a somewhat fresher air instead, and few will deny that the change has its compensations.

Our surroundings, too, are very pleasant, if not exactly exciting for the more sophisticated among us.

Baseball, pre-breakfast P.T. and plenty of digging and wiring during the day keep most of us fit and bronzed, and woe betide anyone who endeavours to "do the Wilkie" on the wire.

Running, too, is well to the fore, and we still cherish the hope of getting on equal terms with H.Q. Company in the cross-country field.

2/Lieut. "Cutter" S— cycles around with mischievous twinkle and disarming smile—usually, however, a sure sign that the cattle are about to stampede and the village and countryside rock before yet another explosive machination of his inventive mind!

The company has more than held its own on courses in recent months. His friends in other battalions will doubtless be pleased to join us in congratulating C.S.M. (Buffy) Howe in carrying all before him on his Drill Course by gaining first place in quite an impressive field. Cpl. Steward, too, did very well on his Section Leaders' Course.

Our Sergeants have been busy tinkling the wedding bells in Wakefield and Lincolnshire. Comparative newcomers to the battalion have often wondered exactly what *did* go on at these mysterious outposts of Empire defence. However, we congratulate C/Sgt. White and Sgt. Saffery and wish them luck.

"B" Company.

We welcome back to the fold L/Cpl. Kaufman, who has been on a P.T. Course. It is noticed that in his absence he has taken the plunge and got spliced; also heard that he "shoved the boat out", but I can find no one to support this statement. May all his troubles be bandy-legged ones!

We regret the loss of C/Sgt. Fletcher, who has gone to help H.Q. out, but note that he has left his board "Dunrobin" in capable hands.

It is whispered that some people (not excluding L/Cpl. Taylor-Smith) could write "Some Adventures in Armoured Cars" perhaps not so pleasant as those we read of in *The Dragon*.

Lofty, our company clerk, has fallen in love, hook, line and sinker, even to the extent of sending her a cap badge, which also explains the look of depression on the company storeman's face, who has visions of buying his own beer in future as I understand the good lady is a staunch T.T.

Wishing all Buffs the best of luck, wherever they may be, for the present I leave you.

"C" Company.

Back to the beaches, or as one officer very aptly puts it, "From ship to galley". We have moved again, though no one who had the pleasure of participating in the convoy would have noticed it. We hear that the officer detailed to check the vehicles at the D.P. is claiming detention allowance.

Once more the company has been broken up into detached platoons. No. 15 Platoon, within mortar range of Brigade Headquarters, are on road block duty. Knife-rests are unnecessary here as motorists are so dazzled by the bright green blanco and gleaming brass that they draw up of their own accord. Their platoon commander amuses himself by collecting the cars of those unfortunates who have not the requisite pass and checking any senior officers who fail to wear their respirators on Tuesdays.

No. 14 Platoon, with a new master in 2/Lieut. F. S—, are also road-blocking. They are comfortably ensconced in an up-to-date road-house. There 2/Lieut. F. S— can be found with a background of chromium and blue leather rattling the poker dice and waiting for the suckers to roll in from Company Headquarters.

No. 13 Platoon and Company Headquarters, less comfortably off, are compensated by the historical associations of their billet. Sgt. Martin leads the field at the moment with two skulls and a jawbone which he excavated from a corner of the graveyard when digging a weapon-pit.

The Sergeant-Major has taken up landscape gardening again. He brought out the tracing tape as soon as we arrived, and brick borders, fencing and lettuce beds appeared as if by magic. The Company Commander concentrates on paint and the company office has changed colour twice already.

Our acting C.Q.M.S. is hardly ever to be found at home these days. He tells us that he spends his long absences wrestling verbally with the Q.M. Staff. He is getting into the way of things now; and there is a story that when standing a round of drinks at the Gallery, he asked for signatures for them.

We were very sorry indeed to say good-bye to 2/Lieut. O. H. B—. He was the oldest inhabitant among the officers and his loss will be felt both by his brother officers and his platoon. Where he has gone to is a mystery. He left in a cloud of secrecy and initials. We wish him the very best of luck. 2/Lieut. A. J. S— has also left us for a new battalion.

We congratulate L/Cpl. Laslett, our Stretcher-Bearer, on his promotion, and Pte. Goodheart, his colleague, on his marriage. We hear that the latter, fresh from his honeymoon, passed on a lot of fatherly advice to No. 14 Platoon.

"D" Company.

We were able to put on a company rifle meeting on Sunday, June 1st, and it was very successfully carried out, and was appreciated by the troops as a change from the usual type of practice shooting to which they are

accustomed. The results were amazingly good, bearing in mind that the chief practice was 10 rounds rapid. A pool bull was run and 12 were successful in drawing a dividend of 2/3. Included in the pool bull winners were our O.C. and also the R.S.M. (we thought he could only use a pistol!).

Complete result:—Company Shot, Pte. H. Culver, 96; 2nd, L/Cpl. G. Sands, 96; 3rd, Pte. F. Harris, 93.

We are just in time to record the departure, temporarily we hope, of 2/Lieut. T. A. W—, and hope that he will not leave us altogether. In case you don't come back, Sir, we wish you, through *The Dragon*, all the best of luck, and record our thanks for all the hard work you have put in for the company's benefit.

We welcome to the company for a short time C/Sgt. Paine from "C" Company. He has come to "show us a few things", but according to remarks passed by him in the Mess, I think he has formed the opinion that we know more than we ought to already.

Our Company Commander has recently taken up another strange hobby, namely bee-keeping, but unfortunately, as we were going to press, we learned, to our horror, that he was stung. Hard luck, Sir, but may the Mess, please, be supplied with the honey.

Our sporting activities have been largely curtailed recently, this being due to lack of good playing grounds in our particular area, but we are hoping to procure some cricket appliances in the near future, and thereby get things moving once again. Any reader having discarded bats, etc., and wishing to sell or dispose of them in any way, we would be glad to get in touch with them.

The company heartily congratulate 2/Lieut. R. J. G. J— on his recent marriage, and to him and Mrs. J— we wish all the very best of luck for the future.

With the Buffs during 1940—continued from p. 173.

Christmas came and the G.O.C. came along to see us at dinner and a good spread it was. Christmas weather was very poor and it was just three days' rest to most of us. Three days of eating and drinking (lemonades, of course!) You ask the O.R.S. or the C.Q.M.S. who tried to swim out of the Sergeants' Mess in a puddle!).

And so passed away 1940. Maybe I'll find time next year to write of 1941. Maybe the war will be over and then instead of writing we shall be able to talk about it. Let's hope the latter will turn out trumps.

A.H.L.

Past and Present Assoc.—continued from p. 179.

Ramsgate Branch.

Late again, so must cut news short. Our Secretary, busy with Home Guard duties, has got the pip, I believe—sorry, a pip. I passed him the other day and thought it was the G.O.C. But putting jokes aside, Ramsgate Branch congratulates you, Ernie, but for goodness sake hurry up and call a meeting, so that we can have a re-union of old comrades and some news for *The Dragon*.

Members I come in contact with look well.

By the way, I saw Don Marsh, late Q.M.S. "C" Company, 4th Buffs, at Broadstairs. He looks well and wishes to be remembered to friends at Canterbury. Ted Swendell retains his interest in the branch, and after this war, when his police duties are finished, we shall need his services to get going in the Ramsgate Branch.

Beneath Bell Harry.

A VERY distinguished inspecting officer visited us during the month and, we believe, liked what he saw here during a very thorough look at our activities.

We had the pleasure of a visit from The Colonel of The Regiment and Major General the Hon. P. G. Scarlett, who came down to attend committee meetings. They lunched in the Mess after the meetings.

Major Webster on his return to this country has been posted to this centre and we look forward to welcoming him shortly when his well-earned leave is over.

Lieut. Col. H. P. P. Robertson gave us a most effective imitation of the Invisible Man the other day. He aroused false hopes that we might see him after many years but a voice (not his) over the telephone was all that was vouchsafed to us.

Our P.M.C. was borne away to hospital the other day with knee trouble. An operation, however, has apparently set matters right and we hope to have him back very soon.

The Mess room and Ante-room have just received a much needed spot of paint. The work was carried out with great expedition and "stooka pooka" can now be enjoyed again in the solemn and exclusive atmosphere that the game demands.

The inflow and out flow of officers continues steadily. Sometimes the two processes merge almost into one, leaving but a hazy impression of faces and names. A booking clerk at Railway Station must feel the same about the clients who look through his little window as they take their tickets and go on their way.

Our M.T.O. is somewhat nearer the fulfilment of his desire to reach the stars. By the time these lines are in print, he will probably have embarked on the vigorous course of training prescribed for would-be "Accs". Maybe he will look back to his old comrades on the ground with softened feelings.

The Drums of our new battalions have been formed and trained here. They gave evidence of their kenness and also of the excellence of the tuition provided when they beat Retreat on the Square the other evening.

In the intervals of intensified activities, tennis and cricket are being played with enthusiasm and skill. The return of the sun in splendour has been heartily welcomed by devotees of both games.



Cricket.

I.T.C., THE BUFFS v R.A.F. 952 SQUADRON.

Played at Sheerness on Saturday, June 7th, and resulted in a win for us by 10 runs.

THE BUFFS, 128 (Sgt. Copley 53 not out, 2/Lieut. Dove 22; A/C. Dovey 5 for 60).

R.A.F. 952 SQUADRON, 118 (A/C. Wildes 35; Capt. Wills 5 for 39, 2/Lieut. Cox 4 for 35).

I.T.C., THE BUFFS v ST. LAWRENCE C.C.

Played on the St. Lawrence Ground on Saturday, June 14th, and we were soundly beaten by 7 wickets by a very strong local side.

THE BUFFS, 151 (Sgt. Copley 56, 2/Lieut. Dove 38; J. Brett 6 for 72)

ST. LAWRENCE, 153 for 3 wickets (R. Mays 60, R. E. Cole 45, J. Davis 29 not out).

I.T.C., THE BUFFS v CITY POLICE.

Played on our ground on June 19th, which resulted in a very easy win for us.

THE BUFFS, 203 for 5 wickets declared (Cpl. Spivey 96, Major Argles 38).

CITY POLICE, 32 (Pte. Pearch 4 for 0, Capt. Wills 3 for 18, 2/Lieut. Cox 3 for 3).

I.T.C., THE BUFFS v R.N. COLLINGWOOD.

On Saturday afternoon, June 21st, we visited the R.N. and lost by 31 runs. The wicket was very sporting, as we found to our coast when we went in to bat after tea. Captain Wills bowled well in taking 6 for 31.

<i>R.N. Collingwood.</i>		<i>The Buffs.</i>	
Williams, c Copley, b Pearch	2	2/Lt. Cox, b Anderson	7
Tomsett, c Nelson, b Wills	0	2/Lt. Done, b Powell	4
Law, c and b Pearch	20	Capt. Poole, b Powell	7
Beater, b Wills	4	2/Lt. Nelson, c Law, b Powell	7
Beck, b Wills	0	Sgt. Copley, b Powell	0
Park, b Wills	0	Cpl. Spivey, b Powell	2
Warburton, c and b Wills	7	Lt. Bruce, c and b Powell	8
Buckland, b Cox	6	2/Lt. Arnold, not out	1
Anderson, not out	22	2/Lt. Hatcher, b Powell	1
Powell, lbw, b Wills	7	Pte. Pearch, c Park, b Anderson	0
Roach, b Cox	0	Capt. Wills, c Beck, b Anderson	0
Extras	9	Extras	9
Total	77	Total	46

I.T.C., THE BUFFS v I.T.C., ROYAL WEST KENTS.

<i>Royal West Kents.</i>		<i>The Buffs.</i>	
L/Cpl. Ephgrave, c Pearch,	2	2/Lt. Done, b Askew	17
b Wills	18	Maj. Argles, c Levett, b Askew	3
Pte. Lee, b Cox	6	Capt. Poole, run out	5
2/Lt. Levett, c Wills, b Cox	39	Lt. Bruce, run out	11
2/Lt. Robins, c Spivey, b Wills	60	Cpl. Spivey, b Law	10
2/Lt. Murray Wood, c Argles,	36	2/Lt. Cox, b Killick	18
b Wills	1	Sgt. Copley, c Levett, b Johnson	10
Capt. Lenten, run out	1	Capt. Wills, b Law	10
C.S.M. Johnson, not out	62	Pte. Pearch, b Killick	10
L/Cpl. Grainger, c Spivey, b Cox	17	2/Lt. Arnold, not out	1
Sgt. Killick, c Cox, b Poole	0	2/Lt. Hatcher, c Killick, b Law	0
Lt. Law, not out	6		
Pte. Askew, did not bat			
Extras	20	Extras	8
Total (8 wkts. dec.)	265	Total	102

On Sunday, June 23rd, we played the I.T.C., Queen's Own R.W.K. Regiment on our own ground. We were thoroughly beaten by a much stronger side. Nevertheless it was a very hot day and the wicket was

perfect, and everybody enjoyed themselves. Perhaps, from our point of view, the best part of the day was an excellent lunch and iced drinks provided by Sgt. Laker!

We lost the toss and were kept in the field till nearly 3.30 p.m. For the visitors, 2/Lieut. Robins and C.S.M. Johnson both forced the pace well, and Capt. Wills and 2/Lieut. Cox bowled steadily and were very unlucky in several times missing the stumps by the proverbial coat of paint.

Against some accurate bowling backed up by brilliant fielding, our batsmen fared badly. We were a little unlucky to have two of our early batsmen most unfortunately run out.

Intelligence Section.

This month has been a very congenial mixture of hard work and hard play. Day after day we have taken out our bicycles and ridden into the country to do our work. The weather has recently been tremendously hot, and the feeling when cycling up local steep hills is like sitting in a Turkish bath on wheels. Experience tells us that the only cure for this is a strong dose of mild and bitter taken when, where, and as required. L/Cpl. Werner was convinced that the sun had melted his body away like a pat of butter, but when weighing himself whilst on leave recently, discovered, to his great surprise, that he had gained 8 lbs. in weight. His friends immediately started to work out this increase against the amount of liquid food he had consumed.

Like another battalion, we have also had our pigeon worries. One was dumped into our Map-room one evening, and was not "nailed down" till the following morning, but not before our precious maps had been thoroughly dive-bombed. Fortunately he was soon collected.

Our next visitor came in a de luxe cage, and was our guest for some time. We called him "Alfred" and he was an extremely cheerful bird and a voracious feeder, having the entertaining habit of cooing softly during lectures, but when he disliked the lecturer he would make a strange noise which we all took to be the pigeon "raspberry". He seemed such an intelligent bird that we allowed him to fly home. A few hours later he was strutting on the roof of the Officers' Mess with the more energetic members of the Mess crawling in chase. After such a pretty compliment to our hospitality, he was allowed to stay, but one day whilst sunning himself on the porch, he took off, and has not returned. We believe that the I.O.'s pipe upset him badly.

The section has been playing a great deal of basket ball, tennis and squash. Everybody is getting rid of that pallid winter colour.

At this time of the year, to quote Shakespeare, "A young man's fancy gently turns to thoughts of leave".

The whole section takes a poor view of two of its members who refuse to play tennis with anybody less than a Bishop or a Dean. The I.O. feels this very keenly, as up to now he has been unable to get an invitation from any of the local dignitaries.

The Security Officer has an ambition to win a T.T. race after this war, and has unfortunately got hold of a motor-bike—no doubt at a very high rate of insurance. The general rule when he is on the road is to throw oneself into the nearest ditch until he has gone, leaving behind him a cloud of dust and small stones. Some

Tommies who know him well, wait in a ditch near a local farm until he has passed, and then come out to collect the dead chickens he leaves behind in his wake. His record on a P.U. is no less exciting. It is very dangerous to mistake the accelerator pedal for the brake!

Depot Company.

Once again another month has passed and the time has come for us to settle down again and write the inevitable *Dragon* notes. I am afraid we are rather at a loss for ideas this time, however, but no doubt this can be attributed to the fact that the recent bout of hot weather we have been experiencing has left us all with a very hazy recollection of what has taken place since we last went to press.

Our C.S.M. at the moment has completely deserted us and proceeded on a well-chosen week-end. No doubt he has lost no time in discarding his well-known "Section E" waistcoat until the cold weather returns again. In the meantime his Section Leader's belt makes a very good substitute and has been much admired by the company. C.Q.M.S. Twist, who has undertaken the arduous duties of A/C.S.M., has been doing his level best to produce a good C.S.M.'s voice, but up to the present he is still experiencing difficulty. No doubt, on his return, the C.S.M. will take compassion on him and give him a few lessons in voice production.

We are still overwhelmed with requests for still more Men (fatigue and otherwise), and we are doing our level best to live up to our reputation. For a full definition of "A Sausage Machine", the C.S.M. will be only too pleased to oblige, with a full account of its originator.

We shall soon be missing several old faces in the company, but as several of them are expert homers, we shall not be surprised to see them return to the fold in less than the scheduled time.

Our O.C. is still as interested as ever in agriculture and the hot weather has not yet affected his studies in the prevention and destruction of crop pests.

"A" Company.

With the temperature at 90 in the shade, skin peeling in layers from my face, and a general sort of impression that I could use a long and very cold drink to distinct advantage, it isn't the most propitious of moments to be reminded that *The Dragon* is once again ravaging for its notes. However, as the creature has to be pacified, I'll wipe my heated brow and get cracking. Of course, when the time arrives for going to press we shall, as usual, be shivering in the depths of our arctic summer, but anyway, this may serve as a reminder that filling sandbags and digging trenches was once one of the warmer occupations. And while on the painful topic, it must be added that at this, as at everything else, the company have excelled themselves. Our digging is up to the same standard as our drill, and "I" Company should take careful note of our slogan—"You want the best parades—we have them." At least, our company offices don't collapse on us through rough treatment and the stamping of defaulters' feet.

Talking of company offices, we have moved again. It must be the gipsy in us! Anyway, "it's an ill wind" We're now nice and near to the spot whence the Company Commander can get his daily bar of chocolate without much difficulty. Poor old "Q" Branch aren't so happy though! Their entire existence is passed in an atmosphere of boots and

washing, and sometimes when things get very congested, the only way of knowing that they're in residence is by tracing their cheerful prattle to some far distant corner of the Stores where there's just about enough space to park a type-writer. It's easy to tell when the Quarter Bloke is getting browned off—his hair starts to come out of curl, and as for Pte. Smallfield—well, what with clothes rationing and the price of lipstick, what *can* one expect?

The curious effect of the European situation upon certain individuals is a phenomenon worthy of more careful study. For instance, one morning on entering the office, a voice is heard declaring with a pronounced Polish accent: "I haf ze monney counted right, yes?" while on the next one is greeted by strains of the "Volga Boatman", accompanied by impatient demands for vodka. Of course, the great day will be when Germany, having finished off Russia, has started on Persia, and we are being regaled with a rendering of "In a Persian Garden" and harassed by requests for sherbert and rose-water, or whatever the drink is out there.

Anyone with any powers of perception will immediately realise that the person referred to above is *not* the C.S.M., who, as everyone knows, never touches anything stronger than milk, with an occasional glass of lemonade when he's in a convivial mood. Which undoubtedly accounts for the extraordinary lemonade shortage at the A.T.S. dance on Friday, where he was to be seen disporting himself gaily on the dance-floor. The outstanding advantage of these two beverages is that a hang-over is a rare, in fact, practically impossible occurrence.

We hear that the Quarter Bloke is already concentrating on his Christmas dinner. Recent reports state that all rabbits and their families are doing well and it is to be hoped that the recent addition to his own family is likewise flourishing.

THINGS WE WANT TO KNOW.

Who was the clerk in skirts who took the C.S.M. on a binge, and what happened after the ball, and above all—what did it cost her?

"B" Company.

This month, after a long period of patient waiting, our company is gradually increasing in numbers, till very soon it is hoped it will be like old times, and our C.S.M. will again be able to take his drill.

To our new "rookies" we extend our warm welcome and hope that their coming days at the Depot will be a lasting and fairly pleasant memory. Also, Sgt. Hodgson is back with us after the very successful turning out of a Corps of Drums, the drill of which will be continually brought up as an example of our company's N.C.O.'s for a considerable time to come.

To those who have left us—mainly Sgts. Downe, Clarke and Davis to "I" Company, and Sgts. Horne and Neate to the —th Battalion—we wish all the best, and hope to meet them again in the near future.

Sgts. Copley and Greenslade are once more well in their old style, and their voices are now being heard from dawn to dusk bellowing across the barracks.

This month's joke is once more directed at our "boy" Greenslade, who one day when it was raining hard, rolls up in a flash civvy, fur-lined mackintosh, much to the delight of all who witnessed this amazing spectacle.

We were highly honoured last week by a visit from our late Sergeant and C.S.M., now R.S.M. of the —th

A Battalion Overseas.

THE BUFFS



Officer 1801

TOMORROW, May 16th, we are, it is hoped in common with many other serving Buffs, celebrating the Regimental holiday on the anniversary of the Battle of Albuhera. In other words parades will run roughly as follows, Reveille, Breakfasts, Dinners, Teas, Roll Call, Lights Out.

It will present a golden opportunity to catch up on some arrears of sleep.

Meanwhile we have changed into K.D. which is infinitely more comfortable than battle-dress, though more complicated to adjust, viz., shorts to point of knee-cap, hose-tops turned over to length equal to that of match-box etc. However the battalion as a whole can display a magnificent collection of knees.

We have so far been unsuccessful as far as cricket is concerned having played two matches against the R.A.M.C. and losing both. Once the team has its eye in though, and this may take some little time, since some members have not played for years, the issues will reversed.

Mail seems to be getting out here more frequently now which helps morale a good deal. The writer of these notes may even be encouraged to further literary efforts one of these days by seeing these notes actually in print.

"A" Company.

I start off this month feeling in much better spirits than usual. It is Albuhera Day and a holiday, which means that if you are not on guard, cookhouse, sanitation or a conference, a spot of trouser-pressing is indicated, a pastime which in these days of arduous training is acceptable to the exalted and lowly alike.

The company is now in shorts. What an array of white knees, almost as dazzling as the local landscape. The whiteness, however, will soon be remedied by King Sol, who is day by day gradually getting stronger. I wonder why "Ducks-disease" P. Chapman was given a pair of shorts that would fit Sgt. Mockler. Was it an accident?

Sgt. Crook has returned from hospital again, once more fit for the fray. The hospital seems to have or had a big attraction for our Sergeants and Officers. It may be noted here that a large proportion of the staff wear petticoats (I believe), but of course this may have nothing at all to do with it.

I don't think that I am giving away any military secrets by saying that "A" and "C" Companies are now billeted together. This means that there are now two C.S.M.'s bawling about instead of one, otherwise everybody seems satisfied with the move.

The passing of four old friends, namely Cpl. J. Miles, Ptes. J. Duncan, S. Matthews and H. Woodward, is mourned deeply by the whole of the company, and all tender their sympathies to relatives and friends who may read these notes.

A welcome is extended to the following, who have just recently been posted to this company on promotion: L/Sgt. R. Luckhurst, L/Sgt. A. Wise, Cpl. J. Collins and L/Cpl. G. Collins. The latter N.C.O. adds yet another member to the steadily increasing Sittingbourne element of the fraternity.

The Company Commander has from some unknown source secured a small ball of fluff. It might grow into a dog, but it is doubtful. According to reports from the Officers' Mess it is what is known as a "Sooner". When it gets older it will be taught tricks, the chief among which will be to find matches. I'm told that they make good smoking tobacco.

Three N.C.O.'s have just returned from training local recruits. Somehow they seem to have aged, but their labours appear to have proved successful as the proverbial little dicky bird tells me that the squad was the best of several. Well done!

The Sergeants' Mess has received a cook from the old school in Burma. A man who worked his way into the Mess by donning a green baize apron and carrying the Sergeants' Mess piano on the road to Mandalay. It is also stated on good authority that he was once the head chef at the well-known "Palmer Towers". Anyway, there is a great improvement.

"B" Company.

Yesterday the whole battalion was agog, being on the eve of a regimental holiday.

This evening at 18.30 hours, those who are not still at their various duties are too tired to feel anything much. Such is war!

Really, under our peculiar conditions, at the moment it is extremely difficult to find anything "printable" that would be of interest to *The Dragon*, and the only outstanding occurrence recently is the sudden appearance of many pairs of pink knees to tone in the "browned" faces of the battalion.

Cricket has started and is being played in spite of the regular visits of the Boche bombers, who do their best to stop play but have not yet succeeded.

All this must seem as though we are spending a very pleasant war, but the general feeling is that May 16th, 1811 must have been rather more interesting and certainly would give us considerably more to write home about.

"C" Company.

This month there is the usual nothing to write about.

As "A" Company have now joined "C" Company, we like to think that the cream of the battalion is now gathered together under the one roof, and at last the novelty of standing staring when the other people are mounting guard is now wearing off.

Our local recruits have departed, incidentally turning out to be very good indeed—one of the best squads in this place, which is very gratifying.

In point of fact the company has been running up and down hills so fast and so frequently just lately,

that no-one has had time to do much worth writing about in these notes.

No. 14 Platoon managed to spare enough time to be first in the field firing, also having the section (L/Cpl. Brett's) with the highest score; and No. 13 Platoon would feel most insulted if they ever failed to lead the attack against the "Germans" weekly landing at — Bay or get dive-bombed West of —. Get off the road!!!

"D" Company.

You know, writing *Dragon* notes is like crawling through a double-apron fence—once you stop you're stuck. My chief worry, though, is getting started. A good deal of the work connected with these notes is done in a horizontal position—preferably with the eyes closed—a fact that leads to much malicious comment from those unappreciative of the lot of the literary artist. But once the recumbent position has been assumed, although it's ideal for the spirit, it's tough on the body—from a creative point of view, that is. It's always easier to give up than get up, I've found. And writing on one's back is quite impossible—the ink always runs back into the pen, or more often over your face, and either is enough to make the most enthusiastic author quite uninterested in anything but culpable homicide. I've know better men than myself gnash *Dragon* notes to pieces in a frenzy at less provocation. I've no doubt that George Bernard Shaw has much the same problems to cope with, so I'm in good company.

Then again there's the question of censorship, with the result that of necessity much of what your correspondent writes is robbed of its vitality—merely because it doesn't deal mainly with what the B.B.C. describes as "Questions of the Hour", but rather with mere chit-chat.

If we wrote all we wanted to each month in these notes it wouldn't be long before we had "That Man" on our mailing list—and then where would we be? A flattering state of affairs, but dangerous. The only question of the hour that concerns me, then, is how to get this finished by the 15th—and that occupies all my waking moments.

However, I don't think it will set the Wilhelmstrasse afire to know that "D" Company this month won the section competition in field training against all-comers. A very creditable performance as a result of a lot of hard work, especially as we were not the favourites. "C" Company insist it was because, of L/Sgt. H—, recently transferred from them, and that if it hadn't been for . . . etc., etc., but we treat those statements with the reserve that we feel they want.

Also I hear the N.C.O.'s on the last course managed to climb well up on the list of those who took part, gaining, particularly in the case of L/Cpl. C— and Cpl. W—, well-deserved recognition for their instructional abilities.

Our new Company Commander, P.R.I.O., having satisfied the "powers that be" of his capabilities and undoubted zeal, has gained the coveted third pip, amid mutual rejoicing. We understand that it is only his prodigious size (6 feet something in his socks) that assists him to bear the weight of brasswork he now carries on his shoulders. It's a pity that the cloth pips he wears on his K.O. lack that exciting brassy shine, but no doubt this is compensated for by their lightness!

The insect season now being well under way, although it is still the close season for sand-flies (which means, if you are bitten by one of these pests it doesn't count—

till next month!), we have been issued with those imposing structures of white net that are meant to hang over the bed and protect the occupant from mosquitoes and such like. When finally erected, they look like a cross between a parachute and a Sam Goldwyn bridal suite. I can tell you they are ruthlessly efficient for their purpose—but here's the rub, they not only prevent the insect from getting in to torment you, but if he does manage to sneak in somehow (don't ask me how!), he certainly can't get out. As if that worries him! The remedy then is, I understand, to cease using the net for quite some time, after having trapped your insect within, and let him starve to death. What you do in the meantime while he's starving to death is your problem, not mine!

Beneath Bell Harry, "B" Coy—Continued from p. 186

Battalion, who looks exceedingly well and has apparently lost his favourite quotation of "Take cover". Also, Sgt. Cristwood paid us a visit while on seven days' leave by the sea-side.

Leave is still one of the main topics of the day, and most of us have either had our seven days or are in the process of having it. Our Company Commander has just returned from his leave looking extremely well and ready once more to pull our cricket team together after its disastrous week-end without him.

"S" Company.

You are on the threshold of a great awakening, stupendous events probably altering the whole course of human progress. The Russo-German incident? Oh, no! The usual scribe having fallen down on the job, as steeplejacks would say, I fling myself into the breach, or rather, borrow a pencil and get cracking. (Collapse of Bony the bone-chaser, who thought mathematicians were infallible and one could tell a Pukka Sahib by his smell.) But to write, one must have data, and the comings and goings, like the goings and comings, are taboo. Thus, these restrictions make me feel more dumb than the Pizeco 18 set. Therefore it's got to be chit-chat. You know the kind of thing, social scandal and all that. Such things as "Did you know Ruby got hitched?" Not that there is much comment to make about that. I mean to say, any chap is liable to get the call of the wild sometimes. In fact, no doubt there is a multitude of unsuspected emotions seething beneath the old Hawkinge neck rag. But some comings and goings can be spoken of. Such as the return of our R.S.O., who comes just in time to swipe the hedges back into line. Or the return of Strong arm A— D (Twitcher), who comes back to us with a strong desire to foist his new-found fitness on to the officers' squad, who of course don't resent it a bit. One is bound to get an exceptional squad when the dross is eliminated, and when such personages as Stinks W—r, the Honourable B.S., the Battery Battam, Bread from the Boards and Shades of H.R.G., with J.P.I. bringing up the rear, grace the list. In fact, as the dear old lady said as she was falling and grabbed the bishop's beard, "You've got something there".

This is no time to worry about falling though, because we are enjoying a bout of beautiful sunshine and the Fall is some way off. It's been so warm that I believe there are so many Germans dying that they have left the gates of Hell open. But dying for me is not yet, and effort is demanded, so here now, unlike the Austin. Seven or Sarah's bike, I must go, with apologies for no sporting news and no mention of the grease boys.



ONCE again I sit down to endeavour to put the monthly doings of the battalion on paper.

The day for the writing of the "Dragon" notes seems to come round with incredible speed though after careful thought I find it was a month since the last notes were written.

Summer is at last upon us and the pleasure of quarters by the sea are being fully appreciated by all and especially those who delight

in showing their fish-like abilities in the sea which, although at the moment looking very nice, is really rather chilly. However, the cold does not deter many of us from going for a dip in the "briny".

Competition has been very keen in the contest for the battalion football cup this month. The final was played at the end of June, and resulted in a glorious battle for that much coveted trophy. 14 Platoon "C" Coy. were the champions, after half an hour extra time being played. Both teams gave us all a really fine exhibition.

We are all very pleased to welcome back to the battalion Capt. A. C. J. V—A— and congratulate him on his appointment to Adjutant.

Sergeants' Mess.

A very eventful month. We welcome a number of new faces in the Mess, and congratulate them on their promotion. We also congratulate C.S.M.'s Harwood and Pitt, and C/Sgts. Delves and Anderson. C.S.M. Kettell is moving to Brigade, and C.S.M. Pointer is now W.T. W.O.

It was indeed a pleasure to welcome back Sgt. Anderson (since promoted) and Sgt. Andrew from the "Y" List.

Our best wishes go to Sgts. Ryan, Blaskett and Rose, who were married during their last leave.

During the month we held two Smoking Concerts, the first with the R.A. and the second with the R.A.F. I can vouch for the success of the first evening, and from reports, the second seems to have been equally as good.

We were sorry to lose L/Sgt. Hallam, who was usually responsible for these notes; also Sgts. Stroud and Ashby.

If this weather continues, the cadres which have just commenced will be a change from the schemes of the past months.

This seems to complete the news for this month.

H.Q. Company.

Since writing our last notes, summer has sprung upon this "holiday" resort. Most of the company are

making full use of the sea during their spare time, and we hope they have enjoyed themselves, but we have yet to see a well-known personality taking the parade in his bathing trunks.

Hard luck, Mortars, on being knocked out of the football competition in the semi-final.

We wish to congratulate all N.C.O.'s upon recent promotions. We were very sorry to lose our "Muscles," but welcome S.I. Robertson and hope his stay will be a long one.

We were all very sorry to lose C.S.M. Miller, and wish him the best of luck in the future.

We welcome C.S.M. Pointer to this company and hope he will stay with us a long time.

"A" Company.

Firstly, we should like to welcome 2/Lieut. H. J. J—, who has recently joined the company. Also, congratulations to C/Sgt. Harwood on his promotion to C.S.M., and to our new C.Q.M.S. (C/Sgt. Delves).

During the month the company has managed to survive even larger and longer schemes.

The weather has not been too kind to us, but we have managed to get our full complement of training and sport.

News seems hard to come by this month, but "no news is good news" and with that comforting thought we wish you good-bye until our next issue.

"B" Company.

We welcome Sgt. Anderson and L/Sgt. Andrews from the Depot.

We wish every success to Cpl. Blaskett, L/Cpl. Blythe and L/Cpl. Washer on their promotion.

C/Sgt. Francis has returned full of intelligence and method after his administrative course.

No. 12 Platoon put up a good show in the battalion inter-platoon football match, being knocked out in the semi-final by "C" Company after a most strenuous and exciting game.

"C" Company.

Again nothing more exciting than many outings to examine the countryside, from which we have returned fitter, though weary.

The inter-platoon soccer final (as a result of which we hope to keep the Howells Challenge Cup for a second month) has yet to take place.

The company's lead in the Savings Campaign is undisputed—£43 in six weeks.

Officers and N.C.O.'s Cadres are beginning again, to give us all another chance to find that elusive baton in our knap-sacks.

"D" Company.

Since I last wrote these notes, many things have taken place to disturb the peace or our surroundings. A six-day exercise occurred in which a vast and magnificent array of enemy were duly accounted for by the battalion in two separate battles. But luckily we got a day's rest in between them and I think everyone enjoyed the small town where we spent the time.

Continued on p. 193.

News from the Veterans.

IT is a long, long way to Tipperary. At least that is what some of us thought when we had to rise early in the mornings and go for cross-country runs, clad in the flimsiest garments, in Arctic weather.

"Over the fence leapt 'Jimmy the One',
Followed by 'Monty', isn't it fun!"

However, it reduces the figure and gives one an appetite for breakfast.

Again we are changing some of our locations. It is rather sad, as we are abandoning gardens tended with great care, and winkles and wild goats will no longer appear on the menu. The piano which we "won" from a kind lady, as being the loneliest post in England, we are taking with us. We shall be closer to civilization where we are going to and, incidentally, we have been there before, so no doubt we shall get a hearty welcome from the local inhabitants.

The weather having got warmer, cricket is in full swing. On our own wicket we are invincible and we are expecting at any time an invitation from Sir Pelham Warner to appear at Lords. There our Bradmans and our Hammonds will be more in their element, as when you play in a field that has been "laid in" for hay, the late cut and the "shot past cover" don't count and all men are equal.

Sergeants' Mess.

The great event has been that one of our members deemed it necessary to increase the Regiment's portion to the recruits for the A.T.S. To him and his wife we offer our congratulations, and even hope that this will not be the last, although the dress problem may become acute owing to coupons.

We hope that our members who departed with "D" Company are nicely settled down in their new sphere, and do not pine for the sea.

We hope that the R.Q.M.S. will not crab us for our belated, but we hope just, reward by giving him our most hearty congratulations on his promotion.

The gas problem now is really acute, and it is really hard to find our Sergeants when required; it is even stated that the ladies of a certain village in Kent are really interested in decontamination at week-ends. Practice makes perfect, as the C.S.M. of "D" Company would say.

The dance hall at — seems to be a really big attraction for some of our more flighty members, and they are thankful that the Defence Regulations prohibit wives from visiting these areas, otherwise the Divorce Courts would be full (or the Police Stations).

A number of our members have taken part in games, which no doubt will be described more fully elsewhere, but I must say that the form of Slasher T— was admired by all, but we were sorry to see the run out just when he was getting set; others will insist on the deadly destruction of worms when at the crease, as we often see them face the bowler, then stop to hit a worm who has dared to show his head in front of the wicket.

Somewhere in the South-West.

ANOTHER month has passed and we still find ourselves in the same part of the world, and very pleasant it is too at this time of the year.

The chief source of entertainment at the moment is the officers motor cycle courses in the evening, at which some of our officers do not really excel. The mess in the evenings abounds with such remarks as "I don't seem to be able to turn right when I get to a corner" and "I hit the bank again this evening".

Our V.A.D.'s have risen up in their wrath at some of the remarks recently passed about them in the Dragon and I attach here their reply:—

"Gentlemen! after two very poor 'write-ups' in your last two publications, couldn't we now sink into decent obscurity? otherwise we shall be forced to hit back with such remarks as—Whereas the V.A.D.'s. are prepared to allow the adjectives 'delightful and capable' used in the last month's issue, they would point out that any 'romance' which may have lingered in their hearts on arrival, regarding the male creature 'en masse' has now departed; or would that be too subtle?"

Sport.

Report of a boxing match held on Saturday, June 7th, 1941. Proceeds in aid of the District Sports Fund.

Four boxers from H.Q. Company were entered for this competition:—L/Cpl. Graham, Ptes. Blake, Brailsford and Stevens. Bouts were of three rounds of two minutes' duration. Despite the handicap of only ten days' training done during the evenings, all of these boxers fought very well, and shewed great spirit, determination and stamina.

FEATHERWEIGHT.—L/Cpl. Graham fought Pte. Brown of the —th Battalion, The Buffs. His attack was very determined, and clever boxing put him far ahead on points, and he was declared the winner. A very good boxer.

MIDDLEWEIGHT.—Pte. Blake fought L/Bdr. Handsley of the R.A. His opponent had more experience, and put him "down" twice with heavy blows, but each time he got up and shewed good spirit in carrying on. He lost the fight but made a good show. A keen and spirited boxer.

MIDDLEWEIGHT.—Pte. Brailsford was matched against L/Bdr. Hughes of the R.A. He lost the fight in the second round, but fought very well despite his handicap of a damaged hand sustained in the first round. A very plucky fighter showing good stamina.

MIDDLEWEIGHT.—Pte. Stevens was matched against Pte. Eastwell of the —th Battalion, The Buffs, who was an amateur with some experience. Pte. Stevens lost his fight mainly through lack of experience, but made a very good showing.

L/Cpl. Graham, as a winner, was presented with a one-pint pewter tankard, and Ptes. Blake, Brailsford and Stevens, as losers, with half-pint tankards.

S/I. Maiden and Cpl. Mitchell acted as seconds.

On the whole, the performance put up by these men was satisfactory, especially since they were handicapped by short training and lack of experience. They all fought well and throughout their period of training shewed great keenness.

Sergeants' Mess.

Since writing these notes last month, various people with, I presume, rather guilty consciences, have been treating me with great respect. They have probably heard the old saying that "the pen is mightier than the sword", and are wondering whether this pen will be utilized as a weapon of attack! Don't worry, pals, this is *not* a "Gossip of the Town" column. Now that we know where we stand, here goes in the good old orthodox manner.

Congratulations to that good old "Diehard" Peter Ward on his promotion to the "Select 40". We are sorry to lose you.

During War Weapons Week the members of the Mess ran a buffet and invited the officers and friends. Thanks to the great effort by Bob Fagg, everything went off alright and was appreciated by all.

We welcome to the Mess Sgt. Holdom and L/Sgts. Fagg and O'Hara, not forgetting "Scrumpy"! May their stay be happy. A new member from the Muscles Department is Dick Maiden, who is no stranger to us. Congratulations, Richard II, on attaining such dizzy heights in so short a time! The Provost Sergeant must have saved a "helluva" lot of money if he puts it in the bank the same as he did his five rounds!!! They say that people who like "Rough" and drink "Rough", look "Rough". I must say we have a couple of "Rough"-looking specimens amongst us! 'Nuff said!

"Peg-leg" is now walking on an even keel. His tap-right, tap-right was certainly getting on our nerves.

The old Monk is at present walking around as if he were in a monastery garden. What's up, Monk? Worried over Archie?

As I am now doing C.O. Sgt. and cannot find men for guards, I have a sneaking suspicion that the Cook's Staff (led by Bill Bedford), being short of fresh meat, are cutting up a couple of potential sentries per day. I wonder if cannibalism is general in the British Army?

Well, folks, being the busiest man in the company (ahem!), I must close, wishing everyone the best of luck.

The Clerks' Alphabet.

A is for 'Appy—what all good clerks are.
 B is for Bell-ring that calls from afar.
 C is for Cave—of model perfection.
 D is for Dish—the latest selection.
 E is for Edwards—who makes things worth while.
 F is for Faults—they stand out a mile.
 G is for Gunner—the postage clerk king.
 H is for Hitler—that nasty old thing.
 I is for Ink-pot—that often upsets.
 J is for Jitters the C.O. never gets.
 K is for Knowledge the clerks all possess.
 L is for Lack of—that causes the mess.
 M is for Moving that one always dreads.
 N is for Night-time we don't spend in beds.
 O is for Orders—produced every day.
 P is for Prescott—who loses his way.
 Q is for Questions the companies all ask.

R is for Route-March—oh, what a task!
 S is for Sector—amendments galore.
 T is for typing—the same by the score.
 U is for Useless—we are, we're *told*.
 V is for Value of OUR weight in gold.
 W is for Wallis—our new O.R.C.
 X is for 'Xtra work after tea.
 Y IS JUST YOU, ON WHOM WE DEPEND.
 Z is for Zoo—in which we'll all end.

H.Q. Company.

Owing to the "exigencies of the service", these notes must be cut short. Also, any curtness, bluntness or other journalistic blunders must of necessity be ignored by the reader.

This company has, more than any other in the battalion, been working very hard indeed! The rest of the battalion, I am sure, will agree that H.Q. Company was the mainstay of War Weapons Week, and results achieved were acclaimed by everyone as excellent. Well done!

2/Lieut. B— and Sgt. Crouch have been working really hard with their Young Hand Signals. Cpl. Trim and his men feel confident that should the enemy come from Mars itself, they could deal with them effectively! As for the Mortars, sufficient to state that they are the cream of the company (Nerts!!!).

The Carriers have been reinforced recently and are now trying to settle down to some real training. The Pioneers, under L/Sgt. Marsh, their "Courseful" leader, have been promoted to the position of "Right of the Line, Priority", etc.

The remainder of the company—by that I mean the "still waters run deep" people—are slogging away at their various jobs in various moods, some happy, some "browned off". The answer to the latter is, "Go to it!"

Sgt. Maiden quite recently organised some tabloid sports which went off very well indeed. The men thoroughly enjoyed that afternoon.

To conclude, we wish those who left us and those who have joined us, the best of luck.

Last, but not least, congratulations to Sgt. Holdom on becoming a proud father (future A.T.S.?).

Signal Section.

The concert for the local War Weapons Week was a great success. Rumour has it that we shall tour the other battalions—just to shew 'em what *can* be done in that line! Of course, Signals were well to the fore. In the now famous Harmonica Band we had Sgt. Crouch, Ptes. Bruce, Hunt and Raymond. Woodhead thrashed a piano with mighty feeling. Harrison rendered (I think that's the term!) vocal solos with the Band; and Hunt, of course, gave us "I couldn't help it, could I?" Bynes shewed that he could send "Vic Eddies" with his feet, if necessary. 2/Lieut. D. H—, assisted by a West End actress, gave a couple of delightful Noel Coward sketches. 2/Lieut. B— recited and was a member of the "Axis" number. Tunbridge sang with success and feeling.

Now to work. On the day before the C.O.'s Inspection, we were horrified to find that the Sergeant had lost his voice. However, the Platoon Commander hadn't! and we were very pleased to be complimented by the C.O. on our turn-out.

Congratulations to L/Cpls. Tunbridge and Pullinger. Tunbridge has just completed a Cadre Course in which, despite the disadvantage under which he started, he came through with flying colours. Look out for the Tunbridge Rifles! Pullinger has recently taken unto himself a wife. Although the news shook most of us, several members of the platoon managed to be present at the ceremony. All success and happiness to them both.

Cpl. Ede has just returned from the Signal School with honour, having passed with great distinction. I don't see the flags above his tapes yet, but I expect Mrs. Ede will be sewing them on any day now.

Burke has deserted us for the Pioneers, and Bennett has gone to "A" Company.

All the Young Hands (there are so many of them these days, we hardly know who's what) are progressing favourably. What course it is, some of them can hardly decide. They think it's a drill course, they do so much of it.

Leave has poked its lovely nose once more into the platoon. Those who are due for it, work like men possessed, and those who've had it do the same thing. They say it makes the time pass quicker until the next leave.

M.T. Section.

Being our first issue, our readers must excuse the briefness, but to kick off with, the section is glad to welcome back to us our M.T.O., who has been away on three weeks' sick leave after a hectic time in S—. We congratulate him on being presented with a son and heir, and hope mother and son are doing well.

The section have done well in the sports line and have torn up all the local Home Guard teams. We got so good that the company team had to challenge us, but although we put up a good show, we went down fighting to the tune of 4—2, which the critics must admit was a good show. We also put out a team to play the Carriers. Afterwards the M.I. Room was visited by most of the team (who hit the Sarg with a bogey wheel?).

Driving has kept us quite busy lately, also buffing up for C.O.'s Inspection, for which, by the way, we got 100%. Well done, M.T.! Again we astounded the critics. We shook 'em, and we can always shew them that we can soldier as well as sit behind a wheel all day. Cushy job, this M.T. business—so some think!

Route marches are coming along now and every N.C.O. and man in the battalion must get going on their "dabs" and do one a week, and the M.T. can do them, too, although our numbers are small owing to driving. (Anyway, Monk reckons they're O.K., providing there's time to have a few before they shut!). Did you knock your knees on the last one, Monk? But we would like to know who measures the distance, for those 18 miles sure look like 28. Still, why worry? There's a war on.

Congratulations to Queeny King on his marriage, and we wish both him and Mrs. King happy years of married life. (Ask Ned, Kingie!).

They tell me that the technical Sergeant is anticipating a move. His wife and all the little Monks are on the way to Devon. Well, he shouldn't have much fear about amusing them. He'll most probably be able to fix up a few playthings with what he's got tucked away in that technical store. (What say you, Monk?)

Now this question of leave. We are managing to get through quite a lot, and we all come back to count that 13 weeks (roll on!).

Well, as we have no more news to impart, we'll close these, hoping that next month will produce some exciting items.

"A" Company.

All's well in "A" Company (we hope). But all's well because of the appearance of Sergeant-Major Davis (alias Jack Hulbert), and not forgetting his stick. It's his best friend, next to a certain blonde.

How things have smartened up, especially guard mounting. I'm sure if we can afford to give demonstrations we should be next on the list for Buckingham Palace.

We also welcome back Captain H— after his brief spell of indisposition. Let's hope the weather we're having now has its effect.

There's only one grumble, and that's "fags" (commonly known as cigarettes). They are as precious as onions. We've heard of people living on grass, but, by the smell, some boys here are smoking it!

Congratulations to certain N.C.O.'s on gaining promotion.

What a lovely sight the boys at H.Q. had on the 18th. It was so hot in billets that they all decided to sleep on the lawn—a beautiful moon, and stars were shining down upon them. In fact it was a wonderful experience until someone and his stick woke them all up and made them go somewhere else. You should have heard the "luggage" (slang)—it was shocking. Anyhow, it was a thrilling experience. Ugh!

If K.B.M. keep up their cooking, I can see the boys buying them a present (probably some sugar). "What! No jam?"

We welcome to our midst 2/Lieuts. B— and W—. Let's hope they enjoy their soldiering with us.

Sgt. Sharrod has gone to the —th Battalion as a Warden.

C.Q.M.S. Millen has been posted to "Y" List. Let's hope he doesn't lose his S.A.A. fame.

"B" Company.

Several shooting matches have taken place during the month, both on the open range and the miniature range. The Home Guard have not yet attained our standard of shooting but they are beginning to shew marked improvement. After all, they cannot be expected to equal the performance of Pte. Shave at our last meeting when he scored five bulls out of a possible five at 200 yards range, wearing a respirator. The miniature range has also been very popular and the match arranged with "C" Company resulted in a win for us.

Our darts team have given a good account of themselves—the Home Guard, the A.F.S., and "D" Company all being included in our list of beaten foes. On the football field we have played matches against "D" Company and the M— Rovers, as well as inter-platoon games. "D" Company beat us 3—2, but we won two matches against the M— Rovers. A cross-country run was also arranged during the month.

A couple of dances at the school hall, an E.N.S.A. concert and a number of cinema shows have all helped

to pass our evenings, and then, of course, there is always the fish and chip shop, which is regarded as one of the high spots of the village.

But our life in this station has not been all entertainment. Several nights have been spent under the stars and the weather has not been very kind to us on these outings. However, even the 30-mile route march failed to daunt our spirits, and the Sergeant-Major actually looked as though he was enjoying it, much to the disgust of those with sore feet. Still, we must give our chiropodists some work to do, otherwise they will forget all they have learnt.

There is one wedding to record this month. Pte. Rick was married at Micham on May 31st, and we wish him all the best.

"D" Company.

As we write these notes, the sun has actually appeared, and the weather really is what we expect from this part of England. But, as usual, just as we are really settling down and getting to know the local inhabitants, not to mention leading ladies and film actors, along come the usual crop of rumours of another move. If these should be unfounded, we are sure that many will be glad as, after looking at the sea and trying to hide from the cool winds, it seems only right we should be able to disport ourselves in it and enjoy it, as many have already done.

There have been quite a few changes in the company. After a very short return, we again bid farewell and good luck to 2/Lieut. H—; also Lieut. P—. We are sorry to lose also, Sgt. Hunt and Sgt. "Middleton" Butchers. We shall miss the former and his untiring work on the drums very much. At the same time, we welcome 2/Lieut. B— and 2/Lieut. B—, and wish them good luck in this hard-working but pleasant company.

We are glad to publish that the rumours of confinement and operations on the "Remarkable Horseless Carriage", as referred to in last month's *Dragon*, are unfounded, and she is still pulsing with health and vigour.

We have held several successful dances, and we have also had our usual quota of films, and an E.N.S.A. concert, which was greatly enjoyed, especially by a rather deaf old lady in the front row.

On Whit-Monday we beat "B" Company at soccer, and although of course we were confident, we were very pleased to win as we understand they were an unbeaten side; two good goals were scored by Cpl. Sluman and Pte. Whitehouse. Others seen being very energetic were 2/Lieut. E— and Pte. Golding.

"D" Company—continued from p. 189.

Cadre courses are about to begin again with gusto, and they will be a change from the endless schemes of the past months, especially as the hot weather seems at last to have come.

We welcome Captain M. A. B— as Company commander; and are very glad that Captain K. Mc— is staying with us as Second-in-Command.

A rumour is going round that our venerable Sergeant-Major Pointer is going to be the Weapon Training W.O., and we wish him luck and plenty of rabbits in his new job if it comes off.

Congratulations to L/Cpls. Publicover, Lawes, Russell, Stockwell and Weaver on their promotion to Corporal.

The Villa Rose Battalion

IN our last despatch we said something about grumbling. Since then we have had a feast of it, with the most suitable of all objects for a British grumble—the weather. The High Powers arranged, with extraordinary accuracy, that our June excursions into the country, should be timed to coincide with a peculiar kind of rain; rain of a special extra wetness which, falling vertically at high speed, makes a last-minute twist so as to worm its way inside the battle-dress collar and down to your waist, while other drops by skilful infiltration work their way up through your battle-spats to your knees. The timing only broke down during the last really big picnic: the rain laid on for Z—4 hours, was punctual, but by Z it had ceased to operate. So, rather drowsily, and a little hungrily, we saw the matchless hills of our adopted county in brilliant early morning sunshine.

We have rather grown up these last few weeks, and become (in strict privacy) slightly pleased with ourselves: so many new toys to play with and recondite abbreviations to use, such enormous map-cases to carry about, such Herculean marches and such complex discomforts to boast of ("...head in six inches of rain " ".....only forty minutes sleep " ".....and the rats, running all over my face, I tell you!"). Next month we celebrate the first anniversary of our formation; and, if we have everything still to learn about making little plans and painting tiny pictures, it is something to feel like Old Sweats so soon.

Some allusions will be found below to the start of the bathing season. The Commanding Officer himself took the first plunge, closely followed by the Intelligence Officer, who gave a fine exhibition of the inverted crab-stroke. Both were fully clad. A number of others followed, believing that they couldn't get wetter than the rain had made them already. They were wrong. They could. They did. A little later some of us tried the experience of motor-cycling in saturated Battle-Dress trousers. We cannot wholeheartedly recommend this.

Brigadier H— has left us. Before he went he was kind enough to come and talk to the officers; and the charming, intimate little speech he made will remain with some of us as one of the best small memories of this strange summer.

Here are the latest bulletins from our various Companies and Coteries.

Celebration of Albuhera.

Albuhera Night was well and truly celebrated by the battalion with a dance in aid of the Buffs Prisoners of War Fund.

The assistance of the Mayor and Mayoress of T— had been sought and the gathering of not far short of 500, resulted in the swelling of the Fund to the extent of £75. The Mayor and Mayoress were unfortunately unable to be present, but in words of the Commanding Officer "they were ably represented by their deputies and the Aldermanic Bench". We are proud to say that the higher ranks of all three Services attended in force, the Resident Naval Officer and the Air Commodore of the district, as well as our own Brigadier, each bringing a large party.

The high spot of the evening was the auctioning of a quantity of that rare and almost forbidden fruit, the Onion; this was carried out in his inimitable fashion by Mr. Owen Nares, and the fruit itself was purchased by Miss Diana Fishwick for the truly magnificent sum of £9, (Miss Fishwick was given the services of an armed guard to see her safely home with her prize).

The Young Ladies of the Cabaret performed with skill and exceeding vigour and were voted by all the men present to be beautifully dressed—one middle-aged lady present was heard to remark that "she had never felt so naughty since visiting the Windmill Theatre".

Raffle Prizes included bottles of whiskey and boxes of chocolates; many of the local residents present were unable to believe their eyes.

The evening was voted to be one of the best ever spent in this flourishing corner of our England; and despite the fact that everybody who came was charged exorbitant prices for everything they ate and drank in an endeavour to extract the maximum amount of money from them, each and every one agreed that both the evening and the cash were well spent.

Sergeants' Mess.

Dear Readers,—We crave your forgiveness for taking such an age to appear in print. We fully realise that you have anxiously scanned the columns of *The Dragon* each month, searching for us; at last your patience is rewarded.

Our absence must be put down to the fact that during the last nine months the battalion has done its best to spread itself over as much of the home of the cider as possible; we in turn have spread our wings in order to cover them with our guiding influence.

Our comings and goings since formation have been numerous; space does not allow for detail, so we will say good luck, *bon voyage*, etc., to all who have marched on, and welcome to all who have joined our ranks.

Since our arrival here we have drawn in our wings in an endeavour to recall to the fold those that have long since been conspicuous by their absence; but, alas, it is of no avail. We still find members paying us flying visits. Heaven knows where they are stationed. Security, you know.

Training has been our main aim this month. We have done our best to put our shoulder to the wheel. Sports, etc., have been taboo. Even our Mess Caterer bemoans the fact that he has had to drink with himself.

THINGS WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW.

Why did Sgt. — lock the door?

Why does the O.R.S. keep his window open and his door shut?

Who is the Sergeant who when at meals can be seen in the same old position gazing intently out of the window into the semi-lower regions?

What is a "Pyhard"? What remarks will somebody make? Your guess is as good as mine.

Which W.O. pushed a bicycle 2½ miles home?

What does Jimmy know about that?

At last **Headquarter Company** has been able to show the rest of the battalion that it is useful as well as ornamental; that it is not maintained just as a university for soldiers who are too far advanced to use rifles, or as a kind of museum to show off to visiting Staff Officers. By the reluctant kindness of a West Country Regiment we have been given transport at the rate of about 20 h.p. per man; and with this we have been able, as the Americans say, to go places and do things.

The **Signallers** especially. From a mysterious tribe they have turned into familiar beings, and however remotely a rifle company may be placed, there are always two members of the Blue and White Brigade in attendance, while others are constantly emerging from the scrub, paying out line like spiders. Everywhere their voices are heard in what sounds like some form of Oriental religious observance: "Ahab calling Abimilech, Ahab calling Abimilech I say again over". We are sorry to lose Cpl. Smith so soon after his getting the coveted "D" on a Signals Course. We still hope he will come back to us.

Our **A.A. and G.D.** people are also much in evidence nowadays (though some of their work in protecting the battalion is done in lonely cubby-holes on high and distant hills). Where the battalion is, there will the A.A. trucks be also, with Pte. Cohen looking stern and business-like in a kind of dentist's chair, with Pte. Cole towering above the tripod, the philosophic Pte. Burden looking as if he could carry the whole world on his sturdy shoulders, Ptes. Cook and Bright in sunny attendance.

We have spoken before of the great powers of our **Mortarmen**, among whom Pte. Ottoway is perhaps the principal Samson. Something should be said of the gentler side of their natures: music—of the most highbrow kind—makes a strong appeal to them, and this is supplied in bulk from the squeeze-box of Pte. Peckham. The noise sometimes serves to drown the rattle of Pte. Ball's helmet falling off. When it comes to warfare, we modestly claim that this platoon will take some beating. There is an assured professional touch in the way they handle their awkward machinery which old soldiers would find it hard to equal.

The same thing may be said of the **Carriers**. This team has many new members now—we are particularly

grateful to "C" Company for their generosity—but there has been no bungling in the way their craft (which are kittle cattle, as the writer happens to know) have been handled in the exercises. The things do disappear altogether sometimes, but that is just done for security. It is probably for the same reason that L/Cpl. Moules wears a black jersey—so that he can pretend, if necessary, to be a civilian.

The **Pioneers** flourish mightily (the word applies particularly to Pte. Tough) in their new surroundings, where they have a fine—if rather chilly—decontamination centre among the other tools of their trades. They are becoming experts in many subjects, being particularly strong in anti-gas work. Congratulations to Pte. Harding on his marriage and to Cpl. Watkins on his "D" in the Fire Fighting Course.

We have been glad to have the **Medical Section** at Company Headquarters for a while and to become familiar with their very cheerful faces. These non-combatants have much to teach us; Stretcher-Bearers Brennan and Melville, for example, have taught us that good men can do a tour of duty at the end of a hard day's marching.

We have been unable to persuade the **M.T. Section** as a whole to leave its seaside haunts, but some of the drivers have been good enough to follow us, and it is nice to see the faces of Pte. Lawrance and the inimitable Pte. Chart, among others, peering out from unfamiliar vehicles; to say nothing of Pte. Gill, the most experienced soldier of us all, who looks charming in his new Brooklands hat. The **Intelligence Section** has been ubiquitous on exercises: there was hardly a bush on — moor under which you would not find Pte. Hollinsworth or Pte. Mayblatt drawing maps, while the inspiring face of Pte. Hennessey seemed to shine between every pair of bluebells. The **Quartermaster's Staff**, on the other hand, have hidden themselves away in a provision shop, from which you hear, above the roar of the traffic outside, the steady click of Pte. Rutstein's needle, the low, insistent burr-burr of the Quartermaster's brain ticking over as he thinks of new and more awkward Returns to ask for, the measured pace of L/Cpl. Sargeant between the flour-bins, intercepted by sharp and shattering bursts of agricultural mirth from the Browsing-and-Swilling Officer.

In Company Headquarters we welcome L/Cpl. Preston, whom we have acquired by craft and subtlety from "B" Company.

THINGS WE SHOULD LIKE TO KNOW.

Why did L/Cpl. Preston and Pte. Ritter sleep with the geese, and did the pigs really "hum" to them?

Did the Company Commander enjoy his ride in a Carrier, or did it "jog" his memory of things left undone at the office? Was the "seat" of the trouble caused by "standing orders"?

"A" Company.

It seems some considerable time since we left—well, where we were before, but time has not been wasted and C.S.M. Martin is to be heartily congratulated, for on May 26th, the big event happened and although unable to hide his disappointment at not having a R.S.M. in embryo, he may have the equivalent in the A.T.S.

Sport some months back did not appear to be one of the company's strong points, but the scene has changed. The battalion's boxing match with the R.A.F. last month might well have been "A" Company

versus R.A.F. L/Cpl. Dadd and Ptes. Hutchings, Hubble and E. Davis were worthy representatives of the company. During the past month the sporting activities of the company have been seriously curtailed and therefore it is with regret that no further opportunity has been afforded us to outstrip the other companies.

The move from—where we were before, was accomplished in an extremely business-like manner; the C.S.M. and the C.Q.M.S. made it look ridiculously easy. When we arrived at — it seemed that a pretty energetic month lay ahead of us, and so it turned out to be. If the parties responsible for the Propaganda of "Sunny —shire" would only be allowed to run the Country's propaganda—how Goebells would be out-Goebelled! The hours of sunshine can be counted in minutes without the services of a mathematician.

What fun these higher formation exercises are for amphibious creatures, but, alas! not for poor human beings. Even the Battalion "O" Group became tired of half measures and decided to go the whole hog and "swim for it". Still, we have some results to show when after being ordered to counter-attack we were successful in capturing the battle-scarred standard of a company of another battalion. It's the first rung of the ladder climbed, whatever else it might be. Joy, almost abounding to ecstasy, was our experience when, coming across a beautiful fat telephone wire in the enemy's reserve lines, we proceeded to hack it down, while we conjectured what the Brigadier was saying to the B.S.O.

"Time, gentlemen, please!" and once more we have to say our pretty piece to those coming and going. *Au revoir* to 2/Lieut. B—, and best of luck; and welcome to 2/Lieuts. G— and G—. Lieut. G— has left temporarily to find out for us whether it will be worthwhile getting a "Blighty" when things do happen, a sort of "rece" of his own.

Just as we go to press, the news comes through of the promotion of C.Q.M.S. Hill. He goes (with our congratulations and regret) to pilot "D" Company.

"B" Company.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

Training is running high. At times it seems that the company is "running wild"—in fact we understand that the Company Commander is now indenting for a hire-purchase of the racecourse (for use from 06.00 to 07.00 hours each morning). We might well call this form of vital training "here a man, there a man", for on one famous occasion there was but one runner on the start line at Z plus 5. This "scarlet runner fever" has developed a remarkable popularity for cricket, squash, fives, swimming, football, ping-pong, rounders, and other novelties.

History repeats itself. Recognizing in his Company Commander the intrepid qualities of the pioneer explorer, 2/Lieut. C— emerged from his defensive locality in the dense forests of "You-know-where", and, brushing aside a hungry lion gnawing at the strap of his map-case, said: "Major Livingstone, I presume!"

Initiative: A.A.L.M.G.'s mounted on giraffes! (Gas-capes and eye-shields will be worn—round the neck?).

Sense of humour: Message goes astray—unfortunately the ostrich swallowed it. "But I thought—" "No, you silly ass, it *wasn't* 2/Lieut. W—. You ought to be able to tell him by his gaiters."

The bi-weekly meeting of the Royal and Ancient Order of Pro-Formas was held last Saturday. Captain G— P— was in the Chair. The business proceeded according to plan, and many new and complicated pro-formas were adopted and co-opted. A good time was had by all.

Progress! 2/Lieut. H— has returned from his course with many new ideas. His platoon (always a musically-minded body of men) have already adapted a well-known song to the title of "Open out". The fruits of his new education were clearly visible (in spite of the weather) when, while demonstrating the principals of "infiltration", he was shot three times at point-blank range and still lived to lead the final assault against a very dampened audience.

More progress: We were sorry to lose L/Cpl. Gaskin, who has departed to higher spheres of training—in other words, from a Cad to a Cadet! We hope to see him R.T.U. when he has got the pip.

OVERHEAD ON THE TELEPHONE (Title: "When the rains came").

ADJUTANT (not ours, of course!): "Hullo... Oh, hullo, old boy! What's that? You want to "paint the picture"? Well, I should use water-colours if I were you."

"C" Company.

A few of us still survive, if we have not had the fortune to be specialist tradesmen. After many efforts our company clerk carried out his threat and left us to enjoy the comforts of the metropolis and the badge of the R.A.O.C.

Buster Smith 750, often referred to as 10 to 8, went off to learn how to become a sapper. Talking of this branch, has the section of this famous corps which deals with drainage been disbanded?

Pte. Hopkins' deafness secured him a discharge. In fact the only remark that he heard in the last month was when his platoon commander casually remarked that Pte. Hopkins had secured his ticket. We fitted him out in Saville Row tailoring for 50/- in that lucky pre-coupon era—the golden age of the well-dressed man—and sent him off well satisfied.

S.O.S. has removed our best runner, whose signalling qualities had remained strangely dormant while he was with us; and Carriers also have a strange lure for the foot-sore and bedraggled rifleman.

The C.S.M. has now returned to us and the noise of the carriers has taken second place.

Sgt. Elliot copied 2/Lieut. P— and went to learn about the intricacies of the modern bomb. He now spends his time collecting odd bits of metal, possibly in the hopes of forming one "rattling" good Austin.

Our storeman is a man of resource, but even he could not grapple with the unfortunate loss of 2/Lieut. S—'s compass, prismatic. C.Q.M.S. has his pen ready for signature of A.F. P1954 when our friend from beyond the Equator, whose better nature occasionally prevails, produced same.

One Saturday afternoon we had a gala sports day. L/Cpl. Randall pulled off the Individual Championship Cup by a short head from L/Cpl. James 54, and both proved that the married man can still show the youngsters up. We noticed that the Officers and Sergeants will have to wear bigger boots if they hope to win the tug-of-war next time. Old "Pacific" steamed in well ahead of schedule in the 440, and Cpl. Richards,

doubtless by stinting himself at dinner (or is this possible?) completed the mile first.

Recently we have substituted for Church Parades some bitter struggles with the H.G. We have proved even to that be-ribboned Matabele warrior, Lieut. N—, that his Simla is not impregnable to The Buffs. Which platoon was it that was still behind the starting-line when the exercise closed? Perhaps they had forgotten that for some inexplicable reason all Sunday schemes end at 1200 hours! Cpl. Perkins is taking intensive map-reading. Sgt. Evans returned almost trouserless. We hope those well-known philanthropists, the Q.M. branch, presented him with a new pair. The H.G. are indenting for a supply of carriers after this little exercise.

We understand that the Company Commander has recently become very aquatic and has pretensions to be a cross-Channel swimmer (Channel dimensions somewhat shrunken), although at the ripe old age of 30 he may be numbered among the "elders". It is rumoured that a swimsuit (non-Army issue) is now packed in his valise.

Rumour has it that some men have forgotten what their wives look like. We hope this will soon be remedied, although bachelorhood is scarcely the order of the day here.

"D" Company.

Writing this month's *Dragon* notes is like nearly missing the last bus. There has been very little time for any of us to break into literary expression—but the need seems imminent—and consequently the battalion's favourite company (despite all rumours) must break off for a few minutes to consolidate, collect and impart information about its activities.

We left — with the sadness of a boy leaving school, which was alleviated only by the thoughts that a return (if only for several hours) was not only possible, but probable. We marched out with the mid-day sun, which changed gradually, as we approached the promised land, to the grey, overcast sky to which we have lately become so accustomed. Our march through strange new roads and part-hostile-looking shops with placards in the window marked "No Cigarettes" was executed in the pouring rain, which at once depressed us, but seemed appropriate.

We do not pretend that the company's new billets are as luxurious as those we are used to, but the roofs keep the rain from our heads, and the walls seem stable enough to stand securely for several more weeks.

The lonely billet orderlies who act as Cinderellas when the Company of Ugly Sisters goes out for 48-hour picnics are said to have made friends with local rodents. We have our usual quota of canine camp-followers, too, and a kitten of doubtful parenthood whom Sgt. Gaylor has an eye on as a potential paper-weight.

We have been given plenty of opportunity for admiring the scenery, though we must admit there is a monotonous similarity about it—red mud and tall wet grass which has a habit of investigating the working parts of our rifles and the weak parts of our boots. Our current theme song is "It never rains, but what it pours". After our first outing we returned feeling like miniature *Graf Spee* and proceeded to scuttle the rum ration. We must now consider ourselves immune from pneumonia, and able to throw into confusion any future hunger-strikes.

A week or two back, officers and men proceeded to — on reconnaissance patrols, having received information that the enemy had taken our previously prepared

positions there. Troops had to be carried in civilian omnibuses and upon arrival consolidated in the shadow of a religious establishment. From there (after refreshing ourselves with the Waters of Righteousness), we sent out fighting patrols. Large forces of enemy troops were surprised in Rock Walk. L/Cpl. Scillo, leading a section, attacked and destroyed them, and set about repairing the extensive damage. Runners reported "Enemy destroyed and prepared positions re-captured" at 16.00 hours. The company then moved up the line for an evening's enjoyment.

Our Question Column is still active. There are some entries of interest. Who is Nobby? Did 2/Lieut. H— have hair-raising experiences on his recent course at P—, with disastrous results to his soft cap? Is it true that the company has become even more security-minded and has this any bearing upon the fact that one of our officers sometimes receives letters addressed only to 2/Lieut. Eric —? Is there any truth, too, in the rumour that Cpl. Harman has received offers to pose for a Maclean's toothpaste advertisement? Is Cpl. Simes responsible for the outbreak of moustaches in the company?

Before leaving T—, we helped to organise The Buffs Prisoners of War Dance and netted £75. This figure is one of which we are justly proud. It is interesting to note that £9 0s. 0d. was received through the raffling of a string of onions, which the Company Commander scrounged in his inimitable fashion.

High spot of the month was the impromptu party given by 2/Lieut. H— on the occasion of his 21st birthday. Company Headquarters participated in the fun, as he flung the grapes of his good-living in their laps. There was a march-past the window of the Mess, the Glee Club rendered numbers from their repertoire, and the party ended with various officers and other ranks attempting to bugle "Lights Out". This was so successful that we all promptly went to sleep.

We note that C.S.M. Martin of "A" Company is now a proud father. We congratulate him, though we fear we have missed hearing his remarks upon the event, which would have been interesting.

We are to-day welcoming C.S.M. Hill to our company. We are used to "Sticky" weather, so hope to survive.

We are sorry to report that we are losing 2/Lieut. H—. The Pioneer Platoon will be on the map when he has been there a short while.

There is not much more to report. L/Cpl. Collins showed us that he knows all about gas—and we are hoping Pte. Samwell will stand up under the strain to which he is now being subjected. Pte. Staines offers to teach any of us the tango in six easy lessons. The price varies.

Every N.C.O. and private has a personal runner, and the fish-and-chip shops are doing a roaring trade.

The month has been one of marching, rain, wet feet and the Second-in-Command popping in and out of hedges at unexpected moments.

EVENT OF THE MONTH.—This month it is difficult to choose. But perhaps the greatest moment in our month's history was when we discovered that the absence of rations on a certain day was due to the fact that our cooks' lorry had been captured. We took a very poor view of that!

"Z" Company.

Once again these notes are being written in strange surroundings, far removed from our feudal estate and

the sanctity of a certain Methodist Sunday School. Our abode now is under the broody wings of Battalion Headquarters.

The month has not passed without some incidents, and our ranks are now in a somewhat depleted state. We extend our best wishes to those who have gone to other companies.

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Pte. R. Dodge, whose popularity in the company was assured. Our sympathy goes out to his wife and family.

There has been very little activity in the world of sport during the month, but everyone appreciated the fine display of boxing in a tournament held with the members of the senior service. We saw some good and clean fighting, and finished in a draw. Our congratulations go to the N.C.O.'s and men who took part.

The powers-that-be, having apparently decided that we were getting too settled in our habits, "rusticated" us by sending us exploring the highways and byways, with the apparent object of seeing how much of the good earth we could collect on our person, and how many trout we could catch in our trousers pockets. In the first we succeeded beyond the wildest hopes of expectation, but, alas! the wily fish were not to be caught by such unorthodox tactics. Again we have been forced to cope with yet another strange language, one which, to say the least, has left us breathless, and which reduced many of us to a state of nervous exhaustion, until one more enterprising than most amongst us, discovered that all we had to say was "O.K.". This apparently was the correct answer to anything and everything!

We understand that a certain C.S.M. has become efficient at dealing with land mines, but we venture to suggest that a course on the maintenance of Cycles Mk. I, would enable him to surpass his most brilliant exploits.

Whether it is the call of the cuckoo, which so often resounds in our ears these days, or life generally, we know not, but our tame poet, unable to repress himself any longer, has burst upon our startled ears a poem picture of life as we lead it (so he imagines—which heaven forbid!).

Pandemonium reigns supreme

When the battalion decide on a tactical scheme,
 Dispatch riders at office doors,
 Company Commanders pacing the floors.
 At all companies, including H.Q. and "Z",
 Every Company Commander at once sees red.
 With messages arriving thick and fast,
 Depends how long the scheme will last.
 Company Commanders pull long faces,
 Subalterns sort out their map cases,
 On their minds they have a load,
 And raspberries are issue if they take the wrong road.
 Amid the sacred precincts of our High and Mighty Lord
 Are six Company Commanders and they hearken to his
 word,
 Plans of action are settled and lots of notes are taken,
 They're relieved to get outside the door, but one or two
 are shaken.

The information is passed right down
 To the Sanitary Corporal, and even Pte. Brown.
 They then are told to draw their rations
 And to report to "action stations".
 A gallant Major on an Ariel steed
 Says, "Gad, a helmet steel is what I need!"

Continued on p. ▼

The Bisham Boys.

A MONTH ago we were talking of Albuhera Day—our first battalion parade. Now the major topic of conversation is the forthcoming celebration of the first anniversary of the formation of the battalion. July 4th, a date already famous in history, is to be "The Day", and it is evident already that it will long be remembered in a certain West coast town.

The Colonel of the Regiment, Major-General Sir John Kennedy, will take the salute at our battalion parade in the morning, and many of our old friends (including, we hope, our "Fairy Godmother" from Bisham) will be there to see the yearling march past. In the afternoon the Sergeants, undaunted by their defeat a year ago, are meeting the Officers in a Cricket Match. As both sides are much lighter and tougher than they were a year ago, there should be some hard smiting and speedy fielding. Our second battalion sports meeting (the first was on Boxing Day!) will also be held, and there will be dancing in the evening with the Sergeants' Mess Dance as the principal attraction. It is, perhaps, unwise to say too much about this, as on every previous attempt the battalion has moved to a new station on the eve of the dance. Anyhow we're hoping for a change in the luck this time.

The Brigadier under whom we served the greater part of our first year left us just after Albuhera Day. His successor, having formerly commanded a battalion of "a famous Midlands Regiment" which provided the initial cardre of our battalion, is already well known to many of us.

Our Commanding Officer is doing two months hard labour—at the Senior Officers' School—and in some quarters there is uneasy speculation concerning rods he may have in pickle against his return. Already, despite his very full programme at the S.O.S., he has managed to pay us a flying visit specially to hold a Sunday morning Officers' T.E.W.T. We hope he will be spared from his labours to come over to our birthday celebrations.

One of our recent exercises put us in the headlines in a well-known West County paper. "Britain's Troops Ready For Hitler's Invasion Hordes": "Buffs Show Way to Hurl Them Back" gave a clue to what was to follow, but the story deserves reproduction as a fine piece of descriptive, if not imaginative, writing. Here it is:—

"In a green valley, familiar to thousands of holiday-makers, sloping between smooth hills down to a line of cliffs on the South Coast of England, I watched a

demonstration of how Nazi invaders from the sea would be dealt with by troops of a famous county regiment.

The only piece of realism lacking was the presence of Germans.

Bullets whistled overhead. Bren guns cracked viciously, rifle and hand grenades exploded in sheets of flame with ear-splitting detonations. For 20 minutes that valley was the unhealthiest spot in the whole of southern England.

I had waited for the attack to develop in the shadow of a high bank topped by a few leafless bushes through which an icy wind whined mournfully. There was no sign of life apart from the wheeling gulls over the cliffs 800 yards away. The sea was a cold, steely-grey expanse, with the horizon lost in mist.

Buffs Advance.

Where the fields reached the cliff-tops I could see tiny light patches representing Germans who were presumed to have climbed from the foreshore. They were scarcely visible in the gathering gloom, for evening was fast drawing on.

I knew that from inland The Buffs, that illustrious regiment with a record going back to the days of the Tudors, were advancing to hurl the invaders back into the sea. Since early morning they had been on the march, one of their routine exercises designed to toughen their endurance. By the time they reached the scene of action, they would have covered 25 miles.

An emissary, who might have been a Home Guard fortunate enough to catch first glimpse of the Nazi landing, had gone back to report the invasion to the oncoming troops. We knew the situation would soon be well in hand.

I could imagine the happenings over the brow of the hill behind—the approach of the steel-helmeted soldiers through an insignificant lane, the half-running, half-crawling reconnoitering dash of the company commander, the swift deployment of men behind every available scrap of cover.

On the hill forming the right shoulder of the valley, where a low hedge ran near the skyline, I thought I could detect movement, but the signs were so faint and fleeting that I might easily have been mistaken. Yet a menace brooded over the valley, and it deepened with each passing moment.

Suddenly the tension snapped. Behind and on each side of the hollow came the sharp, dry crackle of rifle-fire. Still I could see none of our troops.

Then a Bren gun began spitting. It was firing at an imaginary enemy machine-gun position established about 100 yards inland. Death sped over my head to that tiny space of English soil.

Action.

A whistle, an orange flash, and a deafening detonation. Beside the machine-gun post a mortar bomb exploded. Then another.

Now for the first time I saw soldiers. Several came running from the hedge of a field to the left of the valley, near the cliff-top. One hurled a hand-grenade at the targets, and the party immediately flattened to the ground. The crack of the explosion was followed by a louder bang as the mortar got to work in the same area.

The whole valley rang with reverberations. Over the hill on the right raced the men of The Buffs, upholders of a tradition forged at Blenheim and Albuhera, as ardent at the end of their 25-miles march as they were at the beginning.

A rounded shoulder of the hill hid them from the targets. They swept along in dark rows that steadily lengthened. Their rifles began barking again.

Final Assault.

The moment came for the final assault. I could hear the shouts and cheers of the troops, mingling with the startled cries of the seabirds as the last drama on the cliff verges was enacted. Then more rifle shots as the beach below was cleared.

Details of the vivid picture were filled in by the sight of an odd man or two left lying in the fields as The Buffs tore forward, by the sound of an order ringing clearly up the valley, by a flying fragment of bomb which whizzed through the open window of a car not far from my watching post.

Sea and land, restored to quietness, merged in the mist of night as troops marched back through the valley, gay and seemingly unfatigued. They had the calm assurance of men who knew their job. And England has millions of them."

H.Q. Company.

The final notice to-day for copy for *The Dragon* has brought Fleet Street to our very door-step in this peaceful, sleepy village "Somewhere in the West". Windows and doors of cottages are being thrown open, and the "locals" peer out at the sight of our scribes dashing here, there and everywhere they shouldn't, in search of tasty morsels for our contribution. Indeed, we even fancied we smelled the tang of printer's ink, but investigation proved it to emanate from the boots of our runner, who, strangely enough, had really been running.

The company is on the range to-day and latest reports have it that everyone is among the "Bulls". We have been very unfortunate with range days allocated this month, as on three occasions rain has taken command and stopped play.

We have said good-bye to C.S.M. Grant, who after nearly a "Y" List stay in hospital, spent a few days with us and then swopped with C.S.M. Basted of "A" Company. We wish them both success in their new spheres, and when soccer comes round again we look forward to seeing C.S.M. Basted train a H.Q. Company team to avenge our past defeats from his former company.

Lieut. T—, our Signals Officer, is very busy these days with a group of "flag basher" trainees. He says they all shew great promise, and has high hopes that they will all eventually classify. We wish them what it takes to stay the course.

The "Classifieds" have played busily with their new toys—wireless sets. Judging by the performance they put up on the battalion's last "Phoneless Day", many of them are Bruce Belfrages, Joseph McLeods, etc., in the making. We should really enjoy hearing Sgt. Mumford read the football results.

Whilst on the subject of "flag bashers", we should like to know who was responsible for camouflaging the telephone lines with "smalls" and clothes pegs during a recent exercise! Also if any platoon of any company has taken up the challenge for a match at any game from tiddley-winks to baseball.

2/Lieut. S— and Sgt. Rogers gathered their platoon of "Hammer Slashers" and would-be "Slashers" from other companies and emigrated to the battalion assault course to run a field engineering cadre. After a full fortnight's land work it was decided to disband

and await the arrival of materials to work on the water, when, it is said, they will be bridging the River —. We suggest that our generous P.R.I. be approached for a loan to equip them with life-jackets; it would be a catastrophe if one of the "Slashers" took a header with the platoon's only hammer tucked in his jumper.

The Carrier Platoon have been having a high-powered lecture and maintenance period—secretly we surmise that this was done to preserve the "spit and polish" put on to the vehicles for the Albuhera Day Parade.

Much amusement has been gained from the sight of Company Commanders and other officers "bog-wheeling" on battalion "Motorless Days". We are eagerly awaiting the opportunity of witnessing the Q.M. and M.T.O. mopping up on their "bog-wheels" from — to Battalion Headquarters.

The M.T.O. is as proud as a peacock these days. For two months none of his many vehicles has been involved in even a paint-scratching accident. A great performance this, and the special mention gained in battalion orders was well-merited.

The Band and Drums earned a great name for their Albuhera Day performance and are now busily rehearsing for the battalion's "Birthday Parade", which will take place on July 4th. We shall have much to tell you about this in the next issue of *The Dragon*.

The scribes have returned minus the tasty morsels they went to seek: one of them thought a tasty morsel was something to eat, and has spent the greater part of the time gathering mushrooms.

"A" Company.

We are now in the throes of company training, which, it can be truthfully said, most of us are enjoying. I say "most" because one or two haven't quite made up their minds about P.T. before breakfast!

After months of "2 on and 4 off", we are glad to have our turn at W—, a glorious spot if ever there was one, despite the far-from-sunny weather we have had so far. The sorrow with which some of us left certain people behind at D—W— is wearing off with a rapidity which can only be due to the close proximity of the school for young ladies.

Rain has put football off the menu for the last two weeks and the last game we played (against "D" Company) put one of our stalwarts, Pte. Still, into hospital with a broken nose.

Congratulations to L/Sgt. Ewers on his well-deserved promotion.

The canteen which has just been opened here is already going with a bang (many thanks to the local inhabitants for their kindness and hospitality) and looks just the place for dances, concerts, etc. Altogether things are looking pretty rosy.

"B" Company.

The main energy of this company during the past month seems to have been spent in preparing for matrimony or committing it. We don't know why there should be an outbreak of this nature, but imagine it is due to the seasonal biological urge when, as the poet says, "in the spring-time a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love".

Capt "Critch" is leading the way with a wedding on the 21st in a local church, when a large muster of officers and other ranks is to be expected.



“Shiny C” Company

[Photo: E. Morgan

2/Lieut. “Stan” has already added to his responsibilities.

Nevertheless, the reader should not run away with the impression that all our energies are dissipated in this fashion. This would be far from the truth, for much time is spent in the healthy pursuit of erecting a giant meccano set with occasional interludes unravelling wire. Early P.T. in the cool morning mists keeps our muscles supple and in trim for evening distractions.

The Adjutant, too, has been displaying a sudden excess of energy on early morning drill parades in preparation for the welcome visit of the Colonel of the Regiment.

A few brave spirits have already ventured into the icy waters that lap the shore this arctic summer, but soon the whole company will have to plunge in, for the C.O. has decreed that all ranks must learn to swim and pass out in battle dress. By the time he returns from the S.O.S. we hope to show him how the busy B's can buzz when they set their minds to it.

“C” Company.

After a month away from the beach which has known us since New Year's Day, “Shiny ‘C’” is back again on its accustomed role, but in a different place.

During our training period we have fought many sanguinary “battles” on and around the moors, and are now experienced mountaineers. What with P.T. at 06.15 hours daily and swims in an icy sea, we are

getting super-tough—and liking it. Even Church Parade was a four-mile march, but it made a welcome break from the eternal guards. Sgt. “Rabbit” and others have shown that their proficiency with firearms is not confined exclusively to military targets, and their endeavours have more than once provided welcome supplements to the day's rations. Similarly, cliff climbing exercises undertaken as training introduced seagull's eggs as an addition to the breakfast menu.

We have beaten the R.A.F. 7—2 at soccer, and “A” Company 1—0. We then gave “A” Company the return they asked for on their own ground, and had much pleasure in beating them again by 5—2. Later the “Q—s” fell to us for 7—3. We are now on the look-out for fresh scalps.

We welcome Captain C—, who is commanding us during the absence at Battalion Headquarters of Major H—.

2/Lieut. T— is taking a lengthy vacation of two courses (one of them a whole month's P.T.!) with a spot of leave in between. With so much violent exercise it is feared his appetite will increase still further. Anyhow, he'll find a “rill mill” ready when he returns.

All ranks are extremely pleased to disport themselves on the beach at the crack of dawn each day for twenty minutes' P.T. (Physical Tiredness!). However, it is an encouraging sight for the rest of the company to see Captain C—'s nether extremities disappear into the grey of an early morning sea; he enthusiastically anticipates that ere the Yule logs burn again, at least two people will be giving him their moral support.

Somewhere in Kent.

BY next week the whole battalion will be breathing the salubrious air of Buffs' Bay. Never before have we been so self-contained. The unity thus produced should be most beneficial. That feeling has been greatly fostered of late by a series of battalion parades, battalion exercises and a highly successful battalion Sports Meeting, at which "D" Company were proclaimed the winners of events with monotonous but deserved regularity. There has also been an outbreak of cricket, tennis and bathing.

What with tennis, gardening, bathing, P.R.I. training and, above all, Carrier-bating, Major Leslie's days must pass in a sort of congealed whirl. He is shortly going on his first leave since the war began.

Vere has just returned from one of his periodic orgies, miscalled leave, looking as usual rather unreliable at the knee joints, and like my canary under his eyes. He was gently borne into the mess on a stretcher carried by willing, sympathetic hands. His winning of the mess Derby Sweep may retard his recovery.

The Big Bear whose shoulders gleam golden with a rich crop of spring pips continues to decentralise with success. Consequently, Little Aubrey, has to leap about like a sort of adenoidal Principal Boy on battalion drill and P.T. parades.

Adolph awaits the visit of a Committee of Inspection with equanimity. He has arranged for battalion transport to career round Kent with surplus stores for the duration of the inquisition.

Ralph has gone on leave; remarks on his activities have to be censored as any anecdote which hurts his *amour propre* results in the writer being appointed Duty Officer for a whole week. His room is at present occupied by a lame and halt septuagenarian, who at some time must have bamboozled the doctors into passing him A1.

Guy is Acting Adjutant, and bears up very well under the strain. Some have expressed a wish that he would not sit next to Oliver at meals. The subtle olive of his complexion in close proximity to the aggressive Bardolph-red, affected by Oliver puts these sensitive souls off their dressed crab.

It will be gathered that Major John, our revered P.M.C., looks after our bodily wants with as much attentive care as ever Buddha devoted to the souls of his followers.

Plum has been disappointingly responsible this month, though his disinclination to remove

hurdles from the battalion parade ground rendered unduly complicated a series of otherwise straightforward movements.

Charles regularly lowers his pints with an admirable air of injured innocence. His imagination has been fired by the success of his aide-de-camp, young Brack, in worming secrets of high military importance from high-ups, in the guise of a pale young curate. His impressive lip-wear prevents him from assuming a Church of England garb, but we must warn all Headquarters of high formations to treat with great suspicion any stray Nonconformist Minister hovering round the precincts.

This fifth column business is becoming a racket. Rain-in-the-Face, disguised as the *Enfant*, recently played havoc with "B" Company's dispositions until the impudent imposture was discovered by an unusually alert sentry.

It may be said in conclusion that this Eden is no longer Eveless. Contact may have been slow, but the reconnaissance was thorough. Young Brack, Little Aubrey, and many others, smitten with the charm of those trim blue uniforms and piquant millinery, may be seen making a nightly trek to the Lighthouse, guitars in hand.

Cricket.

The following cricket matches have been played by this battalion, and it is with some satisfaction we can record that up to going to press the battalion team remains unbeaten.

THE BATTALION v — QUEEN'S (Home).

Result : Won by 18 runs.

The Battalion.		— Queens.	
S. J. S. Moore, b Dickens	3	Beattie, st White, b L. P.	
Sgt. Jeffries, c Beattie, b Dickens	2	Whatley	10
R. N. Marcy, lbw, b Hart	2	L/Cpl. Grant, c Seymour, b Wallace	13
V. Collins, b Wynn	44	P. G. T. Kingsley, b Sgt. Seymour	11
L/Cpl. Wallace, c Kingsley, b Wynn	23	Fee-Smith, c Wallace, b Sgt. Seymour	16
Pte. Ives, b Wynn	9	Upton, b Sgt. Seymour	31
L/Cpl. Butler, st Stevens, b Dickens	1	Bramwell, lbw, b Sgt. Seymour	0
Sgt. Brown, c Kingsley, b Wynn	2	Wynn, b V. Collins	3
Sgt. Seymour, st Upton, b Wynn	9	Stevens, not out	5
L. P. Whatley, not out	0	Sgt. Dickens, b Sgt. Seymour	0
Pte. White, did not bat		Pte. Hart, lbw, b V. Collins	1
		Pte. Mann, c V. Collins, b Pte. Wallace	0
Extras	3	Extras	0
Total (9 wks. dec.)	108	Total	90
Wynn, 5 for 35.		Sgt. Seymour, 5 for 31.	

THE BATTALION v DOVER POLICE (Home).

Result : Won by 78 runs.

The Battalion.		Dover Police.	
S. J. S. Moore, c Youden, b Weston	34	Holmes, hit wicket	2
Pte. Ives, c Baker, b Haines	7	Fletcher, run out	2
V. Collins, st Youden, b Weston	2	Stanway, b J. H. Creaton	16
Sgt. Jeffries, c Youden, b Weston	0	Blunden, b Sgt. Seymour	7
R. N. Marcy, b Stanway	38	Haines, b Sgt. Seymour	2
J. Creaton, b Haines	9	Baker, b Sgt. Seymour	2
L/Cpl. Wallace, b Stanway	8	Crush, c Sgt. Brown, b Pte. Thompson	0

Sgt. Brown, c Crush, b Weston	3	Potton, c L/Cpl. Wallace, b	0
Pte. Barnes, not out ...	2	R. N. Marcy ...	0
Pte. Thompson, not out ...	1	Youden, c Sgt. Seymour, b	0
Sgt. Seymour, did not bat		R. N. Marcy ...	2
		Datlen, not out ...	0
		Weston, b R. N. Marcy ...	0
		Extras ...	3
Extras ...	11		
Total (7 wks. dec.)...	114	Total ...	36

Weston, 4 for 23. Sgt. Seymour, 3 for 9; R. N. Marcy, 3 for 2.

THE BATTALION v ROYAL MARINES (Home).

Result : Won by 5 wickets.

<i>Royal Marines.</i>		<i>The Battalion.</i>	
Seggie, run out, b Sgt. Seymour	4	R. Q. M. S. Clarke, b L/Cpl. Oxley	2
Oates, c R. Q. M. S. Clarke, b		Pte. Ives, c L/Cpl. Viner, b	
R. N. Marcy ...	13	Seggie ...	8
Rees, c Wallace, b R. N. Marcy	6	L/Cpl. Pearce, b Seggie ...	50
Andrea, c Pte. Ives, b Pte.		V. Collins, c Wright, b Andrea	16
Thompson ...	24	L/Cpl. Wallace, b Oxley ...	2
Wright, b V. Collins ...	11	R. N. Marcy, not out ...	21
L/Cpl. Oxley, b V. Collins ...	8	Sgt. Jeffries, not out... ..	7
Nurse, b Pte. Thompson ...	6	J. P. Nash	
Hamilton, b Sgt. Seymour ...	0	Sgt. Brown	
Cpl. Norris, c Sgt. Jeffries, b		Pte. Thompson } Did not bat	
Pte. Thompson ...	3	Sgt. Seymour }	
Cpl. Hunt, c R. Q. M. S. Clarke,			
b Sgt. Seymour ...	9		
L/Cpl. Viner, not out ...	6	Extras ...	15
Extras ...	6		
Total ...	96	Total (5 wks.) ...	121

Pte. Thompson, 3 for 19.

Sergeants' Mess.

This month's notes bring to you, by kind courtesy of Spellman-Marriott, Orderly Room Sergeant, late bachelor, presumed at one time to be a misogynist, this stupendous, amazing, colossal, most astounding scoop of all time. News that will make us sigh with relief: Yes, ladies and gentlemen, you've probably guessed it first time. At long last the above-mentioned gentleman has weakened and at this very moment is groping his vacant way homeward, and drifting before his "rose-coloured spectacles" is a constant stream of flowers, altars, wedding cakes and other odds and ends of paraphernalia usually associated with weddings. The fateful day is to be Saturday, June 21st, 1941, and, suppressing an urge to send condolences, we hope to send our very sincere best wishes to the happy couple by telegram, with unwritten remarks such as, "The first ten years are the worst", "Nil Desperandum" and "May all their troubles be little ones". Congratulations to "Spell" and our very best wishes for future happiness to Miss (?) Paddy Webb.

Members of the Mess have been educating "Spell" in the mysterious rites of marriage, and also that period which follows this ever tragic event. We hope that the books kindly loaned by "old sweats" have been inwardly digested and that his mind is at a suitably low level. That these books have had a marked effect has been noticeable owing to his astounding loss of appetite. Never before has "Spell" been known to give the leavings off his plate to the cat. The said cat is now an ardent admirer and constant companion to him at meal-times.

Talking about food reminds us that "Chalky" Wright is returning to us shortly and, in consequence, we have packed our kit-bags and are moving out to the nearest hotel before famine overtakes us (in future amend "Chalky" to read "Famine" Wright).

The advent of "Famine" Wright will re-open the competition with Francis Augustus Brown ("Blower"

to you, "Blower" to us, and "Fanfare" to himself). This amateur musician was persuaded to take up motor-cycling as a side-line and, with motor-cycle between legs and trumpet to lips, announced his intention to become mobile. The change from static to mobile was so swift that "Blower" remembers nothing more than a smashed motor-cycle, a heap of wreckage and broken sangfroid. We hear that the trumpet has gone back to "Uncle's" in exchange for a violin; but there, fiddling also comes natural to him. His latest escapade took place on the Sergeants' Mess tennis lawn, kindly assisted by "The Baron of Barnett's" tennis racquet. Not being very well acquainted with the rules, he rather absently swung the racquet complete with press. He shot the racquet into the air and it was prevented somewhat from falling to earth by an obstacle in the form of a left eye in the possession of Sgt. Standing. Standing was suitably admonished by an uncouth comrade for interfering with "Blower's" game. "The Baron" is now presenting Standing with a telescope to complete the Nelson effect.

Talking about effects. Sgt. Palfrey is walking out these days hidden behind a growth of fungus called by ordinary folks a beard, but by us a "ruddy sight". Far be it from us to pass adverse comments upon this facial decoration, for we all know that there are many uses that a beard can be put to, from absorbing surplus soup to saving razor blades. But beards, like most other things, have their disadvantages. We understand that on his first night at home on a recent leave his wife said: "Outside, 'Fido'", and locked him out with the cat. His nicknames now range from "Abdul Singh" to "Bernard Shaw" (apologies to G.B.S., who dislikes the Frankenstein touch).

When we speak of "Moaning Minnie" we do not necessarily mean air-raid siren, but merely Old Wick. This first class grouser, on being given permission to proceed to London to visit the Paymaster for a few days, boldly asserted that he was going under sufferance and that "duty" was his middle name. Anyway, we now know that the half-hour he managed to spend with the Paymaster was very usefully employed.

We announce with great pleasure that the Swear Box is now full (Thank you, Gents!) and the box (and the money) will be sent to the Prisoners of War Fund, never to be seen again, we hope. Then perhaps we shall be able to ease our minds in the traditional Sergeants' Mess style. There is an unhappy rumour abroad of the possibility of another box being presented to the Mess by "Louis the Wop", which leads us to believe that he receives a substantial commission from the fund for services rendered.

The old Brains Trust firm of Lent, Worms and Kelly, normally known to members as the Cohens and Kelly, come into the news as a "combine" for the first time. If you walk into the Mess and say "Ol' Clo", one or all of the firm will look expectantly at you and business would be rapid thence onward. It was taken as a matter of course that one of the combine would win the Derby Sweep run by the Mess and it was no disappointment when Worms collected the winnings.

No notes would be complete without some reference to the "Bold Baron". Old Wick endeavoured to convince him that he would be shortly taking over an additional duty as Drum-Major. From his inane remarks, we assume that the "Baron's" conception of a drum is "something that other things get as tight as". On returning from leave (or the "vac", as he calls it), he had two things to talk about: (a) a four-course meal in some low den in Piccadilly, and (b) a trip to Brest in

some "super super" type of aircraft. An incredulous listener to this story was heard to say that he hadn't thought it necessary to use an aeroplane to get to these parts.

Bandmaster Foster and his disciples paid the battalion an appreciated visit during the month, and after a very creditable performance to a surprisingly large audience, the Bandmaster took tea with us in the Mess. This tea was on such a banquetous scale that we all wish that we could have a Bandmaster of our very own, preferably Bandmaster Foster, but Bandmasters are *rara avis*.

Those members who have been "absent friends" for so long are now to rejoin us. Among whom are Arthur Curnick (Charles will be able to keep a sharper eye on this social delinquent now), and R.Q.M.S. Clarke, that debonair desperado who gets Younger (hop variety) every day. Chief Warder Collier has left the Big House and in accordance, large reserves of stock have been ordered by the Mess Caterer. His new book will be entitled *Prisoners and How to Mistreat Them, or How to Get Drunk Though Broke*.

PERSONALITY OF THE MESS No. 2.

R.Q.M.S. "NOBBY" CLARKE.—A "Hess"-like creature whose whereabouts are never known. He is one of the things that the "Baron" considers would get as tight as a drum. The man who keeps the brewers in affluence. Considers that the R.Q. job would be grand if there were no stores to look after. Always has a canary in the office to act as a gas-detector, but having been in the Q.M.S. so long, the bird is now immune to "Gas"!

H.Q. Company.

A certain person, maybe he was on a Cook's Tour, once declared: "See Naples and then die". But we fortunates have discovered a place where the aftermath is not so drastic, we have indeed "Seen the Bay and lived".

"The Bay! Where is it?" you may ask inquisitively, probably disbelieving that such a spot really exists. But there I am afraid your prying enquiry must receive a rude halt. An exact position as to its whereabouts, or even the tiniest hint, is absolutely barred. So for the present it must necessarily remain—like most people's Utopia—just somewhere.

One thing I can disclose. We are stationed at the Bay. But there, any ardent reader of *The Dragon* knows the full authentic story of our escape from the dreaded dungeon; how we dragged emaciated forms from its fearful vaults, to recuperate, later, amidst the beauties of the Bay.

We have now been here many weeks. The beneficence derived from the effects of the sun and air has been far-reaching. We have become veritable superhuman beings. I dare say the almost violent early morning parades referred to in last month's issue of *The Dragon* have helped in bringing about this astounding change. However, be it what it may, the fact remains, we are different; the Bay has truly "resurrected" us.

Now, when one possesses such an exuberance of high spirits, the problem of expending this superfluous energy becomes rather a head-ache. Of course, different folks have different ways and means of expelling this newly acquired stamina. For instance, L/Cpl. MacDowall (medical orderly) has taken an unexpected plunge into the fearsome world of boxing. It would be safe to assume that his stalwart companion, Ernie Wymont (the M.O.'s batman) was the real instigator of this startling occurrence, for as we are all aware,

Ernie is quite a boy in the realm of self-defence. Why, way back in our glorious past, during the "'Appy 'Adlow" period, I can recall how he used to parade with the rest of us for meals, would walk in one end of the marquee only to exit immediately by a further entrance, to nip off sharpish-like to the sole village cafe, where he would feast on eggs, milk and vegetables—all of which was explained away simply as "training requirements". But that is all beside the point. We are more concerned at the moment with Mac's career. He has, like all great boxers, had a photograph taken of himself in a neat pair of blue shorts, assuming the usual aggressive pose, apparently waiting for some unseen foe to pounce on him. I thought upon first seeing this remarkable picture that either he had been waiting for a hell of a while, or that the "pounce" had actually come. His legs seemed extremely shaky, whilst the forward position of the trunk was so accentuated that it appeared as though the invisible force had landed heavily on his back. Judging by the expression on his face, I should say he had just eaten the goose-egg also referred to in last month's notes. However, I was indignantly informed that this effect was just one of those camera deceptions, or he admitted he might have moved. He would have had to move right out of the picture to obtain such a study.

Oblivious to all unkind remarks, Mac takes all this training very seriously, worrying no end as to his progress. This he has done to such an extent that his hair has commenced to recede from the forehead—and the consequent anxiety caused by this unexpected development is pitiful to behold. I only hope this does not bring his boxing career to such a sudden end, for who knows to what heights he may have arisen.

A person not often seen and rarely talked about is Pte. Taylor, the ration clerk. Even on our morning get-togethers he is conspicuous by his absence. In fact the only parade on which I have ever seen him present an appearance is the Pay Parade. Even then it is just a fraction of time that he spends with us, before fluttering off to his store, something after the style of a bee to its hive. I suppose it must be thrilling to work amongst sacks of sugar, boxes of margarine, chests of tea, and whole sides of bacon, for most of us look upon these valuable commodities nowadays in terms of mere ounces, indeed sometimes $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces. Can it be wondered, therefore, that he feels this great responsibility so greatly, and guards his charges so judiciously. Personally I rank him amongst those "back-room boys" of which we hear so much.

The biggest surprise of recent weeks came from Sgt. Palfrey (Pioneer Sergeant). It was noticed several moons ago that this N.C.O. appeared to be slipping; oft was he seen going about his business with the most noticeable unkempt growth of hair about his face. Razor blades are known by all to be extremely short, so temporarily this seemed to be the first open answer to this shortage. But soon the news filtered out that this was the beginning of a beard. Many people became exceedingly annoyed that a Pioneer Sergeant should be allowed to do this, and contented themselves with the thought that from that day onward the poor fellow would lead the life of a recluse. Like the little dog in the tale about Old Mother Hubbard, they were due for a shattering disappointment, for judging by the frank way in which the N.C.O. reveals his affairs of the heart with certain Vivvies, Ethels and Margarets, the abundance of fungi which now clings endearingly to his features, like ivy to the wall—has on the contrary enhanced his appeal from the feminine point of view. Undoubtedly it is the wild, barbaric countenance of his

that excites the maidens so. It is worth contemplating what would be the consequences if, say the R.Q.M.S. or Sgt. Drury also cultivated similar facial decoration.

Whilst on the subject of "growth", our garden is coming along excellently. Indeed the sweet peas (I have my doubts about that, but the packet can't be wrong) have grown to such a height that they endangered the presence of "Swann's Hammock" to such an extent that the whole darn affair had to be re-erected several feet higher. "Swann's Hammock" is *not* a species of sunflower, but is the meeting-place, or figuratively the Clapham Junction, of all the telephone wires leading to the signals' exchange. From far and wide they come, twisting and turning, creeping unseen through hedge and grass, and leaping from tree to tree, all eventually congregating triumphantly above our vegetable garden. Here some 20 of them, hanging in graceful folds from tree to window assume the shape of a hammock, whilst at the window end, all converge together in a frantic race to reach the switchboard with their message. Swann, by the way, is the name of the inventor of this wireman's nightmare. A civilian was heard to say cautiously to a companion: "Look, radiolocation! Marvellous, isn't it?"

Sgt. Marriott has at long last left us for a week in order to get this marriage off his chest. Pte. Galvin now walks about looking jolly white, for he rashly bet Sgt. Marriott £5 that he would never do such a thing. Making sure that he will obtain this money, the bridegroom has made several purchases to the extent of £5 and is having the bill sent to Galvin. Meanwhile, Sgt. Lent (O.R.C.) leans back languidly in his chair reflecting on the joys *he* had whilst on his honeymoon several months ago.

The Baron has just returned from leave and tries to tell us that during the week he paid a flying visit in an R.A.F. fighter to Brest. How conscientious the fellow is—he even eats all his cheese ration at once in order to obtain a nightmare, so that he might get first-hand experience. I wonder did he take his binoculars and motor cycle—the inseparable three. If only he could have obtained a few onions, to go with the cheese, he might have even taken a compass bearing on Hitler's new order.

Meanwhile, at the Bay, in glorious sunshine, we swim, play cricket and tennis, and, in case anyone is deceived, work. The only person at the moment in any unsettled frame of mind is Cpl. Roper. He has been presented with a Thompson S.M.G., for what he is not quite sure, having done nothing outstanding in the Orderly Room to deserve it. I am afraid our exponent in Accountancy and Business Economics is getting more removed from his sphere as each day passes. It is another case of the sword for the pen.

Knowing fully of the presence of a paper shortage and a consequent economy practiced in this respect, I shall retire quietly and continue my sun-bathing.

Signal Section.

Whilst welcoming to our platoon four new additions from the companies, whom we sincerely hope will be comfortable and happy with us, we trust their shortened course may not entail too concentrated and laborious study on their part and that ice-packs may not be needed. May we give golden words of advice to the newcomers to which they will after future careful consideration take as a precedent by stating that higher studiousness and intelligenzia may not be paramount for signalling but that studied tidiness at all times is a

criterion. Steratorean clamour may be an ideal means of communication at short range, say from the Corporal's Room to his intended victim, especially at Reveille, but of little value for authentic signal training.

We congratulate Cpl. Amos on his selection to produce himself at the R.S.I. Course which durates for a period of seven weeks. We hope that he does not subject himself to a course on Electricity, as the transition of his learning together with the Edisinal enunciations of our Sergeant will cause us to change from morse monons to educated electrons.

The field sports H.Q. have brought glory and adequate pecuniary recompense to L/Cpl. Hall and Pte. Barnes. The former trained with Spartan strictness, and like the Athenian of old, ran his Marathonic distances of one and three miles in record time to win the laudable laurels. Whereas the latter ran with a message from Athens to Sparta, the Lance-Corporal, forgetting his signal training, arrived empty-handed at the finishing-post. We at least expected him to carry the Signal Register, to which he is so attached, so that the events could be detailed together with map references in the diary. Pte. Barnes jockeyed himself into second place in three of the lesser distances in both the H.Q. and Battalion Sports. It is rumoured that he lost considerable weight training for his events, so that he was a mere shadow of his former self; his Gargantuan appetite had a noticeable lapse and on one occasion he abstained from scoffing a second helping of (rationed). His sacrifices to our cause will be written in the annals of the Signal Diary and was remembered by the H.Q. officers, as they presented him with a silver pencil.

After careful comparison of notes with all attached company signallers we wish to put on record the hospitality these companies have shewn to us and the havens of quietude and rest they are after the fiery fervour, pulsating pace, and meticulous methods of the Signal Billet. It gives the aesthetics amongst us an opportunity to get up-to-date with our S.T.A.A. Pte. P—, with glazed eyes, lapses into a coma and then into a natural sleep when he thinks of those salubrious sabbatical days.

The A.A., Mortars and Intelligence have been learning the art of semaphore, to which they have adapted themselves zealously and with great aptitude. Proficiency amongst them was of such high degree that the Signal Platoon are going about in great fear of losing their livelihood. The Intelligence, bereaved by the loss of the pigeon, had no alternative but to revert to semaphore as a means of communication. A pigeon in the bush is not worth two flags in the hand.

Intelligence Section.

The Clerk of the Weather has at last spat upon his hands and has dished us out a very large portion of sun, for which we are more than grateful. Our only hope is that he sticks to his present regime despite all polished brasswork.

The I.O. has just returned from leave and we believe that he has been dabbling about in the garden considerably, but there is no truth in the rumour that he proposes to take up a correspondence course with Mr. Middleton.

Our sleep has, of late, been disturbed by numerous boomphs which appear to originate from the other side of the "drink". In fact, "all der time dere is boomphs", which only goes to shew that there is a certain amount of ill-feeling between certain parties.

During the past three weeks the number of the section has been temporarily increased by three

"recruits" sent to us by the companies. They have been learning the hidden mysteries of intelligence work and it was noticeable that when their course of instruction was completed they returned from whence they came with a somewhat haggard look and staggering gait. Some disbelievers there may be who will read this with a cynical smile, but what do we care? We haven't deviated from the truth—much.

"C" Company.

Now that summer is upon us, we are once again participating in a few more "delightful country rambles" amidst the rustic scenery of Kent, added to which are the thrills of heating one's own dinner in a mess-tin and sleeping under the hedges at night. Night ops. are also plentiful and the age-old custom of curling up between the sheets has been almost entirely abandoned. However, most of us agree that Kent in the moonlight is definitely romantic. Company drills are well to the fore, and we understand that the C.S.M. has indented for a free issue of Zubes.

We have also been taking part in battalion drill parades. Having adopted the idea of "beating a tom-tom" in the middle of the parade ground, we are now anticipating the inauguration of a "ceremonial dance" accompanied by blood-curdling war-cries, thus completing the native effect. The R.S.M. recently gave instructions to the N.C.O.'s to exercise their lungs a bit more when giving orders. In fact, to shout so loudly that the telegraph poles bent in the middle. A certain Lance-Corporal in this company has apparently taken this order to heart and on an exercise quite recently, practised this on a tree. The tree bent in the middle alright and the vibration from this N.C.O.'s vocal chords caused it to fly back suddenly, with unfortunate results to a private with flaming red hair, who now has about 5% of the M.O.'s stock of plaster, etc., on his chin.

We are glad to welcome back Cpl. King after his spell in hospital and his period of recuperation. It is pleasing to note that his personal beauty has not been in any way impaired by his unfortunate accident.

We also welcome a newcomer to our ranks in the form of "Tich" Campbell. Is it true that his "old school tie" is now flying half-mast, following the handing to him of a small piece of paper by one of those stately figures in blue?

"D" Company.

Once a wise philosopher said: "Pride cometh before a fall". How very true this is, I know to my cost. For I was rash enough to predict in the May issue that the football league was "in the bag". Well, so it was, but H.Q. Company managed to pull it out after playing with us a deciding match, both of us finishing level in the league on points. However, it was a closely contested match, H.Q. Company winning 2-1.

The next event of importance was the cross-country run, which somewhat soothed our feelings after the league. We managed to get home 13 men out of our 15 in the first 26. Only 12 had to count, so every one thought it was a fair effort. The course was 5½ miles straight across country, and was selected by that well-known connoisseur of country, Second-in-Command Major Leslie.

Knock-out Tug-of-War and Bayonet Fencing was also going on during this time. In the former we pulled in the first round against "C" Company, managing to win by two straight pulls, and got a bye to the finals.

In the latter we also managed to beat "C" Company, in the first round, and were eliminated by H.Q. Company in the second round. The second round of the Bayonet Fencing Competition brings us well into the middle of May, and fairly well up-to-date. Of the more recent events was another company sports meeting where we selected the material for the battalion sports meeting. There was some good performances, too, considering that the 440 yards track leaves quite a lot to be desired. This last remark is not meant to disparage the efforts of the Sports Committee, who have done exceptionally well with the ground available.

Coming right up-to-date was the battalion sports meeting—an inter-company affair. The meeting took place on June 3rd and 4th, and, to cut the cackle, was a most agreeable and profitable turn-out for "D" Company, whose position at the end of the meeting was first, with 47 points. The final of the tug-of-war took place on the second day, in which we managed to pip H.Q. Company on the third pull. I was pulling myself, so don't remember much about it, and perhaps some other scribe might supply a more graphic account. One amusing and fortunately not "fatal" episode on the second day of the sports meeting was the spectacle of Captain P— pacing the "Boy Wonder" on the last 220 yards of his 880 yards. This was in the one mile medley. Of course, this disqualified the team, and though we were all itching to do "grievous bodily harm" at the time, the utterly woe-begone expression of the miscreant when he discovered the enormity of his crime, softened our hearts somewhat. The outcome of all this sporting endeavour was a "Smoker" for all the participants, the only absentee being Pte. Kearns, who has left us for "Higher Command", and we all wish him every success in the R.A.F. As an afterthought on the sports meeting, perhaps members of other battalions may know some of the individuals who helped "D" Company to fame:—440 Yards—Sgt. Colley, Ptes. Hughes, Church, Capt. Plum. 880 Yards—Ptes. Hughes, Shrubsall, Wilkes, W. Thomas. One Mile—Ptes. Cookow, Ives, Jenkins, Carter. Three Miles—Ptes. Jenkins, Carter, Wilkes, Cookow. High Jump—L/Cpls. Butler, Turner.

Villa Rose Battalion—Continued from p. 197

And tells the C.M.S. to hurry
To get the rations on a T.C. lorry.
Umpires' plans are soon made out,
And burly Captains rave and shout—
After all, the poor chaps must decide
As to the most comfortable way to ride.
Bottles are brought from the Globe Hotel,
Sahibs are broke, but they think it's swell.
They cart away Scotch, Bitter, Ales and Stout,
And think they'll get wet inside and out.
They don't take long to leave the station,
Marching on in extended formation.
Everyone's keen and fit at the start,
But soon feel pangs around the heart.
Run here, run there, run everywhere,
Be b— sure that you get there,
And now for my sake don't delay,
Or you'll go in clink and get no pay.
One company alone has not a worry,
They never march or get a T.C. lorry,
They just remain behind in station
To protect females of the civvy population.
The personnel look immaculate,
They see the others and say it's great,
Whether it's rain or may be fine,



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Villa Rose Battalion—Continued from p. v

It's glorious to be left behind.
The day arrives and the battalion returns,
Kit hangs by fires and almost burns,
It's always pelting down with rain
When this old battalion decide to train.
The lessons learned we must decide—
I think the lads prefer to ride,
But being short of transport,
We march it first and contented be.
The umpires rally round a table
And shew their critical notes if able—
All agreed and it's understood,
Tactics were bad but marching good.



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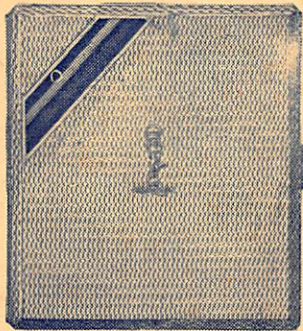
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