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EDITORIAL . . .

*It is now 12 months since Crossfire was first published as an experiment.
It is hard to judge it's impact.*

Some look forward eagerly to the next issue, some contribute regularly to keep it going, some quibble about having to pay 20c for it when similar magazines are issued free.

As we said when we launched it, success depends upon the members.

Financially, it is holding its own and we should shortly be able to transfer about \$100 profit to the Relief Account.

Welfare is occupying the Executive increasingly and at the last meeting approval was granted for the hire of "Heritage" high school boys to help our widows and elderly with home chores.

If you know someone needing assistance, please let us know.

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Try lunch at the RSA — 12 noon to 1.30pm
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See the Secretary/ Manager if you would like to take advantage of this postal service.

EDITORIAL

The Editor is Paul Brodie and the sub-editor Allan Gardiner. **PRINTING**

Crossfire is printed by Gards Print Ltd, 14 Bomford Street, Blenheim.

ADVERTISING

Copy should reach the RSA Office no later than the 25th of the month preceding publication.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Correspondence should reach the Editor by the 30th of the month preceding publication.

PLEASE NOTE

All opinions expressed in Crossfire are those of the individual contributors and do not reflect MRSA official policy unless otherwise stated.

President's Page

I am pleased to report that the special committee set up at the annual meeting to discuss alterations to our clubrooms has had two successful meetings chaired by Wally Boddington, with Gordon Gardiner as secretary. After members realised that everybody had to give a little it wasn't long before they had a workable proposition.

At the next meeting Wally produced a plan that met general approval with a few reservations. This plan will be discussed at the next executive meeting and possibly the committee will be asked to bring down estimated costs in part and as a whole. Contrary to general opinion, we have NOT got unlimited funds. Our last increase in liquor was minimal and has only covered the increased cost of liquor itself.

Next year's increase in subs is very light indeed when one considers we will pay only \$6. When you stop and think out that we pay the NZRSA \$3 per head capitation, 15c per heady levy to the Chartered Clubs Association and 10c per head as a membership fee to the ATC.

As I pointed out last year, 155 members pay no subs — life members, returned women and WW1 veterans, but we still pay capitation, etc., on these members.

So it must be realised that funds for all our alterations must come from special efforts and bar profits.

We must also bear in mind that we have had two years of big spending. What with big increases in our welfare spending, which after all is our main concern. I personally think the executive will have to look very closely at all expenses in the coming year.

THANKS, RUSS

Russ Matthews has presented a framed photographic display which is now hanging in the TV room. A gesture appreciated by all members for sure.

ALL AT SEA

"Well, my boy," said the captain to the new midshipman. "The old story I suppose? Fool of the family sent to sea."

"Oh no, sir," replied the youth. "That's all changed since your day."

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We also have to face up to the fact that we are going to lose 45% of our income from our fixed deposits to taxation.

During the month the Combined Indoor Bowling Club invited Nola and I to have lunch with their visitors — Motueka Indoor Bowling Club. We enjoyed meeting these people and we thank the club for the opportunity.

Mr Russ Matthews has donated a picture to the RSA to hang in the TV room. Thanks Russ it is just what the room needed. It is good to see this room being used more often.

I also spent an hour with veterans at their monthly get-together. Here is a chance for some of you chaps to go in and have a yarn with some of the older members. They long for a little male company. Do more than think about it!

Don't forget, if you know of any person needing welfare help of any sort, please contact Ike Cameron, Paul Brodie or any of the welfare committee. It is only through you that we can cover everyone.

I have just read that postage on the Review is to increase from 5c to 9c per copy. This will mean an increased cost to the NZRSA of around \$3400. This is the sort of unbudgeted cost we can be faced with.

KEN YEALANDS.

QUICK ON THE DRAW!

Rangi to Vern: "By jove, that one came in nicely."

Vern: "Yes, I'm using magnaplast on my hands."

Rangi: "What's magnaplast?"

Vern: "It's a drawing ointment sold by chemists — best on the market."

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WORRY-SOME

Sam complained to a friend that he had been unable to sleep or eat since a man telephoned a threat to kill him if he didn't stop seeing his wife.

"Then who don't you stop seeing her," asked his friend.

"The call was anonymous," replied Sam miserably.

Everything went ship'shape with Noah and his ark until it sprang a leak. After being inspected it was found the leak was a very small hole. So Noah got a dog to put his nose into the hole. The dog kept his nose in the hole for two days, then it got so cold he had to take it out. That is the reason a dog's nose is always cold.

So next Noah got his wife to put her foot over the hole. It got so cold she had to take it off. That is the reason a woman's feet are always cold.

Then Noah decided to sit on the hole. He did so for two days and it got so cold he had to get off. That is why a man always puts his back to the fire when he comes in out of the cold.

★ ★ ★

FAIR PROFIT

During the campaign in North Africa, a Scottish officer was annoyed because the Kiwis were bringing in hundreds of Italian prisoners while his own men were getting none. So he offered his men 2/6 per 100 for prisoners.

Three days later the smallest man in the regiment brought in 800 prisoners. After paying out the 20/- the officer asked: "How did you capture them?". And the small man replied: "I didn't capture them sir, I bought them off the Kiwis for 1/- per 100."

SURE TO PASS

(For the matelots' table)

An admiral was conducting an examination for the navy. To one of the candidates he said: "Now lad, who in your opinion were the three greatest sailors in the history of the world?"

For a moment the young man looked puzzled, then his face lit up. "I'm sorry sir," he replied quietly, "I did not catch your name when I entered, but the other two are Nelson and Beatty."

★ ★ ★

"How old is you?"

"I is six. How old is you?"

"I don't know."

"you don't know how old you is?"

"Nope."

"Does women bother you?"

"Nope."

"You is four."

★ ★ ★

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THE STORY OF SAM — THE SIMPLE SAPPER

(By an unknown author from the 6 Field Coy N.Z. Engineers, 1942).

Once there was a simple Sapper whose name was Sam, and as Sam always felt lazy, all he wanted to do was sleep. But this didn't suit Lieut. Bash, Sam's section officer, and he told Sam that he couldn't sleep all the time because none of the other sappers did and if he caught Sam sleeping all the time he'd give him "whato" and was that clear?

So Sam said that was clear and as he didn't see any prospects of becoming an officer when he might be able to sleep all the time. He groaned and tried to do some work but it was very hard and he was glad when Lieut. Bash's company commander said that Lieut. Bash's section was pretty anaemic on bridging and they had better jolly well get down to the Nile and learn some because this meant a long ride in a truck.

But the ride was bumper than Sam expected and he couldn't sleep, so when he got out at the Nile he was more tired than ever but he had a very clever idea and he volunteered for the first carrying party, so he was the first sapper to reach the water's edge. But he was very tired, because he had carried a boat, so he broke off as he had planned and walked off into the rushes where he found that if Wogs hadn't been there before him he could lie down and have a jolly good sleep without Lieut. Bash, who was very busy, seeing him.

But this annoyed the other sappers, who took a very poor view of it and they decided to play a trick on Sam as he lay sleeping all the time in the rushes, they crept up and put a plug of gellignite with a detonator in it and a piece of fuse in it and they put it near where it would do Sam a

lot of good and lit it, but a spark off the fuse lit on Sam and burnt him so he woke up.

And when he saw what was going on he picked up the plug and read that it was gellignite and he remembered that Lieut. Bash had told them that gellignite went off with a big noise, so he threw it away and it hit the water just near the boat where Lieut. Bash was fishing, and when it went off it killed a great big fish which floated up and Lieut. Bash hauled it into the boat and when he saw how big it was he was very pleased.

So he said that Sam had been hiding his light under a bushel and that an explosives expert like that was worth a stripe, so he gave Sam a stripe, which was a big surprise, and when they went up the blue again Sam found that if he took some gellignite and an E.P. Mk II mine and sat away off by himself, nobody came near him very much except a stray Brigadier or two who didn't know what he was supposed to be doing anyway, and he got a big reputation and could sleep all the time, but he soon got tired of E.P. Mk IIs and found other mines much easier to handle, but he found that he liked to read detective stories and talk Wog to the Wogs and in any case he has applied for a job writing routine orders.

* * *

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|-----------------------|--------|
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Husband: "We must think of our future. We should save some money. If I were to die where would you be?"

Wife: "Why, I'd be right here. The question is, where would you be?"

* * *

How times have changed! There was a time in the good old testament days when it was considered a miracle for an ass to speak. Now it's nothing short of a miracle to keep one quiet.

Did you hear about the man who lost 185lb of ugly fat in one day? — His wife left him.

Ex-Malayan Services Association

BRANCH NEWS, AUGUST 1979

Hello there, fellow ex-Malayans.

Time again for another newsletter. Things have been fairly slow to date, but now that the days are lengthening and the prospect of warmer weather is just around the corner, plans are under way for our next round of functions.

Danny Linton reports that "UU BASHERS" orchestra is organised and ready to go for our barn dance and hangi, with only final arrangements as to venue to be tidied up.

Negotiations are also under way to hold another picnic at the same venue as last year, but a little later in the year. It is also planned to hold a cabaret in the Blenheim area. More details of these will be included in the next newsletter.

While your committee are only too pleased to organise these functions for members, they can only become a success if you take an interest and attend.

And likewise, don't forget our monthly meetings — they are well worth attending as after the business is finished we get together for a convivial yarn and it is one way of keeping track of each other.

BOB FIDLER, President.

ANNUAL DELEGATES' MEETING

Your president and secretary had the privilege of attending the annual delegates' meeting in Wanganui. This was held on Saturday, July 28, and was well worth the time and effort it took to get there.

It gave us a better insight into the manner in which the association runs and we can now identify the various people who run the other branches.

Branches represented were: Far North (Kaitiaki), Northland (Whangarei), Auckland, Tauranga, Rotorua, Waikato, King Country, Wanganui, Wellington, Canterbury and Marlborough.

The conference was run along traditional lines, with the minutes of the previous meeting, treasurer's report, remits from branches and general business.

It is pleasing to report that from our observations the association is in good heart with a sound financial base and a capable and hard-working executive.

The remits and recommendations will be discussed at our next branch meeting which will be held in the committee room Marlborough RSA on Wednesday, August 22 at 1930 hours.

We look forward to enjoying your company there.

No time

Good girls keep diaries — bad girls never have the time.

Same ending

They had just got married. He rented the huge bridal suite in a swanky hotel. He dimmed the lights, put on some music and poured her some champagne. They danced and drank and hugged and then he gently led her to the bedroom.

When she saw the bed she said, "Damn it! Every time I go out with a man it ends up the same way."

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"At the going down of the sun . . .
We will remember them."



*THEY GAVE THEIR ALL
AS WE WHO ARE LEFT DID NOT
FORGET THEM NEVER OR BE
YOURSELVES FORGOT.*

HELP!

We desperately need contributions from YOU, our members for this magazine. There must be many humorous incidents that you can recall — so share them with others — through CROSSFIRE!

KIWI TEN LEGS

Les Watson, honorary secretary-treasurer of the Gallipoli Legion of Anzacs (Marlborough Branch) has given us copies of remarkable correspondence between a friend of his, Arthur Gordon, and an insurance company in New Zealand in 1952. Arthur was a double amputee, having lost both legs in WW1. He had just purchased a new Consul car and because of his disability had to receive special consideration for insurance purposes.

Copy of first letter, dated May 7, 1952:

Dear Sir,

Motor Vehicle Insurance on Consul Car

When the new proposal was completed recently to insure your new Consul car you told my inspector that you had two artificial limbs in the legs. I should be pleased therefore if you would kindly advise if both artificial limbs are in one leg — in which case please advise which leg — or are the limbs in both legs, in which case please advise their location.

Yours faithfully,
Branch Manager.

My friend was so taken aback by the stupidity of the letter that he ignored it.

Subsequently he received a further letter.

Copy of second letter, dated June 4, 1952.

Dear Sir,

Motor Vehicle Insurance on Consul Car

With reference to my letter of the 7th May, I should be pleased if you would kindly advise if both artificial limbs are in the one leg, in which case advise which leg, or if the limbs are in both legs, please advise their location.

Yours faithfully,
Branch Manager.

Hereunder is Arthur's reply:

Dear Sir,

Re Insurance of Motor Car — Artificial Limbs

With reference to your letter of the 7th May seeking information in respect of my

possession of artificial limbs, I presume you want a case history, which is as follows:

May I first state that the statement I made to your agent when asked if I had any physical disabilities, my reply being that I had two artificial legs, was incorrect. On checking over I find I have 10 — in various stages of repair and disrepair. You see I was in the civil service for 30 years and accumulated the legs for a certain purpose but unfortunately never got the chance to use them. However, they are perfectly good legs, nicely shaped calves (if dents are taken out); some have feet and no toes; others have toes and no feet; some have knees and others no knees, the reason for which I shall explain later.

How I became possessed of artificial limbs:

Well, inadvertently I got mixed up in the Great War which for your information was not the Hundred Years War, nor the War of the Roses.

Although I saw many battles, I don't quite recall the Battle of Hastings, which someone assured me was in the days of "hors-de-combat" — if that was so I would not be far away. One fine day a bright young peroxide blonde known as Bertha Krupps sent over one of her renowned tokens of goodwill in the form of a high explosive shell with my regimental number on it. Not being in a very receptive mood I beat it; for a while I kept ahead and would have out-distanced it had not someone with a queer sense of humour placed some strands of barbed wire across my path. The shell overtook me with a bang, bit some hefty chunks out of both legs, both arms and blew a hole through my neck which the medical officer promptly plugged up, I presume (apropos of

your letter) to prevent me talking through it. With the friendliest of good fellowship the M.O. with he olde axe and saw cut off both legs. being a very sympathetic fellow he allowed me to retain my right knee, presumably for the purpose of bending the knee before Baccus, Psyche or some such similar near Royalty.

His Majesty's New Zealand Government, not to be outdone, presented me with two artificial limbs of a prototype which succeeded the rack as instruments of torture. Hence my possession of artificial limbs.

With regard to your inquiry re location of artificial limbs, one is in the barn, another astride a sheep pen half a mile away (tried conclusions with an old ram or vice versa), a third I keep in the car for booting the dogs, a fourth is roaming around somewhere. Oh! I remember, it's out in the middle of the turnip paddock — got bogged down one day so unhitched and pulled out without it; the others (in keeping with your letter) are a bit disjointed; and oh! I almost forgot (when thinking of the author of your letter) there are a few screws loose also.

Please note the artificial limbs I have are Army issue and under Kings Regs, Sec. 99 1b 4c (NZ Army) I am required to hand them in to QM Stores when I "hop the bags" for the last time, apparently on the presumption that they will not stand the Fahrenheit test when I reach my final objective.

Having done my best to keep terms with your letter, I now would appreciate it if you would carry out my request to your agent.

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR GORDON.

Not Wisely — — But Too Well!

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Pretty girl Kiss curl | Boy pleading Girl yielding | Hears tale Against male |
| Meets boy Bliss joy | Sighs pouts Fears doubts | Boy swear Never there |
| Park walk Loving talk | Never fear Pretty dear | Utter bosh Won't wash |
| Secluded nook They took | Will wed Boy said | Little creatures Dada's features |
| Grassy seat Kisses sweet | Girl content Gives consent | Magistrate stern Boy turn |
| No one near Nothing fear | Mad embrace Forget disgrace | Dollars two Pay you |
| Kisses more Many, score | Months fly Girl sigh | Every week Orders Beak |
| Girl shifts Dress lifts | Boy brings No ring | Girl glad Boy mad |
| Exposing stocking How shocking | Girl queer Twins appear | Tears hair Big swear |
| Boy sore Oh — Lor' | Case brought Into Court | Damns park After dark |
| Fingers itch Limbs twitch | Mother's breast Infants rest | Also girl Kiss curl |
| Boy twisting Girl resisting | Magistrate kind Just dined | Sorry sore Never more |

The Scanty Snatcher

"I dunno, I always do something wrong, and now me and Jim are not on speakin' terms, and this is how it happened.

I was reading the paper one day and I suddenly says that I see where a Pommy airman has his sheila's strides on his plane for a mascot, and what a good mascot they would be on our truck. Jim grunts that it is a pretty funny sort of mascot and then I gets the idea and says what about him fetchin' a pair back from leave, and he looks at me kind of sour, but in the end he says he will and so the next week he goes on leave.

When he comes back I am all excited and

goes up to him and asks if he got the gadgets and he lets off some awful language and says as it is all my fault, and me bein' innercent as a new born babe I asks what's wrong and he goes purple and says he is on the mat all through me for bein' undressed in public, and I asks him how. He lets out an insane howl and after he finished frothing at the mouth it turns out that he goes out with an ATS sheila determined to clifty our future mascot. But the ATS bint must've read the paper too, for she gets in first and Jim was left in the park minus short KD. Now all the boys call him the "scanty snatcher" and he gets all mad and says he will knock my head off, but I don't think it is fair blamin' me. Do you?

Why I cling to life

A businessman's reply to a request for a donation.

For the following reasons I am unable to send you a larger donation: I have been held up, held down, snadbagged, walked upon, sat upon, flattened and squeezed by the Income Tax, Super Tax, the tobacco tax, the beer tax, the spirits tax, the motor tax, the sales tax and by every society, organisation and club that the inventive mind of man can think of to extract what I may not have in my possession for the Red Cross, the Black Cross, the Ivory Cross and the Double Cross and for every hospital in town and country.

The Government has governed my business until I don't know who runs it. I am inspected, suspected, examined and re-examined, informed, required and commanded, so that I don't know who I am nor why I am here at all.

All that I know is that I am supposed to be an inexhaustible supply of money for every need, desire or hope of the human race, and because I will not go out and beg, borrow or steal money to give away, I am cussed, discussed, boycotted, talked to, talked about, lied to, lied about, held

up, hung up, robbed and darned-near ruined. The only reason why I am clinging to life at all is to see what the devil is going to happen next.

★ ★ ★ ★

Your dream

A young lady had a dream in which a handsome male angel flew into her bedroom and scooped her up into his arms. They flew out the window together and travelled through the air for some time. Finally, they reached a castle in the sky and soared in through an open window. He gently tossed her on a luxurious bed.

"What are you going to do now?" she asked in a frightened voice.

"That's up to you," he said. "It's not my dream."

Future problems

"Tom, after we're married, I'll share all your problems."

"But I have no problems."

"You will have after we're married."

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THIS MONTHS PERSONALITY



B. S. (BOB) ROBERTSON

After leaving Timaru Boys' High School in 1915, Bob spent two years mustering in the McKenzie country before going into camp at Trentham in 1917. He sailed from New Zealand in the Athenic and landed in Glasgow, Scotland, and went into camp at Sling Camp.

Bob's memories of England, mainly of parading under overcast skies in overcoats. France, however, he loved . . . everything seemed so much lighter, brighter and green. Bob's first action in France was at the Somme.

While out of the line he was lucky enough to be chosen for the N.Z. Platoon for the 14th of July celebrations (Bastille Day) in Paris. There were platoons from Canada, Australia, U.K. and South Africa — in fact, every allied nation had a platoon there. Then they were all guests of France for a week, staying at the Grand Palais. An abundance of free bubbly, wine, etc., was provided. Just what the etc. was Bob is fairly cagey about. The grog was replenished each morning by lorries drawn by two horses.

Then, back to the front at Hebuterne. At one stage K. S. Judson, VC, DCM, MM (all won in the space of two weeks) was a corporal in the same section as Bob.

Bob was wounded at Le Quesnoy and came home on the hospital ship Marama in January, 1919. A good friend on the ship was the notorious Starky, who used Bob's bed as a gambling pad. One day a chap borrowed £2 off Bob and refused to repay it. Finally Bob issued an ultimatum — "pay up, or I'll get Starky to collect it." He paid up smartly.

After discharge, Bob took up a block of tussock country at Fairlie. This block was ring-fenced only. He spent nearly a lifetime fighting snow and rabbits. a hard and happy life it was.

During WW2 Bob was, in his own words, the local Captain Mainwaring. After the second war he put a manager on his farm and took a position on the Land Sales Court, the last six years as chairman. Eventually, war wounds caught up with him and he decided to retire in Blenheim to enjoy our sunshine and the Sounds.

Bob still travels widely within New Zealand and thinks our local RSA compares very favourably with others he visits.

Bob spends a fair bit of his spare time in our clubrooms, giving O. L. Watson lessons in snooker and billiards.

On looking over the war years, certain brave men stand out in his memory, mainly Gordon Coates (later Prime Minister of N.Z.), George Dittmer, who was OC of the 28th Maori Battalion in WW2, Bill Alderman (Austrian staff on loan), Starky, Lindsay Ingles (a Brigadier in WW2) and Dick Travis.

One of Bob's saddest days was the day they buried Dick Travis. As Bob says they only got him by accident — a stray shell killed him.

Bob is enjoying his retirement in Blenheim where he has made a wide circle of friends.

In his own words: "Blenheim was a very happy choice indeed."

First, the bad news . . .

Girl job applicant to boss: "No, sir, I can't type and I can't take shorthand. But I'm an absolute riot at office parties!"

Ex-Navalmen's Association (Marlborough Branch)

Election results, August 7, 1979:

President, Bert Anscombe; vice-president, Doug Simpsn; secretary-treasurer, Mrs Elva Adams and a committee of eight.

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** Well, almost unanimously.*

Lion Beer

If you know what's good for you



Blenheim Women's Section

Our new president, Mrs Eva Kennington, presided over good attendances at the June and July social afternoons. Mrs W. B. Parker gave an interesting address on the work of the Red Cross within the community and overseas. Mrs Kennington thanked Mrs Parker for giving us her time at such short notice.

At the July meeting members were entertained by Mrs Elsie Weaver and section members Mrs Olive Finlay and Mrs G. Haack.

VETERANS

Again this year the veterans' afternoons have been well attended. Our guests really do contribute to the success of these functions. Bright entertainment by some members of the Country and Western Club and the Maori Welfare League was enjoyed.

Mr Munro, one of our popular guests was the model for a wig and make-up demonstration. Very nice he did look! Mick Jagger?

On behalf of the veterans Mr O. L. Watson paid a tribute to our late member Mrs D. Davis and to the late Mr Keith Jamieson.

BOWLS

The Picton ladies joined our section to play the annual game of indoor bowls and cards. The card games resulted in a draw and our girls won the bowls. Mrs Sybil Phillips from Picton thanked Mrs Kennington for a pleasant day.

Our girls also played the men for the Perkins Rosebowl. I believe the men won, but more on this later.

Before I conclude this report I am sure you all join me in thanking Mrs Moira Wilson, who has reported our doings for so long. May I be able to fill her position with just some of her expertise.

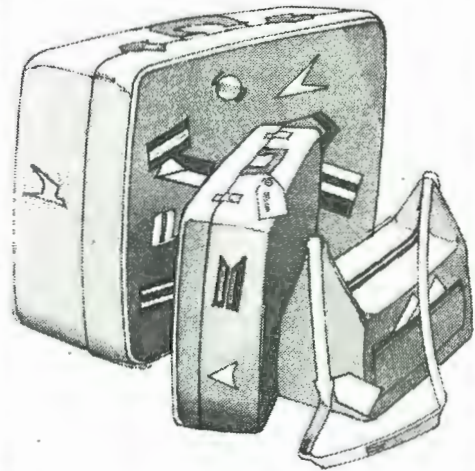
Because of the change of scribes I must apologise for the absence of a women's section report in the June issue of Crossfire.

JO ALLAN.

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The Macfarlane's Gathering

*Send the fiery cross swift o'er the dark glens and fountains,
Kindle the beacon on dreary Ross-Dhu;
Let hundreds blaze on the Arrochar mountains,
The flowers of Macfarlane will soon be in view.*

*Bid the pibroch sound bravely through gloomy Glenfruin,
Though Macgregor be backed by the proud 'Sider Roy;'
He marches to battle — he marches to ruin;
We'll welcome him there with the shout of 'Loch Sloy!'*

*When the clan is insulted — for honour's their darling—
They will die on the heath if they cannot prevail;
For never a Clan like the Clan of Macfarlane,
Trode the glen of the Saxon, or hill of the Gael.*

*When round by the side of Benlomond they're wending,
Their proud, stately march fills the bosom with joy;
While the pibroch its wild stormy measure is blending,
With 'This I'll Defend,' and the shout of 'Loch Sloy.'*

*Macfarlane steps forth, in the bloom of his vigour;
His sons march behind like a bright ridge of flame;
Now welcome to battle, ye sons of Clan Gregor,
Macfarlane descends to the field of his fame.*

*Bid the war-pipe resound through the wilds of Glenfruin;
Let the claymore in strength sweep round and destroy;
Macfarlane will fall, or Macgregor meet ruin;—
On, on to the battle, my heroes, 'Loch Sloy.'*

IN LIGHTER VEIN—

The mama broom and the papa broom were surprised when they found a little whisk broom running around their home.

"I can't understand it," commented the mama broom. "We've never even swept together."

* * *

A kiss is a peculiar proposition. Of no use to one, yet absolute bliss to two. The small boy gets it for nothing, the young man has to lie for it and the old man has to buy it. The baby's right, the lover's privilege and the hypocrite's mask. To a young girl, faith; to a married woman, hope; to an old maid, charity.

* * *

A little girl asked her mother how soon her newborn baby brother would talk.

"Oh, in a couple of years," said mama.

"Isn't that pretty slow?" said the child. "At Sunday school the teacher read from the Bible that Job cursed the day he was born."

A politician was electioneering in a thickly populated section of the town. As he came to one house he was attracted by the noise of what sounded like a family fight. As he paused to listen, the door opened and a small boy rushed out.

"What's the trouble, boy?" asked the politician, "are your parents fighting?"

"Yes, sir," said the boy, "they're always fighting."

"Who is your father?" demanded the politician.

"I dunno! That's what they're fighting about," chirped the boy.

* * *

The boss' secretary had just returned from her honeymoon and was discussing it with the girls at the office.

"How did your husband register at the hotel?" one little typiste wanted to know.

"Fine," the secretary said, beaming. "Just fine!"

We once knew a man who was really interested in his wife's happiness. In fact, he was so interested that he hired a private eye to find out who was responsible for it.

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New Zealanders in the Libyan Campaign

(The first in a series of articles)

On Active Service

* * * * *

TO OTHERS WERE LEFT SPECTACULAR VICTORIES at Sidi Barrani, Bardia, Tobruk, Derna and Benghazi. Almost unheeded at the time, New Zealand troops quietly carried out vitally important tasks in that most remarkable campaign when the barely equipped and audaciously small Army of the Nile defeated Graziani's mighty Imperial North African Army.

The first contingent of the Second New Zealand Expeditionary Force arrived in the Middle East in February 1940. The preliminary months of training in early 1940 were spent in desert camps near Cairo, where the aim was to develop physical fitness, endurance, desert craft, and speed and confidence in handling the weapons of modern warfare. At that stage in the war with Germany, Britain was in contact with the enemy on one front only, and although the Middle East was being reinforced, there was no definite theatre of operations until the outbreak of war with Italy on 10 June. It was then that the New Zealanders fully realised they had been trained for a purpose. The armies of Mussolini, known to be large and ready for war, lay across the desert to the west and south-west. New Zealand units were used for internal security measures in Cairo and two battalions of infantry moved into the desert to Garawla, where for the next two months they were busy digging an anti-tank ditch. New Zealanders were selected by the Middle East Command to form the first patrols of the Long Range Desert Group, an organisation which was formed to find out what was happening in the oases of southern Libya.

In May 1940 the second contingent of the 2nd NZEF, which was to have arrived in Egypt, was deflected to the United Kingdom

and employed there to reinforce the British Isles against threatened invasion. This brought about a delay in the scheme for forming a complete New Zealand division in the Middle East, and when the third contingent joined the first at the end of September, the Division was unable to take a combatant part in the first Libyan campaign. Nevertheless many New Zealanders took part in the operations. The New Zealand patrols of the Long Range Desert Group disappeared into the fastness of the Great Sand Sea and, penetrating far into Libya, engaged Italian outposts. Signalmen were able to maintain slender lines of communication for the fighting forces in the desert. Never far behind the fighting troops, New Zealand Engineers followed them into Bardia, Tobruk, Derna and Benghazi, salvaging enemy vehicles, operating water points and power houses, and maintaining workshops in the field. New Zealand Army drivers maintained special supply columns, known familiarly as 'The Colonial Carrying Company', which earned a special reputation for reliability and initiative. They also carried Indian and Australian troops into battle, driving in some cases up to within a few yards of the enemy's perimeter defences.

Since that first campaign, and during Greece and Crete, New Zealanders have worked continuously in the desert. The LRDG carried on long range reconnaissance; while specialised engineering units built railways over wide areas of desert, constructed roads with heavy mechanical equipment, and laid water lines, preparing through the hot and anxious days of 1941 for that second Libyan campaign in which the New Zealand Division was to do so much hard fighting.

Desert Anatomy

* * * * *

THE SETTING FOR THIS CAMPAIGN IS THE enormous tract of desert in north-east Africa. Beginning at the edge of the Nile valley, the desert runs westward for 1200 miles to Tunisia; from the Mediterranean coast it extends 1000 miles to the south. In this vast area, one of the driest in the world, much depends on water, its presence or its lack. Water supplies, in fact, provide a clue to the understanding of desert strategy. Oases and water points become military objectives, and their names figure largely as strongly defended points.

Geographically the desert may be divided into several distinct regions. First in importance here, although only a fraction of the whole, is the area somewhat loosely known as the *Western Desert*. This area includes the desert lands immediately west of the Nile and the adjoining strip of low-lying country which extends along the Mediterranean seaboard to the broken plateau and fertile valleys of Cyrenaica. Never more than twenty-five miles wide, the coastal strip is bounded by an escarpment which for the most part runs parallel to the coast and rises in several places to a height of some 500 feet. The plain varies in depth between Mersa Matruh and Sidi Barrani and rapidly tapers towards Sollum where in places the waters of the Mediterranean lap the broken edges of the escarpment. To the east it broadens, merging finally into barren upland. The name 'Western Desert' was used in 1914-18 to distinguish it from the Sinai or 'Eastern Desert'. It was known then to units of the New Zealand Rifle Brigade who assisted in quelling the Senussi rising. Its name is indelibly associated with a new generation of New Zealanders, already veterans of three major campaigns in the Western Desert.

In Roman times the whole coastal area was an extensive granary, but even then there was great difficulty in maintaining the soil. After centuries of neglect the ancient fertility is a memory, visible only in numerous Roman remains. In the

winter months, however, sufficient rain falls to provide the Arabs with corn crops and with winter and spring grazing for their flocks. And strung along the coastline are oases replenished by the water from winter showers, which seeps through to the beach until it meets there a barrier of porous limestone rock. The defect of this supply is that it is tainted by other seepings, of salt water. During the Roman occupation rock cisterns were built to hold the rain water and prevent it from becoming brackish. Cleaned and repaired, these cisterns are once more in use and supplied British troops during the first campaign. The water varies in quality. The best is found at Burbeita and Baggush, while the most important storage area is Mersa Matruh.

The coastal area enjoys a healthy climate in which Europeans can live throughout the year. The dryness of the air favours good health; the few diseases are due to the absence of proper sanitation amongst the natives. Chills are easily caught in the evening when the temperature makes a sudden drop. In summer the temperature sometimes rises to above 120 degrees, while in December, January and February it may fall below freezing point.

Most distressing of all desert phenomena is the hot, dust-laden Khamisin wind. Failure of rains during recent years and the resulting loss of surface vegetation, together with the continual movement of vehicles and troops, have increased the incidence of dust storms. The New Zealanders once experienced twenty-four hours of dust storms so heavy that men worked in the open with their faces completely covered, and vehicular traffic moved as if in a black-out. Night winds spread a blanket of fine dust over miles of desert.

Dust entered the securest of tents and lay thickly on beds and equipment. Even in the middle of the day a thick gloom covered the countryside, and at the height of the storm trucks moved slowly through the murk with a soldier perched on the bonnet directing the driver. Of course, nobody accepts a storm philosophically; dust that could be smelt and tasted, that blew unceasingly into one's eyes, throat and ears, that left a film of silt at the bottom of one's

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ACC REPORT ON CO OF N.Z. ARMY MEMO

When the average lost-time accident rate for New Zealand's construction industry is about 15 per 100 000 man-hours, there has to be something unreal about a major site returning just three lost-time accidents in 170 000 man-hours.

There is nothing unreal about the figures. But from the viewpoint of the construction industry, there are some aspects of the job which stretch credibility.

Like construction workers who carry on regardless of sub-zero temperatures, rain, mud, extended working hours — without any thought of special pay rates? Like the contractor deciding he needs 20 extra men for a day or so and having them right there, on call, with no worries about costs. Like the employer being able to put a man off the site if he looks like becoming a liability, and with no fear of union comeback. Like the contractor being able to go into a major job happy in the know-

ledge that he has almost endless technical, machinery and manpower resources to fall back on if the need arises.

It is with this in mind that the exceptional safety record of the New Zealand Army Memorial Museum construction programme, at Waiouru Military Camp, must be viewed. It is also a reason why the Army — while justifiably proud of its lost-time accident rate of about 1.76 per 100 000 man-hours — is circumspect about blowing its trumpet to the private sector.

The museum project is the largest construction job ever undertaken by the Royal New Zealand Engineers. The job has been centred on the corps' 2 Field Squadron, under the command of Major Andy Anderson. The man at the heart of the job — as on any major site — is the clerk of works, Warrant Officer Class 1 Ray Wills.

The museum was officially opened, with due pomp and circumstance, on October 15, 1978, and has been open to the

public since October 1

The museum is a structure featuring five split-level observation decks. Four levels are on display, with the first being used as a workshop and entrance is via a ramped area to the third level. The building covers 14 000 square metres.

A shallow concrete building on two sides

Construction is tilted. Foundations were followed by pillars, internal floors and tilt-slab external wall panels.

The slabs, cast and cured in place, were the largest ever cast in New Zealand. Some of the panels are about 14 metres long and weigh 11 tonnes.

The panels are not cast in place. They were cast and cured in a cycle. Curing was by temperature steam injection blanket. Waiouru's local

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nd preparation area.
ained forecourt display
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factor in the decision to cast them on site rather than have them produced under contract and transported to the job.

Construction work began on January 16, 1978. In view of the manpower situation, some use of voluntary labour and the free availability of a huge range of army resources, description of the museum as a half-million-dollar project is difficult to align with civilian construction costings. The civilian wages bill for the 170 000-plus man-hours clocked up by Day-258 (when ACC report visited) would, alone, far exceed the half-million-dollar mark.

The three lost-time accidents that occurred are easily described:

1. A Territorial volunteer worker (non-tradesman) removed safety rails from a level-three window space to facilitate removal of equipment, which he was throwing to the ground. An item caught on his clothing as he was throwing it. He went out of the win-

dow with it. He suffered foot injuries.

2. A worker slipped on ice, and suffered back strain. He was two days off the job.
3. A worker was struck by a wheelbarrow and suffered a back injury. He was 10 days off the job. Soon after his return he had a minor fall, causing further back pain. He did not return to the site.

New sport

George: "My wife suggested that I take up a new sport this summer."

Frank: "Well, that's nice. She certainly has your interest at heart. Did she make any suggestion?"

George: "As a matter of fact she did. By the way, how do you play this Russian roulette?"

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mug of tea, was something to be sworn about. The New Zealanders swore thoroughly and unprintably—but the incident passed and was forgotten.

The people of the Western Desert are nomads, for the most part Senussi tribesmen and Bedouins. In 1931 Graziani's campaign for the pacification and settlement of Libya was in full progress. The Senussi resented the Italian attempt to change their nomadic way of life, and a systematic persecution ensued in which the most appalling cruelties were inflicted upon this unhappy people, who had resisted all previous attempts at foreign domination.

In 1932 the Italians erected a barbed wire fence along the Libyan frontier, from the coast southwards to the Great Sand Sea. This fence, 'the wire' as it is generally called, could be crossed only at four points, all of which were closely guarded by the Italians. Before the construction of the fence, the Bedouins were accustomed to migrate between Egypt and Cyrenaica to find the best grazing for their flocks. Crossing the artificial boundary appeared an insuperable difficulty to the simple desert people, and consequently during a period of drought, the Bedouins who lived on the Egyptian side of the border were on the verge of starvation.

As preparations for the Western Desert campaign proceeded, the Bedouins drifted back from the forward areas. The New Zealanders, along with other troops, came to know these desert people very well. Empty trucks returning from the desert were instructed to assist native families in their trek eastwards towards the Delta, where they would be properly fed and cared for; and it was a common sight during the summer months of 1940 to see a New Zealand or English truck speeding along the road filled with Bedouins, their belongings, their poultry and their goats.

*

Beyond the coastal plain lies the immense desert hinterland. This too was to be familiar to members of the New Zealand Division, those who were selected for service in the Long Range Desert Group. During the second half of 1940, in a series of spectacular patrols, these men were to penetrate remote wastes of the Libyan Desert

hitherto unknown to Europeans, except to a few isolated explorers. To appreciate their achievement it is necessary to have some idea of the extent and configuration of the *Inner Desert*, as it has been termed.

Bordering the coastal strip, lie rocky uplands which stretch eastward to the Nile valley and southward along its border. In the north the uplands are comparatively low, but from Cairo southward they rise to 1500 feet above sea level. It is a region where erosion works with dramatic effect. Temperatures are extreme and the rocks heat rapidly by day and cool no less rapidly by night. Softer layers are rubbed away by sand-laden winds and by the rare showers of rain. These forces work together ceaselessly to make the typical landscape—plateaux dotted with small isolated hills, and cut up by water-courses (*wadis*) which sometimes become deep ravines.

The desert uplands are separated from the more remote desert region by the vast bowl of the Great Sand Sea, considered by some geologists to be an ancient lake bed.

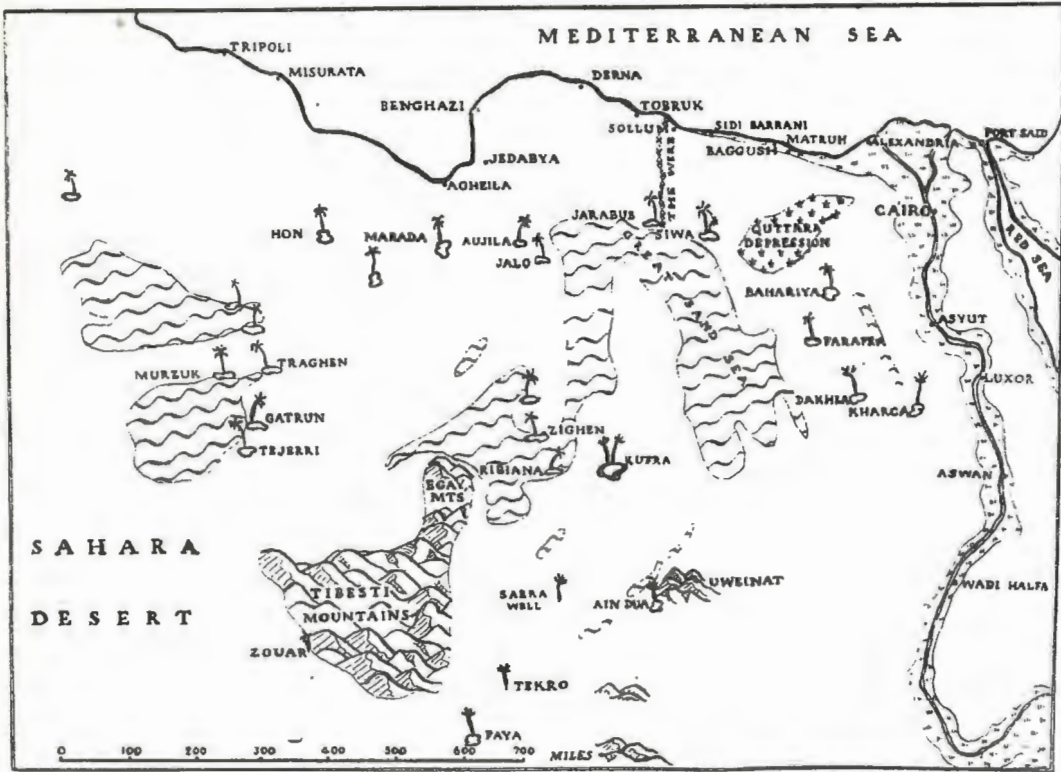


THE WIRE

Part of the fence built by the Italians from Siwa to Sollum.

Here countless rows of huge narrow sand dunes run in perfect alignment NNW and SSE in the direction of the prevailing wind. Between these motionless waves the wind sweeps, leaving corridors of smooth gravel which provide good going for cars. The dunes themselves can be crossed by skilful drivers but each car, disturbing the hard-packed surface, makes the passage of following vehicles more difficult. East of

LAND FEATURES OF NORTH-WEST AFRICA



two oases called Bahariya and Farafra is another smaller sand sea only three miles wide but covering a length of 550 miles.

West and south of the Great Sand Sea stretches the Libyan Desert, separated from the Sahara only by highlands around the Tibesti mountains. Here the type of desert alters with the nature of the soil. Sometimes there are interminable pebble-strewn plains of soft sandstone, either undulating or flat as a billiard table. Sometimes harder sandstone forms jutting plateaux or steep scarps. Elsewhere clay is scooped out to leave gigantic hollows in the desert surface.

In this inner desert, where exposed metal becomes too hot to touch with bare hands, where engines overheat, water-cooling systems boil, and the human machine is hard pressed to ward off heat-stroke and exhaustion, water inevitably becomes the foremost consideration. Among highlands and mountains there are water holes, erratic sources because they are the result of direct accumulation of rain. But scattered over the desert at isolated wells and oases is a surer supply. This comes from subter-

anean sources which flow on a bed of hard sandstone some 300 to 500 feet below the desert. Where the surface is low this artesian water has often been exposed by erosion to form an oasis in the surrounding desert, as in the long east-west depression which contains the oases of Siwa, Jarabub, Jalo, Marada and Hon.

Desert Patrol

* * * * *

WHILE THE MAIN BODY OF NEW ZEALANDERS were working on defences and lines of communication, a group of their fellow-countrymen were actually engaged on operations. These were the men of the Long Range Desert Group, whose duty it was to carry out long range patrols far into enemy territory. Their expeditions actually brought them into contact with the enemy, and they were the first men of the New Zealand Division to see action in the present war.

The LRDG was originally formed to find

out details of enemy garrisons and movements in the Libyan Desert. It was known that the Italians had garrisons in the oases of south-eastern Libya and that Kufra and Uweinat were important aerodromes on the enemy's line of communication to Abyssinia. But this area was cut off from accurate knowledge by the bulk of the Great Sand Sea, over which transport seemed impossible to any but the most experienced of desert explorers. Behind this barrier the enemy might concentrate large forces for a thrust southwards against the valley of the Nile. Hence it was necessary to find out what was happening in the inner desert.

Fortunately there was a group of men primarily interested in exploration, who were already considering the application of desert-exploration technique to military purposes. Between 1926 and 1932 a small group of people in Egypt organised light desert motor expeditions capable of covering very great distances without refuelling, and of remaining away from all supplies, including water, for periods up to a month in duration. Major Bagnold, a British army officer, took the leading part in this exploration, and in 1938 he led an expedition into the desert which supported itself for more than a month at a time. He describes his earlier experiences in his book, *Libyan Sands*. In November 1939 Major-General

Herbert, 7th Armoured Division, who was Major Bagnold's commanding officer, put forward the idea that in the event of war with Italy, small mobile parties should be formed to collect information about the interior of Libya, to harry the enemy's communications with the oases of Kufra and Uweinat, to survey landing grounds for the RAF in enemy territory for future offensive operations and to keep touch with French outposts on the south-western border of Libya.

Major-General Creagh repeated the suggestion in January 1940, and when war broke out with Italy, Bagnold, who was serving on General Headquarters staff in Cairo, again put forward the idea. On 23 June General Wavell gave his approval to the formation of long range patrols, which later became known as the Long Range Desert Group. All trucks in the patrols were to be fully packed with twenty-seven cwt load of arms, ammunition and equipment. They were to carry petrol sufficient for at least 1500 miles and rations and water to last each man sixteen days. The patrols had to be prepared, as we have seen, to cross some of the most arid, difficult country in the world, navigating over un-mapped territory hundreds of miles within enemy bounds.

TO BE CONTINUED IN NEXT ISSUE.

MORE V.C. HISTORY

Private Thomas Cooke, 8th Infantry Bn, AIF, born Kaikoura. Won VC July 24, 1916, and was killed the same day at Poziers.

* * * *

1959 — Royal Warrant authorised \$NZ200 tax-free annuity for all holders of the Cross.

* * * *

Twice, seven Crosses have been won in one action. First by the South Wales Borderers at Rorke's Drift in the Sudan in 1879; and by the AIF at Lone Pine, Gallipoli in 1915.

* * * *

Three sets of father-and-son and four sets of brothers have won the award.

* * * *

The Gough family have the unique distinction of three VCs in the one family, two brothers and a son. Major C. Gough, Indian Mutiny, 1857-58; his son, Captain J. Gough, Somaliland (1903), and Lieut. H. Gough, brother of Major Gough, Indian Mutiny.

* * * *

Five VCs have been won since the end of WW2. Two by British soldiers in Korea, two by Australians in South Vietnam and one by a Gurkha against Indonesian troops in Borneo.

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Second Lieutenant Keith Elliott



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An acid spinster constituted herself O.C. Morals in a sleepy village. One day she dropped in on Giles, a jobbing gardener, noted for his joviality. "Giles," she said, "I'm ashamed that you should set such an example. Why, yesterday I saw your wheelbarrow outside "The Fox and Badger" for two hours."

Giles didn't say a word, but that night, he left his wheel-barrow outside the spinster's house.

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A WAT-SON SPECIAL

A beautiful young girl with a heavenly figure and looks to match, applied for a job as a shorthand-typist and in turn was given an interview by the prospective employer. he said to the young lady: "Tell me, can you type?" to which the girl replied "No sir." He then asked "Can you take shorthand?" Her reply was again "No sir." He then said: "Well, as a matter of interest how much did they pay you in your last job?" She replied "\$120 a week sir." He then remarked: "You tell me you cannot type and you cannot take shorthand and they paid you \$120 a week. What ever for?" Looking into his eyes with a lovely smile on her face she replied, "Sir, I cannot conceive."

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Little River,
Canterbury.
July 25, 1979.

To The Editor,
Crossfire.

Sir, — I was interested in your "Personality" column on Bill Horrocks, particularly as I have met Bill occasionally over the years and my sons

owe their appreciation of music in part to his teaching. I admire as well as like him, for anyone who takes on the teaching of music at a boys' school has courage of a very high order.

However, I must take issue with your proof-reader over his spelling. As a retired Chief Ordnance Artificer myself, who has always believed that our branch of the Navy was sadly neglected and little appreciated, I would count it a sad dereliction of my bounden duty if I did not point out that the word "ordnance," meaning to do with things gunnery, has no "i" in it.

I am sure that Bill himself as an ex-teacher would have been appalled at the twice-repeated error, and that only his natural modesty would have prevented him from demanding an apology.

Yours faithfully,
F. L. COCKRAM.

Editor's Note: The article was correctly spelt when sent to the publisher and we have apologised to Mr Cockram.

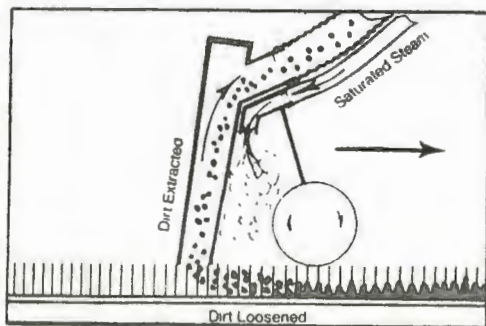
Clean one

Waitress: "We have everything on the menu."

Customer: "I can see that. Don't you have a clean one?"

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THEN THERE WAS THE ONE ABOUT

Two spinster sisters were sitting reading when one of them looked up from her paper and commented: "Here's an article describing the death of a woman's third husband. She has had all of her husbands cremated."

"Isn't that awful? said the other. "Some of us can't even get one husband while others have husbands to burn."

★ ★ ★

Then there was the story of the man who went up to the salesman at the Rolls-Royce stand at the Motor Show and asked the way to the Gents' toilet.

The route was a bit complicated and the salesman deserted his post to escort the man to the door of the toilet.

Thanking him, the man asked why he had gone to so much trouble.

"Because," answered the salesman, "yours was the first genuine inquiry that I've had all day."

★ ★ ★

Six prominent businessmen were named as pallbearers in the will of a man who died penniless and owing each of them considerable sums of money.

"They have been wonderful creditors," the will said, "and I would like to have them carry me to the end."

★ ★ ★

Margie was an enthusiastic newlywed and, after discussing the family budget with her husband, she decided she should get a temporary job. Bouncing into the public library, she approached the attentive old maid sitting at the reference desk.

"Could you please give me the name of a good book on positions?" she inquired.

"What kind of positions did you have in mind?" asked the old librarian with a starchy smile.

"Oh you know —" explained the bright-eyed young girl, "— the different kinds of positions a bride might take."

★ ★ ★

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crossword puzzle 10

ACROSS

- 1. Pierce
- 5. Thus (Lat.)
- 8. Mexican coin
- 12. Single
- 13. Fuss
- 14. English river
- 15. Seed covering
- 16. Sailor
- 17. Smooth
- 18. Campanile
- 20. Algerian city
- 22. Pertaining to flying
- 26. Pursue
- 29. Chip
- 30. Feminine name
- 31. Red deer
- 32. Obese
- 33. Sacks
- 34. Son-in-law of Mohammed
- 35. Distant
- 36. Manservant
- 37. Breathing apparatus
- 40. Session
- 41. Proprietors
- 45. Food
- 47. Personality
- 49. Medicinal plant
- 50. Poker stake
- 51. Decay
- 52. Tumult

- 53. German river
- 54. Distress signal
- 55. Water barriers

- 7. Small crown
- 8. South Pacific islands
- 9. Ultimate
- 10. Heir
- 11. Single unit
- 19. Female ruff
- 21. Uncooked
- 23. American author
- 24. English clergyman
- 25. Throw
- 26. Scorch
- 27. Healthy
- 28. Awned
- 32. Agriculturists
- 33. NY college for women

DOWN

- 1. Thick slice
- 2. Ripped
- 3. West Indian shrub
- 4. City in Ireland
- 5. Woodland deity
- 6. Mountain on Crete

- 35. Tree
- 36. Promise
- 38. Actor O'Toole
- 39. Plays a horn
- 42. Charles Lamb
- 43. Space
- 44. Hardens
- 45. Chinese leader
- 46. Conclusion
- 48. Sticky substance

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 5 | 6 | 7 | | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
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| 50 | | | | | 51 | | | | 52 | | | |
| 53 | | | | | 54 | | | | 55 | | | |

(Answer on Page 36)

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My tour of the Vatican and Hell . . . *Michaelangelo's way!*

In late April 1945, just as the Italian campaign was drawing to a close, I was withdrawn from battle and as I had accumulated leave I decided to visit the "Eternal City" and so went on 10 days leave to Rome. I was billeted at the N.Z. Forces Club, a pre-war top-class hotel with beautiful marble stairways and bathrooms and cuisine to match, and in the evenings two beautiful Italian girls were engaged to sing for us in the luxurious lounge.

If one was not satisfied with all this splendour — right behind the hotel was the Royal Opera House where I witnessed the performance of two operas, *Il Trovatore* and *La Forza Del Destino*.

The name of our beautiful Club Hotel was *Quirinale* or *Royal* in English and situated on the *Via Nazionale*, right in the heart of Rome and only a few minutes from the Colosseum.

To anyone lucky enough to visit Rome, a tour of St Peter's and the Vatican Museum is a must.

In fact, I went three times and even then I only scratched the surface in my efforts to absorb some knowledge of its vast artistic treasures of painting, sculpture, tapestry, architecture, etc.

In fact, the English woman who acted as our guide said that she had been guiding parties to the Vatican for 25 years and she still was able to find some article of art that she had not seen before.

During one of my visits, together with about 50 others, we had an audience with the late Pope Pius XII. I remember it well because an American soldier did his cheeky best to do a heavy line with a rather beautiful South African WAAF, who in icy tones and impeccable language, told him what she thought of his ancestry and crude advances in such a holy place.

Part of our tour took us to the famous Sistine Chapel where Michelangelo Buonarroti,

painter, sculptor, architect, and poet, dominated all 16th century art in Italy by his extraordinary sculptural vision and depth of intellect.

He spent eight years lying on his back while he painted Biblical scenes and figures on the ceiling.

During this period, when not even the Pope was allowed to view the unfinished work, some Vatican High Court official with an officious manner pestered Michelangelo to let him see the work and generally made life hell for the overworked painter.

So when Michelangelo finished the ceiling, he began his ceiling to floor painting on the end wall depicting heaven, hell and purgatory, and he painted an easily recognised portrait of the official and placed him in hell.

Well, when all the paintings had been completed and the Sistine Chapel opened for public viewing, the official, now a figure of public ridicule, went running to the Pope complaining bitterly about his treatment by Michelangelo.

The Pope, a wise man of his day, said: "Well my good man, had Michelangelo put you in purgatory. Maybe I could have done something about it. But even you must realise that even a Pope cannot take you out of hell."

And there he is today. If you don't believe me, pop into the Sistine Chapel at St Peter's in Rome and check for yourself.

C. M. J. WATSON.

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Martin was known among his friends for the punctuality with which he sent his wife her alimony payment each month. When asked the reason for his haste he shivered and explained: "I'm afraid that if I ever should fall behind in my payments, she might decide to repossess me."

"Just a minute," the girl declared. "I'm really a prostitute and I have to charge you \$50."

Later the man sat quietly behind the wheel. "Aren't we leaving?" the girl asked.

"Not yet," the fellow replied. "I'm really a cab driver — and the fare back to town is \$50."

last social.

Fortunately, the members of the band provide their time, instruments and efforts at no charge, or the socials would be a financial disaster.

It is very disturbing to hear that the social committee are to review the whole scene, and give consideration to reducing the socials. If this happens I can only predict the eventual collapse of the band through lack of incentive, and the club will then learn to their detriment, the true cost of running a social, and in turn you, the patron, will be forking out well in excess of the \$2 per head admission charge.

I implore all readers to make an effort to get to SOME socials, providing that is, that the social committee haven't already lowered the boom.

Picton Women's Section

July is the month when the annual competition between Blenheim and Picton Women's Sections takes place.

This is for bowls in the morning and cards in the afternoon, and is always held in a spirit of keen but friendly rivalry.

This year Blenheim were the hosts to about

20 of the Picton members, who thoroughly enjoyed the outing, despite losing the bowls.

However, we retained the handsome cards trophy through a marginal technicality, so next year's tournament should prove to be highly competitive.

At our July meeting Mrs Margaret Olliver from Blenheim conducted an enjoyable Tupperware display, which created considerable interest.

Mrs Joan Norton was enrolled as a new member. Husband Athol was recently elected to the RSA executive.

In answer to the request for assistance in welfare visiting, the following women volunteered to be available as requested and at their own initiative: Viv Owen, Margaret McLaughlan, Ida Willoughby, Joan Taylor. Also ex-officio the president Sybil Phillips and secretary, Eileen Mattingley.

The raffle winner was Mrs Jim Fletcher.

One of our older members, Emma Frost, died on July 21 after a period of 18 months of indifferent health. Although unable to take an active part, she valued her women's section membership and I personally have lost a dear old friend.

To her son Don Marsden and W.S. member Elfi, his wife, our sincere sympathy.

JOAN M. TAYLOR.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE 10

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