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Editorial

Another year gone, another year older and another year wiser.

They say it is a sign of growing old—the way time slips past these days.

With that introduction we wish all readers and members all they could wish for over Christmas and the New Year.

This will be the shortest editorial since Crossfire started because time has caught me and I haven't a show of doing any more before we publish.

Merry Christmas to you all.

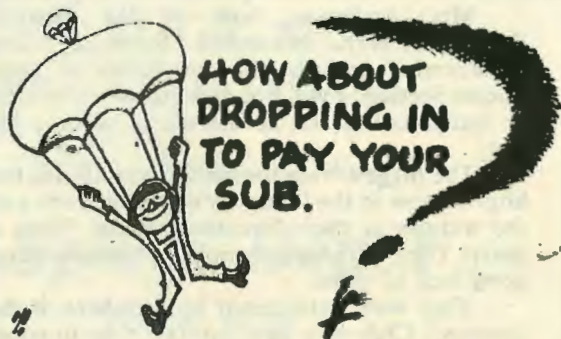
SERVICE MEMBERS

The following ex-service personnel were elected to service membership of the RSA.

ABERHART, Trevor J. F.
BAILEY, Ronald
BRODIE, Rene G.
BROWN, David W. J.
CAMERON, Don R. B.
CLIFFORD, Mavis S.
DAVIES, Hector F.
EATHORNE, Robert J.
EDEN, Leslie D.
FAIRHALL, Russell M.
GIBB, Donald B.
HART, Susan J. T.
HIPKINS, John V. E.
HODGETTS, Cyril C.
HOLMES, Peter.
JOHNSTONE, Gordon W.
KERERU, Kawana.
McCUTCHEON, Malcolm R.
McGOWAN, Daniel B.
McKIMMIE, Murray D.
MADDOCK, Rachel P.
OWENS, James F.
POPE, Douglas J.
SHANKS, Alan C.
SMITH, Ila M.
TAYLOR, Christine.
THOMPSON, Kenneth A.
VERRY, Peter J.
WASS, Ronald L. W.
WHITEHEAD, Claude B.
WILLS, Norman D.

NEW MEMBER

931944 Francis Nesbitt SHERIDAN



President's Report

Well, 1980 has certainly flown past as far as I am concerned. It just doesn't seem possible that this is the last report I shall be writing this year.

The past month has been an extremely busy one and the rest of December promises to be the same.

All members of the Executive will be calling on our widows and elderly members where it is needed to take them some small Christmas cheer. They look forward to seeing the representatives from the RSA on their rounds and they make them so welcome that it is difficult to get away. Bill Haythorne took a week last year to get around his ladies at Havelock.

Sheila and I had the pleasure of attending a gathering of the House Committee along with their partners and friends. It gave me the ideal opportunity of being able to present Mr Alan Eatwell with his certificate and badge of Active Life Membership of the Marlborough RSA.

Alan showed great modesty in accepting an award which had been well and truly earned by him. It was a very enjoyable occasion.

Picton's turn for honours came on December 6 when our Dominion President was on hand to present Mr John Murrell with his certificate and Badge.

It was a pleasure to listen to Mr D. Leuchars during the formal part of the evening. I know that he has to attend a lot of gathering around New Zealand in his capacity as President. When he told me that he is away approximately 45 weekends a year, it made me realise what a great job they all do at headquarters.

Johnny Murrell thanked everyone concerned and it was well received by all who were fortunate enough to be able to be present for the evening. It was a very nice gesture, in my opinion, when Johnny's old badge was pinned on Mrs Murrell. She has ably assisted and supported him over the years.

Mrs Anderson, wife of the District President Vern, presented Honorary Life Membership awards to four ladies of their Ladies Section. I will not dwell too long on that or Jim Maxwell will accuse me of stealing his copy.

The biggest treat for me this month was the hour I spent in the lounge with the veterans and the widows at their Christmas Party. What a party! They thoroughly enjoyed themselves and good luck to them.

They were entertained by members of the Orphan's Club who gave up their time to come down for a while and lead a sing-song.

As I have stated before and I will continue to say until I am blue in the face, we owe a great deal to our busy Ladies Section for the splendid way they look after our senior people and I thank them for a good job from which they must get a great deal of satisfaction.

An omission when I spoke to the vets on Monday was to thank Geordie Carlisle for transporting them to and from these afternoons — I do so now.

Finally, I would like to wish on behalf of the Executive a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year to all members, our hard-working staff and their families and trust that everyone has a happy holiday.



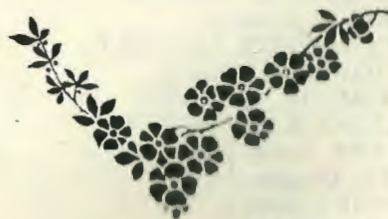
LADIES NEWS

At the end of November, 15 returned service women enjoyed a pre-Christmas function-dinner at the City Hotel.

President Connie was not able to be with us, but she is out and about again now.

Two newcomers to Blenheim were welcomed.

Our next get-together is 5pm on January 30 at RSA. Just bring yourself and a little pocket money.



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Centrepont Mall, Blenheim.

Excerpts from the December Executive Meeting

Ron Moseley retiring on December 13 — Alex Grant late of the Workingmen's Club replacing him — Peter McIntyre prints hung in the lounge — Schoolboy gardening becoming a major item of expenditure in the Relief Account — First of Service Members approved — Charter profit down to 12.5% in last quarter — Charter Committee given power if needed to increase prices if necessary when new hotel-workers award becomes effective — Omaka Marae and Maori Community Centre granted \$100 towards building improvements — Messrs Gibbons and Dunn accepted as builders for stage one of alterations — Widows, veterans, hospital patients and inmates of Amersfoote to receive gifts at Christmas.

and 25 years ago . . .

Present: J. A. Bell (president) and 14 members — Gold Star and Certificate of Merit awards approved by NZRSA for F. A. Harrison — RSA Bowling Club requests sump be raised to ground level — RSA Bowling Club given permission to conduct raffles, half the proceeds of which were to go to building fund — £20 grant

made to bowling club — General Account debit balance of £398/12/- and Relief Account credit of £199/17/1 — Secretary granted holidays from 22/12/50 to 9/1/51 and office to be closed during that period — Christmas staff bonus to be paid — No reply from Sir Edmund Hillary who had been invited as guest of honour at the annual ball — Fathers night held at Picton — Picton challenged to cricket match — Building funds appeal progressing steadily.

and 30 years ago . . .

President W. A. Hood with 15 members present — £206 collected so far for Nurses' Memorial — Billiards against Picton won 8-0 — Picton so confident of winning again they had not brought the trophy up with them — Kiwi Concert Party made enjoyable visit — Queen Carnival campaign begun — General account in the red and permission given to conduct a raffle to offset the deficiency. First prize £10 worth of gold, and minor prizes to a total of £25 — Staff to be paid Christmas bonus — Christmas grants and gifts to be made as usual — Children's Christmas party being held.

LUNCH AT THE RSA — 12 to 1.30

**BUY LOCALLY AND YOUR MONEY
WILL COME BACK TO YOU**

This Month's Special
Inspect our WALTHER TARGET RIFLE NOW.

Marlborough Sports Depot

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"The Good Shots Next To The Cri"

EEL V MOSQUITO

Reprinted from "Quick March," 1922.

A story comes from England (writes "Blue-gum") of experiments in the direction of slaughtering the demon mosquito, nipping him in the bud, so to say, by destroying the larvae. Scientists were endeavouring to discover whether eels could not be used to destroy the larvae; if it were proved that eels were greedily destructive of the youthful skeeter, they would be bred specially for the job, mobilised in fact, for the war against the stinging terror by night.

Mosquitoes were a nuisance in the Norfolk fens and thereabouts, hence the crusade. But I doubt very much if eels are going to turn the trick.

What of the eel and the mosquito in our New Zealand swamps? Both are there in untold myriads and one doesn't seem to have the slightest effect on the other.

If the English pundit's theory held water the wriggling "tuna" should have exterminated the mosquito long ago, yet both flourish exceedingly, and the more eels there are in a swamp the greater, apparently, the mosquito plague.

That, at any rate, has been my observation.

We shall have to fall back on the kerosene cure, after all, and here let some mathematical genius work out the number of millions of gallons of petroleum, say it would take to wipe out the mosquito breed in the Waikato swamps.

LUNCH AT THE RSA — 12 to 1.30

**YOUR SUB.
HASN'T BEEN
SPOTTED...**



... IN OUR MAIL
THIS YEAR

KING OF THE TUNA

Yet another big eel story, by way of capping all predecessors:

At the junction of the Rangitaiki and Wheao rivers, on the eastern side of the Kaingaroa plain (writes "Matau") there is a reedy kind of backwater which long ago was the home of the champion monster eel of the district.

We heard the moving tale of his capture as we spelled there at midday, boiled the billy and dried our boots and socks after fording the swift Rangitaiki, which here came up to our saddle-flaps.

The big tuna was famous among the Ngati-manawa tribe whose homes were along the river banks. Many a line had been carried away by this old wizard of all the eels and many a "hinaki" had been set for him in vain. One day an Arawa Native Contingent under two white officers made camp at this river junction, after three months' arduous marching and starvation fare in the mountains of the Urewera Country.

They had not a scrap of food left except a little wet and crumbled biscuit in the bottom of their haversacks. At nightfall the senior officer of the force went to the raupo-grown delta of the rivers to try his luck with an eel-line.

All hands but the fisherman had turned in under the flax bushes, supperless, to dream of Rotorua and square meals, when a yell from the waterside aroused them.

Jumping up they found their officer literally wrestling with a gigantic eel he had caught. Standing in the shallow water he had hauled it up until its head was over his shoulder while its tail was in the water, and it was struggling desperately to free itself.

A dozen men were on the big fellow in a moment, and in another moment the king of the Rangitaiki lay dead on the grass.

He was 6ft long, 14 inches thick and when he was weighed by the sergeant-major of the contingent he scaled 55½lb.

The tattooed chefs of the expedition speedily had him artistically dressed up in raurekau leaves and cooked, and then came the midnight feast.

"There were 70 men in our contingent," said the narrator — he was the fisherman himself — "and every one of them had a feed."

Not long after that Rangitaiki ride I happened to meet the other officer of the old-time Arawa force and mentioned the eel story.

"Perfectly correct," he said, "with just this one exception; my old friend's memory may not be so good as it was, or maybe my own is at fault, but to the best of my recollection our strength was not 70 men — but 90 — and every man had some of that eel."

ANOTHER EEL STORY

(From the mouths of babe's and infants).

Lies are not the exclusive product of politicians and pensioners.

A lad of our acquaintance, not yet left school, has a lively imagination. He has regaled us with various stories which gained him a reputation as a boy Baron Munchausen.

One of his stories dealt with a miraculous draught of fish (herrings to be exact) at the Wairau Bar. He was netting them on a basis of lifting the net every 5 minutes otherwise it would be too heavy to haul in. However, at one stage the net was inadvertently left in for 7 minutes. The result of this negligence was that there was a herring in every hole.

Another incredible tale concerned a giant earthworm discovered by roading contractors near White's Bay. This monster was 40ft long and the workmen could not dig fast enough with shovels so they used a bulldozer to extract it.

But the Magnum Opus in the youthful raconteur's repertoire is his eel story.

The ancient giant lurks in deep, turgid pools near Onamalutu. It has constantly eluded all attempts to bring it to bank. The eel's hunters include local farmers who are concerned about the number of sheep that have fallen prey to the monster while drinking from the stream.

This epic was told with such earnest credibility that we had to give him top marks as a learner liar.

However, some months later when he commenced the same tale his audience concealed any previous knowledge of the subject.

The performance was almost identical to its premiere, up until the conclusion. This time, however, the climax nominated the victims as cows!

It was in the days of the gas lights that the old negro woman went to her dentist about a sore tooth. He advised her to have it pulled out.

She agreed to this and asked what it would cost.

"Well," said the dentist, "do you want gas?"

"Sure I want gas," answered the negro woman. "You-all ain't gonna fool around wid dis chicken in de dark."

*

*

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Marlborough R.S.A. Women's Section

Cosmetics were the order of the afternoon for the November meeting and Mrs Kennington welcomed a good attendance.

Miss Penny Mitchell gave a make-up demonstration, assisted by her supervisor from Nelson, and Mrs Colleen Neal agreed to be the model.

Penny is a Marlborough agent for Neutric-Metric Cosmetics and one of her services is to attend private homes for group demonstrations. A phone call to her will provide all the information. On view and for sale were toiletry packs in this range and suitable gifts for all family members. Dads were particularly well catered for.

There was also a table of kitchen and laundry aids.

The women's section Shop Day held in Centre Point was well patronised and in all was a most successful day. Mrs Kennington conveys her thanks to all who contributed.

Our members who travelled to the Renwick and Picton Christmas parties thoroughly enjoyed their evenings. Their entertainment as always was delightful.

At our Christmas dinner party, Mrs Kennington welcomed members and ladies from Renwick and Picton. The evening was a huge success, everyone joining in the Christmas spirit — a lovely meal and bright entertainment by our girls.

Under the guidance of Grace and Colleen and accompanist Cath, two brackets of songs "Sunshine of Sound" and "Bells" were bright and breezy and entertaining. There is no need to say the sketches were hilarious — they were just that and more. Adding interest to the stage this year were the props created by Grace and the steeple especially constructed by Mr Wally Boddington.

A very pleasant evening concluded with carol singing and a message of thanks and good will from our president Mrs Kennington.

"Darling," he sobbed passionately, "if you refuse me I'll die."

"You should have asked me before," she said coldly.

PICTON NEWS

November was notable for the considerable amount of maintenance work either done or prepared for. Roofing iron has been purchased for re-roofing the original part of the clubhouse.

Gordon Mattingley has installed hand-railings to the side entrance slope. A new PA intercom system has been ordered and will be installed in the near future. This should be a great asset throughout the clubrooms.

The fence at the entrance to the Servicemen's Cemetery has been painted voluntarily and is a vast improvement.

The old cash register has been working so hard that it put on a tantrum and gave up the ghost in a cloud of smoke. Ironically, there were only about half a dozen members present, just as well, and not in the middle of a busy social. So now we have a brand new machine ready to take on all-comers.

The November social was again a good success and the regular December Xmas Social will be held on the 20th.

Two of our members — Richie Smith and John Frisken — alternated as Father Christmas for the Waikawa Play Centre's big fund-raising Gala Sale on November 29, funds going towards their new building and on December 9 Alan Whyte was Father Xmas at their Xmas party held in the RSA social room. It is good to see the co-operation given by our members to assist youth, particularly fostering goodwill across the generation gap.

Vern Jury, who has given sterling service as barman and other help around the club, will be greatly missed when he leaves to live with his widowed sister at Thames. Our best wishes go with him.

The 1981 RSA membership clips are now available at the clubrooms at a cost of \$6. Get yours promptly and be up to date when visitors arrive, or when you go visiting other clubs.

A request for information. Can anyone old soul made a good recovery in spite of, have drawn a blank. Perhaps it lies forgotten in that seldom used cupboard. A warm welcome awaits its return or information as to its whereabouts.

Our hospital visitor, the Rev Stacey Golder, told me the following and vows it is true:

"Recently while visiting Wairau Hospital and serving Communion to those who wished it, I was met in a corridor by an agitated attendant who told me that an old lady was being brought to me by stretcher as she thought she was dying. I hurried to replace my white surplice and went to meet her. We nearly collided at a corner — she gave me one look and cried out: 'Oh, Hell, I'm gone — here's an angel!'"

Stacey was glad to report however that the old soul made a good recovery in spite of,

or perhaps because of, the encounter.

And now here is what I'm told is a guaranteed cure for all those wishing to lose or avoid that surplus weight over the festive season.

"If it tastes good and you are enjoying it — SPIT IT OUT!"

From our president and the executive at Picton, Christmas Greetings to all.

Happy holidays.

—CLIVE M. TAYLOR.

PICTON WOMEN

November 11 was the last meeting for 1980 and at the suggestion of president June Ireland we stood in silence in recognition of Remembrance Day.

A new member in Daisy Robinson was welcome by the 28 members present.

Nancy Tranter and Anne O'Callaghan prepared an entry on our behalf at the annual church rose day competition. Although unplaced it was nevertheless a lovely display. Still on the horticultural theme, the pebble garden and surroundings are coming along very well, thanks to the efforts of Ida Willoughby, Margaret Charters, Mavis Town and June Ireland.

Pearl Badlands was the lucky raffle winner.

Several carloads of us had a thoroughly enjoyable evening and a super supper at the Renwick Section Christmas party on November 20. We have been told that our own entertainment on November 25 also created a lot of fun.

We sadly report the death of our member Alva Smart on November 29. To her family we extend our sympathy.

Although our meetings are finished until February 1981, we will be attending a few more functions during December, but more of them in the next issue of Crossfire.

I would remind those women's section members who are also members of the Picton Branch RSA Charter Club that our subscriptions are due for renewal at the end of December. These subs are not to be confused with the women's section fees which are renewable at the end of May each year after our AGM.

In conclusion may I take the opportunity of wishing a Happy Holiday season to all women's section and fellow clubhouse members, not forgetting our RSA executive and members.

After all, they are what the RSA is all about. Lest We Forget.

—JOAN M. TAYLOR.

LAST POST



19424 G. A. REYNOLDS
59012 R. W. JOYCE

LEST WE FORGET

As we remember, with deep gratitude those who suffered pain and gave their lives for us; let us resolve to do all in our power to preserve the freedom we hold today.

TRIBUTE TO JIM HENDERSON

This is written as an overdue and well-earned tribute of the tenacious enduring courage in adversity and undoubted literary talent of Jim Henderson, editor of "Unofficial History" in our national RSA magazine "Review."

Born on August 26, 1918, at a Kairuru farm amongst the marble outcrops, logs and stumps of Takaka Hill, Jim probably inherited some of his literary talent from both his parents.

His father Herbert, so I am told, was a very well read and scholarly man, and his mother Mabel (nee Trolove) was a schoolteacher. Jim, on his mother's side, has a strong bond with the Marlborough province. His great-grandfather George McRae founded "Blairich" and died there on September 3, 1864. His grandfather, Edwin Trolove pioneered "Woodbank" with his brother.

A son of George McRae, Nehemiah McRae, was the first to climb Tapuaenuku and was drowned in the Awatere River in May 1872.

Tapuaenuku, the snowy sentinel of Cook Strait, clearly seen from Wellington, means "the footsteps of the rainbow god."

It is interesting to note that Edmund Hillary climbed Tapuaenuku three times in winter, learning many valuable mountaineering lessons before conquering Everest.

Anyone who has read "Red River to Blairich" (by Catherine Holst and others, including a section by Jim Henderson) will readily appreciate how deep and strong are Jim's roots and relationship to many Marlborough families who have played a proud and prominent part and continue to do so — in pioneering and development of the farming and the rural community in our beautiful sunshine province.

Like several of his forebears Jim attended Barnicoat House, Nelson College, where to quote his own words "they asked me, a wild-eyed, untidy, ignorant hermit brat hot from Takaka Hill to start a House Magazine."

This I did — "Barnicoat Breezes" — semi-subversive, suspicious of authority and its many shadows, convinced "names is news" record what people say (not what others say they say), the skirting board view, the irritated and uneasy outlook of all those who in a million years, would never make the first XV — or the prefects' study, except to be thrashed.

Barnicoat Breezes, among my greatest joys, is still going, stronger than ever, 45 years later."

Before the Second World War, I am told Jim worked as a journalist in the Wellington district.

During the war Jim served with 29 Battery NZEF in Egypt and while in action during the terrible battle in the desert at Sidi Rezegh in Libya he was severely wounded in the leg and

left for dead, in the retreat that cost many N.Z. lives.

Jim was taken prisoner and ended up in an Italian hospital at Bari where his leg was amputated and where apart from his wounds he and many others suffered very severe privations.

Primitive and unhygienic medical attention plus a severe lack of good nourishing food placed many of their lives in further jeopardy and the sheer hell of his and others sufferings I feel sure inspired the birthplace of "Gunner Inglorious" acclaimed and considered by many to be the greatest story of the Second World War by a N.Z. author and to further qualify that Jim Henderson signed up last March to have Gunner Inglorious made into a movie — cinema set in N.Z., Australia and Italy.

In Jim's "Gunner Inglorious" he dedicated a special chapter to "Two Guardian Angels" — in which he pays a magnificent tribute to all those anonymous Red Cross and St Johns War Organisation members who prepared and distributed those never to be forgotten, often vital, food and clothing parcels, plus all the wonderful other items like books, soap, drugs, medicine, cigarettes, games and cards. They indeed gave courage, strength and hope and indeed life to our prisoners of war and I am sure that even today many men in their private prayers still say "thank God for the Red Cross and St John."

Jim is also the author of many fine other books, including the Open Country Series — such as Return to Open Country, Swagger Country, to mention but two, plus the RMT History, 22 Btn History, Tobacco Farm and many others.

In the early months of 1979 I posted several copies of our local magazine "Crossfire" — seeking comment on our publication, which I considered first-class.

His reply read: "Oh, what a beaut, Crossfire. Thanks indeed and congratulations to all concerned, good toiling Editor and staff (such work is not easy, despite goodwill and good intentions, a million words are spoken for every one written. The great Jack London, ever venerated, said there are many more blacksmiths than writers because it is much harder work writing. And the printer, most important — a magazine must look worthwhile and here you again are bang on. I only hope the idea spreads elsewhere. So many so now, yes, but what do they do? Here, you have an answer. And it is personal, never a trace of handout stuff or head office brayings: Hear and Now, Us! Yes Reg, I certainly have enjoyed the neat and most interesting Crossfires. A top-rate job and congratulations to the surefire editors and Adcentre."

Jim Henderson's three children, Guy, Andrew and Nicola must be very proud of their talented father. (Jim's wife died several years

ago).

Despite a 160% war disability Jim has risen above this and written a proud place for himself in our N.Z. literary wealth and history.

This then is my humble effort to portray Jim Henderson to the many local readers of Review and to pay tribute and thanks to a man who has given me help, advice and encouragement in my own small literary efforts.

Again, welldone Jim and a very happy Christmas to you and yours from Marlborough.

—C. M. J. WATSON

The Good Old Days!

Looking back through some old copies of "Quick March" of the early 1920s, the younger of those among us could only view with envy the prices people paid for goods at that time. Of course, we would not have viewed with envy the wages of those days.

Some of the items that caught our eye were:

MEN'S SUITS

Tweed and Fancy — £4/9/6

Wool Worsted — £5/9/6

THERMOS FLASKS

Two Pint — 11/6

PIANO ACCORDIONS

26/6/, 31/6, 33/-, 35/-, 37/6, 40/-, 50/-, 60/-

GENUINE CEYLON TEA

5lb—11/3; 10lb—21/6; 20lb—41/8

WORKING CLOTHES

Overalls 8/6

Jackets 8/11

Bib Overalls 8/11

ROOFING PAINT

11/- per gallon

And the beer drinkers had a fair selection to choose from when quenching their thirst.

SPEIGHTS PRIZE ALE

CROWN SPARKLING ALE

MANNING'S AMBER ALE

KAKA ALE

STAPLES BEST ALE

CELEBRATED OATMEAL STOUT

TIMARU SPARKLING ALE

MCGAVINS ALES AND STOUT

DIAMOND FINE STOUT

MEN'S INDOOR BOWLS SECTION

The section's closing social and presentation night was held on November 1. The president, Reg Watson welcomed guests, including the patron and first life member, Sam Duncan and his wife and RSA president Ron Hemming and his wife.

Mr Watson then thanked members for the various services they had given to the section, Ian Moore, Bill Montgomery, secretary Jack Ahearn, Adrian Bishell, Bob Gordon and John McPherson, Charlie O'Rourke and Leo Simpson.

Mrs Watson then presented the trophies to the various winners.

The Singles Cup was won by Orm Register, who became the first member to win the trophy on three occasions, 1972-74-80.

The pairs cup went to Paul Moore and Norm Waters (s).

The rinks trophy went to Leo Simpson, Bob Strickland, Jim Howe and Sam Lucas. Sam has now won three rinks titles (1957-70-80), while Bob and Jim have now won two each.

Long-serving committee member Bob Strickland also won the Championship Aggregate. Our thanks to Gary Smith who donated this prize as he has done for several years.

The Thursday Playing Night Club aggregate championship was won by Reg Watson — who was taken completely by surprise by this award.

A new event this year, the triples, was won by Bob Strickland, Bill Montgomery and Murray Carroll (s).

At the conclusion of the presentations Mr Ron Hemming congratulated the winners and thanked the section for conducting the annual diggers tournament on behalf of the association.

The well-known Blenheim Orphans Musical group and variety entertainers provided most enjoyable dance music, compered by Ray Williams, while Les Aberhart's magic act was most polished and enjoyable.

All agreed it had been a happy and enjoyable evening.

—C. M. J. WATSON.

LUNCH AT THE RSA — 12 to 1.30.

The Bargain Hunters

By Claude Jewell

The experienced auctioneer chuckled. he looked around the drawing-room with great satisfaction, and noticed that the majority of potential buyers of the chattels of the deceased householder were women.

He whispered in the ear of one of his minions; the minion rushed from the house and commanded the firm's lorry driver to fetch three loads of the most unsaleable goods in the firm's emporium and gently insinuate them in the rear rooms of the deceased householder's premises.

It was an opportunity not to be missed. When the goods arrived the mesdames were so busy screaming out bids that the goods were introduced without comment.

There was excitement over an old cretonne-covered settee; its entrails dripping borer-manufactured dust.

Four women, all with settees at home, were determined to achieve this settee, although previously neither had a single thought of settees.

"Now ladies," yelled the auctioneer with his palpitating gavel poised, "are you going to let this superb settee go at \$4.90, when one cannot be bought anywhere for a level \$20?"

Mrs Smith raised it 25c. She was already shepherding a fire tongs with toothache, an armchair oozing kapok and a staring photographic enlargement of a defunct relative of the deceased.

When the sofa was knocked down to her for \$8.30 she cast a look of ineffable contempt on a woman who had collapsed on a brown tin trunk in a state of exhaustion after bidding \$8.25.

The grocer's lady who was present to rescue a dingy Axminster carpet bearing every evidence of many midnight perambulations, gave herself time to wonder if Mrs Smith might not have acquired a receipt for groceries instead of a settee and scrunched a complete upper and lower denture with some malevolence.

Mrs Smith bought a frying pan, a clothes prop, a piece of linoleum cut for a hexagonal kitchen, which had evidently contained a gas stove of robust dimensions, half a dozen burnt out electric globes (they look so pretty "crewelled" over with pink string and suspended from the ceiling), a bundle of old magazines and four wire clothes lines liberally kinked.

The fire of conquest burnt in her blood until the sight of a kitchen poker, apparently about to become a household god in the domestic haven of a hated neighbour, roused her speculative instinct to fever heat.

Only by presence of mind was she able to pant "5 cents" when it seemed that the hateful Mrs Twinks had her 15c ready and her face flushed with success as she beat Mrs Jenkins for a kahikatea kitchen table, raised the limit on Mrs Green for a roll of tea-stained American cloth (with bread knife cuts in it) by 10c, and captured a whole bundle of floor cloths, a tin of floor polish and a scrub brush with the back missing by calling "50 cents" at the psychological second.

The auctioneer — a pleasant young fellow with an unblemished Sunday School record — knew he had Mrs Smith at his mercy, and when the minion (a trained man) brought in an Oregon pine cheffonier and placed it in front of Mrs Smith, she triumphantly called "Ten dollars!"

The minion hid behind the cheffonier and imitated the nod of a lady who "looked" another dollar without saying it. To be brief, Mrs Smith captured in 15 seconds, \$1.50 worth of cheffonier for \$11.50.

Mr Smith was waiting for his tea. He looked worried. He had the "second notice" about his overdue life insurance in his hand, a receipt for a quarterly instalment of his Haihaiha section was on the table and propped up against a bargain vase achieved by Mrs Smith in a previous foray was a letter from his firm ordering him to leave Wellington and to assume a position in the firm's Adelaide branch.

When Mrs Smith burst in, her dear little face glowing, carrying enough of her bargains to make her look like a small perambulating marine store, Mr Smith was calm for a moment. he had not seen Mrs Smith in this exalted character before. His first words were, "Jess, old girl, the boss has ordered me to Adelaide — we'll have to sell the whole bag of tricks and clear out before November."

"But we can't," said Jess.

"Why not?" exploded Jim.

"Oh, because I've just bought some perfectly wonderful bargains — clothesline, props, a frying pan, a settee, a chettonier, and a . . ."

"Woman," he roared, "you're silly. Ratty as a rabbit — gone a million — loopy as a bandicoot!" and rushed out of the house in time to collide with two slow but determined men carrying a rickety chiffonier up the path.

"How much did you spend?" he gasped when he returned to the weeping huntress.

"Only \$36 Jim," she sobbed.

The strong, slow determined men stacked the bargains in the indicated wash-house and Jim went out to choir practice.

In the morning a gentleman with characteristic features called.

"How much will you give me for the tot?" asked Jim.

"Vell, Misder Smid, if id vos anypotty but you, I wouldn't gif much — but ssein ve're friends — say three dollars."

Smith left his friend, walked to the fowlhouse, scowled at a White Leghorn hen, "about-turned," marched back to his friend, and hissed "they're yours."

And some other Mrs Smith will buy those inestimable treasures at some other bargain sale.
—Reprinted from "Quick March."

The thief admitted to having repeatedly broken into the same dress shop. "What did you steal?" inquired the judge.

"A dress for my wife", he explained, "... but she made me exchange it three times".

☆☆☆

Elsie was complaining to her friend, Sophie, about her husband, Chick.

"Ever since he lost his hair, he has stopped running around and chasing girls. But now he's talking about getting a toupee. Do you think a hairpiece will start him chasing again?"

"What are you worrying about?" said Sophie. "You can change the top of a convertible, but if the engine is lousy, nothing will help!"

☆☆☆

The local men's swimming champ was amorously engaged when his bedside phone rang one evening. Since he'd been waiting for a long-distance call, he answered it.

"This is the sports director of the YMCA", the caller said, "and I was wondering whether someone in your position could teach our youngsters the proper swimming techniques?"

"I'm sorry", replied the champ, "but anyone in my position would drown".

☆☆☆



"Now do you remember what we used to do in the evenings before we had television?"

EDITORIAL

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

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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.

CHRISTMAS 1914.



Embroidered handkerchief-cards sent home by troops in France during the First World War

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British and German troops fraternising in No-Man's-Land near Armentieres, Christmas Day, 1914



Private Turner of the London Rifle Brigade photographed flanked by two German officers on Christmas Day, 1914. The officer on the left is wearing an electric pocket-lamp, the lights of which signalled the beginning of the spontaneous truce on Christmas Eve



German officers meet with their British counterparts of the 7th Northumberland Hussars in No-Man's-Land near Armentières on Christmas Day, 1914

FOR MEN'S SHOES

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TROOPSHIP MAGAZINES OF WORLD WAR TWO

We were recently loaned some magazines published on troopships carrying servicemen overseas.

These magazines were printed on the ship's printing press and we publish a few excerpts that will probably bring back memories.



CONVOICE - a voice from a convoy. A live young voice, born, nursed, and grown on H.M. T 24. It laughs, it moans, in patches it is serious. To those on board we hope it will be more than a memory of life aboard the "Twenty-four" on this, her first voyage with New Zealand troops. To our people at home we hope it will show something of our hopes joys and little disappointments.

Newspapermen at home, overseas, and even in the Army are wont to talk "shop". So it was on this ship: they talked, planned, appealed, wrote and from it all arose this publication. It sounds easy, but let nobody be deceived. There were a thousand difficulties each one presenting its own little complications.

From the beginning it has been a race with time. Old Man Time has had his supporters, but with more than our fair share of good luck we have won. Photographs and cartoons were rushed ashore to make reproduction blocks; thousands of sheets of paper were bought and taken on board; a printing staff has worked 24 hours a day. A race well won has its own reward.

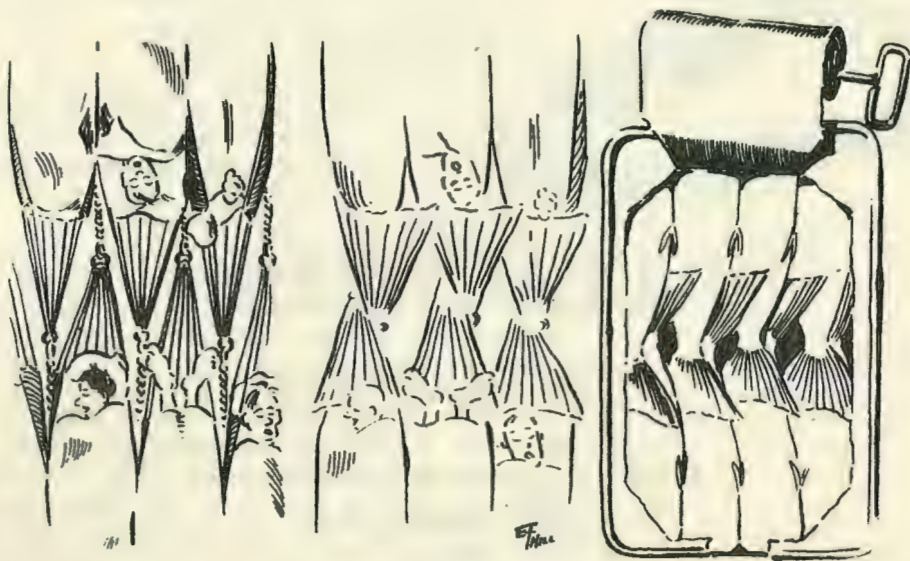
All we ask is that "Convoice" be accepted in the spirit with which it was published. Overlook its shortcomings and remember that it is a troop magazine written by troops for troops. Long hours of work and thought are nothing if to those on board, all working for the same cause, it is of some small value.

To many ashore and afloat we are indebted for their assistance. To them all we extend our thanks.

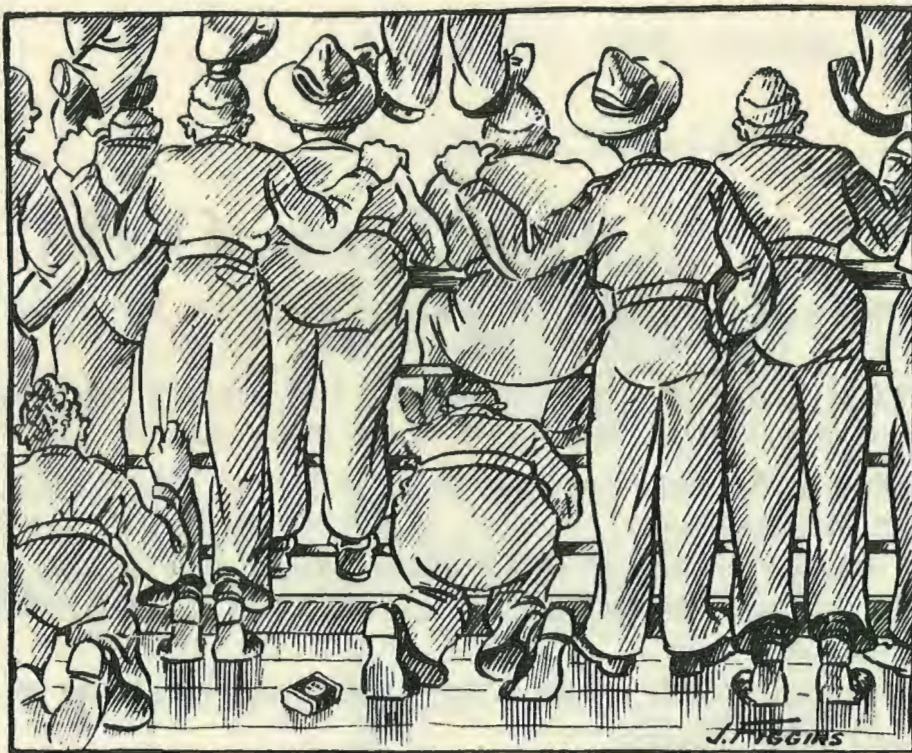
Other troops will follow us in H. M. T. 24, and other magazines will be published. We hope they are an improvement on what we have done, but, as New Zealanders, we are proud to have been the pioneers.



"ROCKED IN THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP - I LAY ME DOWN IN PEACE TO SLEEP"



SARDINIA!



FIRST PORT OF CALL.

WE SHALL HAVE MUSIC

A crowded troopship without a band would be like lamb without mint sauce and yet The Queue Ship might have been in this unhappy position had it not been for the energy and resourcefulness of Major B.V.A. Jones and Capt. K.S. Cox, plus a handful of enthusiastic bandmen in Group 6.

The formation of the band originated at "B" Block, Burnham, when part of the Southern Infantry Group was living through those tedious days of examinations, inoculations, vaccinations, checks, etc., ad infinitum. The idea of forming a band was an excellent one. Everyone agreed. There were several bandmen in the Group who had previously played in the Burnham Band and they would form the nucleus of the personnel required.

What about instruments?

To find the necessary instruments - several hundred pounds worth - wasn't easy. Far from it. Most men would have given the job up as hopeless when the Patriotic Board declared that it had none to lend. But then Major Jones and Capt. Cox have been in the Army for a long time and old soldiers

know their way about. Somewhere or other there was the principle of taking first and asking afterwards. Suffice to say that the Patriotic Board first became aware that it had lent a full set of instruments to the band for the duration of the voyage when it was asked to supply music to go with them. Possession being nine points of the law, the band kept the instruments and we've enjoyed the music.

If you wish to deliver in person brickbats or bouquets about the band, then you'll have to venture down "torpedo-alley", and find Cpl. V. A. Mc Herron - he's your man. When the band was first formed, he was appointed its conductor and it's under his guidance that it has reached its present standard.

The band made its debut on the ship the afternoon before we sailed, and, augmented later by bandmen from other groups has brightened many a weary day with its music. The troops thank you, Major Jones and Capt. Cox, for your appreciation of the situation.

F. J. C.

On the Honour of a Pilot

Whereas many of my fellow airmen have needlessly lost their lives by low other forms of dangerous flying; and

Whereas their deaths have caused even more pain and distress to their loved if they had been killed in action against the enemy; and

Whereas I recognize that such deaths, pain and distress could have been a forbearance and consideration for others on the part of the pilots concerned;

Now, therefore, I solemnly pledge upon my honour, that I shall faithfully obey the instructions and regulations governing my flying service in the Royal Canadian Air Force; that, above all,

I shall at all times resist any temptation to indulge in unnecessary other foolhardy flying.

This pledge I make to all whose happiness depends on my continued life, and the breach of which shall consider a stain on my personal honour.

Dated at Alplands, Ontario
this Second day of October 1944

Brodie

Many pilots under training were needlessly killed in low-flying accidents — beating-up parents or girl friends homes, etc. The R.A.F. made pilots sign this declaration in an endeavour to reduce the toll from such accidents.

Anyone remember?

TROTTING TIPS FROM "YOUNG CHARLES"



Xmas Specials

*LIGHT LORD

(B h, 4y, Lordship-Brigade's Advice. Trainer: D. G. Rickerby.) One of the most promising young horses seen for a long time. Looks destined to win them in a row before Christmas.

COLOURS UP

(B g, 5y, Frosty Dream (US)-Local Colour. Trainer: B. Swain.) Has been placed in his first three races this season and looked unlucky not to win. Highly talented and could go places quickly in the far south.

ARANIA SCOTT

(B g, 4y, Scottish Hanover (US)-Arania. Trainer: G. B. Noble.) Suffered a serious setback last season, but has come back in style this spring. Has the breeding to be a topline pacer.

CHELTENHAM

(B g, 4y, Armbrø Del-Why Not. Trainer: T. G. Cavill.) Lost form last season, and has taken time to strike top this spring. Is not far-off now and could yet live up to the high opinion formed of him in his early racing.

VOLANTE

(B g, 4y, Smooth Hanover (US)-Volante. Trainer: D. M. Kerr, jun.) Left the duffer class recently at Gore. Impresses as top staying material and should be worth following for some time to come. ■



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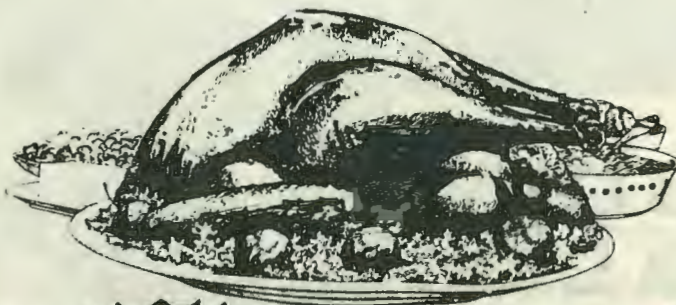
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WISHES FOR CHRISTMAS AND
THE NEW YEAR



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The Tree That Got Angry

Among the Maoris of the old school, their minds stored with countless folk stories (writes James Cowan), one hears curious tales of forest magic and of tapu trees.

Here is an example from many such items of bush lore in my notes, it was solemnly narrated many years ago by a venerable Arawa chief as we rested on the high ferny ridge Te Ahi-Manawa, which divides the beautiful lakes Tikitapu and Roto Kakahi, in the Rotorua district.

There lies — or lay, when last it was seen — on the shore of Roto-kakahi, a certain enchanted log called "Te Mata o Tapotu," which means "Tapotu's Prophecy."

It was once a tall and beautiful rimu (red pine) tree, which grew at Te Papara, near the south end of this Roto-Kakahi, the Lake of Shellfish.

Six generations ago (about 150 years) a party of Tuhourangi men, seeking for a suitable tree from which to hew a tahuhu, or ridge pole for a large meeting house, came to this rimu, felled it with stone axe and firesticks and hauled it down to an open place some little distance from the lakeside.

There they adzed it and partly trimmed it into shape and leaving it there went back to their village on Motutawa island, in the lake, intending to return next day and complete their work, haul it to the water and tow it across to the island.

When they returned however, the half-trimmed log had mysteriously disappeared. It had betaken itself to the water as they saw by the marks indicating its path to the lake, and then the people knew that it must be an enchanted tree, a rakau tipua, in short, a taniwha, or supernatural creature, endowed with strange and god-like or rather demon-like, attributes.

The foresters returned and reported the strange occurrence, and the people took council and came to the conclusion that the log by thus eluding those who would have built it into a house, was taking utu, or payment for the offence committed in cutting it down. It was a sacred tree, growing on a spot of tribal tapu, and it was angry, because it had been so sacrilgiously felled.

So, in great annoyance, it took to the water, and by that token the Tuhourangi knew that presently some dire vengeance would fall on their people.

It was not long before a fatal battle befell, the fight with the Urewera at Puke-Kai-Wahu, on Lake Rere-Whakaitu, where many of the Arawa were slain.

And "Te Mata-o-Tapotu" went drifting about the lake, sometimes hidden from mortal

eye for long periods, sometimes appearing as an oracle and omen of fateful happening.

Sometimes it lay stranded for a while, resting on the beach, but none dared approach it.

Soon it found out for itself a hidden way under the cliffs into Lake Tikitapu, a subterranean passage connecting the waters of the two lakes.

"It is like a maha, a rat run — the narrow trails our people used to cut in the bush in which to set their snare for the Maori kiore," said the old man. On occasion the bedevilled tree would float through this passage and appear on Tikitapu, drifting on the face of the waters.

Its favourite haunts on Roto Kakahi were Motu, beyond the ridge of Pa-tarata, Paetaha (on the west coast side of the lake) and Te Parapara; the last named place was its permanent home, "and in fact it lies there at the present day," said the sage.

To behold this magic tree travelling, of its own volition apparently, across either of these two lakes, was regarded as a most unlucky happening.

It was seen two weeks before the eruption of Tarawera in 1886.

At that time not only was the demon-log seen drifting on Roto Kakahi, but the waters of that lake turned the colour of the peculiar variety of greenstone which is distinguished by the numerous small dark spots it contains.

The lake, moreover, rose high above its ordinary level, and there was a curious surf at the outlet.

This was plainly the work of the Taniwha, in the fancy of the Maori.



Reprinted from "Quick March," National Paper of the NZRSA, December 10, 1921

THE BUNGALOW IN THE BAY

"Tupara": I envy exceedingly a man in the north who has secured from the Maoris the rights to a section in a glorious bay of Rotoiti Lake for his summer-time home. Well I know that bay; it is narrow of entrance, with straight walls of rock, wooded on top, and within it open out in a splendid sweep of calm clear water; a grassy knoll comes out into the indent like a green tongue. On the right-hand side of the entrance to this gem of a harbour the cliff is flat-topped, an olden lookout place and fort of the Maori.

Grand old pohutukawa trees bend out over the water, but there is a clear space on top where a handy quick-firer, mounted, would sweep the approach and keep away all bill-collectors, launch-trippists and other undesirables. Big rainbow trout pass the front-door and on the slopes of this delectable baylet one could grow kumara and strawberries and loaf under one's peach tree with exceeding great content.

When I die and, of course, flit straight to Paradise, I devoutly hope the Department in charge will permit me to exchange my lot there for a section and whare on a Rotoiti bay.

THE R.M.S. ROYAL WILLIAM

"Lee-Oh" tells of the Ulimaroa's remote forerunner: How would you relish a run to Sydney — perhaps crawl would be the better word — in a little sailing sutter crammed with other livestock, as the olden skippers called their passengers, to say nothing of casks of whale oil and a bale of flax, with a few head of cattle thrown in on the return voyage?

No stewards, no baths, no deck-chair, no concerts in the saloon — the said saloon measuring 10ft x 8ft with a double tier of bunks around it. That was the way some of our old-timers went to Australia and back.

In the Forties one of the favourite packets trading between Wellington, Nelson and other New Zealand ports and Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart, was a cutter called the Royal William, of 43 tons, a bluff-bowed little craft, built in Tasmania, with a beam that was considerably more than a third of her length.

She regularly carried passengers, mails, cargo, cattle and horses across the Tasman Sea.

It is a pity the diaries of some of her passengers haven't come down to us; but we can imagine the scenes — and smells! — in that cockroach-ridden little Argo of the Forties, bucking into the season of Cook Strait or lying becalmed in mid-ocean. She was a well-built tub, the Royal William, and I believe she was afloat in Tasmanian waters until 10 or 12 years ago.

SOME OLD-TIMERS

"Bluegum": We have still amongst us one or two good old veterans whose memories go back to days that seem like romance.

I know a venerable half-caste woman of the Ngati-Toa tribe, a very brainy, masterful old lady, too, who remembers having clearly witnessed, as a young girl, a duel between Te Rauparaha and Te Rangihaeata on the beach at Taupo Pa, now Plimmerton, about 1845.

The two chiefs, though relatives and old comrades, had quarrelled over the proceeds of the sale of land to the Europeans; Rangihaeata accused Rauparaha of having kept more than his fair share of the payment.

Rangi furiously attacked his uncle, and the two old warriors had a vigorous combat with native weapons (taiaha) on the sands, in front of the assembled people. However, they did not inflict much injury on one another.

Rauparaha, the narrator remembers, as a small but very active man, with a strong, hooked nose; Rangihaeata was a tall warrior some inches over 6ft in height, erect, well-made and powerful.

Another of the hale old-timers is Mr John Waters, of Pipitea Street, Wellington. Cheerful, white-whiskered, ruddy-faced; a splendid specimen of the hearty, hard-working pioneers.

John Waters arrived in Port Nicholson from England in June, 1841, in the barque Slains Castle; he was then a boy of six or so.

He remembers, for one thing, the stocks that stood in Thorndon, and the fun the boys of those days had with the offenders locked up in them, particularly on Monday mornings, when there was often a "full-house" after the festivities of Saturday night.

John Waters walked up the west coast from Wellington to Wanganui. His father had decided to shift to Wanganui, and took the whole family, their goods and some cattle up the coast road, or rather, trail.

There was a road part of the way over the hills to Porirua through the bush, but for the greater part of the distance it was merely a very rough, muddy track. John was then only a boy of nine.

At Taupo village, which stood where Plimmerton now is, they saw big Rangihaeata. Crossing the Pukerua Range the travellers lost the track and wandered about for a long time amongst the terribly rough and steep forested hills and deep gullies.

At last they reached the Waikanae beach and then their tramp was along the seashore all the way to Wanganui.

The boys had broken in a young bull, which carried their swags, and a German trader, who was with the party, had a horse laden with their goods.

At Otaki, Waters saw Te Rauparaha, a little man, a complete contrast to Te Rangihaeata.

He begged for the spurs which the horseman of the party wore, and got them, although he had only his bare feet on which to buckle them.

THE MAORI AND THE COMPASS

"Try Fluke" spins another of his old bush yarns:

The old-timer was talking of bush travelling and the difficulty in rough forest country of maintaining one's direction without a compass.

"In my days in the bush," he said, "we found a good pocket compass indispensable. And that reminds me: My old friend, Tom McDonnell, was once out scouting in the dense forest to the west of the Tongariro country after Te Kooti. It came on a dense fog and drizzle when the bush was entered, but Mac had taken a compass bearing of the direction in which the rebel's fires had been reported, due west of the open country, and he felt confident of coming on them before night set in.

With his force was Chief Kepa, a first-rate fighting-man — well known in later days as Major Kemp. Well, Kepa begged to be allowed to take a lead with his Wanganui fellows, and Mac at last gave up the post to him, believing Kepa's instincts in the bush to be better than his own.

All day long the march continued through peaceful country, without a sign of the quarry, and that night the force camped in the pouring rain, famished with cold, for Kepa begged Mac not to let anyone light fires; he believed he was close on Te Kooti's camp.

Next morning the weather cleared, and Mac found he was far out of his reckoning, away to the north of his intended destination. It was right-about-turn then for the camp and tucker.

Days afterwards Kepa happened to come into Mac's tent. A compass was lying on a box. Kepa took it up, turned the card round, examined it curiously, and asked: "How is it that ships at sea are guided by the compass?"

Mac explained the use of the magnetic

needle. "Ah," said Kepa, pointing to the North mark on the card, "then that does not point to the object you are searching for?"

Mac saw daylight now. "By jove," he said, "Kepa, did you have a compass the other day when we were hunting for Te Kooti?"

"Oh yes," Kepa replied. "I borrowed one from Sergeant Maling in the Scouts. I thought that it could point to Te Kooti's hiding place and that all I had to do was follow it!"

After that Kepa was invited to confine himself to his own good Maori instincts on the war-path.

THE HEFTY AXEMAN

"Old-Timer": Yes, some of those bush-whackers of the past generation had a handy way with them, especially when it came to exacting utu from the Hauhaus on the warpath. I have in my mind's eye a 6ft 3in scout, pakeha in blood but Maori in upbringing — he was reared on the banks of the Wanganui — who was fully as tough a character as any of the warriors he trailed in the bush.

He, like one or two others, did not wear boots when on the warpath, but in his case the reason was he could never find a pair of boots big enough in the frontier townships or in the colonial army quartermaster's stores.

He usually carried a tomahawk stuck in his belt and he collected "head-money" after one forest chase in Taranaki for at least three "specimens," as he called them; every male prisoner taken on that expedition lost his head in a very literal sense.

There was another time, at the taking of a Hauhaus stronghold high up the Waikato River, in the Urewera ranges, where a dozen of the most troublesome rebels were told off for summary execution.

The pakeha-Maori borrowed a long-handled tomahawk from one of his native comrades in Major Kepa's contingent, made the prisoners kneel at the edge of the riverbank and nicked their heads off as neatly as Charles the



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First's. He could get a better swing on, he explained, with the "long-handled fellow."

Verily, guerilla warfare in the Maori bush was no work for a gentle curate.

The only good Hauhau those days, in the code of the forest fighter, was a dead one.

OLD SAILORS AND THEIR TONGUE

"Leech-oh" discusses a point of nautical lingo.

"Fo'c's'l!" is almost universally used now, both writing and speaking, as the term for the sailors' parlour, as Merchant Jack styles his cramped quarters in the eyes of the ship. But a grand old sailorman friend of mine, who commanded a Blackball frigate built ship trading between London and the colonies in the palmy days of sail — that was well-nigh 60 years ago — invariably pronounces it "forecastle."

Moreover, he gently corrected me once for using the common expression "stu'n's'ls," maintaining that no true sailorman should pronounce it otherwise than "studding-sails."

He is right, of course, but life is scarcely long enough to give everything its correct and full value in pronunciation. This veteran of the sea was in command in the famous line of Money Wigram's ships, in which everything was carried out as nearly as possible on Royal Navy lines.

Mr Money Wigram would not allow sailors' chanteys to be sung in working ship — tars were over-free in their poetic diction, and passengers' feelings had to be considered — and all the jobs of weighing anchor, hoisting sail and so on, were done to the music of a fiddle, old navy fashion.

A fiddler, as many pioneer New Zealand colonists will recollect, was a regular member of a ship's crew in many of the Blackball ships in the Sixties.

By the way, my punctilious old captain, who has been on his little farm up Auckland way for many a year, is only one of many sailors who have made first-rate farmers.

A sea-trained man is always adaptable; he quickly learns to turn his hand to anything. Not long ago I spent a very pleasant few hours with a jolly ex-seafarer who was comfortably fixed in life, as the owner of a couple of hundred acres of £60-an-acre land on the alluvial flats of Opotiki. He comes of a famous north of England ship-building firm who in their day built some splendid fliers of the sea, and he served his time as apprentice in a China tea-clipper of the Fifties.

He might have been a shipping magnate with a corporation and a title today had not New Zealand taken his fancy when he landed at Auckland in the Seventies, and he found true happiness and contentment when he dropped anchor among the peach-groves on the Opotiki plain.

PIGS IN WATER

"Kaukau": What about that legend that a pig cuts its throat if it attempts to swim? Four of us were working our way up the Mokau river one day — two pakehas and two Maori, in a canoe — when we surprised a brace of porkers in the water just as we rounded a sharp bend.

Our pig-dog in the bows got fearfully excited but he balked at taking to the water in chase.

The leading swimmer crossing the river was a big tusked boar. When he landed there didn't seem to be much wrong with his throat. Immediately he scrambled up the bank he turned and champed defiance at us, covering the landing of his faithful missus who had wallowed along in his wake. He waited until the sow had scuttled into the safety of the bush, then with a parting grunt and glare at us he followed her, a belligerent rearward.

The Mokau too was about fifty yards wide and fairly swift, but the chivalrous old hog and his partner in fernroot-hunting seemed to have no difficulty in Annette Kellermaning it.

THE TIMBER HARVEST

"Orakau" writes: Nearly 50 years ago my father, a pioneer of a settlement on the Waikato frontier, got some eucalyptus and pinus insignia seed up from Auckland and sowed broadcast some acres of a steep hillside close to the homestead.

The idea was to provide a good breakwind and maybe a supply of small stuff for farm use when the native bush on the farm was cut out.

The plantation prospered, and last time I passed the old home a few months ago I saw a portable sawmill at work in the big grove of bluegums and pines — chiefly pines.

The pinus insignia were all over 100ft high, and some had a diameter of 4ft at the butt; each tree on the average would contain about £30 worth of timber.

Strangers owned the place, and someone also was reaping with the saw where my father had sowed a half-century before. It was a good old Scottish adage that Mr Walter Scott — wasn't it? — put into the mouth of one of his characters, "Aye be stickin' in a tree."

But lucky, or long-lived, is he who survives to gather the harvest thereof.

PICKING THE DOUBLE

"Bluegum": Hone Tikerā has a trick of neat epigrams now and again. When he heard that a pakeha acquaintance of his, a Government inspector of noxious weeds, had won a big sum by backing the double at the Christchurch Cup meeting, his admiration was vast and eloquent.

"Py Korry," he declared, "Hemi's te clever fellow — he's te poy to pick te bad weed an' to good racehorses!"

The Chronicles of the Forty Teeth According to the Pay Books of the Profits to the Members Thereof

*Reprinted from "Black Watch," journal of the
42nd N.Z. Reinforcements*

1—And a great stir arose in the land, for the word of Bil the Masseyite had gone forth saying: Bring unto me all men who have less than one child that I may raise me a mighty host wherewith to deliver my people from the bondage of my unclean neighbour, Bil the Hun.

2—And Jimalan, hearing these things, said unto Bil the Masseyite: Where have I defaulted? Have I not supplied you with a great army? Where are men more valiant than the young men I have given you, and where men who can whitewash like the men of C1? Have not my trusted servants, Gib, the son of Agun, and Bumper, which means righteous, worked mightily that the ways of Bil the Hun may be confounded? Have I not sent many Redfeds unto Jugg; yea, even to plant trees.

3—But Bil the Masseyite waxed exceeding sorrowful and answered saying: Many of the young men you have given me are slain and many wounded, and even those who remain are weary and cry out for their kindred to come and assist them; therefore it is meet that we send forth word unto the forty teeth that the tribe may foregather and smack the wily Hun to leg, yea, even unto 150 not out.

4—And it came to pass that the men of the forty teeth journeyed unto Trent Ham, a place of forbidding appearance, where dwelt the tribe of the Bigpots. And in the multitude which assembled were men from the wet places who were exceeding joyful and also men from the dry places who carried corkscrews.

5—And the men of the forty teeth seeing the city of Trent Ham, said among themselves: There shall we make ourselves a home until Bil the Masseyite requires us. But the tribe of the Bigpots spake unto them, saying: Behold you are unclean; you have measles and meginiss among you and may bring a plague upon the city. Go you forth unto Hairy Tango unto the tents which we have erected for you. So the men of the forty teeth went and took up their abode in the tents.

6—And it came to pass in the days which followed the tribe suffered great trials and tribulations, for the heavens opened and the rain descended upon the earth until no dry spot remained in the tents, yea, even were the institutions of the padres blown down until the

murmurings of the men and the language of the padres reached unto the ears of the Bigpots.

7—And there came to Hairy Tango a man called Potter who was chief of the Bigpots, and he spake unto the tribe saying, Go as many as can unto the butts and them that remain shall double-bank their tents with those which you have left. And the tribe arose and did this saying, Blessed be the name of Potter for he uses his nut.

8—And it came to pass that the tribe visited the Gumdiggers, which means Toothcarpenters, who ill-treated them, after the manner of their kind and lacerated their mouths until they cared not to eat the stew of Bil the Masseyite and were compelled to subsist on much sloppy stuff which the cooks in their wrath supplied. And the names of the Gumdiggers and the cooks became sour in the mouths of men, for it is said they brought much affliction upon us.

9—And certain of the High Priests of Trent Ham, who were called quacks, fell upon them and forced sticks into the throats of the forty teeth that they may discover those who were possessed of devils. And behold many were possessed of devils and were cast into Iso Layshun which is nigh unto Hairy Tango, and the Chronicles of the forty teeth knew them no more.

10—And it came to pass that a man of Trent Ham, who was called Taila, spake unto the forty teeth exhorting them to be steadfast in their resolve to put the kibosch on Bil the Hun and to live honourably among themselves. And the tribe arose and said, This man is one of us for he is a Hardoah.

11—And behold another who was called J.M., which means Jeremiah, lamented unto them, saying, Take heed that ye touch not the electric light globes for verily you may be burned. But the tribe were not moved by his lamentations, and said among themselves, This is all piffle and Bullswool.

12—And it came to pass in the days which followed that the tribe journeyed afar even unto Ahellufa Place, which was also called Tarrynee Kow, wherein dwelt one of the tribe of Bigpots who was named Major, which means Jonwilly.

13—And Jonwilly, seeing the forty teeth from afar off near unto the Tinhut, rode to meet them, saying, Know you there is by one Discipline and Jonwilly is his profit. Wish ye that consternation be struck into the heart of Bil the Hun, then take heed of my commandments.

14—I am the boss dog and King pin and have brought thee out of the land of Trent Ham, out of the land of sandflies and lightning.

15—Thous shalt have no other bosses before me.

16—Thous shalt not make before thy tents images the likeness of anything on the earth or in the waters under the earth.

17—Thous shalt not bow down thyself before the Medical Officers and swing the lead,

for I the boss dog will visit such iniquity with many days C.B., even unto 28 days.

18—Thou shalt not take my name in vain nor the name of any of the officers in vain.

19—Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but on the seventh day thou shalt wash thy clothes and have thy kit inspected, and also shalt thou have many inspection parades, and whitewash stones as far as the eye can reach.

20—Honour me seven days a week and at smoko. Jump when I say jump, and when I say "In fours about turn," about turn like soldiers, so they drilling may be short and thy fatigues shorter.

21—Thous shalt kill all Huns, and those you cannot kill they shall ye maim.

22—Thou shalt not adulterate the section's rum.

23—Neither shalt thou steal out of camp or break bounds, for if thou be caught ye shall surely die or some less penalty as in this act mentioned.

24—Thou shalt not mislead the C.O. at orderly room, for if ye do and be caught then your appeals to me shall be in vain, and more so, for I can but increase the penalty, and woe shall be thy portion day and night.

25—Thou shalt not covet thy comrade's palliasse. Remember each straw thereof is numbered. Neither shalt thou pinch his boots or clean his rifle, for both are double dealing and in adversity shall ye return his boots and clean your own rifle. Remember ye cannot covet his ox or his ass, since he does the work of both and so is akin.

26—And it came to pass after many days that the tribe became fed-up, so that even the Bigpots said among themselves, It is meant that we send the tribe back unto the place from which they came, that they may again see the wives and damsels of their hearts, for verily it is written the quacks of Tarrynee Kow are of no avail.

27—And the forty teeth journeyed back unto Trent Ham and took up their abode in the huts.

28—And the tribe of the Bigpots spake unto them saying, Behold we give you leave, which means final even unto 10 days.

29—But the forty teeth waxed exceedingly angry, saying among themselves, How dammean are the tribe of the Bigpots. Let us arise before them and make riotous demonstration that they be manifested as the dizzy limit.

30—And a great multitude assembled before the house of Luckam, crying aloud, Give us the leave which is 14 days that thy days may be long in the job which Jimalan has given thee.

31—And Luckam, hearing these things was more afraid, and answered unto the multitude saying, Behold I the dispenser of the squaredeal will give you leave of 14 days.

32—And the multitude were exceedingly joyful, but certain of the forty teeth who were soldiers said among themselves, This is a ragtime outfit, which means uptoputt.

33—Then the forty teeth journeyed back unto their own lands and after 14 days many returned to Trent Ham.

34—But behold there were some who swung the lead and many who missed the bus.

35—And after many days when all were again at Trent Ham the word of Bil the Masseyte came unto them saying, The time has arrived for you to go and smite their enemies. So the tribe of the forty teeth journeyed unto a far land, and the place of their fathers knew them no more.

SMOKE UP LARGE FELLOWS— SO THE WIFE GETS A PENSION!

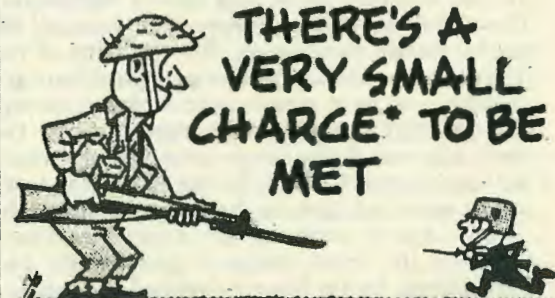
A woman whose husband started smoking during WW2 and died 30 years later of lung cancer, has won the right to a war widow's pension.

She said her husband's smoking was attributable to his war service and smoking had caused his cancer.

Because of her victory, thousands of widows are likely to benefit.

The decision giving her a pension was handed down by the Federal Court in Sydney. The three judges agreed unanimously that the war widow's pension was due to Mrs Nancy Law, of Perth.

They said that the onus was not on the widow to prove her claim beyond reasonable doubt — it was up to the Repatriation Commission to prove beyond reasonable doubt that she had no claim.



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A DAY AFLOAT

*Reprinted from "Black Watch," the journal of
the 42nd N.Z. Reinforcements.*

Ta t-a-a- ta t-a-a-a-; Ta t-a-a ta t-a-a-a!

To the accompaniment of a slight swell interspersed with a gentle and warm breeze, life aboard HMNZT No. 109 is awakened once more by the somewhat groggy notes of "Reveille" played by the one and only bugler, Hooker. In spite of the extra half-hour or so allowed by reason of our going west (geographically speaking) this summons is not accepted everywhere with the spirit and fortitude which have been instilled into us. Fore and aft where the men "doss," "Reveille" has but little meaning as, owing to the awful stuffiness and/or smelliness of their respective dormitories, they are up on deck long before the awakening notes are sounded.

A hurried wash is only just accomplished when the bugle sounds the "warning for parade," and 10 minutes after that, "fall in" for roll-call goes. While the platoon sergeants are bawling "Smith, Jones, Robinson," etc., the mess orderlies — who are exempt from all drill parades — are away aft securing their respective companies' breakfasts.

The cooking, serving and general routine of the ship's cookhouse is a work of art and a masterpiece of organisation on the part of the

hard-looking cooks and their willing assistants, who smile and swelter simultaneously in their torrid caboose. Why is it, may be rightly asked, that at Trentham, with fresh meat, vegetables direct from the garden, excellent water, up-to-date ovens and cookhouses, etc., at the disposal of the cooks, the men were forced to put up with such ill-cooked and badly served food, while on a ship such as this, with no conveniences at all to speak of, the food is better cooked, served more punctually and in a much more appetising condition? Echo answers why?

Breakfast of either chops, steak, or stew being over, shaving and a general titivation for the 9am parade is the next thing to consider. Neglecting to shave for this parade is almost on a par with the crime of embezzlement in civil life, and woe betide the unfortunate private who neglects this daily prune.

First his sergeant will look upon his dial in a most disconcerting manner, making remarks the while to the effect that if he has no razor "to push 'em in and bite 'em off inside," "wonder the rifle doesn't get tangled up with them," and various other acidic suggestions.

Then the sergeant-major appears, followed by the O.C., who "hits the roof" and lectures on and on until the culprit is convinced that suicide is the only thing left for him to do.

Deck space being somewhat limited aboard, drill has necessarily to be adapted accordingly. To keep the men employed and amused is the aim of the powers that be, and the officers and

NCOs are kept busy in devising ways and means to this end.

Work, interspersed with fun, is the order of the day until smoko at 10.15am. One platoon takes the rifles and, under the able guidance of its sergeant, indulges in a mixture of "standing load," "on guard," "secure arms" and the shattering of imaginary periscopes with more or less success.

Meanwhile, the balance of the company is either being shaken out of its coma by the physical sergeant or each individual man is waving his arms about in a most weird fashion, which is termed "doing a semaphore stunt."

Games aboard ship are various and always humorous. In one corner may be seen two perspiring privates endeavouring indelibly to mark each other's countenance per medium of the gloves, each hampered in his object, however, by the eccentric motions of the ship and the fact that their feet and legs are encased in common or garden potato sacks.

"Whip to the gap" is in full swing elsewhere, the unsuspecting soldier being awakened by a resounding smack on his nether regions which tells him in a most touching manner, and as if spoken in so many words, that more will follow unless he skips around the ring in double time.

It is to be wondered what "wifie" would think if she saw her sluggish "hubby" playing ye goode olde Sunday school bun rush games with a vim equalled only by his antipathy to chopping the wood in pre-war days.

Dinner of good roast beef and plenty is followed by an hour's rest. "Fall in" not sounding until 2pm. The same routine as in the morning follows, with the exception of, perhaps, more amusement in the shape of potato sack, wheelbarrow and relay races until eight bells (4pm), when work ceases for the day.

At this hour, however, the fire bell usually rings, followed immediately by the "alarm." This is a signal for donning lifebelts and standing by on the respective parade decks to await orders.

The good effect of these "false" alarms can readily be seen by the rapidity with which everyone aboard, from the Master downwards, arrives at his particular post.

Tea is followed by a regular go-as-you-please feeling. The weather being good, everyone congregates on the boat-deck and indulges in such sport and pastimes as his fancy dictates.

Boxing, ring and deck quoits, reading, rough and tumble, punch-ball and skipping supervene until nightfall, when music (sic) in all its branches holds sway.

Accordions, gazooks, Sally Brown bands and choruses serve to soothe (or otherwise) the savage breasts above decks, while below a first-class orchestra and some fine vocalists while away many a pleasant hour.

Gambling (in toto) being forbidden, the Knights of the "Crown and Anchor," "Spiel-

board," etc., are conspicuous by their absence.

This edict does not interfere with card-playing, and many are the exciting finishes experienced by the devotees of the various games.


"Lights-out" blows at 9.45pm, but at this time almost everyone is well asleep, the soldier turning into his hammock fairly early and echoing to himself as he loses consciousness in sleep. "Another day nearer the bally war and to our eventual return to 'God's Own Country'."

A day afloat is too mixed up with different happenings ever to verge on the monotonous. Kit inspections; chest and other medical inspections, bath parades, C.B. parades, dental appointments, etc., etc., all serve to keep a man employed and healthy.

This, combined with the splendid spirit displayed by the officers, NCOs and men towards each other and the general good fellowship pervading everything and everybody, serves to make one half-wonder if life on a transport is as dull and irksome as it is usually painted.

FOR SALE

One Ford car with a piston ring,
Two rear wheels, one front spring,
Has no fenders, seat or plank,
Burns much gas and hard to crank.
Carburettors busted half-way through,
Engines missing, hits on two,
Three years old, four in the spring,
Shock absorbers 'n' everything.
Radiator's busted, sure does leak,
Differential's dry, can hear it squeak,
Ten spokes missing, front all bent,
Tires blown out, 'taint worth a cent.
Gets lots of speed, runs like the deuce,
Burns either gas or tobacco juice,
Tires all off been run on the rim,
But it's a damn good Ford for the shape it's in.

DRINK AND ENJOY 

*"Drink because you are happy,
Never because you are miserable."*

G. K. Chesterton.



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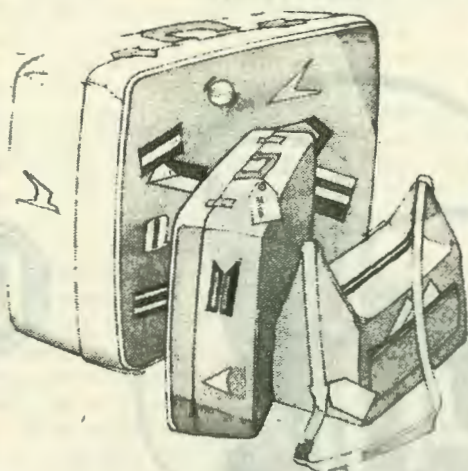
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Nautical Terms Explained

Master: Known also as The Old Man or the Skipper — Seen usually at 11am looking for microbes with the aid of an electric torch. His main use is as an advertisement for sardines.

First Mate: Great clobber of Old Man. Keeps one eye on the bosun and the other on the deck. Boxes the compass but the compass usually wins on points.

Second Mate: So called to distinguish him from the first mate. Although sometimes referred to by his friends as an unclean bow-wow, has never been known to growl on the dog watch.

Third Mate: Assists second mate. The rumour that he is the grandson of the Old Man is incorrect.

Extra Third Mate: Holds a position equivalent to that of lance-corporal in the army, but draws extra pay.

Bosun: A holystone terror. Entirely responsible for the cleanliness, discipline and moral tone of the ship. Suffers from insomnia in consequence. Assists ship's orderly corporal in the discharge of his duties.

Bosun's Mate or Bosun's Batman: His duties are to shine the bosun's gumboots, clean his buttons and dress him for dinner.

Carpenter: Known as "Chips." He chops the cook's morning wood. Can replace anything from a bathplug to a spare beam.

Chief Engineer: Known as the civilised engineer. Dines with the combatant officers. Very Scotch. Makes his screw go a long way.

Second Engineer: Of revolutionary tendencies.

Third Engineer: The trimmers' delight. Enlivens their dreary existence by telling funny yarns intermingled with classical selections on the violin.

Fourth Engineer: Responsible for oiling the works.

Greaser: The man who oils the works.

Fireman: A futurist. A man who calls a spade a shovel; also a poker expert.

Purser: Not carried, as nothing valuable on board.

A.B.: Stands for "Ask the Bosun" or "Abaft the Binnacle."

O.S.: Orderly Seaman. Does any little jobs overlooked by the fatigue parties.

★ SUPPORT THE ADVERTISERS ★

Chief Steward: Responsible for the manufacture of the stew.

Stewards: Convey the stew to the officers.

Porthole: Has position but no magnitude; originally designed for ventilation; now only used when not required.

Dormitory: A place designed to prevent sleep.

Saloon: Where the police sleep.

—Reprinted from "Black Watch," the journal of the 42nd N.Z. Reinforcements, on HMNZT 109, T.S.S. Tofua.



LUNCH AT THE RSA — 12 to 1.30

* * *

A man accompanied by a young boy walked into the hairdressers. The man took the chair first and when he had been trimmed he placed the boy in the chair, saying to the barber "I'll just slip next door to the TAB while you cut the lad's hair."

Completing the boy's haircut the barber told him "to sit over on the stool till your father comes back."

"Oh, he isn't my dad," said the boy. "I met him down the road and he asked me if I would like a free haircut."

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crossword puzzle 24

ACROSS

1. Social insect
4. Whole amount
7. Paid athlete
10. Precious
12. Fragrant flowers
14. Sluggish
15. Challenge
16. Wide-awake
17. Domesticate
18. Love apple
20. Tomboy
22. Native mineral
23. Extreme danger
24. Cast a ballot
26. Boy
27. Cease

30. Mature

31. Cake of soap
32. Tried
34. Consumed
35. City in Illinois
37. Steeped beverage
38. Excuse
40. Weep
41. Lacy plant
42. Den
43. Burst
44. Affectations
45. Compete
47. Auction offer
48. Arrange beforehand
50. Hawk wares
53. Cravats
54. Market

56. Dwell

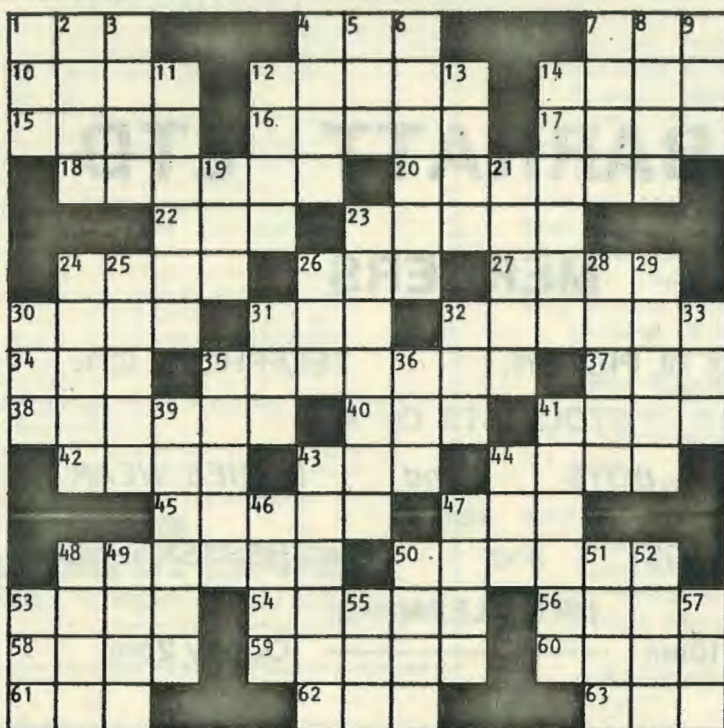
58. Dismounted
59. Man's singing voice
60. City in Pennsylvania
61. Fellows
62. Bright color
63. Wholly

9. Be indebted to

11. Far away
12. Price per unit
13. Asterisk
14. Long, thin legs
19. Exist
21. Penny pincher
23. Sunshade umbrella
24. Full of life
25. Musical drama
26. Varnish ingredient
28. Aquatic animal
29. Equals
30. Sharp knock
31. Mr. Franklin
32. Vat
33. Actor Dailey
35. Actress Day
36. Summit
39. Most dismal
41. Violin
43. Specialized lingo
44. Assist
46. Waistcoat
47. Malt beverage
48. Heap
49. Bridle strap
50. Poke
51. Italian coin
52. Wicked
53. Scotch cap
55. Single item
57. Elongate fish

DOWN

1. Append
2. Tidy
3. Source of poi
4. Song for one
5. Employ
6. Blended
7. Blueprint
8. Capital of Italy



(Answer on Page 36)

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WAR NEWS!

Reprinted from "Black Watch," journal of the 42nd N.Z. Reinforcements.

Special news items which have been compiled by our special correspondent from the daily news files of the world.

ROME:

The Italians have captured 35,000 prisoners.

PARIS:

Sir Joseph Massey and Mr William Ward visited the trenches yesterday and inspected the Army Pay Corps. Later, the freedom of the city of Flers was conferred on them.

ROME:

The prisoners captured by the Italians total 3500.

ROME:

There is great submarine activity along the Alaskan coast.

PITCAIRN ISLAND:

Rumours are afloat that a war is in progress. The rumour is unconfirmed.

ROME:

The Italians have captured 350 prisoners.

TAUHERENIKAU:

Major J. W. Brunt has been appointed roading engineer to the Wellington City Council.

FEATHERSTON:

A Board of Enquiry has been convened to ascertain how Private J. Smith became deficient in his kit to the extent of one knife, one oil-bottle and one toothbrush.

ROME:

The Italians have captured 35 prisoners. This figure is confirmed and cancels all previous figures given.

BERLIN:

During the past week we brought down 1376 enemy aeroplanes.

WELLINGTON:

Mr J. W. Brunt has resigned from the position of roading engineer owing to a disagreement with the council on a proposal that all kerbstones be painted white.

TRENTHAM:

Of the first draft of C1 men passed through, 50% are ready to proceed for service abroad. Unfortunately the other man is in hospital with measles.

GET YOUR CROSSFIRE REGULARLY!

For just \$2 you can have Crossfire posted to any address in New Zealand.

Have you an old RSA cobbler who has moved to another town?

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See the Secretary/ Manager if you would like to take advantage of this postal service.

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Magistrate: And what brought you here?—

Paddy: Two policemen sir.

Magistrate: Drunk, I suppose?

Paddy: Begorrah they were sir, both of them!

Magistrate: One month or \$100.

Paddy: Thank you kindly sir. I'll take the money.

Jones was busy wielding a paint brush when a neighbour called by.

"Is your wife home, Mr Jones?"

"My dear madam," replied Jones, "do you imagine for one moment that I would be doing this if she wasn't?"

Tailor to customer having suit made up.
"Now sir, the hip pocket. Pint or half-pint?"

Doctor: "Remember, if you give your husband anything but water to drink you'll kill him."

"Oh doctor, if I give him water he'll kill me."

Arriving at a town on the West Coast the American tourist asked the stationmaster where he could get a drink.

"See that building?" asked the stationmaster pointing to a rather new looking structure.

"Yes," said the tourist, "what is it?"

"That's the church."

"Surely I can't get a drink at the church?" said the tourist.

"That's the only place in-town that you can't get one," said the stationmaster.

LUNCH AT THE RSA — 12 to 1.30

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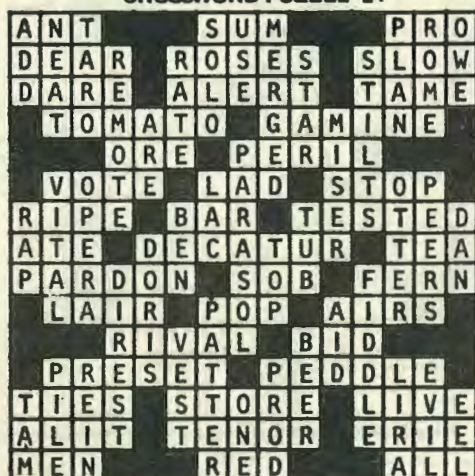
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