

Loophole



OFFICIAL NEWS BULLETIN
of the
MARLBOROUGH RETURNED SERVICES ASSN

Vol. 4, No. 1 December 1956

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PRESIDENTIAL

The recent flare-up of the trouble in the Middle East must have claimed the thoughts of a large number of our members. Many will agree that while the nations comprising the United Nations organisation do not all subscribe to and recognise the same ethics of thought and behaviour, it is necessary, unfortunately, finally to have recourse to the use of force in settling disputes. In so far as the United Kingdom and France, by their action in the Middle East have made it abundantly clear to the United Nations that an International Force is essential to fortify and implement its decisions, I am certain we will all consider they have made an inestimable contribution to the cause of World Peace.

It is of course regrettable that some casualties have resulted from their action, but how many more casualties would have been caused if Israel and Egypt and probably other Arab States had carried on fighting while the United Nations continued to pass denouncing resolutions. I am sure that the United Kingdom and France will be only too pleased to hand over their self-imposed task to an International Force as soon as the United Nations is able to organise one.

Descending perhaps a little abruptly from international to local spheres, I would remind you that, with this issue, Loophole begins its fourth year. Our worthy Editor is still providing the bulk of its contents so please make a point this year of helping him with some contribution. It is hardly enough to suggest that he write up a certain topic. If you think of one, have a go at it yourself and argue with him any variations suggested.

Since our last issue the N.Z.R.S.A. has awarded its Gold Star Badge and Certificate of Merit to our District Vice-President, Lance Waters, for outstanding services given. It is unnecessary for me here to elaborate on these services since they will be known to so many in all associations throughout Marlborough, Nelson and the West Coast and further afield. I am sure you will all join with me in offering Lance our warmest congratulations.

Suitable types of buildings for our new clubhouse are being investigated by your Executive. We had hoped to have received full information and estimates of cost from one firm last month but, unfortunately, delays occurred. We expect, however, to have something concrete to consider this month.

The Indoor Bowling and Miniature Rifle Clubs have completed successful seasons and the Outdoor Bowling Club has commenced a new season. Its opening day was cut short by rain unfortunately, but members were able for the odd hour to test their capacities to recover form and all were pleased with the state of the green for which credit must be given to those volunteers who put in some solid work during the winter and early spring.

Several functions in recent months were organised by your Social Committee to enable local members to become more fully acquainted with members of Sub-Branches. These functions were well attended by the members of some of the Sub-Branches but the support from local members was disappointing. If further functions of this nature are held

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next year it is hoped that local members particularly will attend in greater numbers and ensure their success.

May I take this opportunity of offering to the Staff and all members of the Association on behalf of your Executive Committee our very best wishes for Christmas and the coming year.

J. A. BELL, President.

MEMBERSHIP 6/11/56

	Financial	Unfinancial	Total
AWATERE	63	12	75
EAST COAST	20	4	24
FLAXBOURNE	24	8	32
HAVELOCK	48	10	58
KAIKOURA	121	81	202
PICTON	154	53	207
RAI VALLEY	18	20	38
RENWICKTOWN	41	23	64
SOUNDS	26	4	30
<hr/>			
BRANCHES	515	215	730
BLenheim	995	272	1267
S.A. VETERANS	31		31
LIFE	22		22
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	1563	487	2050

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NEW MEMBERS

A welcome to our ranks is extended to the following new members who have joined during the past three months. They are:—

11781 V. C. Pawley; N.Z.405799 L. H. Bunt; 25835 W. H. Chester; 32597 P. Smith; 208503 T. N. King. Transfers in: 72455 P. R. Lyons; 427569 O. M. Haldane; 452891 L. Thompson; 468904 B. A. S. Reade; N.559166 C. B. Martin; 467117 D. D. Aldridge; 8750 J. A. Watt; 39305 E. Subritzky; 434527 A. M. Page.

CASSINO

When Jim Furness left for his overseas jaunt round the world he carried an introduction from Marlborough R.S.A. to Major Harston, Secretary of the British Empire Service League. We have received the following reply from the Major:

"Thank you for your letter of 21st Sept. introducing Capt. Furness. I was simply delighted to meet him and we had a most amusing time together endeavouring to see the whole of London in an hour, and believe me we didn't do too badly. I met both the N.Z.R.S.A. representatives at Cassino and we led one column in the wreath laying. It was a great experience for them seeing again the battlefield which had in the meantime become more or less unrecognisable owing to rebuilding. I heard more than one General, clutching hold of another one, asking him to help decide where it was they had been. It was a most beautiful and moving service, but Furness will describe it to you better than I can, though I will have a shot at it in the next number of the magazine, and send you out a copy. You say that you hope we may be able to do something to make Furness's visit to Headquarters a happy memory

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for him. Let me assure you that he made a happy memory for us. Yours very sincerely, Ernest Harston."

And now here is Jim's story :

My mission to Cassino at the end of September with Lieut.-Col. Jim Henare, D.S.O., as the two representatives of the New Zealand R.S.A., to attend the unveiling of the war memorial there was an experience I will never forget. There, under the shadow of the 1700ft peak of Monte Cassino on which is located the rebuilt Benedictine Monastery, is a memorial and last resting place of some 8000 gallant men who gave their lives in the bitter struggle to open the way to Rome and beyond.

Chiselled out of the face of 12 marble pillars, each 15ft high, are the names of 4000 Commonwealth war dead of the Italian campaign who have no known graves. In a garden of remembrance, of which the memorial is part, are a further 4300 simple white headstones marking the graves of those who died in the battle for Cassino.

That New Zealanders paid heavily in the struggle against such a stubborn foe who had all the advantages of defensive terrain on his side, is indicated by the fact that there are 476 white crosses bearing names of men of this Dominion. A further 55 names of New Zealanders appear on one of the marble pillars.

The cemetery lies just across the Rapido River from the Railway Station and Hummocks area. Established at a cost of £65,000, it is a worthy memorial to those who paid the supreme sacrifice. The graves are well-kept, with flowers and shrubs in abundance along every row of headstones. Apart from the work of the War Graves Commission staff in maintaining the cemetery, the Italians frequently visit the cemetery and place fresh flowers on the graves.

Cassino was well chosen for the memorial. More than 4000 men of Britain and the Commonwealth who fell in the liberation of Italy, from Sicily to the Alps, have no known graves; now they have been symbolically gathered to rest at a spot that proved the valour of their comrades in one of the decisive battles of the whole campaign. It was there that in 1944 three successive battles, each fiercer than the last, were fought to open the way to Rome. Cassino was also a key to final victory; for the twin thrusts there and at Anzio pinned down German divisions which might have helped to defend "Fortress Europe" against imminent invasion.

When it was first suggested that I be nominated by the Marlborough R.S.A. as one of the two representatives of the N.Z.R.S.A. for the trip to Cassino, I was enthusiastic and keen, but as the days passed and I had time to meditate on the hellish battle that raged in the once peaceful town of Cassino 12 years ago, bringing back cruel memories, I became afraid, and genuinely hoped that I would not be selected. However, I then realised that a great honour had been conferred on me, and I was proud to have the opportunity of representing the many hundreds of ex-servicemen who would

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have liked to visit the graves of their comrades who gave their lives in one of the most costly and tragic battles of the war.

Jim Henare, who commanded the Maori Battalion over the closing stages of the war, was a great companion, both while travelling and when at Cassino. He had been with the Battalion from the start to the finish of the war, and had risen from the ranks to be its commander.

We both had something in common—Jim had stormed the Cassino Railway Station and Hummocks area along the railway line from behind Mt. Trocchio in February, 1944. I had been in a similar attack with armour and infantry a month later. We wanted to have a look at close quarters over our old "stamping ground." However, we were denied this, as time would not permit a visit into the town on the day of the unveiling of the memorial.

We left Rome in a convoy of buses at 7.30 a.m. on Sunday, September 30, and arrived at the memorial, which is to the west of the town, soon after 10.30. We both wanted to take photographs of graves, and these took some time to locate. By this time there were several thousand people at the memorial and cemetery, and it was difficult to secure information about certain graves. At 11.30 we had to take up our position—we were very close to the microphone through which Field-Marshal Lord Alexander of Tunis, was to speak when unveiling the memorial.

Split second timing had to be maintained to ensure that everything ran smoothly. A rehearsal with "stand-ins" had been held on the day of our arrival in Italy, and the authorities were determined to see that the actual ceremony was conducted as set out. As soon as the memorial was unveiled we were asked to join our buses for a trip to the Monastery on top of Monte Cassino for lunch. It was then 2.30 p.m. An hour later we were on our way back to Rome, very disappointed at not being able to enter the town and see at close hand the lay-out of re-built Cassino or to walk the ground we had fought over so bitterly inch by inch 12 years previously.

After the official wreaths had been placed by Lord Alexander, followed

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by Lord Freyberg representing the New Zealand Government, and others, representatives of ex-servicemen's organisations stepped forward to place their wreaths. We were pleased with the position that had been allocated us as representatives of New Zealand ex-servicemen. We followed directly behind Major E. S. Harston, secretary of the British Empire Service League. Then came General Wimberley, leader of the 51st Highland Division, and a number of others. When the ceremony was over the families of the dead men began walking through the cemetery seeking a particular grave or a particular name on a marble pillar. It was a touching scene—mothers and fathers walking hand in hand to kiss the white cross marking the last resting place of their dear ones. Then, in the evening light, the families departed. And over this, one of the most savage battlefields in the history of the war, there fell a profound peace.

On the night before the pilgrimage to Cassino Jim Henare and I were among about 200 guests at a reception held at the British Embassy at Rome. There we were introduced to Lord Alexander and Lady Alexander, to other famous war-time generals, such as Templer, Lesse, McCreery, Crocker, Auchinleck, Horrocks, and Anders, who led the Polish Army with such distinction. We also met our Divisional Commander, Lord Freyberg, and Lady Freyberg. The latter was as bright and vivacious as ever, and still referred to "My General" when speaking about her famous husband. To me Lord Freyberg gave the impression of a spent man. It seemed that at last the terrific strain of war was catching up on him. He was delighted to see us; and so were the other generals. Without exception they expressed pleasure that New Zealand was to be represented at the unveiling ceremony.

In Rome Jim Henare took me to several of his old "haunts." The first



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was the former N.Z. Club, the fashionable Quirinale Hotel on Via Nazionale. Opposite is a basement restaurant well-known to New Zealanders. When we visited this Jim found a member of the staff who was there during the war. Now he is the proprietor. He remembered the New Zealanders and he gave us a good time—but we had to pay heavily for the lavish fare he dished up for us.

On September 3 Jim Henare left for New Zealand and I went in the opposite direction—towards London and beyond, to complete a round trip of 28,000 miles in 28 days.

LAST POST

*Behind is life and its longing,
Its trial, its trouble, its sorrow;
Beyond is the Infinite Morning,
Of a day without a tomorrow.*

Since our last issue of Loophole, the following returned men have answered the Last Roll Call. Our sympathy is extended to those who are left behind.

2/2929 R. J. A. Whitehead; 6/335 L. Register; 43233 W. Pohorama; 38284 J. N. Herd; 7/1128 G. Purches; 74598 A. H. Sim.

BUILDING FUND

Further contributions and promises have been received from:—

Hort Foley, E. Laskey, A. F. Norgrove, F. V. Langdon, J. A. Thompson, F. S. Ball.

STAFF

We got Nola safely married and launched on her honeymoon on 20th October. About 100 guests attended what I would say was one of the nicest weddings that one could wish to attend.

And now we have Norma to help us in the office.

Those who are unfinancial should

hurry along to make her acquaintance and also to see how neatly she can write a receipt for 12/6.

We welcome Miss Norma Kerr to our staff.

ALAMEIN REUNION R.S.A. CLUB

There was a good muster at the Club Rooms for the reunion, and a pleasant evening was spent nattering about old times and friends. During the evening a discussion was held about future gatherings and it was decided to try to contact anyone who was interested in same. Any man who was with the "Div" when it went back to the Desert from Syria until the "break through" (L.R.D.G. and Air Force included) is invited.

At 10 p.m. a few moments silence was observed for our cobbers who had passed on. A list of those, who members present thought were in this campaign, was completed.

A very enjoyable supper supplied by Mrs Shannon, brought a very pleasant evening to a close. The committee thank, most sincerely, those who helped in any way with the evening.

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YOUR GARDEN

The secretary tells me that these notes should cover work in the horticultural field from December to February. That's an awfully long time when much can go wrong, but it's also the time when the gardener who has worked assiduously from spring on, reaps much of the reward for his effort. However, to business:

Apples: The codlin moth will get you if you don't watch out. If you read Loophole when you should, i.e., the day you receive it you will read these notes about the period when the codlin is most active. A spray of arsenate of lead or D.D.T. now and repeated at fortnightly intervals until late January should give you much cleaner fruit. Incorporate Lime Sulphur with the spray at a fluid ounce to the gallon of water and you'll reduce fungus diseases quite a bit. If woolly aphid shows up use Lindane as well.

Peaches: Brown rot will be greatly reduced if you thin your peaches early so that no two peaches touch even when fully grown. You'll still get about the same weight of crop even with fewer peaches on the tree because they'll grow bigger. Spray with Lime Sulphur three weeks before harvest.

Apricots: The setting in most areas hasn't been very good this year and it will pay to save as many as possible. Thinning will help brown rot but there is a relatively new spray called thiram which will check the disease. This material may also be used on other fruit instead of lime sulphur. It's not poisonous but it does cause

slight irritation of the skin of some people.

Vegetables: The not so common spud is worth cherishing this season and in Marlborough the tuber moth caterpillar can do a great deal of damage to both the haulms and the tubers. A couple of sprays with D.D.T. in January and February will help to keep this menace at bay. For the rest of the vegetables Lindane is a good insecticide to use but not within three weeks of harvesting the crop. It has the advantages of killing both caterpillars and aphid whereas D.D.T. and arsenate of lead kill caterpillars only.

EIGHT TO FOUR THIRTY-FIVE.

BOWLING TOURNAMENT

R.S.A. members who are bowlers are now fully acquainted with the conditions of the bowling tournament which will be held at the R.S.A. green, Blenheim, commencing at 9 a.m. on Saturday, 9th February.

The winners of this tournament will represent the R.S.A. at the N.Z. tournament to be held at Palmerston North in March (23rd - 24th). Any ex-serviceman bowler may make up a four with those from any one or more clubs. A stipulation is that all members must be financial members of Marlborough R.S.A., but not necessarily members of the R.S.A. Bowling Club.

Entry fee of 30/- per four must be lodged with the Assn. Secretary, one week before the tournament, i.e., 2nd February.

Make up your four early and enter early.

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VISIT TO SOUNDS SUB-BRANCH

It was a little unfortunate that the Sounds Sub-Branch selected Labour week-end for the date of their postponed meeting as many who may have been able to make the trip on an ordinary week-end, were otherwise occupied.

The trip by M.R.S.A. Executive was necessary to endeavour to carry a stage further a thorough investigation into the economics of farming in the Sounds.

Many of our good members are on rehabilitated land in the Sounds. They are having an uphill battle with tauhinu and reversion. Their freight costs are steep, particularly on fertilisers. It would almost seem economic to load fertiliser on to top-dressing planes in the North Island for dropping on to Sounds farms; but the height at which top-dressing planes would have to fly apparently rules this out.

Freight subsidies could be the answer.

From a national point of view and

taking a long term view, could it be that we may be well advised to allow the Sounds to revert to bush—and so expect reward from world tourist trade?

Federated Farmers are also keenly interested in the overall problem. Their line of reasoning may not conform to ours. They remember that many large families were brought up on Sounds farms. Their ideas of an economic unit are not quite what R.S.A. and Rehab. Dept. expect of an economic farming proposition. They also feel that the S.A.C. are prejudiced against land in the Sounds.

Federated Farmers views, if correctly expressed here, are certainly sound, and are not brushed to one side. It is probable that R.S.A. and Fed. Farmers will come together as one body in an effort to find a solution to this vexing question. It would be impossible to adequately cover the subject in this magazine. We will reserve space in our March issue of Loophole, for individual letters from Sounds farmers whether members of R.S.A. or not, on the future of farming the Sounds.

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NATURE'S TRICKS

Viewing a picture of the bearded woman, my mind travelled over some of the unkind tricks that nature has played on most of us. If you can say that you have escaped scot free from her cock-eyed pranks, you are indeed lucky. Pondering over this subject, I took my lunch-time stroll into the vege garden to see how nature was treating my embryo veges. Never having grown cucumbers from seed before, I was pleasantly surprised to find five healthy seedlings thriving in a seed box. Next day, at lunch time, the cucumbers were the first seedlings I looked at. The count was four. The following day three, and then two. I still have one cucumber plant; but boy, what a wonderful herd of fat slaters. Then again, why does nature send us such vast quantities of rain for seedlings, and so little just when we want unlimited quantities in the hot weather for much larger plants.

But nature was kind to Blenheim gardeners when she devised a means of supplying us with a combined water supply and liquid manure service for our gardens; but she plays her annual practical joke on us by failing to deliver the goods when the need is greatest. In spite of this, we hear of a Govt. Dept. specially designed to prevent erosion. Nature has the laugh on them, and Blenheim residents will surely complain if their liquid manure supply is taken away. My neighbour was delighted with a particular spud he grew last season. With the aid of a small hat and a little chiffon he had a perfect model of a human being, well nigh perfect in all essentials. Was nature laughing at us again, when it departed so far from the normal shape of the humble tater. A book could be written on the fight with nature in the garden, with its pests and vagaries.

What is it in our make-up, that makes us do the ridiculous things we

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at times find ourselves doing, contrary to our staid and supposedly sane way of life. What makes us, just when we wish to be making an impression, come out with some stupid spoonerism, some stupid twist of the tongue or forget the kind of clever remarks we had meant to use in that important speech. A niece of mine was toiling in the back garden one hot summers day, when the parson came through the gate where she was working. "Good afternoon," he said, "Is Jack your brother?" Somewhat taken aback, surprised and perhaps annoyed at being caught a little untidy, she foolishly replied, "No, he's my sister." Then we must tell you about Nola who had been ringing all the committeemen to pass a message to them. She was interrupted by a member who stood at the counter. Nola dropped the receiver and bracing up to the counter, inquired of him, "Are you there?" Is nature smiling at her handiwork when we do these foolish things? What makes us do the foolish things like lighting a match then turning the water tap on

and putting the match in the running water, instead of lighting the gas range.

A friend of mine built a wheelbarrow in his shed. When he had it finished and nicely painted, he found that he had to dismantle it to get it out of the shed. Then there was another chap whose workshop was in his cellar. He made a large picture frame, and when it came to putting in the glass, he discovered that he had made the frame around one of the piles of his house. Both these men were perfectly normal; but nature had her little laugh at their expense.

Why are some people absent-minded like the professor who kissed his bike good-bye and rode his wife to work? When fishing from a wharf with my very young daughter many years ago, she took my knife and hacked old bait from her line. Unthinking, instead of throwing the bait away she hurled the knife into the sea and carefully held the bait. Nature had her laugh when she saw

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THE SERVICEMEN'S CEMETERY

It may not be generally known that a plan of the Omapa Servicemen's Cemetery showing names and regimental numbers over the plots, is framed and hung in the meeting room of the Clubhouse. This has recently been brought up to date. It could be pointed out that this plan cannot be kept up to date, day by day, but by the aid of our members qualified to do such work, it is brought up to date at frequent intervals.

There are 112 graves in the two semi-circular plots with upright headstones. The first "plaque" area containing 85 graves is full and 17 burials have taken place in the second area opposite.

Two further areas, each containing 105 plots, are in the process of being levelled, topdressed and sown down. With the cyprus trees now well established and standard roses well spaced and coming into bloom, the whole area with its well kept lawns, is one in which we take justifiable pride.

WHY?

When living in Greymouth, I had a neighbour whose little son Robin always became intensely interested in everything I thought fit to do about the house or grounds.

Robin wanted an explanation for my every action and when I'd explained what I was doing, Robin's next question was invariably "Why?" As explanation followed Robin's "why" — Robin's "why" followed every explanation. This tended to become somewhat irksome until one day, as I was digging my garden, Robin appeared alongside me and asked his usual — "Why, are you digging?" When I told him "why" I was digging, he promptly asked "why?" I took a discreet look-see, and as no parents of Robin were about, I raised my spade above my head in a menacing attitude and said, "Robin, if you say 'why' to me again, I'll flatten you with this spade."

"Why," said Robin.

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OPEN LETTER

One who has signed himself "Anzac" (Picton) has written to a weekly newspaper supporting another anonymous writer to the same journal, in which they both appear to have a grudge against R.S.A. and National Patriotic Committees for their "attitude to all and sundry who apply for assistance." He suggests that funds should be distributed on a pro rata basis to survivors of W.W.I. His suggestion is, to say the least, somewhat out of step with general welfare policy of helping those who need help—attending to the needs of those in need.

If "Anzac" (Picton) is sincere in his "pro rata" suggestion, he would evenly divide funds for disposal, to all and sundry — millionaires, business magnates, wealthy farmers and war veterans all receiving the same amount. As a war vet. wouldn't he and his pals be pleased? No, Anzac, you're not sincere, you have only used your sob stuff for political propaganda as the remainder of your letter clearly indicates. Get stuck into politics just as hard and fast as you wish; but at least try to prove you are an Anzac by not using R.S.A. and Patriotic to prove a particular political point. Being an Anzac myself, I throw out a challenge to our Picton friend. Let him state publicly or through this journal, firstly, that he is entitled to sign himself "Anzac" by reason of combat service in 1915 on Gallipoli in the Australian or N.Z. Forces, and secondly, that he has been turned down by R.S.A. or Patriotic Committees when he was in need.

Let him do this, and we in turn will publish the reason why he was turned down.

If the Picton correspondent is

really finding existence difficult, is it too much to ask him to make his needs known to Mr Roy Mears, Picton, who, I'm sure, will listen patiently to his troubles and who will endeavour to find a solution to his problems. Remember though, if the horses have been a bit slow lately or if you are not endeavouring to help yourself by being law-abiding and if you are not playing the game of life as it should be played, you would be well advised not to waste Mr Mears's time.

In a previous issue of Loophole, we commented on a similar type of letter, in which the writer said he had to live on 7/6 per week, which of course would only be believed by half-wits.

We are perhaps unwise to take any notice of these and similar types of letters which appear in this particular paper; but these letters do harm to R.S.A. and Patriotic Committees spread throughout the length and breadth of N.Z. Their sole function is to improve the lot of returned men.

In Marlborough, sixteen Welfare Committees, on which over sixty men and women serve, spend a great deal of time investigating and dealing with such cases as Anzac (Picton). They represent the Marlborough Provincial Patriotic Council. Also in Marlborough, ten committees with numerous sub-committees, on which close on 100 returned men serve, are working in the interests of returned men. They represent the R.S.A.

Let's have no nonsense from any Marlborough man. If there is only one, walking round with a "chip on his shoulder," let him come forward manfully and see what can be done. Don't walk round bearing a grudge—it's bad for your health.

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SECRETARY'S NOTEBOOK

It is just a week since the September issue of Loophole was posted to our 2050 returned men, so the time is ripe to commence the preparation of the December issue. With it we celebrate our third birthday, and start our fourth year of publication. As Editor, I have endeavoured to make a survey of our efforts of the past three years—a sort of self analysis. This resulted in my preparation of a report to your Executive Committee, in which I invited them to consider discontinuing Loophole and to change its Editor. Both are to continue. We have ample proof that Loophole is read by our members and their wives. Odd items from Loophole are reprinted in Review; but there—I shouldn't have used the term "odd," as someone is sure to say "are not all your articles 'odd'." I have noted that the meaning of "odd" is "not even, casual, strange, peculiar, queer." I promise to continue with my "odd" items.

At this stage, I wish to thank George Cole and his enthusiastic helpers, who assist in wrapping Loophole. We appreciate that assistance.

An old member with a wooden leg has sent in two excellent articles for publication. While thinking of his effort, I wondered why 1700 other members didn't do likewise. Is it because they have wooden heads?

Had a visit this week from Harold Waghorn, of Kalkoura. He told me that the local lads are still working on the early history of Kalkoura Sub-Branch, for publication in this magazine. I have mentioned this matter before and commend it to other sub-branch committeemen. Don't leave this too late, as in a few years your

foundation members may not have such clear memories as they have today.

Roy Mears—our Picton Secretary was in today and it's always a real treat to have a yarn with Roy. His sincerity and enthusiasm for R.S.A. and Patriotic work is apparently boundless. Had to tell him today that he was too sensitive and too eager to do too much for so many. Roy didn't get his Gold Star Badge for watching other fellows knapping rock on the roads.

Ian Burson came in when Roy was at the office, or was it vice versa, so a miniature secretary's conference ensued. Ian is our Rai Valley secretary and I'm prepared to say his efforts in the interests of members is surpassed by few.

Ian has been a busy boy lately fencing his new holding. He got a tummy full of living on the Rai lowlands and seeing old man river periodically invading his home, so he has moved to the highlands. Now that he is settled in, I hope Rai notes will appear regularly in future issues of this magazine.

Bill Buckman, Flaxbourne secretary, pops in to see us for a "how do" when in town. Can't really say; but I feel that Flaxbourne may have to find a new secretary in the near future, as its a monty that Bill will soon be taking another step up the ladder, by moving on to pastures new.

Chris. Jones, Sounds secretary, and Hori Bates, their president, always drop in when in town. Some of these fellows have great noses for teapots and we're pleased for them to share a cuppa with us. Fact is, we welcome these friendly visits from all our sub-branch secretaries—the pity is that we do not receive more visits from

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branch presidents, and branch committeemen.

Try to find time to look in on us and make yourselves known. Maybe we both can benefit from such visits.

The introduction of cricket matches between Executive Committee and Branch Committees was aimed to bring about better relations and understanding of our various problems. The Executive team somewhat fancies itself as potential champs this year, so buck up you sub-branch boys and have a tilt at them.

M. O. Moore, our Kaikoura Secretary, has not yet been in to see us, so remember that 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. are good times for a visit Maurice.

As I write, Menzies & Nasser are having a natter; wonder what the position will be in two months time when we hand over these notes to our printer. Meantime—what are our members thinking? What think our members who served in Egypt in W.W.2? Maybe it is a real pity that Nasser and Co. did not have a taste of enemy occupation in W.W.2.

Listening to Jim Henderson's 5 p.m. Sunday session, when he was interviewing a W.W.1 digger who had just returned from a world tour, I was not surprised to hear my wife shriek with laughter, when the digger told us that the Turkish Bath alongside the Hotel Russell was still there. It so happened that we honeymooned at the Hotel Russell, and I had made a point of showing my bride these same baths and telling her of my introduction to

them. I had journeyed from Manchester to London, arriving at Marylebone Station at about 5.30 a.m. No cabs or taxis were available as a zeppelin raid had just taken place, so I walked the two miles or so to Southampton Row. I asked at Hotel Russell for a bed, but they had none and I was directed next door—really to the next hotel, the Bedford.

Next door, meant next door, to a well disciplined N.Z. Sar. Major, so I climbed the five or six steps next door and as I stepped on to the door mat, swing doors automatically opened. I had never seen such wonders before even in London and looked apprehensively about to see who had opened them for me. After a few seconds, I closed my mouth which had automatically opened in unison with the doors and stepped inside. I was greeted with blank white walls in front and on my right, and a stairway leading down to a basement. Funny kind of a hotel this, I thought. I spied a bell press at last and pressed. After quite a wait, a fellow in a white coat came up the stairs and I told him I required a bed for a few hours sleep. He gave me such a nasty look and informed me that "this is a Turkish bath" and immediately returned to duty below, apparently somewhat annoyed at my stupid request. I turned away and again the doors obliged. I had enjoyed two or three hectic days in Manchester and a night in the train, so really required a couple of hours rest; but my experience at the Turkish bath

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seemed to waken me up, so I had an early breakfast and began "doing" London—or was London "doing" me? With seven days leave from France and three of them already behind me, there was no room on my programme for sleep.

But, before continuing with a good secretary's notes, which are designed primarily to give you bits and pieces of office and Association news, I would like to recount my *de luxe* sleep at the Midland Hotel in Manchester. After Gallipoli, Egypt and the trenches in France, I was given seven days leave and arranged to meet Frank at Hadfield, not far from Manchester, where I arrived by train in the early evening. I "did" Manchester alone and naturally Manchester "did" me—by lamplight. I was to catch a branch line train at 8 a.m. for Oldham & Hadfield to meet Frank at round about 10 a.m. Bernie Hipkins of W.W.2 has told me of the feather bed he carried in his truck; but we simpletons of W.W.1 never knew what a real bed was for months and months on end. After two years bedless, I made my way to my room at the Midland Hotel near midnight, fully intending to rise at 6 a.m., which virtually meant the luxury of sleeping in—"stand to" being between 2 a.m. and 3 a.m. in the trenches which I had just left.

Was that bedroom magnificent—was it not just the final word in luxury? How I wiggled my toes on the deep pile of that carpet. And the bed—there it was with snow white sheet—all folded back and so inviting. I climbed in and slowly sank down and down into that soft fluffy mattress and was soon in dreamland. But

all good things come to an end and I woke to realise that I hadn't been brought a morning cuppa; but perhaps they didn't serve early tea in England during wartime. I looked at my watch—it was 2.30 p.m. and I had missed breakfast, lunch and the early train; but wasn't it worth while.

Quite a pleasant function was held at the Clubhouse on 22nd September, when members of our East Coast Sub-Branch were present. Opportunity was taken during the evening to present framed certificates of merit and M Badges to Arch Kitching and Frank Parker who have served (and are still serving) returned men over a long period of years. Both awards have been well and truly earned by these stalwarts. Our President, Jim Bell, recounted their work over the years, and Lance Waters representing N.Z.R.S.A. made the actual presentations. Both Frank and Arch suitably replied.

During the evening President Jim, paired with the Secretary, had two interesting games of snooker with President M. Young and K. G. Avery of the East Coast Branch, the local lads running out winners by the smallest margin. The highlight, of course, was the challenge shoot on the miniature rifle range between the same four when East Coast took revenge. The Secretary has posted his target on the office wall and now challenges or dares President Jim to tack his up alongside it.

Miniature Rifle Club officials in Bruce Hadfield and Bob Hornblow were unanimous in disallowing a "bullseye" to Jim, secured with a

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wood chip, shot off the overhead floor joists.

Bruce was really to blame for putting Jim off his shoot by reminding him so often to use his "backsight." Jim had never heard of a backsight before and could only visualise a girl in slacks riding a bike. But if Jim can't shoot, he can make a good cup of tea. Those of us who journeyed by launch to Homewood in October, were thrilled with the good brew Jim managed to concoct, by balancing a kettle on a primus, juggling two teapots and producing, like an Indian magician, unlimited quantities of steaming tea on the outward and homeward run. He produced cups from nowhere, oodles of milk and sugar and returns for those who wanted a second cup. All cups were washed and dried by Jim—and to the best of my knowledge no one said—"give you a hand Jim." Then when it came to fishing Jim was the only fella who pulled two large fish up in one haul. The Sec. managed to catch one cod which David Waters took from his hook and threw contemptuously back to its mother.

I was more than a little pleased with an article I had written for these pages and proudly handed it to my wife to read. When she handed it back to me, I asked "how will that do for Loophole?"

She replied, "I suppose you've got to fill it up with something."

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

This issue of Loophole marks the entry into our fourth year of publication. It is in fact our thirteenth issue—as the boys say at housie "Lucky for Some." It is also our Christmas issue.

We extend season greetings to those who are now serving their Queen and Country overseas. Our good wishes go to those serving our Country within its shores. Kindred Associations are not forgotten. We keep in mind the widows and children of our departed members, our war vet. and disability pensioners.

To them all and to our members and their families and to our parent body my we extend our very best wishes for a Merry Christmas and prosperity and good fellowship for 1957.

KAIKOURA NOTES

Since our last notes, two major items of interest in our local branch have taken place, namely the annual ball and the R.S.A. golf tournament. Both were good shows. The ball was held in the Memorial Hall and was well attended, the music was good; the flower decorations were a masterpiece and the supper arrangements were in charge of our ladies' committee, who did a grand job. The president of the ladies' committee, Mrs Clive Chapman, has been a wonderful worker for the R.S.A. and it is with regret that we announce their departure from this district. Clive was our last term president and he and Maureen have been a great help to us.

At the ball we had several guests: Mr and Mrs Chas. Upham and the president and his wife, from the Amuri R.S.A. I think I can safely say a good time was had by all.

We have had three annual golf tournaments and this year was the first time the weather has been good to us—the day being fine.

Some good cards were returned—a nett 58 by Colin Barry and Delia Giles on a par 70 course, was greeted with cries of burglars. This event was a greensome. In the medal rounds nett scores ranged from as low as 65. Stove, Betten, Goold, Burns and Bob Smith, another pack of burglars, were all under 70 nett; never-the-less it was a happy day. Our ladies again did good work in catering, also Jim Deys and Reg Kitching were two good toilers. After the president had welcomed the visitors and thanked the helpers and all those who had made donations, his wife, Mrs Stove, presented the prizes and the day ended with everybody full of good spirits. Apart from being a good day's sport, it was a success financially, thanks to the good work of our organiser, Jack Goold.

We are making an effort to get our financial membership 100% here and I think the subs. are coming in well. Those who cannot contact our secretary can get their 1956 tabs from our vice-president who works in a very convenient business in the West End. Now in conclusion (Loophole) please convey to all returned comrades the Season's Greetings from the Kaikoura Branch.

SHACKLOCK.

PATRIOTIC FUNDS

Readers of Loophole will have learned from previous issues full particulars of the many and varied financial privileges that are theirs under the War Pensions and Rehabilitation regulations.

Many I am afraid do not know of another source of assistance that is available to them. I refer to the Patriotic Funds, which were subscribed to by the people during the war years for the help of ex-servicemen where the privileges obtainable under the pensions scheme, are, through many and varied circumstances, inadequate to meet unforeseen conditions.

The policy of the Patriotic Council is that no returned man and his dependants should be up against it at any time and for any period.

So far as Marlborough is concerned, the funds are controlled by a Provincial Council, on which there are appointed annually representatives from the various local authorities, the R.S.A., the Home Servicemen's Association and all kindred bodies. This Council at its annual meeting appoints a standing committee, which handles the Council's affairs during the year. Welfare committees are appointed (comprised mainly of R.S.A. members) in every zone in Marlborough and it is the duty of those committees to report to the Standing Committee any cases of need, with their recommendation as to the best means of meeting such needs. The Standing Committee also looks to every returned man in the district to see that no ex-serviceman, to his knowledge, is in need.

The first duty of the Standing Committee is to see that the serviceman is obtaining all the benefits provided by legislation, that he is receiving the correct pension and that he applies for a pension if not already in receipt of one—that if the pension granted is not sufficient in his particular case, that he may be eligible for further assistance from the "Special Fund" provided to meet cases where a set pension does not meet the need.

Whilst this procedure is being followed, immediate assistance is made available so that "the horse does not starve whilst the grass is growing," and in cases where all avenues of help have still proved insufficient the committee will grant help right up to the full measure of need.

We know that our Welfare Committees are doing a good job in reporting needy cases they hear of, but we have a fear that any man and his dependants may be overlooked—we look to the individual returned man to report to us any case of hardship that comes to his knowledge and we will do the rest.

Some men are diffident about asking for assistance—some say they do not want charity. Our reply to that is that the Patriotic Council does not dispense charity—we try to grant relief where it is needed without anyone outside the committee being aware of what relief and to whom same is granted.

I appeal to all returned men to help us in our effort to see that no veteran and his dependants are up against it.

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Marlborough Patriotic Council.

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SOUVENIRS

We have recently received from N. B. (Brodie) McCallum a most interesting collection of souvenirs, photographs, invitations, programmes, etc. To me, the most intriguing is a packet of the famous "Flag" cigarettes which were issued to Brodie on Gallipoli over forty-one years ago. There is also a full box of Turkish matches looking just as fresh and clean and efficient as when received by some Turk on Gallipoli in 1915.

There are clips of 5 Turkish ammo. and numerous similar items such as most of us have harboured and treasured for many years. Would not a corner in our new Clubhouse be the ideal resting place for these souvenirs? It is hoped that a suitable space will be reserved for these and other treasures which have been handed in to us over the years. Many members will have badges and other war relics, which will be lost as museum pieces if not suitably housed now. Among Brodie's collection, we have photographs of the first Executive Committee of Christchurch R.S.A., a newspaper report of the inaugural meeting of N.Z.R.S.A. at which the following motion was carried—"That a New Zealand Returned Soldiers' Association is hereby formed."

Brodie was present at that meeting. He was also President of the Christchurch R.S.A. and for many years a more than enthusiastic executive R.S.A. officer in Canterbury.

We are at times prone to forget these far sighted men who built our organisation on such sound foundations. Let's raise our hats to them.

REBUILDING

Some may think this subject is something of a myth—that it's all talk and no do; but let's hasten to reassure you on this point. You have not had much publicity or information lately, as there has been little to tell. Looking back you will recall that originally—over two years ago—we intended to make the outside appearance of the clubhouse look a little more presentable to the general public. The cost would have been £3000 with little or no apparent improvement in clubhouse facilities or added room for our various activities. Even today, a few of our members still advocate nothing more. The decision to completely rebuild was taken at a special general meeting and it is quite obviously the wisest action.

To rebuild, money is required and prices and plans have to be obtained. Our target of £8000 was reached by May this year. Many discussions have been held and means explored of keeping building costs within reasonable limits.

We could have hired architects and structural engineers to advise and submit plans costing something like £1000; but if their plans called for a building costing a figure beyond our means, we would still have had to pay that £1000 and the plans perhaps rejected on account of costs. We have dallied, perhaps, in our effort not to waste our members' money. We feel now that we have found the answer.

We are at present waiting for plans, specifications and estimated costs to arrive.

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It is not possible in this article to give you the estimated cost of our new building—it will probably be made known to you through the Press.

We can let you into our confidence by saying that one estimate of a new clubhouse was as high as £36,000, and another about £25,000. At no stage have we felt that we should go higher than £18,000. In spite of the credit squeeze and steadily mounting costs, it is a safe bet that our new clubhouse will be an accomplished fact for less than this amount—provided that our members lend their unstinted aid in cash and labour. In nearly every issue of "Review" one reads of new clubhouses being opened and much being made of the volume of volunteer labour employed. We are quietly confident that Marlborough men will not be any exception when labour is actually called for. We are confident also, that those who have not yet made their £10 contribution to the building fund and those who have made promises of contributing, will not hesitate to come forward when actual work commences. That day is not far distant. At this moment we are awaiting sketch plans which will incorporate all our own ideas for a convenient new clubhouse with ample space for all our various activities. It will measure 120 feet by 70 feet—or 8400 feet of ground floor space, with a lower floor giving our bowling and miniature rifle clubs more room and better facilities than they now have.

We cannot expect that all our members will agree on all details. We fought for democracy—majority rule. We trust therefore that no one will fail us, even though he should disagree with some small detail in this our rebuilding scheme. Remembering that many hands make light work, it is not anticipated that any member or small group of members will be called on for long periods of strenuous work; but it is confidently felt that our members will be as good as their counterparts in other R.S.A. districts and come forward in large numbers to assist in actual construction work.

REPORT ON WOMEN'S SECTION

The Women's Section social afternoons have been very well attended over the last three months. Several new members have been welcomed and it is very pleasing to have been able to welcome old members back to the social afternoons.

There has been a lot of sickness, and bereavements in the families of some of our members. Where possible these members have been contacted and flowers or cards sent to them.

The entertainment for the afternoons has been varied—the items by young children, both vocal and elocutionary, have been warmly and enjoyably received. The Blenheim Women's Institute has contributed with sketches and plays which have proved very popular and we thank them for coming along so willingly to entertain us; also other adult artists who have helped to make the afternoons so successful.

The indoor bowling season was brought to a close with social play with the men's club, and trophies were given to the winning rinks and pairs. Indoor bowls has done a lot towards keeping the section in close contact with its members. The president of the men's club presented the Perkins' Trophy that is competed for annually, to the women's club, who won this year's matches. Social and competition games have been very much enjoyed with the men's club.

We were very pleased to have the Picton W.S. visit us in October. The get together and chat over luncheon was very enjoyable. After lunch, crib and euchre was played, Blenheim section, making the largest score, retains the trophy which is competed for annually.

Invitations were received from the Nelson and Renwick W.S. to social afternoons.

The outdoor Bowling Club has had their opening and there are prospects of a good season ahead.

WHITHER GOEST THOU?

Where are we heading and what makes us tick? Are we grasshoppers giving an occasional kick which lands

us in clover or in the cactus, whichever fate decides? Or are we honeybees hell-bent with only one purpose in life, i.e., to gather honey at any cost?

Do we weigh all the pros and cons before making decisions, or do we act like a bull in a china shop and later regret our hasty actions?

Do we try to observe the niceties of life, by considering the feelings of others before we act, or do we refrain from harmful acts out of consideration for others?

Do we occasionally take stock of ourselves—turn our eyes inward, as it were? In military parlance, "do we appreciate the situation"? Do we weigh up the situation and ask ourselves, "how will the other fellow act if we do this, and how will he act if we do that?" Do we ask ourselves if our actions will land us in clover or in the cactus?

Consideration for others plays a

greater part in our life of today than we are apt to realise. Lack of consideration for others has been the cause of our worthy President having to write unpleasant letters to several of our members in recent months. Wherever else we may be, let's keep out of the cactus.

With the risks we took overseas and with so many of our old comrades no longer with us, surely we as returned men, here, alive and enjoying all the good things around us, should be the happiest and most grateful group of men in the community.

Harsh words, hard feelings and rough action will land us no other place than in the cactus. Finally, those who think before acting remember that the other fellow also saw active service, and it may be that his war service may have been the cause of his "highly strung" condition.

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

(Note.—Some rates have since been increased)

UNIVERSAL SUPERANNUATION

On attaining the age of 65 years and fulfilling a residential qualification, viz. 10 years if resident in New Zealand on the 15th March, 1938, or 20 years if not resident at that date, any person is entitled to receive a Universal Superannuation Benefit the rate of which is £100 a year for the twelve months ending on the 31st March, 1957, and increases by £5 a year from the 1st April of each year until the maximum of £182 a year is reached. Universal superannuation is not subject to a means test and is payable in addition to a War Disablement Pension or a War Widows' Pension but cannot be claimed concurrently with any other Social Security Benefit (other than Family Benefit), a War Veteran's Allowance, an Economic Pension or a Wife's Pension.

A point of note is that where a person who has attained the age of 65 years and is in receipt of an Age Benefit and has the Age Benefit reduced below the current rate of Universal Superannuation for some reason, there is entitlement to immediate transfer to Universal Superannuation.

Similarly, a recipient of a War Veteran's Allowance or an economic pension, who is qualified by age and residence to receive Universal Superannuation, who finds that his circumstances cause the War Veteran's Allowance or Economic Pension to fall below the current rate of Universal Superannuation should claim a transfer to the latter.

AGE BENEFITS

Persons 60 years of age fulfilling a residential qualification similar to that for Universal Superannuation may receive an Age Benefit, the maximum rate of which is £182 a year. (£195 a year when the beneficiary is unmarried.) In the case of a married man whose wife is not entitled to an Age Benefit in

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her own right, the benefit payable to the husband may be increased by an amount not exceeding £182 a year.

An income exemption of £78 per annum is allowed without the benefit being affected, while any interest in land is not regarded as chargeable property for which there is an exemption made of £500 to cover say, money in bank or any liquid assets.

An Age Beneficiary who served in South Africa as a member of a New Zealand Contingent during the South African War, or who, being a New Zealander, served in South Africa with some other Force can have his Age Benefit supplemented by a grant of £13/13/0 per annum provided his personal income together with such grant does not exceed the aggregate of the basic rate of the benefit and the allowable income.

WIDOWS' BENEFITS

Widows' benefits are payable to widows, deserted wives and wives of mental patients, the latter two classes of women being regarded as though they were widows. There are certain qualifications for the benefit which have to be fulfilled in regard to age, length of marriage and residence, etc., and in each case it would be advisable to make inquiries as to eligibility at the Social Security Office.

Widows' Benefits are subject to a means test.

The basic rate of benefit payable to all classes of widows is £3/15/0 per week and where the beneficiary has a dependent child or dependent children the amount may be supplemented by a Mothers' Allowance the rate of which is £2/7/6 per week where there is one child and £2/17/6 per week where there are two or more dependent children. In addition Family Benefit for each dependent child is payable.

Widows are strongly advised to make inquiries at their nearest Social Security Office where all the provisions of this benefit may be explained to them.

INVALIDS' BENEFITS

Any person not less than 16 years of age and not qualified to receive Age Benefit, who is permanently incapacitated for work may receive an Invalid's Benefit if he or she fulfils a residential qualification of 10 years immediately preceding application provided also that the disability suffered occurred in New Zealand. For other cases where disability arose outside New Zealand, a more restrictive residential qualification is imposed.

The amount of the benefit is the same basically as an Age Benefit, though NOT for unmarried persons under 20 years of age where the rate is £3/2/6 per week. Similar income and property provisions as for Age Benefit are made to cover Invalids' Benefit.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Any person over the age of 16 years, who has resided continuously in New Zealand for not less than twelve months is entitled to receive an unemployment Benefit if he is unemployed and is capable and willing to undertake suitable work and has taken reasonable steps to obtain such work. A married woman may not receive an Unemployment Benefit unless the Social Security Commission is satisfied that her husband is unable to maintain her. Unemployment Benefits are payable at the same rates as Sickness Benefits.

Income qualification provides for a reduction of 1/- a week for every complete shilling of earnings of husband and wife. In respect of income other than earnings an exemption of £1/10/0 per week is allowed before the benefit is reduced and a deduction is made for accumulated property in excess of £500 for a single applicant or £1000 for a married one.

War Disablement Pension is not counted as income and may be drawn in addition to an Unemployment Benefit.

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