WHENCE THE CHINDITS TOOK THEIR NAME: Major-General P. W. Peeling, D.S.O., commanding the 36th British Division (left), and Lord-diarical Sir A. J. Sullivan, the U.S. Commander in Burma (centre), stand thoughtfully next to one of the great Chock Taw at Mandalay in British Burma. These standing guardians of Burmese temples were originally erected to keep away evil spirits. From The Field, a British magazine, page 6, Vol. 7, issue 1, nothing more.

Photo: British office.
Home Scenes Recorded by Our Roving Camera

GERMAN PRISONERS in Norfolk helping to lift the harvest crops under the firm supervision of 56-year-old Lieut. Col. Leslie Whiting, R.A., a British soldier. The men are dressed in German uniforms as ordered on the order. It was arranged on December 17, 1943, that 10,000 German prisoners were being transferred to agricultural work without supervision. Their uniform is checked-dyed battledress, and the mark on the ranges, Field, is to be in a week.

MR. LEWIS J. STURGE 72-year-old barrister (above), now Chief Enforcement Officer for the Ministry of Food, gets the war against black marketeers.

A LARGE I.M.S. WORKERS, two-thirds of the railway system's vast array, have been building tanks, guns, planes, armoured tanks, bridges, and armoured trains for the past five years. Trains (below) have a ready construction bridge outside a I.M.S. workshops.

CHRISTMAS COMPETITION was organized by London Transport for the most attractively decorated Tube-station cases for shelters. The prizes consisted of War Savings Certificates. The contest at Gloucester Road, London, S.W. (above) reflects the air of Christmas cheer achieved under tremendous pressure.

MEN OF THE SERVICES, as well as hundreds of Italian prisoners of war, helped the75-year-old company to work and the men and engines at the great London station. The work of the men and women is the welfare of all the civilians at Waterloo.
THE BATTLE FRONTS


When last I wrote it was well known that the Germans had during the autumn been able to form a powerful reserve with a large armoured component, and that it was located in the Cologne region.

The Allied High Command apparently considered that it was intended for use in a defensive counter-stroke in case the west wall was breached. They presumably thought that Von Rundstedt, in view of Allied air superiority, would not dare to undertake a counter-offensive operation which, if it achieved any success, must involve a lengthening of his lines of communication and an advance out of the area in which he possessed well fortified defensive positions.

The prospects of such a counter-offensive achieving anything of decisive importance would be small and the risks of ultimate disastrous defeat very great. It is not, therefore, astonishing that Von Rundstedt secured surprise as good generals have often done, by accepting apparently prohibitive risks.

Surprise gave him the initiative and initial success, but it remains to be seen whether he has not followed a will of the wing. The situation while I write is still too fluid to justify any attempt to forecast the outcome, although personally I have never wavered in the belief that Von Rundstedt's success, such as it has been, would be short lived. I continue to believe that his victory would be to disorganize and delay General Eisenhower's offensive preparations and thus gain a breathing time on the western front before the main Russian offensive started.

RESERVES Thrown Pinmeal Into Battle in a Defensive Role

The risks he ran of being caught on the rebound were, however, obviously very great if he attempted too much, especially when Allied air superiority which would test German skill in disengaging to a dangerous degree, I cannot believe that Von Rundstedt seriously hoped that he would succeed in disrupting the Allied front and reach Paris or Arras; although he may have announced that these were his objectives. It should, I think, be noted that the battle has been mainly between the reserves on both sides.

The greater part of both armies face each other on a long front stabilized from west to east and there is not, in the faster moving operations of today, the same opportunity of applying the "reveliement" system used extensively in the last war to maintain the enemy's forces in a state of exhaustion by keeping them destroyed from their main object by a series of raids. Much may, however, depend on the attitude of the Hungarian troops who probably furnish a considerable part of the force in Pest. They might not offer much resistance in an attempt to hold the city which would have devastating effects.

In any case the mere isolation of such a large force in the capital is bound to have a far-reaching effect on the whole situation in Hungary. The troops which failed to hold Budapest must need much reorganization before they become again as effective for they are, moreover, in danger of being cut off from all communication with those opposing Malinovsky on the right bank of the Danube, and they are not likely to receive reinforcement from those facing the division of Guderian's 19th Army.

The prospect of such a menace offered by the Russian forces, even if isolated, is not the only factor that may influence the outcome. The Russian forces, even if isolated, is not the only factor that may influence the outcome.

WESTERN FRONT

Russia has shown an ability to disrupt communications that is new in military history, and the Germans have not yet been able to answer it with any comparable force.
All Wet and Quiet on British 2nd Army Front—

VOYAGE BY ASSAULT-CRAFT was the only means of transport available to these officers of the British 2nd Army. (See page 344.)

ACROSS THE FLOODS a British Bren-gunner of Field-Marshal Montgomery's forces keeps a steady look-out from an old Dutch farmhouse stacked high with overtopping. Towards the end of December old enemy paratroops were reported to be operating along the banks of the Maas by night, trying to cut off Montgomery's rations. Falling laterally, the conscripted Dutchman is only to be disposed of with a Bren gun. (See page 344.)
—As Rundstedt Struck Savagely Farther South

U.S. FIELD ARTILLERYMEN basically maneuver their guns into fresh positions in the early stages of von Rundstedt's powerful counter-offensive launched on December 16, 1944. Drenching fire from nine Patton's 9.2 in howitzers (below) over a frontline bridge.

CLOSED DAYS OF 1944 witnessed a full-scale German counter-offensive deeply penetrating the frontiers of Luxembourg and Belgium, notably in the Ardennes, the map below shows. This map shows the front on December 14-15. It will be noted that the German forces were able to narrow the 'bridge' north of Bastogne. The enemy was also held at Canal and Coury, four miles from the Meuse.

"GIVE YOUR ALL IN ONE LAST EORT!" was Field Marshal von Rundstedt's order to his troops attacking the U.S. 1st Army in the west. Among his heavy supporting armaments were the new Royal Tiger tanks, one of which is seen here knocked out during the U.S. 1st Army's reoccupation of the Belgian town of La Gleize. The Tiger (or "King Tiger") is reputed to mount a 88-mm gun, to have deep armor a feet thick and to weigh over 11 tons. Note the exceptionally wide tracks.
THE WAR AT SEA

by Francis E. McMurtrie

In a speech at Sydney, Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, Commander-in-Chief of the British Fleet in the Pacific, has hinted that there will be some surprises for the Japanese at sea as the war advances. A large part of the Pacific Fleet would be moved into the Central Pacific, which would be called upon to meet the attacks of Japanese shore-based aircraft, thus neutralizing the enemy's airfields and covering invading land forces.

How successfully this can be done is illustrated by the progress of the American invasion of the Philippines. By the end of last year practically all resistance had ended in the island of Leyte, where a total of 17,977 Japanese troops had been disposed of, equivalent to a complete army. Mastery of the air has been an essential feature of the reconquest of Leyte and Mindanao. It has been achieved by means of an overwhelming force of aircraft carriers. The total number of these in service in the United States Navy at the end of 1944 was 128, comprising 15 of the 27,000-ton Essex class, eight of the 11,000-ton Independence class; 15 the Saratoga, Enterprise and Ranger, all built before the war, and no fewer than 98 escort carriers. Some may be assumed that the bulk of this formidable fleet of carriers is employed in the Pacific, it follows that the U.S. Fleet there is able to put into the air when desired thousands of aircraft. It is not surprising, therefore, that Japanese air losses have been extremely heavy.

General Fraser observed that he did not rule out the possibility of an aerial clash between Allied capital ships and the enemy's, though it might be assumed that Japanese tactics would be to hold back their fleet until the fullest possible air cover could be provided by shore-based planes. This would naturally imply the postponement of any fleet action until the main land of Japan is threatened by invasion or blockade.

American estimates of the strength remaining to the Japanese Navy vary. According to one commentator, there may still be eight to ten capital ships in fighting condition. This probably is slightly exaggerated, and has been arrived at by taking into account either new 43,000-ton battlecruises which have still to be completed, or the redoubled and probably mythical ships of a planning "pocket battleship" design, supposed to be under construction when war began.

There is no evidence that any new battleships have been completed other than the Musashi and Yamato, which took part in the battle of the Philippines last October. A third of the class may be nearing completion, in which case she may have to be reckoned with some time in 1945. The only other battleships are the Nagato, Hyuga, in Harumi, and Kongo, and there is a possibility that one of these may have been completed as a result of severe damage received in the Battle of the Philippine Islands. The Hyuga and Kongo have both been fitted with flight decks, so are probably no longer in a position to use the whole of their armament. What has become of the Mutsu, sister ship of the Nagato, is doubtful. She did not figure in the Philippines action, when every other known Japanese capital ship was thrown in, and it is suggested that she no longer exists.

It would be more accurate, therefore, to estimate the enemy's capital ships strength at six or seven units. Such a force has little hope of making headway against the weight which the Allied fleets in the Pacific are capable of bringing to bear.

Excluding the obsolete New York, Texas and Arkansas, the U.S. Navy now possesses 30 efficient battlecruises, ten of which have been completed since 1940. This calculation does not include the Arizona and Oklahoma, neither of which was found worth rebuilding after the shattering damage received when they were sunk as Pearl Harbor three years ago.

The Japanese has been released concerning the composition of the British fleet in the Pacific, beyond the fact that the battleship Howe is Sir Bruce Fraser's flagship. (See illustration, p. 500 and 561.) It has been estimated that the new ship launched by Princess Elizabeth on November 5th last—according to a German broadcast on November 17th—will consist of the Vanguard, another 43,000-ton battleship. The Vanguard, Queen Elizabeth, Duke of York, and presumably the Nelson and Rodney. It is also gathered that what has been published in the Press that the modern French battleship Richelieu has been assigned to the Pacific theatre, making the British fleet's potential battleship strength up to eight.

BattleShip Superiority Over Japanese will be Approximately Four to One

This would appear that the Allies will be in a position to muster a possible total of 28 battlecruises against the Japanese, giving them a superiority of about four to one. How different from the bleak prospect that seemed to be opening for Japan at the end of 1941! United States battleship strength was then temporarily reduced to half-a-dozen modern and undermanned units, one of which was under repair, against ten Japanese battlecruises in full commission and two more nearing delivery. At that date, too, this country had no modern capital ships available for service outside European waters.

It may be argued that Japanese strength was faulty, that in the spectacular success at Pearl Harbour 150,000 were not followed up quickly by a landing in the Hawaiian group. If the efforts directed against Bataan and the Netherlands Indies had been postponed while Hawaii was overrun, the task of the United States in recovering from the Pearl Harbour disaster would have been immeasurably more difficult. The battleships Nevada, California, Texas and Wyoming could not have been salvaged and repaired, as they were during 1942-43, and American strength would have been reduced by four important units; while the loss of Pearl Harbor would have been a tremendous handicap.

It would seem then, too late, the Japanese began to appreciate these facts. At any rate, it is generally believed that the large force of transports and warships which were interrupted and broken up by American air attack in the Pearl Harbour Midway, before it had got as far as that island, was intended to operate against the Bataan garrison. If the strike had been launched, and the chances of the enemy surviving the initial American air attack considerably reduced; but it still represented a serious menace, and its defeat is rightly regarded as the turning point of the Pacific war.

Today the prospects for Japan are distinctly gloomy. Her ally in Europe is fighting daily, and at sea she has been reduced to a feeble defensive. Of late the only organized and effective activity by the Germans has been in the shape of night raids, often by small craft, in which their losses have been heavy, and the use of "mechanical parrots," such as midget submarines, has been made. Though these may be useful as propaganda to publicize the number of the foe, they have achieved nothing of practical value.
Fantastic Nazi Frog-Men and Human Torpedoes

Specially trained Nazi saboteur-swimmers in rubber suits, with frog-like padded feet and oxygen masks, swim six miles down the River Weir on November 27, 1943, only to be stopped by British troops after an attempt to blow up the Alnmouth Bridge. A new (1) sabotage technique is given to the British by the Nazis, who have already used the one-man torpedoes to sink ships (2), and light craft with explosive charges (4).
Troopships That Never Fail the Battle-Lines

UP to the end of September 1944, 10,600,000 British Army personnel had been moved by sea—with the loss of 2,747 lives, or only 0.008 per cent of the total. In just over three months from D-Day (June 6) more than 2,700,000 men were landed in France and the Low Countries; and even the loss of three ships due to enemy action totalled a mere three-thousandths of one per cent of all ships landed! Anyone who saw the Canadian assault troops streaming from the Canterbury into the landing craft off Normandy beaches will never forget the spectacle. Since then, under the command of Capt. O. D. Walker, D.S.O., this famous peacetime steamship of the Dover-Calais luxury run has been foremost in the shuttle service between Britain and the forward European ports. Down in the engine-room, the Chief Engineer, Stasley Belchamber, has an amazing record. He was with the first ship to land troops in France in 1914, and with the first ship to land troops in 1939. "I had hoped to repeat it in 1944," he said, "but we lost by four seconds." That is typical of the Royal Canadian Navy, a ship that has conducted the transport of our men with such safety and speed. The first Allied landing on European soil, the operation against Sicily, was headed by Captain M. H. Williams, a ship's master with a record of 41 years at sea. He had trained for weeks beforehand, off a remote stretch of British coastline, to make sure that the high-spot of his voyage would be perfect.

One famous troopship, the Royal Ulsterman, has scarcely passed for four years in her special work of carrying troops to and from Britain, to the Gold Coast and South Africa, to Madagascar, Italy and France. Her sister ship, the Royal Scotsman, which has steamed 50,000 miles since the evacuation of Narvik in 1940, once sailed from Malta to Bombay and back, a remarkably operation for a vessel primarily intended for a peacetime coastal run.

Then there is the Ben-Mary-Christine (Goliath) class, operating between London and Great Yarmouth; the Arlette class, the Arlette class, and four others, all built in Canada during the war, have been used in this capacity. The Arlette, in fact, has been the most successful of these auxiliary ships in Italy when the enemy reported her as sunk in the South Atlantic; and when she recently put into Gibraltar it was with a trail of four doomed U-boats bagged by the destroyers in her wake. She once reached Gibraltar without audder, and the officers decided to run her without passengers and with a volunteer crew back to England. She flogged the occupied coast safely across the Bay of Biscay, but was sighted by a U-boat when 30 miles from Brest. The fog that suddenly swept down and saved her was typical of her luck. At 3:30 a.m., the U-boat's bow fell wide and the rudder was released. When she raised again, a 13-ub shell mislanded, damaged her only slightly. Subsequently involved in a collision, she was sailing again within a few weeks, and now carries troops to within 60 miles of Germany.

Four Invasions in Five Months

The Manxmaid, brought back into active service a couple of years ago after running thousands of miles to the Island of Man, for some months acted as the German battleship Tirpitz while our planes were training for the role against her. No record of the "troopships" would be complete without mention of the Canadian landing ship Prince David, which possesses the proud distinction of having been in four invasions in five months. She lost every assault craft sent to the beaches of Normandy. She was in time, however, to land the French Commandos seven hours before the main assault on Southern France. For nearly two miles she sailed against wind and current as they travelled on a parallel course to some light German craft, but the Prince David was not seen. Then, on the way out, she found herself the centre of a miracle between tidal bores and a bunch of Nazi coasters: once again she escaped. These weeks later came her signal to the landing parties on Kithera, an island off the tip of Greece. Then she followed the force which arrived at France, the port of Athens. The Germans came on the 15th. The British would fleet—from schooners to the British—I.th.

The galileans of the British troopships are the Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary, luxury liners converted to war-work. The 86,000-ton Queen Mary (see illus. page 468) is equipped, with a good turn of speed on two occasions, to charm through a pack of 20 U-boats. In the first three years of this war she made 10 voyages to Australia, and 30,000 Australian troops to the Middle East and Singapore—and, by way of a change, she has carried large numbers of Indian and German prisoners to captivity.

OUTSTANDING AMONG THE HIGH ENDEAVOURS of the Empire's war effort have been the performances of our troop-transporters. Characteristically are the yeast of the 1943 Convoy, which Australia received on July 19th. 360,000 military personnel can be carried in these ships. See also Page 532, photo of Troopship.
Two Irresistible Soviet Armies Encircle Budapest

Sweeping westward, the 3rd and 3rd Ukrainian fronts of the Red Army had completely encircled Budapest (see map) by December 26, 1944. Soviet forces in the vicinity reached Budastrasse, the western suburbs, in March. Hungarian Army and border guards were immediately arrested in the suburbs. Soviet forces were moved through the city, scattering thegarrison of Budapest. The captured city was turned over to the local Soviet command while armed artillery units of the Red Army entered.
McCreery's Die-Hards Take Faenza in Italy

FAENZA—ITALIAN KEY-TOWN—was captured on November 16, 1944, by British, Canadian, New Zealand, Italian and Polish troops of the 8th Army fighting in their re-occupying (see map). Before the final push, Lt. Col. Sir Richard McCreery, 5th Army Commanding General, assured the world: "British on a demonstration job. New Zealanders in a show [1] were haggled there in the year of mud, while their officers continued to admire the world. Battle self-propelled guns [2] harrowed the enemy north of Ravenna.'
Political Prisoners Dash From Alsace Gaol

DELIRIOUS WITH JOY at their unexpected liberation, these French women political prisoners raced from Haguenau prison in Alsace where 300 of them had been incarcerated by the Nazis. When Haguenau, last important town before the German border, was taken by the U.S. 7th Army on December 17, 1944, the Germans were so eager to quit that they forgot the prisoners. Some of the inmates had been held for two years, their "crimes" ranging from making insulting remarks about Hitler to listening to the BBC.
Miracle of South-East Asia Air Command

Lack of planes, airmail, constructional and repair organizations and personnel, plus enormous distances from supply ports, gravely handicapped in the early days of the air war against Japan. Allied operations in South-East Asia have resulted entirely from the development in the past two years traced by Squadron-Leader DEREG ADAMS.

When war was declared in September 1939 urgent operational requirement was to assemble an air force in India, an easy task: it was impossible to reinforce or modernize the pre-war force in South-East Asia, although the need did not really arise until Japan entered the war in 1941. Unfortunately the Royal Navy had protected India's 3,000-mile coastline without a shot being fired and the Army had defended her land frontiers and maintained internal peace.

When Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Peirse arrived in India in the beginning of March 1942, he found no more than four Royal Air Force squadrons. Most of the modern aircraft were a handful of Hurricanes, and the three squadrons of outdated Harts and Lysanders.

In Burma the situation was little better. There were four fighter, three bomber and two Army Co-operation squadrons, but they lacked proper repair or maintenance organization and their warning system consisted of inadequate observer posts. The result was thus, in spite of their own gallant efforts and those of the American Volunteer Group, the Japanese advance could not be halted. These squadrons, sadly depleted in equipment and personnel, were forced to retreat with the Army into India territory.

In Ceylon there was little reason for confidence, but capable improvisation enabled fighters to operate in numbers and beat off enemy naval bombers dispatched from the Japanese base of Truk in Easter Sunday (April 5) 1942. No further Japanese attacks were launched against either Ceylon or India before the 1942 monsoon, which gave time for the position to be consolidated.

The chief problem was the lack of airfields suitable for modern operational aircraft. A high priority programme was planned which aimed at multiplying the number of airfields more than fourfold at a cost of £135,000,000. In spite of the shortage of suitable commercial airfields it was impossible to develop the number of airfields (up to 160), which were being carried out manually by civilians, well enough to service the squadrons available to the British and American air forces in India and Ceylon at the end of 1943.

A second difficulty was to build up an air force as a whole with limited resources, when industry is so primitive that large quantities of essential airframe and armament parts are not available locally. The Indian workmen consider seriously. The enormous distances from the ports at which supplies arrive to the scene of operations in Ceylon and Burma, the shortage of airfields in Burma, and the shortage of skilled workers are causes, however. Nevertheless, by the end of 1942 a civilian repair organization had been started and several civilian maintenance units had begun operating under the supervision and guidance of a small nucleus of Service personnel. Storage space expanded 12 times, and the rapidity and efficiency of the expansion can be judged by the fact that within one month of the arrival of the first six months of 1943 nearly three fourths as many aircraft were in fact erected during the whole of that year.

The third problem was that of personnel. The Service still lacked the trained men that became available from the United Kingdom and other territories after the growth of the mass-production facilities in South-East Asia. The Indian Air Force was therefore supplemented by the Japanese Air Force in Japanese territories in South-East Asia, and to a much larger extent in the Indian Air Force (British and Indian) than on the Japanese side. This meant that Japanese propaganda in Japan had made itself felt in every trade and flying category, knocking thousands of young Indian civil

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL SIR RICHARD PEIRSE, K.C.V.O., G.C.B., D.S.O., A.F.C., AIR CHIEF-Marshal of the Royal Air Force, is the executive authority for all the air forces of the South-East Asia Command. The explanations which, since 1942, are related in this page. After the portrait by Leni Riefenstahl.

The main theatre of operations, however, had been India and Burma, the bases of the squadrons being located in Bengal and Assam. Aerial fighters had dealt sternly with random raiders attacking Calcutta in January 1943, offensive operations began in the spring. Although the Air Force had failed in its objectives of securing forward positions in the Arakan and holding them during the 1943 monsoon, air supremacy was maintained throughout the fighting and direct support given to the troops. In addition, bombers and long-range fighters had vigorously attacked enemy positions and disrupted his rail, road and river lines of communication.

With the advent of the monsoon in June 1943 the Japanese almost entirely stopped air operations and withdrew their units for training, rest and reequipping. The weather, however, Allied air operations were cut short against the enemy in order that his communications and reinforcement activities should be delayed as much as possible. These hazardous operations met with such success that the Japanese forces had to move the bulk of their supplies and troops by night. The interception of intercepted SECRET messages was made possible by the intelligence of the Air Force and the Army and enabled Allied forces to plan their operations. Air reconnaissance and will be used for Intelligence purposes.

The course of the war in the East will depend to a large extent on India's control of the air, and the skill and training of the air forces in the region are as vital to the success of our cause as knowledge that his Allied Air C-in-C can provide whatever backing is required.

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PAGE 596
Assam and Bengal Squadrons Smite Japanese

Armour Again Saves Our Fighting Men's Lives

Some of the most highly specialized types of armours used by British and American forces are produced by a London company which has been making chain mail and swords since the middle of the eighteenth century. Here you may meet men who have been in the business all their lives, and their fathers and grandfathers before them.

Take Mr. Leonard Barrat, for instance. A great deal of thought and research went into the production of the bullet-proof vest which has since saved hundreds of Allied airmen from death or severe injury. Each vest consisted of over 200 overlapping steel plates which stop a revolver bullet at point-blank range. But there was one drawback; if the airmen wanted to hole out, the 23 lb. of armour might cause disaster. It was imperative to find some way whereby the elaborate straps of the vest could be released readily and the whole thing removed. That was were Mr. Barrat came in. He was responsible for devising the release mechanism which brings the whole process down to one simple pull on a red tab. Today an airmen can free himself of the vest, and hole out, at high speed.

Other problems have been faced by skilled workmen in that factory for months before a patella has been discovered. At the very beginning of their investigations it was obvious to the experts that a suit of armour which would give complete protection against the high velocity modern missile was out of the question. They therefore concentrated on partial protection. It was found that in the last war no less than sixty per cent of casualties were due to chest or trunk wounds. Many armoured devices were then tried out to protect those parts of the human body, including a steel plate fitted in the back of the respirator box, and the steel vest now in extensive use today.

There also you may see some of the latest armours used in production, in which women play a big part. Since many of the women came from the dress trade before the war, they handle the intricate sides of cotton canvas and magnesium steel with an adroitness born of long practice. From them belonging to the factory workers is 183-year-old Tom Beasley, whose family has been in the trade for over two hundred years. Tom Beasley was the man who forged the beautiful Stalinger sword (see illus. pages 495 and 499, Vol. 7).

The Germans have reported that some of our thick troops wear a light helmet of armour which gives them protection against machine-gun fire, and the German radio has talked about a bullet-proof uniform. 1 The astonishing thing about the latest types of armour used by British and U.S. troops is that they derive from that worn by Henry VIII.

Tom dip into history began when Mr. Stephen Grant who, U.S. historian and curator of the New York Museum of Art, heard that a group of experts were testing various armours at the ballistic testing ground, Aberdeen, Maryland. Mr. Grant was a lot about the armour worn by the knights of old, and he began to consider ways of effecting improvements to meet modern war conditions. He set to work and in a very short time submitted a new type of armour which surprised the military experts. He then confessed that this armour was modelled on the lines of that once worn by no less a person than King Henry VIII. If true, of course, that Mr. Grant used very little imagination. The main parts of the suit, viz., the coat, the cuirass and helmet were certainly inspired by designs

TOM BEASLEY forging the famous Stalinger sword at a London factory where "tommycoats" are made for our troops, as seen in this page. Photo, Lillian Foul

bulleproof body armour. It was to certain branches of the U.S. armed forces, to France, to Russia, and the Stalinger coat, it was decided to try to improve on the German work, and the British also re-produced this type. It is a steel plate suit with the armours are also protected in this way (right). Photo, Barratt, L.P.C.
In Flooded Holland Our Men Stand By

The British and Army's front in Holland, between Nijmegen and Arnhem, was plunged under water early in December 1944, when the enemy breached the dykes. Meanwhile, on our right flank, Von Rechedgett—on December 16—launched his massive counteroffensive against the U.S. 1st Army, threatening the Ruhr. A British light A.A. gun team (top) goes about its task in the downpour; (bottom) a cheerful party of Royal Engineers plug a sodden Dutch road with logs.
New British Pacific Fleet is Formed—

Among the most powerful battleships afloat, the 35,000 ton H.M.S. Howe, of the George V class, has been chosen as the flagship of Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, G.C.B., K.B.E., Commander-in-Chief of the British Pacific Fleet. It was announced on December 12, 1944. Thus a strong new British fleet, based on Australia, has been established to operate in the Pacific, as well as an East Indies fleet under Vice-Admiral Sir Arthur Power, K.C.B. 

-To Sweep Nippon Navy From the Seas

"We must get nearer to Japan," declared Admiral Fraser on arriving in Australia on December 13. He hoped that the fleet ship to enter the new Sydney graving dock—nicknamed the southern hemisphere, and capable of taking the largest ships in the world—might be one of Britain's mightiest battleships. "The country with the greatest sea power must win the war—and we have it," he added, pointing out that Japan had still to supply her army in Burma by sea.
The 'Jocks' Return to St. Valery

Celebrating the three-months' freedom from the Nazi grip on the Somme, the Scottish Division of St. Valery-on-Somme, on December 13, 1944, gave a hearty welcome to the famous 51st Highland Division—the men who had come back. In June two years after fighting a valiant rearguard action around the town (see page 368, Vol. 1), the town was finally forced to surrender. Just over four years later men of the same division retake St. Valery. In liberating the town they found it in ruins. But for communities when officers and men of the 51st Highland Division were treated at a banquet held in their honour. Followed a parade and a church service of thanksgiving to which the whole town gathered. Later an impressive service was held in the cemetery and wreaths were laid on the graves of the men of the Division who fell in the town, rounded by their pipes and drums. One panel (opposite) shows the march to the church, (left) rounding the Last Post for the fallen.
Views & Reviews

Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyle

Ten marks of books about the Second Great War will be as dead in ten years as the morass of the Flanders have been for a couple of decades. A few, a very few, will be still treasured because they are pervaded by personality—not for what the things in them say, but for the way of telling it. I think one such book will be The Golden Carpet Pressed (15) by Capt. Someret de Chair, M.P. It tells the story of the rapid advance across the desert from Palestine to Iraq, which in 1941 stopped the Nazi-planned insurrection in Baghdad by capturing that city almost without a shot being fired. All this seems to be already ancient history. It may have been, as Capt. de Chair claims, "one of the greatest marches" in the annals of war. "Never since the days of Alexander the Great had an army succeeded in crossing the desert from the shores of the Mediterranean to the banks of the Euphrates. That may be true enough, but probably it only makes the majority of our lads wince. Many people may not want to know how it was done any more than they know how it can be done. But as long as war is going on, and the campaign—interesting as these may be—lasts, the book could be read.

But if you pick up The Golden Carpet and open it anywhere and start reading, you will very soon find yourself tremendously interested, and the book goes on to be even more interesting. There is a lot of people to get to know, and a lot of events to be watched, and a lot of people who are very important figures, and a lot of details that are important, and a lot of things that are not important. But the book is just as good as the story of the war, and the book is just as good as the story of the war, and the book is just as good as the story of the war.

A Battle Won by Telephone

Perhaps at first you may wonder why he describes things in such close detail. It may even annoy you to read that a handkerchief left on the table, or that a man had his saucers and biscuits for breakfast. But you will quickly discover that it is this photographic quality of the narrative which makes it grip, and gives every figure, every landscape, every scene a quality you feel you are not going to forget. One of the most dramatic incidents is the interesting of the enemy's telephone in a building from which the Iraqis had been ejected so hastily that they had no time to destroy their installations. Capt. de Chair, who was Intelligence Officer to the expedition, did not speak Arabic (which seems to the non-military mind extending strange, seeing that his duties were entirely among Arabs), but he had a very useful native interpreter with him, whom he put on at once to converse with the Iraqis as if he were one of them. He received a warm welcome. "I've been trying to get you for two hours, but what has been the matter?" asked a voice from the other end.

The interpreter replied with his hand over the mouthpiece, and I said, "Tell them that we are representatives of the British, that the British do not lose face, that if they lose a place across the flood, it's because the bridge has been destroyed, and that the British are taking the silver platters and the gold ornaments and all the rest of it, and that you had better not be afraid, and that you would have been better off to try to get a bridge across the floods, and if they did not talk, they were not the men they were supposed to be."

Before long word came that an Iraqi platoon had been sent out to look after the telephone tanks and had reported fifty of them! There was no sound at all in the rest of the area. But rumour once started soon created slow prejudice, and after Baghdad was surrendered, an Italian officer, who had been through a course at the I.M.A., Woolwich, spoke perfect English, and knew the situation, political and military, from inside, told me a war correspondent that the Iraqi army had to give in "because you British had fifty tanks there, and we had only two old anti-tank guns on that front."

But whether Capt. de Chair's ingenious invention of a tank farm was recognized as having contributed more than anything else to our victory does not appear.

When it had all been arranged for the British troops to march into Baghdad, it seemed to Capt. de Chair "of the first importance to capitalize the propaganda value of this romantic and in many ways spectacular achievement." He hoped the ceremonial entry would be filmed, so as to let the world know what this little British force had accomplished. General Kingstone—"described in the one-line reports as"—refused, firmly "No." His refusal is attributed to "the inherent reserve of publicity of the professional British soldier." Another defect in far too many British officers is the inclination to follow a course that seems to them necessary, when the civil authority does not agree. The Foreign Office, for some reason, never made clear, did not wish the British troops to enter the city at once, although everyone knew anything about the Iraqis and there would be no trouble if they did not. There was no immediate occupation, and the looters had their way for a whole night.

All who dared to defend their belongings were killed, while again relics to the west walked the eager British force which could have prevented this. Capt. de Chair is a great of the military and after victory the essential is to keep control at the situation.

Genius was depreciably lacking at this juncture. There was a lack even of ordinary common sense. Worse than that revealed itself when the campaign against the French in Syria started. The advance on Palmyra, in which the author took part and was badly wounded, was expected to be a walk-over. Little air support was given to our men, and the enemy, in this case the French, had plenty of planes and used them masterfully. After being wounded by a low-flying aircraft, Capt. de Chair was hit again while in the ambulance, although it had a huge Red Cross on it. The arrangement for disposing of casualties had completely broken down. Those who grew up the time-table of the advance ("silly time-table," Capt. de Chair calls it with complete justification) assumed that Palmyra would be taken in one or two days and that all casualties could be sent there.

"A Worse Hell Than That of Crete"

No one had stopped to wonder what would happen if Palmyra did not fall on Day One."It held out till the 27th, Thirteen, and while our troops were suffering a worse hell than that of Crete, senior staff officers were saving the stout defences of their mahogany desks. "We may have to send some aircraft up to Palmyra after all. Our chaps seem to be having a rough time of it." And at the end they stopped their drinks in the bar they added, "But worrying about those casualties up there—being able to get them back. We should have thought of Palmyra not falling. It is most annoying." (See page 35, Vol. 35.)

But don't think the general tone of the book is bitter—or even critical. It is light-hearted, full of boyish humour, entertaining in a hundred different ways. He seems to have an account of the dinner at the British Embassy in Baghdad just after that night of horror I have mentioned, could not help being entertained. From the champagne to the gatecrashing gift farrand and soft carpet, to the dining room where the dinner table was of polished shining mahogany in which the brightly silver and shaded candles were really reflected—they go to the library for after-dinner drinks, all followed the routine of pre-war English upper-class existence. One can't help wondering if deviation to that routine has not perhaps something to do with—well, the sort of stupidity that led to the massacre in Baghdad.

Backstage Story of Iraqi Revolt

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How the Army’s Amazing Bailey Bridge is Built

The resolution in military engineering has recently high praise from Field-Marshal Montgomery —a permanent way which can be assembled on the spot to span a river or gap and carry the weight of the heaviest tanks, speed and simplicity are its prerogatives. Here a Bailey bridge can be erected in three hours by 50 men as explained below by T. B. DODGSELL. See also p. 169.

A RETREATING enemy endeavours to burn his bridges behind him, and almost since the beginning of warfare the construction of emergency bridges has been a matter of prime consideration. In modern war a bridge has no longer simply to support the weight of marching infantrymen and of artillery. It has to carry the enormous tonnages and massive tasks of a mechanized army.

It was the increasing weight of British tanks that early in the war led to the introduction of Bailey bridges. These are small portable frameworks which have enabled us to pursue the German panzer during the last two years. The Germans have nothing like it.

First of all, it is easily transportable. No special transport vehicles are required. Every part fits into a three-ton lorry, and a small group of these vehicles can move everything required for a complete bridge. The exact number of vehicles varies with the length and strength of the bridge that is to be erected. The way that length and strength can be varied is another advantage. Without supports or pontoons, the Bailey can span a gap of up to 240 ft. Using the supports of a bridge that has been destroyed, or pontoons, the bridge can cover almost any distance. The longest Bailey bridge so far constructed is believed to be the 1,200 ft. bridge over the Sangro River in Italy, a triumph of military engineering. The longest floating Bailey bridge (1,095 ft.) was thrown over the Oderwis in Burma in December 1944. The bridge can be constructed with single panels and single tiers so as to take moderately heavy traffic immediately. Additional panels and tiers, greatly increasing the load it will carry, can be added while it is actually being used. There is nothing to undo—you simply add.

There are other advantages. Two footways for infantry are carried outside the roadway, so that there is no confusion between foot and wheeled traffic. If the bridge is damaged by shells or bombs, the damaged section is easily removed and a new one inserted. Most of the bridge is built on the near shore where there is a certain amount of cover, and it can be built between banks of different creeds. It is not surprising that Field-Marshall Montgomery regarded Bailey bridges as never enough Bailey bridges. This bridge is quite the best thing in that line we have ever had; it does everything we want!"  

The principle of the bridge is simple. Standard parts are fitted together, largely by means of strong pins each weighing six pounds which in turn are held by split pins. The vital part is the lattice-work panel which is carried ready assembled, and in fact is welded. Six men can carry this part by special handles. These panels, locked together, support the roadway which is of wood and is obscured as the bridge is built. Road guides not only keep the traffic central but also hold down the standard wood pieces which form the roadway. The wooden footways are supported outside the panels.

It is the method of "launching" that makes the Bailey bridge unique. Each Bailey bridge section is built up on shore, complete with roadways, and pushed forward on wheels and rollers, which are part of the equipment, almost to the point of balance. The next section is then added and the bridge pushed forward again. A false "base" is fixed, and when this has crossed the gap it goes support while the final panels are completed. Two Bailey men, one with a rocket, so that the bridge can be locked in position.

Forty Men Can Construct a Bridge

There are only 17 parts used in making the bridge itself, and another nine in constructing the supports on which it rests. The tools required are of the simplest, but very ingenious. All these parts, with the necessary tools, are packed into standard firkins. The number of men used on construction varies, of course, with the size and speed required. But forty men can construct a complete bridge. In ideal conditions a short and single-tier bridge can be assembled in three to four hours, a little longer at night. But conditions are rarely ideal in war. One of the first lines was the construction of a 500 ft. bridge over the Tigris in Italy within 48 hours by a division of forty men. Then enemy infantry. A somewhat firmer was also performed on D-Day in Normandy, when engineers bridged the Caen Canal (see illus. p. 169) and the Oure River while under fire of every kind from the enemy. They had the advantage of having rehearsed the bridging again and again in Scotland.

One of the secrets of the bridge is precision in the manufacture of its parts, and the greatest credit is due to the firm and their employees who have turned out millions of parts. Wherever manufacturing was approved, none of the factories normally undertaking this kind of work was available. All kinds of factories were enlisted to the task of production—some had been making greenhouses, window frames, cardboard boxes and even covers for motor-cars. The parts have to be exactly the right size, those vital holes that take the pins in exactly the right place, and all parts interchangeable. Just to make sure, each panel is tested by being built into a bridge before it leaves the factory. The test consists in constructing a continuous bridge, but in the factory as soon as it reaches the "other side" it is taken to pieces by section.

Mr. DONALD C. BARLEY, O.B.E., the designer of this bridge, is a civil engineer in the Ministry of Supply (see illus. p. 169). He was not a specialist in bridge construction when the call came for an improved military bridge, and is said to have sketched out the first design on the back of an envelope while returning with other officials from an unsuccessful trial of a bridge in 1940. The military invention has its "growth pains," but those of the Bailey bridge seem to have been overcome. It is said that everyone was satisfied from their own special viewpoints. By the end of 1943 engineers were actually averaging two Bailey bridges a day, and all the time the "real" men of them required for D-Day was being built up.

The Bailey bridge will cross any kind of gap, and although it goes up to quickly it is permanent. All the bridges, long and short, "easy" and difficult, have been completed in 24 hours in construction. Some of the first are still in use, having carried hundreds of thousands of tons of traffic.
Our Engineers Triumph Over Sheer Destruction

TWO HUNDRED FEET ACROSS, and spanning the Tiber River in Italy (opened in November 1945), is the largest Bailey bridge in the world, since 1964 until now it's under construction. Another noteworthy Bailey bridge exists the Arno (river at Florence). It was erected on the spot of the former Ponte del Trinità and took an estimated four months. Before the enemy entered Florence on August 11, 1944, the bridge was systematically destroyed by the Italian military and the bridge exists one world-famous Ponte Vecchio.
"HOUSING IS THE MOST THREATENED SECTOR on the home front," declared the Prime Minister on November 29, 1941. Eight days earlier the appointment had been announced of Mr. Douglasндекс, M.P., as Minister of Works, in succession to Lord Portal. In a subsequent debate Mr. Sandys disclosed that the bomb-damaged houses in London alone totalled over 800,000 and that the cost of repairs undertaken up to December 7 amounted to well over £3,000,000. Over 200,000 men and women, he said, were engaged on London repairs, which had been given a priority second only to urgent work on essential imports.

To meet this emergency the Government had decided to introduce the pre-fab, or portable, house. 150,000 of these were to be constructed in time to be available for occupation by the end of 1941. The first of these would be erected on land at the Government's disposal for the clearing of London bomb-sites and the building of temporary dwellings. While the present-steel bungalows—known as "Forts"—would not be produced till after the war he was considering calling for the manufacture of prefabricated houses from contractors who had built the invasion harbours (see pages 430-432).

**RE-HOUSING of London's bomb-damaged homes.** The Phoenix House (1), which is to replace the original Period dwelling (see page 43), is still in the frame. The bachelor's flat (2) contains a living-room, a bedroom, a kitchen with a refrigerator. Stabilised, this type is built largely of concrete, steel, and brick with an electric kitchen (3) as a feature of the new B.P.S. houses built on reinforced frames.

U.S. troops took only 7 days to erect a home in the first of many temporary dwellings (4) they are constructing in London. Yet over a ton of steel takes to complete the structures fabricated and delivered from the window-frames of steel. In the U.S. the appeal of Pacific, in the U.S.S.R. the appeal of temporary houses built in the Midlands and brought north by heavy and being piled up in the North.
People of Britain Square Up To V-Bomb Terror
Master of Most Jobs is the Wonderful Tractor.

**Caterpillar Tractor** can handle a greater variety of work from a single place than any other single piece of machinery. In the foreground it is seen cutting a road. In heavy earth handling it is capable of breaking up rows of boulders, breaking up or lifting massive trees, rip up the underbrush from tangle jungle or forest. The engine is carried on steel wheels (1) and can be hauled by powerful steers (2) worked by small boys (3).

Power is supplied by a four-cylinder 160-h.p. engine (4), and the two separate axles (5), one for each track, which can be engaged or disengaged by means of the two track levers (6). Also driving apparatus includes two differential gears (7) for driving two separate tracks (8). The steering apparatus includes a tilting steering gate (9) for keeping the truck in adjustment.

In the left background is a steam shovel ready for transport by air. On the right are tractors doing heavy work and loaders. A 400-h.p. tractor can handle up to 40 tons. Further back a tractor sheds foliage from tree branches by the bucket attached to the fork, which can be raised, lowered and turned by means of the lever (10). In the foreground left an unskilled operator in working with a tractor in the Netherlands is shown in the background. The picture shows the versatility of the tractor in any job, from light to heavy work. The picture is taken in the Netherlands.
I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

Tanks Ran Right Over the American Foxholes

When the Germans launched their counteroffensive in the Ardennes in the foggy weather of December 17-19, penetrations were made in the U.S. II Corps front. Woe Gallagher, of the Associated Press, sent the dispatch from Belgion on December 20, telling of American heroism in the Conrad fighting that was then still in progress.

Dozens slugging it out with Nazi tanks until they were ground to death in their foxholes—such was the Western theater of war in December 1944. The pullout of German forces from the Normandy beachhead was complete, and the U.S. Army was facing a new threat from the west. The German counteroffensive was a surprise, and American troops were caught off guard. The fighting was brutal, with tanks碾平 foxholes and soldiers struggling to survive.

A scene from the Ardennes, where the Germans launched their counteroffensive. American troops were caught off guard, and the fighting was brutal.

How We Captured a Member of the Gestapo

In all our successive moves from El Alamein across the arid wastes of the western desert, the more fertile country of Tripolitania, the olive and orange groves of Tunisia and Sicily, no more pleasant camp site had been found than the one we had at Luara. It was in the heart of the Italian countryside, in the midst of a rich oak-tree plantation, with the Apennines looming in the background and the villages perched on the top of each summit. The Gestapo man was in the village on the top of each summit. The Gestapo man was in the village on the top of each summit.

GERMAN HOCK TROOPS march forward past blazing U.S. vehicles, including a jeep and a heavy half-track, near the Western front during the Allied invasion of France in June 1944. The jeep belongs to the 55th Division of the U.S. 1st Army. (AP Photo)
Our Submarine's Fight with Nine Japanese Ships

We surfaced and opened fire at the rear ship at a range of 3,000 yards, obtaining eight fairly destructive hits. She turned over and sank to the bottom of the sea. We then attacked and stopped the ship ahead of her, but both the crews were now racing towards us, firing their machine-guns. I turned to port to bring them both on to the starboard bow, and directed the fire of all our guns on to them. In turn they were both hit and stopped by direct hits from the 3-in. gun.

This part of the action was most exciting, the range eventually closing to 900 yards. Both of these escorts were carrying Japanese, presumably torpedoes. One of them released a depth charge when it was 500 yards away, which rocked the submarine. Then one of the escorts got out of control, and eventually drove itself under.

Meanwhile, an M.T.B. was sighted coming from the east, on which we had a great lead, so this was the next target to be engaged. She fired two torpedoes into her, turning her side, about 100 yards astern of us. We scored a direct hit, and she was exploding, and she took little further interest in the proceedings. And now some vessel had opened up with a pom-pom. We had not previously noticed this vessel, which was probably a mother gun boat. She got one hit on the bow and was disabled, but her sister ship seemed to be undamaged. There was a peculiar sound of the worst atrocities for which the Japanese are renowned. The last hit of him he was muttering 'Ach! der lieber Gott!'

Hot Air Balloon Race for a £1,500,000 Prize

When the victorious 19th Army was across the Chindwin it formed forces for the British and captured an air supply dump on the river. How an Allied fighter pilot saved the dump from Japanese air attack is told by Capt. W. M. Smith.

An exhausting 30-day trek took us over the last mountain range before the Chindwin, and we reached a village on the west bank opposite Settaw. The airmen had no knowledge of the dump, but told us that there were some Japanese balloon spotting around near Settaw.

There was no time to be lost, so I crossed the river with a fighting patrol to investigate. We went on for about three miles through the jungle, and found the dump, the site of equipment was scattered around. There were beehive aerials and number motors for 75-mm. guns still in their protective wrappings, and one instrument could read totals of all kinds of ammunition, machine guns and grenades. I got back across the river, and that night we heard that about 50 Japanese and many civilians were encamped near Settaw.

Early next morning we went over again.

This time our fighting patrol had been told by a 300-foot glider. It was tricky country, and we moved cautiously. We had gone about a mile when our defensive screen bumped some Japanese, who made off into the jungle. It looked suspicious. Anticipating an ambush, we halted a while before going on. Behind us Lt.-Col. Kingsford had founded a 300-foot village to help move whatever stores we decided to take. He also sent word along to the Royal Engineers party for an ambush.

When we finished what we had to do, the Japanese were exploding with joy. Going back through the dump to the river, we set fire to the huts. But when our ammunition was stacked. Fourteen hours afterwards we could still hear them exploding. That night we marched the Chindwin, and were told that a large enemy force, transport and porters were nearing our dump. They were welcome to what they found!
**Our Diary of the War**

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**Flash-backs**

- **1945:**
  - **January 7, 1942:** Moscow and Cavius in Poland taken by Japanese.
  - **December 24:** Admiral Doenst assassinated in Bremen.
  - **February 8, 1942:** Admiral Doenst assassinated in Bremen.
  - **January 21, 1945:** Warsaw, besieged.
  - **February 21, 1945:** 5,000 U.S. prisoners captured by Japanese.
  - **May 9, 1945:** Allies officially joined the war in Europe.

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**I Was There!**

We rode into a vast wilderness. The roads were overgrown with high grass and the fields with rank weeds. Black, burnt villages, killed orchards—and in them, like tombstones, overturned beehives. Tall black crosses on the roadsides. While the Germans were still in Byelorussia I went on a journey through what had been the most thickly populated district of the Polissya region. For three days and nights I rode and saw not a single village, not a solitary house. I met only a boy tending a cow field, and a half-blind old woman emerging from a hole in the ground at the sound of my horse’s hoof-beats.

The hillocks bore graves with huge crosses adorned with wreaths of maple in autumnal yellow and red. You couldn’t see them from a long way off. I rode from hillock to hillock, from cross to cross, from the half-blind old woman that I first heard the mournful words: “God rest your soul.” The German had riddled the area and closed it in all sides. In one of the biggest villages of the Pink region all the people were burned in the church. In another all the children were burned in the school. In a third the people were burned on bonfires. In the fourth they were burned in their homes. S.S. men stood by and saw to it that nobody escaped through the windows.

I made these notes in a dugout tunnelled deep into a hill in the forest and camouflaged to tone with the face of the earth. It was only by sparks from the chimney that I found it. It was just as though I had found my way into a cave of the Stone Age. The tunnel ran deep beneath the roots of the trees. It was hard to tell how many people were weeping, mourning, weeping, mourning at the entrance. In the depths people lay on the floor. Tins were crammed to the doors, to the walls. The room was over-stuffed, but never will those buried мощности едим страданий.

The people mourned: "All is burnt. The ashes will be scattered by the winds, and that’s the end." Never were they more mistaken. The tenacious memory of the people cannot be burned by fire, slain by the knife, or stung by the rope.

Not far from the River Schich there was a burial mound raised by the people during the German occupation. A wooden cross bore the inscription: "The people’s curse on the German murderers in all eternity. May the memory of those who died in agony be unfading." The Germans broke the cross and scattered the grave. The very next day a new cross appeared, bearing the same epitaph. Tins entered and began to change their course, old roads would vanish, new roads would be laid, but never will those buried мощности едим страданий.
THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

The island of Leyte is the key to the Philippines. American troops, General MacArthur turned his attack upon Mindoro island, south of Luzon on which the Japanese held the capital, Malakula, south. The convoy conveying the American 1st Army troops from Leyte was attacked during each of the two days it steamed through the Mindanao Strait and the Sulu Sea, and 23 Japanese aircraft were shot down. The Japanese aircraft-carriers, and night fighters based on Leyte.

On December 14 the carriers of Admiral Halsey's U.S. Third Fleet attacked Japanese defense airfields. On the 15th 40 carrier-based planes swept over Luzon, 100 attacking the latest Teisen fighters were in action, shooting down eight F.W. 109s and one Meisen-schmitt 262 'jet-job' without loss.

The purpose of the Luff-waffe was to assist the ground forces by laying strips of anti-personal fragmentation bombs in front of the German attack forces. The Americans employed V-weapons in the offensive, using flying bombs and rockets against rear areas behind the Allied lines, and "silber bullets" in the forward areas. The shock of the attack forced the U.S. 1st Army into the first Allied retreat since the invasion of Normandy. On Sunday 17th, the enemy were reported to have put 1,000 heavily-engined fighters and fighter-bombers into the air over the Ardennes-Chapelle sector. By the following day two first five targets, using more than 1,300 bombers and losing 17; 500 attacked Dasing. The Americans lost three of their 500 bombers and five of the 600 fighters, shooting down three enemy fighters; they used a new type of fragmentation bomb weighing 250 lbs. and dropped over 4,000 tons in one day.

While the U.S. hard-air forces were directed to tactical assaults, the U.S.A.'s 35th A.F. from latitude continued the strategic offensive against the Nazi homeland. On December 17 and 18 they attacked Silesian industrial centers, 500 bombers attacked the coastal defenses of the Osnabruck, 48 were shot down, the Americans that day lost 29 aircraft. On the second day enemy resistance was light.

On December 19 and 21 Bomber Command dropped 25,000 tons, escorted by U.S. 9th A.F. 350 Fortresses attacked the railways and road junctions from Trier north to Genoa, carrying the U.S. First Army front on, the first of those days.

A PELLING Weather Conditions Sur-
mounted by U.S. Heavy Bombers

Still the German advance rolled on, and the 10th Airborne Division, equipped as ground forces, were encircled in Bastogne on December 20. This division, dropped from the air on D-Day in Normandy and again dropped into action at Nijmegen. Now they were called upon to fight another isolated action from a different cause. Dakota transport aircraft began to drop supplies to them on December 21, and in four days 842 transports and more than 50 gliders flew in supplies in the largest single effort of its kind throughout the war; only one supply - off-loaded outside the held area. Fortunately, the weather conditions were probably most favorable for the success of the supply dropping operations. The 101st Division in Bastogne also possessed heavy tanks, which the Armies men did not. The American 9th A.F. continued, however, to carry food to their units. The German troops were thus supplied and began to move.

As early as the first week of the German offensive they ground the Allied tactical forces, but the heavy bomber forces in the U.S. continued to operate whenever they could in the worst weather they had ever taken off in. Bomber Command and the 8th Air Force bombed enemy communica-
tions at Fhang, Kaiserslautern, Coblenz, Bonn, Fulda, Gietersheim, Cologne, Saarbrucken, Aachen, Luxembourg, and Bingen. In addition, Bomber Command attacked Peenemunde oil plant near Stettin, Dec. 21; troop concentrations and enemy armour at St. Vith (Dec. 26); the 8th F and R- boats pens at Mussumed (Dec. 13) and U-boat ar-
dams (Dec. 29) with 12,000 lb. bombs as counter to enemy opposition to Allied con-
yings coming in.

On December 24 and 25 Allied armies exceeded 19,000 for the first time by the Luftwaffe. On December 24 over 2,000 Fortresses and Liberators attacked escorted by 250 Meppelings and Thunderbolts. No doubt the Luftwaffe played an impor-
tant part in bringing Rainey's attack on the air - and before the end of the German planes were forced back several miles, there to dig in, while the Allies took the initiative and the southern axis of the new salient.

V-bombs fell in Northern England for the first time at the Christmas weekend; the Germans said London, Manchester and Airdsburg were too attacked.
Premier Flies to Athens to Call Peace Parley

In a dramatic bid for peace, Mr. Churchill, accompanied by Mr. Eden, flew to Athens on Christmas Day 1944, and at once called a conference of the leading political personalities and of the military authorities. The conference was held in the presence of the Premier, and it is understood that the discussions centred on the possibility of a general cease-fire and the establishment of a conference of the two sides. The Premier is expected to return to London on Friday afternoon.
News from the Airways of the World at War

AIRCRAFT have fought their own battles in the skies, served indomitable war in the back of every battle at sea, on land, and in coastal operations. They have carried troops and supplies, equipped underground arms in enemy-occupied countries, and as ambulances have carried wounded and bloodied from the battlefields. Without aircraft the battles on the Pacific islands on Sicily, Italy, Norway and the French Riviera would have been far more costly, and in some cases, perhaps impossible.

As the war has continued, the number and variety of aircraft used by the Fighting Forces have so increased as to make it impossible for anyone not specializing in the subject to keep really well-informed. The series of books entitled Aircraft of the Fighting Forces, of which the 4th annual volume (1944 Aircraft) edited by D. S. Munro, J. A. Goldthwaite, has just been published, should be in the hands of everyone interested in aviation. This series of books, one each year, permits the reader to follow the development of the subject as it progresses. The latest volume, 1944 Aircraft, is an up-to-date, comprehensive, and authoritative work of reference for those who have been in close touch with aviation throughout the war.

HEAVIEST ARMED AIRCRAFT is the B.32 Mitchell bomber, which carries 18 guns in all. Eight .5in. machine-guns are on its nose.

VICKERS-WARWICK, R.A.F., dual-purpose aircraft, has twin 1,000 h.p. Double Wasp engines, carries a crew of three, armed with two .302 in. guns and early warning equipment. See also Illus. page 41.

VICKERS-SMITHSON 191 OTTER MARK I, seen in flight, is a single-engined seaplane, designed for coastal reconnaissance and mines laying purposes. It has twin engines, twin floats and is powered with a British Mercury 16 cylinder 300 h.p. It armed with three Vickers .303 in. guns and carries a crew of three or four.

MODERN ROUGHWATER. This Sabre is a Republic XF-84, the first model of the jet-powered fighter. It is powered by a 3,000 h.p. jet engine. It is capable of a maximum speed of 600 m.p.h. and a ceiling of 40,000 ft. It armed with four .50 calibre machine-guns, two on each side of the fuselage.

MODERN BOMBER. The Boeing 195, an American four-engine bomber, has a maximum speed of 400 m.p.h. It armed with four 1,000 lb. bombs. It is capable of a range of 4,000 miles.

This is a compendium of news and information about the world's aircraft during World War II. It covers the development of aircraft, their roles, and the technology that made them possible. The text is written in a factual and informative style, providing details and statistics about various aircraft models. The diagrams and photographs are used to illustrate the aircraft and give a visual representation of the information presented.
Few persons who have studied public opinion, as all journalists must do, have much use for the "polls," or widely-collected cross-sections of popular notions, which profit to show what the masses are thinking about public affairs. To begin with, only a very small proportion of the persons who think at all, consciously or logically, about matters beyond their own personal ills, are likely to consult public opinion polls; and not many of the polls care to collect the facts and assemble the historical background which alone can provide a basis for rational judgement. Therefore their answers in question, put as the gatherings of opinions depend very largely on the manner in which the questions are phrased. We heard a great deal about the League of Nations Union Ballot in 1933, which showed a large majority in favour of following Munich’s attack on Czechoslovakia. But no poll was done to stop it. People signed the ballot paper, but didn’t really care. Indeed, many of them did not understand what they were signing. This was proved by a London daily paper which canvassed a district where the vote had been overwhelmingly against letting the Italian break the peace, and received an equally heavy poll in favour of doing nothing to restrain them! Not much value need be attached therefore to the result of the same journal's well-intentioned endeavour to find out how long we want control and direction of labour to continue.

Not in Japan has been beaten" was the prevailing view, but I doubt if the majority of the "poll" could give reasons for it.

Many useful changes that were turned down in peace time have been adopted during war. It looked as if there might be a chance to run a short Bill through the House, giving Ministers who are members of the House of Lords the right to introduce their Department in the Commons. That is still a chance we may see to get the line of the one destroyed, inconvenient as it was in many ways. However, there is no reason for not keeping peers who hold important offices in their own place and letting under-secretaries explain the views of their chiefs in the House. In most Legislatures Ministers can speak in both Houses, and there are obvious advantages of the practice. One of them is that there would not be the same feeling in the Commons as there is now when Cabinet office is given to men who sit in the Upper House and cannot be questioned or argued with face-to-face by the representatives of the people.

Those who think of a National Park as merely a禁区 of open space, judged from their judges and kept well-kept, are entirely in error. National Parks are decided by the Constitution of the Committee which is busy even in war-time spreading the idea of them as "national" of our finest landscape brought into full public service—protected in its pristine beauty, continued in their farming use, and kept or made accessible (so far as farmland is not cultivated) for open-air recreation and public enjoyment, and particularly for country walking." In our small island such preservation is essential if we want the men who are fighting our battles all over the world, and their children, to as a gift from Beautiful Britain as their fathers were. We have far too much of the soil of hedge and unfenced by ribbons of holes little buildings, by blanketing buildings of a squalid type such as deface the lovely South Coast and much of the Downs- land scenery ; by cheap and nasty additions to farmhouses or labourers' cottages. To stop that in future everywhere, and not only in National Parks, is our plain duty to those who will come after us. National Parks would be at any rate a good start.

When even the chairman of the Kennel Club wants you to take a lead for dogs' "inquiring", it is obvious that there is something in the dog market. For puppies that used to cost two or three pounds, people are giving twenty or thirty. For a St. Bernard—if you should happen to fancy one, which I never did as a home companion, suitable enough though they are on a snowbound Swiss mountain—you would probably have to give £30. A daschund will cost you £12, a Sealyham £15, and so on. This is not due to the number of dogs in Britain having diminished. There are just as many as there were at the outbreak of war, although a great many were destroyed when rationing made it hard to feed dogs. The cause of the great rise in prices is apparently the increased demand for dogs of every kind and every kind. Even mongrels which used to be given away now fetch several pounds apiece.

If it is true that letters from Marshal Petain to Hitler and Hitler’s answers to them have been discovered in a bureau where Petain lived for a time, they will probably throw light on both men’s characters. I can imagine no reason for not keeping of the story, especially if you told me to call you, can you not let me have Livem lithium? He is a story piece of work. He puts me off my food. And really he is not much use to you. I will not take his orders, print respectfully, Marshal Petain. To which the following was sent: "Marshal, Laval, I agree, is simply a dot in his place. Therefore we will stay where he is—at your right hand, and you will do what he tells you, because I communicate my wishes to you through him.

By the way, you should put Hell Hitler at the beginning and end of your letters for me. Hell! to your affectionate Adolf.

A METROPOLITAN MAGAZINE referred recently to "the epidemic of stealing" which broke out during the last war, continued more or less through the anxious peace, and has become worse since 1939. At first it was mostly among soldiers, but it has spread to the civilians in all sections of the community. Here is one example. From the main post office in the City of London's big department stores some dozens of soap packets and handkerchief packages have been stolen, with the result that the management has had to put up a notice to the effect that no sale can be made.

In another big shop everything purchased is tied with a special kind of tape. One customer who bought some small article and said, "Never mind about tying it up; it will go in my pocket," was told that it was the rule to put the tape round everything that had been paid for. If you did not take the trouble to put the tape on the things without the tape, that something had clearly been stolen.

My friends among the publishers have long had a stout champion in Stanley Unwin, himself a past President of the Publishers’ Association and controlling more then one of our best-known London houses. Unwin has just sent me his newest outburst against the powers that be. It is a six-page pamphlet entitled "Publishing in Peace and War," in which he analyses once again into the arena on his favourite hobby-horse—the meanness of the paper ration for book-publishing which, despite the recent 24 per cent increase, still leaves off to 22,000 a year. This may seem a lot—if you don’t happen to know anything about publishing, and may reflect that the present ration for H.M. Stationery Office alone is 62,000 a year. It came as no surprise to find that at least two-thirds of the total demand for books in Britain is for books for British garrison; and this, more or less, means classics of all ages, and that what is left is not a great deal on the surface of the stream. Which is, of course, it should be there, as the feature of the present situation in the fact that books are no longer selling in Britain at a livelier tune of £11,000,000 a year, as compared with £10,000,000 pre-war, and yet the demand outstrips the supply, Unwin contends that another 8,000 tons of paper a year on the publishers’ ration would make all the difference. I wonder if, for this, he isn’t being a bit too modest in his demands.

NONE of my friends has ever numbered among his desert island reading the "Agony" column of "The Times." Yet a well-known social historian I know not only makes it his breakfast-time reading but card-indexes it for reference—as an invaluable and (the Swells) infallible guide to the foibles and peculiarities of the strange age we live in. I wonder under what section of his card-index he would file the following advertisement.

ARTISTS-CRAFTSMEN (Oxford). 3 languages, commercial perspective, patience portfolios. Situations in art, fine or small, architectural design, executes will, ceilings, frames, furniture, sculpture, undertake all-brush, perspective, chemical analysis, mathematical calculations, lettering, etc. How many readers, I wonder, could name 33 languages without turning up a book of "Hirohito"—ah, alone and (and) their letters, write them? Oh! I think of only 33, for, too much of it, including Basque, the mystery language they speak in the Pynnnon which is said to have an affinity with any other tongue in the world.
They Also Serve Who Guard the Arctic Seas

U.S. COAST GUARDSMEN IN GREENLAND keep guard, vigil among the gray Arctic wastes. The American protection of this vast island, some 250,000 sq. miles in area, dates back to April 12, 1911—eight months before the U.S. was at war with Germany—when President Roosevelt signed an agreement with the Danish Monarch in Washington providing for the establishment of U.S. naval, military and air bases on Denmark's only colonial possession. A coastguard cutter is seen in the bay.