Aboard a British minesweeper the "Area Cleared" signal has been flashed, and with the sicker free of the ship's side the dangerous obstacle to mark a swept channel—a lowerer, or "dinner," is lowered from the deck. This fleet sweeper, known as a "dinner," is operating in East Coast waters in the rear of our fighting fleets. Both in home and distant waters the end of the war has, if anything, intensified the hazardous work of our minesweepers and their crews, whose stupendous peacetime task is described in pages 712-713.

Photo: British Official

Edited by Sir John Hammerton
CAPS IN FLOATING MALCHERAN'S BAY. were used to Mulberry Harbour sections, swept free from Britain in early September 1944. The picture (I) shows the breach blown in the original date at Bayeux. Eleven caps were taken to Mulberry Harbour to be used for the construction of the landing craft. The picture (II) shows the breach blown in the original date at Vire. Eleven caps were taken to Mulberry Harbour to be used for the construction of the landing craft. The picture (III) shows the breach blown in the original date at Fécamp. Eleven caps were taken to Mulberry Harbour to be used for the construction of the landing craft. The picture (IV) shows the breach blown in the original date at Le Ham. Eleven caps were taken to Mulberry Harbour to be used for the construction of the landing craft. The picture (V) shows the breach blown in the original date at Trouville. Eleven caps were taken to Mulberry Harbour to be used for the construction of the landing craft.
AFTER her war with Russia in 1904-05 Japan's position became immensely strong, and if she had played her cards with good sense her future was assured. She had, to an exceptional degree, all the defensible advantages of an island kingdom; for the immensity of the ocean which protected her shores from invasion also ensured that her navy could always fight a hostile fleet in her home waters, where proximity to its bases would more than compensate for disparity in numerical strength. Russia was the only Power that could seriously menace her security; but she was in a position to prevent Russia developing a fleet capable of resisting any renewed attempts Russia might make to encroach on Japan.

Economically, Japan's position was weakened by her inability to produce food sufficient for her requirements; but, on the other hand, geographically she was better placed to develop the enormous resources of China than any other Power. Everything pointed to the expediency of cultivating friendly relations with China and giving her a lead in developing her economic potential. But Japan was in a hurry and preferred to use force and a certainty, presumably in the strength of her position to defy intervention by third Powers.

BRITAIN and the U.S.A. were not Prepared for Effort Demanded

Whether economic sanctions at the time of her war with Manchuria or at Manchuria and Shantung again the question is questionable, but it is certain that armed intervention would have demanded an effort for which neither Britain nor the U.S.A. were prepared, and in which their lack of advanced bases would have been a more decisive handicap. If the two great western Powers had been willing to embark on a long war in which their immense productive power could be developed, no doubt victory would eventually have been achieved. But in view of the strength of Japan's army and the favourable conditions under which her navy would operate, the magnitude of the effort required should not be underrated.

When, however, Japan forced the issue and deliberately provoked war with the western Powers her rapid initial conquests entailed the sacrifice of her strong defensive position. Her army could not be employed as a concentration force to defend outlying strongholds, and her navy, in order to secure communications with them, was compelled to emerge from its advantageous position in home waters. Her ingenious and far-sighted developments of aircraft carriers merely proved the answer which American productive strength was able to provide. Too late, having sacrificed the greater part of her navy, Japan sought to re-establish her position in home waters, but by that time developments of sea-air warfare on which she had relied to control sea communications had turned decisively against her and enabled America to secure the bases from which air-power could undermine the foundations of her former security.

NOT even Germany has given such an example of a nation deliberately sacrificing an obviously valuable position to the less prospects of ever restoring it. In the case of Germany, withdrawal of armies of occupation might obviously lead to the recovery of much of her strong position and aggravate the penalties; but with Japan the situation is very different, for sea-air power can maintain a stronghold on her.

Prolonged or complete occupation of the country would seem therefore to be unnecessary, for sea-air power provides an instrument of control from outside both on aggressive tendencies and on the economic life of the country. Clearly Japan, however much she might develop her internal military strength or strengthen her defences against invasion, would not be able to embark on any offensive enterprises except by a seaborne operation which could have no possibility of success, particularly if America retained her bases in the Philippines and other islands comparatively adjacent to Japan. Moreover, shipping on which Japan's economic future depends would equally be at the mercy of sea-air power.

PREEMINENTLY it is for these reasons that so many observers, including MacArthur, evidently does not consider a large army of occupation or its prolongation in the country will be necessary. It may, of course, be advisable to maintain at least token forces in some of her large cities, and possibly to move columns of Allied troops through the more remote parts of the country in order to bring home to the people the completeness of their defeat. War crimes would be rounded up; and in that insistence on the fullest co-operation of the Japanese Government would seem to be of prime importance.

There can be no question of a soft peace, particularly in that matter, but on the other hand a nation that has an excessive population and has lost all power of aggressive action cannot be kept in impossible economic conditions, and the case for giving her assistance and to be even stronger than in Germany. There is less possibility of concessions being abused; secret or veiled war industries would lead nowhere, nor would quasi-military organizations be a danger except to Japan's internal stability.

If, as I believe, from the military standpoint, Japan as a source of danger to peace has received a knock-out blow from which, under the new conditions, there is no possibility of recovery, the effects of that blow on the Japanese occupation of the possessions of the western Powers appear likely to have a disturbing influence. In Burma, fortunately, the completeness of the Japanese defeat and the hardships endured by the Burmese during the occupation have combined to produce a sense of liberation, and there should be sufficient troops available to ensure a reasonably rapid restoration of good order. In a country where docility had so often given trouble and nationalist sentiments are strong, the presence of large numbers of highly trained troops provide an adequate safeguard against hot-headed attempts to exploit the disturbance caused by the war. In Malaya and the Straits Settlements the situation is even less reason to expect trouble, whatever changes in the system of administration it may be considered advisable to carry out. The repatriation of Japanese troops and the discovery of war criminals among them are the chief immediate problems.

MINIMUM of Force to be Used in Carrying Out an Invidious Task

The situation in Indo-China and Indonesia is much more complicated, owing to the facts that neither French nor Dutch troops were available in sufficient force to resume occupation of their respective possessions, and that it fell to British forces to accept the Japanese surrender and to rescue prisoners of war. Unfortunately the vacuum created by the disappearance of Japanese authority could not be filled by British troops. The resentment against European control, fostered by the Japanese during the occupation, was therefore able to express itself.

Once again British and Indian troops have been compelled to intervene in the interests of law and order where they have neither political authority nor are in adequate strength to do so with immediate effect. Moreover, it does not appear necessary to use the minimum of force. That it should have been necessary to call on the surrendered Japanese troops to assist in the maintenance of order is a regrettable if unavoidable complication. But it shows that our forces in the Far East do not yet exceed requirements.
RELEASED AUSTRALIAN PRISONERS watched their former gaolers filling in defence trenches (top) which the Aussies themselves had been forced to dig in twittering sunshine during captivity. The Bishop of Singapore conducted a service for them in Changi Prison courtyard (bottom), when some 150 were confirmed. Last batch of Singapore prisoners—some of whom had been interned as prisoners of war—left the port aboard the Polish motorship Sobieski on September 27, 1945.
British Army of the Rhine where Nazis Trained

AT LUNEBURG, scene of the German surrender on May 4, 1945 (see pages 79-82), and former famous Wehrmacht training camp, members of the 6th (London) Brigade Royal Artillery with the British Army of the Rhine attended an open-air course on tactics (1) in late September. Marking the site of the surrender, a temporary wooden plaque (2) was erected, and a permanent monument of stone. The plaque was on Sept. 24 reported to have been defaced by local Nazis.

After the surrender hundreds of buses from all over Germany were rounded up in the area, some being dismantled, others employed in transporting our troops. A Carbona cut renamed the destination of this Berli his Bath vehicle (3). On Landberg's outskirts in a small well-wooded British military cemetery (4), where 295 Polish soldiers are buried, a British military cemetery (4), where 295 Polish soldiers are buried.
C.-I.-C. OF THE BRITISH PACIFIC FLEET, Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, G.C.B., K.C.B., today embarked in H.M. Australian destroyer Warrego which, on September 16, 1941, had brought him to Youghal from his flagship, the H.M.S. Australia. H.M.S. Australia was carrying airmen and other troops. Admiral Fraser has been visiting General Chiang Kai-shek at Chungking. He is to be presented to the Allied Far East Air Command. The airbase at Chungking is now under Allied control. Admiral Fraser said that the Far Eastern situation was of great importance to Britain. He said, "We shall need a small place out here to keep it going," he declared. At present it consists of three battle ships, four carriers, nine cruisers and 31 destroyers. Our naval base in the Pacific would not be increased beyond the present ones at Singapore, Hongkong and in Australia.
In this country little has been heard of the war in the Adriatic. Yet, in the rapid progress of the Yugoslav armies in 1944 would not have been possible had it not been for the invaluable aid rendered by the Royal Navy. As the result of a series of small craft actions, control of the channels between the numerous islands that fringe the Dalmatian coast was wrested from the Germans. With their sea communications cut, enemy garrisons on the coastal strip were forced to surrender to the Yugoslavs.

One of the hardest-fought engagements of this type was fought on the small island of Vis. The coast is surrounded by deep fiords and inlets and is cut by a series of small ravines. It is almost completely wooded. The town of Vis, which has about 2000 inhabitants, is located on the east side.

The Germans had put a large garrison of about 3000 men on the island. From there the enemy gunboats and mine-sweepers were able to prevent the Yugoslav navy from reaching the Dalmatian coast. They were supplied with food and ammunition by air. At one time the enemy even established a small airfield on the island.

The new Akt, a small town situated about sixteen miles southwest of Vis, was captured by the Allies on October 11, 1944. The town is situated only eight miles from the southern tip of the island of Vis. The Allies had made a surprise landing there.

The Allied troops were well equipped and well supplied. They had brought with them a large number of tanks, supplies and ammunition.

The enemy resisted fiercely. The Germans were well prepared for the attack. They had dug in strong positions. The coast was well defended by warehouses and machine guns.

The battle lasted for several days. The Allies succeeded in capturing the town. The town was reduced to ruins.

Coastal craft have a short life. If they escape destruction in action by or accident, they soon wear out and are scrapped or superseded by improved types. Already many of those which played a brilliant part in winning the war have gone, or are being offered for sale to the public without their engines.

Soon of our surplus ships are being acquired by Allied Navies. The latest to go are the destroyers Quilliam, Savage and Scorpion, all built during the war, which have been purchased by the Royal Netherland Navy. One of them has already arrived in Dutch waters, and has been renamed Piet Hein, after the celebrated admiral who captained a Spanish treasure fleet and ultimately fell in action off Dunkirk in 1629. Further transfers to the Dutch flag are expected to include a cruiser and an aircraft carrier, names of which have still to be announced.

H.M.S. Geranium, one of the numerous corvettes of the "Flower" class which proved so valuable in the early days of the Battle of the Atlantic, has arrived at Copenhagen on being taken over by the Royal Danish Navy. She has been renamed Theis. H.M.S. Annan and Monnow, two frigates of the "River" class which were lent to the Royal Canadian Navy during the past two years, have also gone to the Danish fleet, so that the Navy, a result of the German invasion, is expected to be completed. A corvette of the "Castle" type is expected to follow.

According to messages from Chungking, there is some prospect of the Chinese Navy's losses being made good by the transfer of ships from the British and United States Navies. Nothing appears to have been settled, but the suggestion is that a cruiser or two, with destroyers, escort vessels and minesweepers, might be acquired from the Allied surplus of tonnage.

The effect of this in practice would be to give China a completely new navy, for with the exception of a couple of small cruisers which were in the hands of the Nanking "quixoting" government, the only vessels in Chinese hands were a collection of river gunboats. It is possible that some of the smaller Japanese ships which have been surrendered may be handed over to China instead of being scrapped.
Hard-Worked British Minesweepers Still Busy

Even after the end of hostilities our minesweepers are still gallantly engaged—now in the gigantic task of clearing the waters of the North Sea and the coasts of Western Europe where they were the forerunners of mine attack. What they have already accomplished and how much remains to be done, in making the seas fit for human traffic, is told here. See facing page, and 356 above.

The war may be over—but not for British minesweepers; their work goes on. They are still busy—and will be for another year or more—bringing to a triumphant conclusion one of the greatest minesweeping feats of modern times—the non-stop clearance of every port in north-west Europe, from Brest to the Kattegat.

In August of this year a hundred British minesweepers made a start on clearing the vast defensive mine-barriers laid round many of the coasts to protect coastal shipping. A hundred thousand moored mines were laid in these waters during the war; in addition there are hundreds of enemy ground mines—magnetic and acoustic, or a combination of both—which lie outside the war channels and were not swept during hostilities. Between V Day and mid-August over 2,000 mines were swept—often at the rate of 300 to 350 a week.

The mines in these fields, which cost a total of some $25,000,000, are being cut and sunk, for they have small value as scrap. The TNT with which they are filled would be worth little more than a sniffing a pound and would not repay the cost and labour of the salvage. Besides the 11 flotillas at present engaged, 22 special minesweepers have been built to operate in shallow waters, and since sweeping will be restricted during the winter months the main effort will not be made till next summer. In minesweeping operations both in home and foreign waters, 1,350 sweepers, manned by 50,000 officers and men, are employed. Of the personnel 90 per cent are temporary wartime recruits.

They are listed on Secret List

A word or two about the actual operation of sweeping. When an area known to be mined is swept, the sweepers adopt an echelon formation (see diagram in opposite page), so that only the leading ship, that of the Senior Officer, enters unswept waters. The others follow, each leaving a safety overlap, so that the ship herself is in water already swept by the ship ahead. Last of all comes the "damer," laying dawn-buoy markers to mark the area. When one length has been completed, the flotilla turns and repeats the sweep in the opposite direction. This continues until the whole area has been cleared. The British Navy has without doubt the finest organization of minesweepers in the world. These craft are not converted trawlers; they are special-built, and the armament is so instrumentable to cope with the varied assortment of sea-mines that they encounter—by German aircraft, U-boats and E-boats.

Much progress has been made in cleaning up the North Sea and English Channel. It is in the southern waters of the North Sea that our minesweeping patrols are encountering the most trouble for here German mine-laying aircraft, spotted by British patrol ships, often jettisoned their mines and swept towards the nearest Lufwaffe bases.

As regards drifting mines sighted in the English Channel, Irish Sea, Eastern Atlantic, and Denmark straits, an Admiralty statement issued on September 27, 1945, pointed out that these are British mines which are designed to become automatically harmless on breaking from their moorings. The risk to shipping of damage from drifting mines in these areas is, therefore, very small.

In home waters, incidentally, one of the most intensive (and expensive) minesweeping operations of the war was carried out in the Firth of Clyde—over an area of 1,000 square miles—in a quest for moored magnetic mines laid by the U-boat 218 on April 18, 1945. At the end of July, three out of 15 mines were still unaccounted for, despite an intensive search made by 25 minesweepers with the cooperation of the U-boat’s commander.

After the German surrender, full information about all minefields sown around British islands during the war was given to the Admiralty by German naval experts. The Germans stated that some of their latest mines could neither be swept nor recovered without exploding when moved. But British naval divers, searching the bottom of Bremen harbour in pitch darkness, working by a sense of touch alone, removed the firing mechanisms from three of them. Elsewhere, several of these mines at first some difficulty because German sweeps are designed to surface only British mines, while our sweeps work the other way round. Modifications were made and the difficulty overcome.

One of the most thickly-mined areas in the world is the Kattegat and here British and German minesweepers, sweeping together, are clearing their respective mines from this vital stretch of water separating Denmark and Sweden. One minefield alone hereabouts—between the Skag and Swedish waters—is some 250 square miles in area. As a start, the British have about 1,200 miles long of mines being cleared. Gradually these will be widened to three miles, and, as every chance has to be swept between ten and twenty times, the minesweepers engaged will have to cover a distance of over a million miles. After that there will still be check sweeps to cover the whole area. In this work some 160 German minesweepers with personnel numbering over 5,000, are co-operating with a British force. They fly no ensign and receive their orders from the British Naval Mission in Copenhagen.

Although negotiations are now in progress to make mine-sweeping an international obligation on all maritime nations, the clearance of north-west Europe’s ports fell exclusively to British minesweepers. They began their task shortly after D-Day at Cherbourg, which had been used as a dumping ground for every type of German mine. During September 1944 approaches to the Seine Seine, Le Havre, Calais, Dieppe and Boulogne were swept, frequently under fire from heavy coastal batteries.

Under Guns of Shore Batteries

With the capture of Antwerp on September 5, the centre of interest moved up to the Nore Command, where sweepers had already begun the task of running a channel across the southern North Sea from the South Falls to the entrance of the Scheldt. The Scheldt was forced by British minesweepers on November 2 and 3, under the noses of shore batteries; by November 26 the narrow unburied waterways were declared open. Nine days later the first sizable convoy of 19 big ships berthed at Antwerp (see p. 521, Vol. 4).

The arduous clearance of the docks in Antwerp itself took from October 16 to December 4, under heavy bombardment by VJs and Vs.

In Italy, U.S. naval minesweeping (airships) are co-operating with Royal Navy minesweepers in clearing enemy minefields in the Gulf of Genoa. In the latter, a U.S. naval officer who acts as aerial mine-sweeper, while acting in Italy, is told here. See facing page, and 356 above.

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Ridding the Troubled Seas of Hidden Death

Sweep in progress. Illustrated diagrammatically above, showing a single Oropesa sweep to starboard, the vessel sailing in echelon formation. In the wake of the last float is the "danner," which lays dan-buys to mark the area swept and thus opened to navigation (see page 3). The Oropesa is named after the island where it was first tried out, in 1918.

Released mines can be exploded or sunk by rifle-fire.

Acoustic hammer being lowered (1) over the side.

The hammer is lowered below the minesweeper; by means of sound vibrations set up within the hammer, seawater mines are exploded at a safe distance.
How the Captives Fared in Sumatra and Siam

REPARATION from South-East Asia began on August 18, 1945. It was organized by R.A.F.W.I. (Recovery of Allied Prisoners of War and Internees), which by October had two transport planes. Over 6,000 Allied nationals from Sumatra and 19,000 from Siam. At Pakar Baroe, Sumatra, British and Australian troops were found in primitive huts, more than 150 to each shack. After liberation they strolled in the compound.

At Bangkok, Siam’s capital (occupied September 12), the R.A.F. airlift was flown by R.A.F. Transport Command. At Bangkok, R.A.F. Transport Command in the liberation. Here the Allied ex-P.O.W. were on crutches—raised their turn to board the first transport planes for Rangoon.

Photo, British Official, Sport & General
ATOKOSUKA, Japan, naval base in Tokyo Bay, 25 miles south of the Inner Harbour, scenes from the last ratings from H.M. Australian destroyers Napier and Nirimba, attached to the British Landing Forces, performed guard duties; the Changing of the Guard ceremony (1). Note the Shinto shrine in the background. Tokyo, women (2). A woman carrying a babe in arms. Baby da is with baby when mother goes to work—by scraping it or her bush as she cleaned windows at the Ajushi barracks taken over by U.S. units.

[Caption: Taking no chances, American troops searched everyone they came into contact with. At center (3) two British rums just released from internment (1). Common sight in Japan’s capital, following the surrender, were herd of downcast soldiers awaiting demobilization or being sent to prisoner-of-war camps. Scenes of the Jap palace, subjects of the Empress who visited General MacArthur at his latter’s H.Q. on Sept. 7, bowed in homage (4). Many Japanese are reported to have committed hara-kiri here. Photo: Associated Press, Feb. 20, 1924, U.S.A.]
Now it Can Be Told!

MAN-MADE ISLANDS AND FLOATING BRIDGES

British scientists have found a way of increasing the natural surface tension of water, making it technically possible to build a mid-Atlantic aerodrome or a floating cross-channel bridge. It was disclosed by the Admiralty in September 1945. This latest discovery in engineering-on-water began when an inventor’s brain-wave sent him motor-cycling at 30 m.p.h. along a tarpaulin stretched over a river ford. The new discovery has been sponsored and developed by the Royal Navy, and brings dramatic dreams within the realms of actuality.

Ordinary tension will support a needle on the water’s surface. By putting a flexible synthetic surface on the sea, and by increasing the tension about 400,000 times, it has been found possible to support heavy lorries any aircraft in mid-ocean. One practical result of the discovery is the production of man-made “islands” — composed of hundreds of hexagonal buoyancy cans—“islands” which can be built to any shape or length required and which can be easily dismantled, transported and reassembled. Another, which has already stood up to the severe practical tests of war, is the “Swiss Roll,” a floating pier that can be rolled up, carried on a ship and later rolled out again from ship to shore. This pier is nearly twenty times as light as a Bailey bridge of equal length, yet it will carry a nine-ton lorry.

INVENTOR of these new devices is Mr. R. M. Hamilton, of Victoria Street, London, who served at the beginning of war as a Petty Officer in the Royal Naval Patrol Service. He is an inventor by profession. Cooperating on the involved mathematical calculations required was Mr. J. S. Herbert, Housemaster at Eton College. “Further details from the original document are being made,” Mr. Hamilton said, “but of a time their nature must remain secret.”

It was in 1944 that the first practical result was employed—the “Swiss Roll” pier, used in the Normandy invasion. In this flexible canvas-and-wood jetty, a tension of 18 to 30 tons is applied to any length stretching from ship to beach and the result is that a laden lorry can be driven ashore in safety over the sea. Some 2,700 feet of “Swiss Roll” were in continual use at the invasion harbour at Arromanches in spite of the appalling weather that, unfortunately, was encountered there.

The Navy’s latest experiments, only recently concluded, have been with a further development of the same fundamental principle, the “Lily” floating airstrip. Given its name because of its resemblance to a carpet of lily leaves on a pond, “Lily” is a very different proposition to “Swiss Roll.” It consists of numbers of buoyancy cans with hexagonal surfaces, so linked together that they give in a controlled manner to the motion of the sea from any direction, yet remain sufficiently rigid to take the weight of a heavy aircraft. Whereas in “Swiss Roll” tension is applied externally, “Lily’s” hexagonal surfaces, when linked together, create their own tension.

The Navy’s experimental airstrip is the smallest on which practical tests could be undertaken, 530 ft. long and 60 ft. across. On this an aircraft, laden to 9,000 pounds, has been landed and has taken off again. A strip of this size can be assembled by 40 men in one hour. At present the cans are only six feet across and 30 inches deep, but their size could be scaled-up to take greatly increased weight.

The whole surface of “Lily” is flexible so that it will not break up, but this flexibility is controlled by the use of underwater dampers.

“With Straws in Your Hair”

The inventor claims that with the latest dampers more than three tons pressure is required to move the surface at all, and that “Lily” will remain flat in waves up to 36 ft. from crest to crest. The dream of Atlantic aerodromes has hitherto been unattainable because it has not been possible to build large enough storm-proof flat-surfaced structures. Modern transport aircraft would need a carrier or a strip twice the length of the Queen Elizabeth, largest ship in the world. Such a floating structure has hitherto been impractical. The Navy’s new “aerodrome” can be transported in ships and assembled anywhere. With the present size buoyancy can, a “Lily” 2,500 feet long, could be transported in three merchant ships.

“Lily’s” possibilities for bridge-building are underlined by those responsible for its development. “To mention a concrete bridge immediately places you with straws in your hair,” said Mr. Herbert, the mathematician, “but we can say that it would be possible to build a floating bridge 22 miles long that would not break up in a sea.”

LANDING ON “LILY,” the novel floating airstrip described here, a Swedish corporal-bomber of the Royal Air Force has nearly touched down. Photo: British Official

UNROLLING THE “SWISS ROLL,” the floating roadway or pier which was used so successfully at Arromanches during the landings on the Normandy beaches. Testing “Lily,” the floating airstrip, in the Scottish loch of Lamlash (left), a photograph taken during the original experiments with this remarkable British invention. PAGE 390

Photo, British Official
Plastic Armour, a wartime innovation, details of which are still top secret, is now being fitted to ships against air attack. Above, it is being hoisted over the waistcoop of a vessel in the West India Dock, London. Gunners (left) on the ship’s bridge were similarly reinforced.

Panic, British Official.

They were somewhat testy. ‘Where’s the escort? ’I answered, ‘In just as undignified a position as you were.’ ‘Come on, said he; get them together and let us get on with it. Rifles were picked up, the escort fell in, the guard took up their position, and off we went on our way...’

“The Conqueror’s Tower never looked grander,” concluded Cook, “than it did on that terrible night. It stood out proud and haughty and seemed to defy those unseen engines of destruction in the sky.”
Our Swimming Tanks Took Them By Surprise!

Now only can the story be told of the part played on D-Day, and subsequently, by the D.D. Tanks and those who crew them. The utmost secrecy was preserved as the tanks were carried on behind sealed doors, trials and training were screened from public gaze. But all precautions brought a rich reward. See also illus. pages 400-401.

The full telling of the story of D-Day has been released one of the most astonishing exploits of the war—the invention of the Swimming Tank and the part it played in what at one moment seemed the most hazardous crisis in the history of warfare.

For many years scientists of all nations have striven to produce an amphibious tank. The Germans tried submersibility and when the war ended were within a few months of producing a method by which Tiger tanks could crawl along the bed of a river with air supplied to the crew and engine by long pipes. Other countries tried attaching pontoons to the sides of tanks to make them float. A variety of more fantastic and less practical proposals was tried out but none with great success.

The Duplex-Drive tank was officially born in 1941 when Mr. Nicholas Straussler, the inventor, was given War Office authority to experiment with a light tank. The principle of flotation employed by him was remarkably simple. It consisted of a collapsible canvas screen fitted to the hull of a tank and raised or lowered at will. When erected, the screen completely surrounded that part of the tank above the tracks and, based on the principle of displacement, enabled the tank to float. At the touch of a lever the screen collapsed to lie like a skirt about the hull. Power came from a propeller at the rear turned by the main driving shaft.

Struasser's tank had two main advantages over previous amphibious inventions. It was easy to operate and could go into action as a normal tank within a few seconds of its tracks touching dry ground and the driver lowering his canvas screen. It was extraordinarily seaworthy and, contrary to original opinions, quite capable of surviving all but the highest seas.

There is always a tendency to distrust simplicity, and this, coupled with the unconventionalism of the D.D. tank, caused many a heated argument in Service conferences before the invasion. To begin with, many people simply refused to believe that the thing would work. It was the C.I.G.S., Sir Alan Brooke, advised by his Chief of Staff, Air Chief Marshal Leigh-Mallory made what was probably the greatest decision of the war. The weather report was bad, verging on the impossible. It had already caused a delay of two days, more delay was out of the question. Despite the possibility that seas might be too high for D.D. tanks and the lighter equipment on board, the decision was made to invade the following day.

In the event, the D.D. tanks and their crews fully justified the confidence placed in them. One regiment, the 13/18th Hussars, launching their tanks some 5,000 yards from the shore, batted in 33 out of their total of 40. Other regiments fared less well but on the whole casualties were low and if the tanks had not been exceptionally rough, would have been much lower.

Small Arms Fire Would Sink Them

It had always been hoped that the D.D. device would be kept secret and that the Germans would take the tanks for nothing more than a fleet of small boats, probably containing infantry. Everything points to this having happened. The D.D. tank is of course very vulnerable to fire, if which by the hour inaccuracy, it is highly accurate, and the damage inflicted on tanks is likely to be very great.

Two more regiments were later trained in operating D.D. tanks. These were the Staffordshire Yeomanry, who took part in the assault on South Beveland in October 1944, and the 44th Bn. Royal Tank Regiment who, together with the Staffordshire Yeomanry, operated in the Rhine crossing. The last use of D.D. tanks in Germany was when a squadron of the Staffordshire's successfully stormed the River Elbe on April 29, 1945. But their use has not been restricted to North-West Europe. In the final operations in Italy they were used by 7th Hussars, and but for the collapse of Japan would have been used in the Far East by the 27th Dragoons.
Navy at Hongkong Rounds-up Jap Suicide Crews

H.M. Destroyers Whirlwind and Quadrant braved unseaworthiness fields and found 150 explosive Jap “suicide” motor-boats at their base in Picnic Bay, where the captured crews were assembled (bottom). The port was entered on August 30, 1945, by a British Naval force under Rear-Admiral G. H. J. Harcourt, C.B., C.B.E., who on that date was appointed C-in-C Hongkong. His flagship, the 30,000-ton aircraft carrier H.M.S. Indomitable (top), rode at anchor in Victoria Bay.
These Floating Chariots Meant Doom to Germany

The astonishing story of Britain's secret amphibious tanks is told in page 193. Here they are seen afloat and ashore. On the banks of the Rhine (1) Shermans are inflated from huge bottles of compressed air, completely surrounded by its canvas screen, a tank glides into the river (2), to be driven across by its twin propellers. Stores and ammunition were toed on a floating sledge (3). A Valentine leaves the ramp of a L.C.T. and enters the sea 3,000 yards from shore (4).

— As They Carried Assault Troops Deep into Europe

During the final operations in Italy, a Sherman crosses the River Adige (5). With collapsible screens down (6), at Lauberg, after swimming the Elite, the two propellers have been raised to avoid contact with the ground. Driver Burnett, Canadian Armoured Corps (7), having his escape apparatus adjusted by an instructor before diving into the sea for a practice swim. Only one fatal casualty occurred during training, in more than 30,000 individual tank launches in all weathers.
Amidst wide areas of rubble only a few modern steel structures remain intact in the industrial section of the Japanese capital, along the Sumida River (above). At the left is part of the same district of Tokyo before the Allied raids. The city’s first bombing was an attack on April 18, 1942, by Mitchell bombers from the U.S. aircraft carrier Hornet, led by General Doolittle (see pages 154-155, Vol. 7). Heavy incendiary and high-explosive raids by Super-Fortresses began on November 24, 1944, rising in fury in the spring and summer of 1945. In the later stages it was increased by British and U.S. carrier-born aircraft, continuing until the Japanese capitulation on August 14.

Photos, Keystone, Sport & General
What was the cause of this? Why did we make war on the Italian people? To beat the pressure of his Allies to "whistle away the original grand conception of victory," Mr. Churchill himself, he would have followed up our initial successes of the past five months. But the British and Americans did not possess the necessary forces with which to exploit it.

Kept Short of Men, Ships and Guns

Mr. Buckingham, if we would have had enough is enough, the British and Americans did not possess the necessary forces with which to exploit it.

King Victor Emmanuel the book takes a walk. By all accounts he is a feeble-witted man who gave in to Mussolini, as weak men always give way to bullies. Why "influential elements in Britain" supported him, as they supported the Greek king, Mr. Buckingham cannot understand. He felt that the thin end of the Federalist loaf was apiing with the instrument upon safety-first principles." That is a heavy indictment. It is a truism of a prominent man who is also a prominent student. Bu the British and Americans did not possess the necessary forces with which to exploit it.

ITALIAN WELCOME for 5th Army men entering Pavia. Calabria, in September. This photograph was emphasized by the display of British and Italian flags, and greetings in English and Italian. The official report of the campaign is reviewed here.

IN THE PROUD ROAD TO ROME

By HAMILTON FYFE

"Routine had to be followed," he writes. Will the conduct of commanders who preferred routine to swift, imaginative action be inquired into?

The politicians also come in for censure in this connexion. The Anzio landing was a political move, Mr. Buckley asserts, and quotes Mr. Churchill's "burst of irritable candor" in the House of Commons when he told M.P.s: "We had to attack the Germans somewhere, unless we were to sit still and watch the Russians do all the fighting." Political moves are invariably disastrous in war. The soldiers will agree with Mr. Buckley that "there were more profitable places in southern Europe in which to fight the Germans than the Italian peninsula.

The type of war that I want to leave the impression that his book consists entirely of military criticism and accounts of operations. It is full of information about Italy and the Italian Army. Indeed, it gives the impression of having been written by an officer who has had personal experience of Italy. But it is not the account of a personal experience, it is the account of an official experience, and it is based on a knowledge of the Italian battalions that "too many died." Fortunately we had enough aircraft to save the situation at Salerno, where the first landing nearly met disaster. So were the Germans of accomplishment as the Americans. The French Expeditionary Force, driven by the pressure of the Allies to "whistle away the original grand conception of victory," Mr. Churchill himself, he would have followed up our initial successes of the past five months. But the British and Americans did not possess the necessary forces with which to exploit it.

The other landing later on at Anzio was a failure. The idea was to put ashore a force that would hold the line. But instead of rushing the soldiers towards the city as quickly as possible, Gen. Maitland Wilson waited to "consolidate," as military text-books advise, and prepared to meet a German counterattack. The British, declined Mr. Buckley, were muffed by "timidity, pusillanimity and a lack of will". That is a heavy indictment. It is a truism of a prominent man who is also a prominent student. Bu the British and Americans did not possess the necessary forces with which to exploit it.

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In the Low Countries Now War's Tumult is Over

ONE OF FIFTY THOUSAND church bells lost by the Nazis from occupied countries for resettlement at Hamburg (see page 148), this fine Dutch specimen (1) is being admired by a British soldier.

South of The Hague, German P.O.W.'s ordered to clear Nazi mined roads in the 'black death' of accidents—feeding vast areas (2). During the Canadian advance from Arnhem in April 1945, Royal Engineers and Canadian engineers built two temporary bridges (3) while under heavy fire; replacing the famous old bridge background, these were named the Honore-Pont and the Blinding Bridge after Lt.-Gen. G. G. Simonds commanding Canadian forces in Holland and Lt.-Gen. C. Faulkner, 1st Canadian Corps.

German P.O.W. and Dutch civilians (4) dig up the bodies of murdered patriots buried in the sand dunes. On the Dutch frontier was this reminder (5) for our forces.

Photos, British Official, Pictorial Press
Britain's Front-Line Mayors Keep a Calais Date

CELEBRATING THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF CALAIS' FREEDOM, the Mayors of Britain's "Front-Line" towns of Canterbury, Dover and Folkestone, on October 3, 1918, visited the French port whence German batteries had shelled our Southern coast. A Hall gun they inspected (1) had its barrel split; right to left: Alderman F. C. Lefeuvre (Canterbury); a British officer acting as guide; Councillor W. J. Pudney (Dover); Alderman A. Castle (Folkestone). The party at the Town Hall (2); and at the British remembrance (3).
A good deal was heard after the First Great War of Teschen, and most people heard of it then for the first time. But this ancient duchy of some 450 square miles had for centuries been an apple of discord between the Czechs and the Poles. Originally ruled by the Piast Princes of Poland, it came under Czech rule in 1292, and was finally united to the Bohemian Crown in 1335. In common with the rest of Bohemia and Moravia, this Silesian region came under the domination of Austria for three hundred years. During that time the racial struggle was between Czechs and Germans, for practically no Poles were to be found in the duchy before 1848.

After 1848 the population began to change. Polish priests and teachers coming from Galicia were supported by the Austrian authorities in their work of making Teschen to all intents Polish, for this was a good weapon against the Czechs. By the end of the 19th century the district had become highly industrialized; the mines, for instance, giving employment to large numbers of men who migrated from Galicia, and the struggle for supremacy between these Poles and the Czechs became intensified.

At the end of the war in 1918, both Poland and the liberated Czechoslovak State claimed Teschen. Strategically it is of great importance, forming as it does the eastern part of the Moravian Gap. It is also the watershed between two great river systems—those of the Polish Vistula and the Austrian Danube. It is a crossroads of railway routes from north to south, from Berlin and Prague to Bratislava and Budapest, as well as from Moscow and Kiev to Brno and Vienna. It is also on the main route from Bohemia and Moravia to Slovakia by way of the Pass of Jelenka. But perhaps the most important consideration for the liberated Czechoslovakia was the possession of the duchy on which the heavy industries of the newly formed Republic mainly depended.

As the Versailles Peace Conference the question of Teschen was considered in accordance with the Austrian census of 1910. This had been based upon the notion of "national intercourse" and not upon "mother tongue." It gave the Polish population of 54,855 per cent, the Czechs having 27.11 per cent and the Germans 18.94 per cent. The total population now numbered 426,870. Of that total, 101,138 had no rights of citizenship, as they were more or less migrating labour of Polish nationality, whose introduction the Austrians, true to their principle of "dividends" and rule by force, were encouraged in order to control the Czechs.

If the whole duchy had been given to Poland it would have caused the Czechs to lose some 100,000 of their compatriots, while the railway route joining the western and the eastern territories of the Republic would have been cut—an alternative line through the mountains could only be constructed at vast expense—and, furthermore, the Czechs would have been deprived of the coal field, which to them is vital. If the Poles had lost the entire duchy it would have meant the loss of some 230,000 Poles and native Silesians and the coalmines. But Poland possesses other coal areas of a similar nature and of a very much larger coal output, so that for her the Teschen mines had not the same extreme value as they had for Czechoslovakia.

Greeted by Riots and Strikes

It was decided that there should be a partition of the duchy. In the closing period of the First Great War, Masaryk and Paderewski met in the United States and endeavoured to settle the matter in amicable discussion. This method, however, did not find favour in Europe, where the Poles summoned to their Parliament representatives from the duchy, to which the Czechs replied by sending troops to occupy Oderburg, in September 1919. Throughout the Greater Poland was fearing further trouble, intervened and decided, in September 1919, to hold plebiscites under the auspices of the principal allies. When the Commission arrived in the following January it was greeted by riots and strikes, so the plebiscite method was discarded and Czechs and Poles requested arbitration by a Council of Ambassadors.

On July 28, 1920, the issue was decided, the duchy ratified by both countries, and became a sacred bond between them. The greater part of the territory, including the town, went to Poland, the western portion with the coalfields and a suburb of the town to Czechoslovakia. It is not clear whether any better solution could have been reached by international arbitration. In the Poles were not satisfied and later declared that if they had not been engaged in war with Soviet Russia they would never have accepted this settlement.

By the Treaty of Warsaw, signed in April 1925, the conditions of the minorities left on both sides of the frontier were arranged. It must be admitted that the Poles in Czechoslovakia derived great benefit from the social and political regulation, land reforms and other measures which made Czechoslovakia the most advanced democracy in Central Europe. But this did not cause the Polish authorities to forget their grievance; and when in 1938 it became probable that Czechoslovakia would have to make territorial concessions to Germany, the Polish Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck, thought the appropriate moment had come for an ultimatum. The demand for Teschen by Poland at the Munich Conference was a stab in the back for Czechoslovakia, made at a time when she was unable to defend herself in spite of her military preparedness. Teschen became Polish, Beck making it clear that his policy was guided by expediency. His joy lasted for a year; then his own country was ravaged by the Nazis.

Throughout the Second Great War the Czechs and the Poles fought and died as allies. Beck’s reputation in his own country was to suffer a final eclipse, while that of Bens was never brighter. We can therefore hope with some confidence that reason will now prevail and that the pledge of friendship made between the two exiled Governments in London in November 1940 will form the basis of a new order in Central Europe and in a settlement of the Teschen question.

When in June of this year Marshal Rela-Zymsgierski, C-in-C. of the Polish Army, entered Teschen the Czechs showed admirable restraint. Their Premier, M. Fierlinger, went to Moscow, where he had been Ambassador for seven years, to enter into negotiations with the Polish Government at the request of Russia. He pointed out that the Teschen district is an indispensable part of the Czech economic system, and that without its coal the great Czechoslovak industrial centre to the southwest of it could not be maintained.

Central European politics present many difficult problems. They can be solved only if the consultation of the good faith of the members of the community where historic, ethnic, geographic, economic and strategic claims are inextricably interwoven. It will be a splendid feather in the cap of the statesman who can settle this problem between her two Slav kinmen in such a manner that no sense of grievance remains on either side.
Our King Sees Ships that Brought Us Victory

ON HIS FIRST PEACE TIME VISIT TO HIS NAVY, H.M. The King, accompanied by the Queen and Princess Margaret, inspected the Home Fleet in the Firth of Forth on September 29, 1946. The Royal party was received by Admiral Sir Henry Moore, K.C.B., Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet, in his flagship, the Rodney. Among the ships visited was the 7,100-ton cruiser Birmingham, on whose forecastle our photograph shows the King, with the Queen and Princess in the background.
Kirkby Explosion Heroes Awarded George Medals

AWARDS for bravery by civilian workers during explosions at the Royal Ordnance Factory at Kirkby, Nottinghamshire, during the night of September 15, 1944, were announced in the London Gazette of September 18, 1945. The first explosion occurred during the filling of highly dangerous ammunition. The foremen of 128 female workers who had escaped from the burning building ran back to bring out injured comrades. They traced their rescues although they did it in the nick of time, for immediately after the explosion occurred, wreaking even worse havoc and endangering still more lives.

After the assistant superintendent, Mr. W. E. Denney, had withdrawn everyone from the building, a pile of bombs, crushed in their wooden crates beneath the fallen roof, was seen to be on fire; and these were beyond reach of the firemen's hoses. The fire was gaining and, had it taken hold, the consequences would have been disastrous over a wide area. Mr. Denney entered the building above and, having found a way of attacking the flames, explained his plan to the leading foreman, Mr. Ronald D. Forbes, and foreman William Topping. Both volunteered without hesitation, and the three contrived to extinguish the blaze: they were awarded the George Medal.

Other recipients of the award included Mr. M. V. Rowling and Mr. J. S. Murdoch, shop managers, and Mr. W. J. Panton, foreman.

The factory Superintendent, Mr. Gale, was awarded the O.B.E.; though on leave, he at once returned and organized the salvage task without incurring a single casualty. Our photographs show the converted tank (above) with which bomb clusters were removed to safety; and (below) a view of the damaged areas showing bomb clusters under the wreckage.

Photos, British Official
I was There!

Eye Witness Stories of the War and After

We Toiled 17 Hours a Day in Siamese Jungle

Guided by Japanese task-masters to help build the Burma-Siam railway was the fate of many men who fell into Japanese hands at Singapore in 1942. The Daily Mail Pacific Bureau Correspondent sent this dispatch, including the story told to him by Lieut. P. A. D. Jones, on Sept. 6, 1945.

A TALL, gaunt Australian bowed to me when I entered a prison camp near Singapore Docks today, then, recovering himself, was so embarrassed that he could not speak for a minute. "It is a little trick they taught us," he said. "It will take us some time to get rid of it." We were standing in a long room where 70 men, all Australians, were lying or sitting on low wooden bunks. Until a few days ago every time a Japanese guard or orderly entered that room we had to stand up and bow.

Some of the men were as thin as those I saw in the Nazi horror camps, and many were sufferers from beri-beri and chronic malaria. Most of them were survivors of the dreadful Siam jungle camps where the Japanese took delight in beating and humiliating our men as they toiled at building the Burma-Siam railway, toiled till they fell dead from half a dozen fearful diseases and sicknesses, from the scorching sun of the tropics. I listened to in this camp today I have selected one story for Lieut. P. A. D. Jones of Smethwick, Staffordshire, regimental No. 98837, he said:

I was captured in Singapore the day it fell, February 15, 1942. For the first 48 hours the Japs kept us in the dumps, then they ordered us to march out to Changi, now the Jap show camp. They separated all the Indians from the whites. Of the 52,000 Indians taken here, there are now only 15,000 left. We can only guess at the fate of the rest.

At Changi, just outside Singapore, we soon settled down to camp life—life made unbearable at the outset by Japanese cruelties. After about eight months I was moved. After many weary weeks, during which we were kicked and beaten by our guards, we arrived at Sungkrai camp in Siam. Our working hours were from dawn to dark, roughly 17 hours a day.

If three of us failed to lift a felled tree, then Japanese guards would make two men do it somehow. When an elephant got lazy and jibbed at moving a tree trunk, the Japanese would put us on it, then laugh at us. We strained ourselves. They called us their elephant power. Guards would often set on us for no reason and beat us with their rifles or bars of iron. During the building of a bridge over a gorge Jap guards struck at several of our unfortunate comrades until they fell off and were killed.

Several Australians took Japanese guards with them to their deaths off that bridge. Finally, we as a party were worked out. The Japanese could not get any more out of us, and work on the railway was slipping again. So they marched us all the way back to Singapore—without 500 of our comrades whom we had buried.

Smiling Men of Nagoya Plan a Jap Come-Back

Third largest city in Japan, Nagoya is ready to "get going" again—largely at the expense of Allied troops. How the battered city's business men are reacting to the Occupation is described by Arthur Le Bern, of The Evening Standard, in this story dispatched on October 1, 1945.

The Kanko hotel—catering exclusively for foreigners—was empty save for an American journalist and myself. We sat in a dimly-lit room surrounded by tables glittering with silver, cutlery, white cloths and fine glassware. There were ten little Jap waitresses in gay pantaloons waiting on our one table. When we entered the dining-room they bowed their heads, nearly touching the luxurious crimson carpet. Steaks, eggs, lobster and trout were plentiful. Fruit was served with every meal.

I was looking down on the ruins of Nagoya when I first smooth-faced bespectacled Japs bowed, and presented cards. They were the President and members of the Nagoya Chamber of Commerce and Research Bureau. They smiled, showing gold and silver fillings in their teeth. They were at my service, they said. Any information I required they would gladly supply. Any questions, however frank, would be answered to the best of their ability.

I had a three-hour discussion with them and gathered that their ulterior motive was to put Nagoya back on the peacetime map. Nagoya, they said, is larger than any city in Japan, was the centre of porcelain ware, gaily coloured textiles, fan factories and fancy goods.

"It was such a shame that the Government converted our peaceful productions to war factories and drew bombing attacks upon us," they said. I agreed. They winced when I told them that Nagoya was the third on the list of the Atomic Bomb, and the surrender just saved them. "We had no chance," they said. Nagoya, switching from peacetime pretty-stuff to Mitsubishi war plants, produced 80 per cent of Japan's aircraft until it was razed to the ground by raids. They obviously didn't like the change of topic, but said: "Frankly we wept. We just couldn't understand the surrender. We knew nothing about the real position."

As they thought they could settle the futility of democratic Government in Japan, they admitted it would take a long time. The people have no political education, they said. Did they desire democratic Government? Oh, yes, they did. Did they think the Emperor shared the responsibility for the war?—Oh, no, the Emperor was hoodwinked too.

Would they go to war again if the Emperor ordered them to?—Oh, they were quite sure the Emperor would do no such thing. Had not the Emperor left his sacred Palace to visit General MacArthur?—"Excuse, please, but we must go now unless there is some commercial or research information," they said.

Forty thousand occupation troops of the United States Sixth Army are arriving in Nagoya this week. The landing barges will touch down at Sannikujo pleasure beach. The troops will live in tents pitched on bomb sites. But the sleek Jap businessman intends exploiting the troops' arrival. Fancy goods, lacquer work, porcelain, are already appearing in the windowless, burned-out department stores. Notices over the counter announce boldly "For Allied soldiers only."

RICKSHAW MAN IN TOKYO tries to bar- gain with a U.S. war correspondent. Fares have doubled since the Occupation, and rickshaws are scarce. (Photo, British Council)

SUMATRA RAILWAY BUILT BY F.O.W. working under Jap task-masters. The Japanese commandeered that it would be completed even if he had to use human bodies for sleepers. Re- construction. See Burma-Siam railway story in this page. PAGE 409 (Photo, Australian bureau)
I Was There!

“We Thought This Day Would Never Come”

Three hundred British P.O.W. shook the dust of Japan from their weary feet on August 5, 1945, and that night slept the sweet sleep of deliverance aboard the hospital ship Benevolence in the Bay of Tokyo. Arthur B. Larbern, of The Evening Standard, tells of their dramatic arrival.

We looked down at them as the landing craft swarmed round waiting their turn to unload. No two were dressed alike. Some wore a tattered vest and ragged slacks or shorts. Some wore even less. Some had broken limbs. Some were so weak that the effort of waving once or twice was too much for them and they collapsed back into the arms of their comrades.

Many of them had pathetic little bundles—ragged paper parcels with the contents bursting out of the torn sides. In them were cherished things which had consolled them through their three years of imprisonment—photographs of their families, dog-eared books, card packs, crumpled letters tied with string, boxes of dominoes and chess.

There was one strangely vivid note about them. Nearly all wore bright crimson or yellow scarves, a contrast to the rest of their clothing. This rather puzzled us until they explained the scarves were cut from parachute Flying Forts had dropped with food and cigarettes. One man had used a large piece of red parachute cloth to patch his ragged khaki trousers. As they filed along the deck towards the hot shower, a meal and medical inspection, they looked like shipwrecked men who had lived for years in a jungle on a desert island. Many were suffering from beri-beri or dysentery; others looked remarkably fit.

Most of them were captured in Hong Kong and had been in Jap hands since Xmas 1941. They were from P.O.W. camps in Sumidagawa and Omori. A large contingent of them were men of the Royal Scots and Middlesex Regiment, and an odd thing was that these British Army men who had been in captivity three years and eight months looked fitter than many captured more recently. One of them, Private Joseph Walter Newman, of the Middlesex Regiment, explained this to me. He said: “We lived by our wits. If we had depended on food the Japs gave us we should have been dead long ago. But every time we went out on a working party we reported to the good old army practice of scrounging. We hid rice in our boots and socks and cooked it when we got back to camp.”

Sergeant F. Pigeon, Royal Artillery, said: “We played a cat-and-mouse game with the Japs all the time. We learned to become as crafty as they are. No matter what job they sent us out on, we usually managed to steal rice or soy beans, which we hid in clothes and boots. We cooked it secretly at night on a little electric stove we rigged up under the floor of our hut, using electric light power.”

Aircraftman Fred Harker, who was captured in Java, said to me: “I thought this day would never dawn. It is like a dream.” His wife and daughter—four-year-old Judith Valerie—live in Norbett Road, Arnold, Nottingham. He said of them: “I have not seen them since Christmas 1944 when Judith was only nine months old.”

All the British P.O.W. testified to this: "Our treatment was mild compared to that dished out to the American Fortress crews. The captured American air crews were continuously assailed, kicked, tortured and starved, and the Jap civilians, if anything, were worse than the Jap military.”

I got confirmation that the Jap civilians were worse than the Japanese military from British Fleet Air Arm Sub-Lieutenant Victor Spencer, an Avenger pilot, of Edge Lane, Brouough, Liverpool. By a coincidence I flew in the same Avenger wing in a strike from the Implacable some weeks ago.

He failed to return from a later strike on Koriyama on August 10 and I did not expect to see him again; but as I was standing on the deck of the Benevolence he walked up to me and said: “Have we met before?” Spencer said: “We had just bombed the dispersal areas at Koriyama when we were hit twice by flak. One hit set the engine alight and we force-landed in paddy fields. We ducked into the hills, but were caught after two days’ hiding. Civilians who caught us knocked us about pretty badly, but that stopped when we got into the P.O.W. camp.”

Dutch soldiers captured in Java received particularly bad treatment. Sgt. Kuijpers of the Dutch Army, said to me: “We did not even get any letters, so we have no idea what happened to our wives and children in Java. The Japs stole our Red Cross parcels and we had no soap for the first eight months as prisoners. When the war ended they cut down our meagre rations by 25 per cent. When the Swedish Consul asked why, the Japs replied: ‘The prisoners have stopped working, and we are afraid they will get indigestion if we give them too much food.’”

The P.O.W. were continuously moved. One of the worst camps was at Kawasaki. Here 263 men had to make meals for a day from 25 pounds of flour and a can of water. One day the same 263 men had to make a meal from one pound of meat. Prisoners working in coalyards were expected to shovel a load of 50 tons of coal per man every day. When boots or shoes were out they were not replaced and gangs of prisoners often worked in bare feet or with rags tied round their feet even in winter with snow on the ground.

I Was a Prisoner Where Men Died Like Flies

This is the last letter of a British Secret Service Agent, who was captured in civilian clothes in France by the Germans, was smuggled home while he was awaiting death at the notorious Buchenwald Camp (see illus. page 90). He later succeeded in escaping to the American lines. Dated Sept. 14, 1944, permission has now been given for its publication.

There are “famous last words,” I am afraid, but one has to face death one day or another, so I will not mean, and get down to brass tacks. I will not attempt to make a report on my journey except to say that up to the very moment of my arrest it had been a success, and I was quite pleased with things. My capture was due to one of those incidents one cannot provide for. I had so much work that I was overwhelmed, I asked for a sure, dependable agent de liaison, and I was given a young chap called Gray, whom I renamed Antonin. He worked for me for a week, and then got caught; how I do not know, but he had an appointment with me at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, March 21, by the Metro Passy, and brought the Gestapo with him.

He was obviously unable to withstand bullying and very quickly broke in to questioning. I was caught coming round a corner...
and had not an earthly chance, being collared and handcuffed before I could say "knife." I was badly beaten up in the car on the way to the police station where I arrived with a twisted nose and a head about twice its normal size. I was subjected to four days' continuous grilling, being beaten up and also being put into a bath of icy cold water, legs and arms chained, and held head downwards under water until almost drowned, then pulled out and asked if I had anything to say. This I underwent six times, but I managed to hold out and gave nothing away.

**Wrist Cut to the Bone by Chains**

I was interrogated for about two months, but dodged everything. I was offered freedom if I would hand over X—some hopes! I nearly lost my left arm as a result of the torture. As I got blood poisoning through my wrist being cut to the bone by chains and remaining unattended with handcuffs biting into them for about six days. Apart from that I was kept in solitary confinement for four months in Fresnes. I was very unpopular as a Britcher, and one of the German N.C.O.s was particularly glad of every opportunity of punching me or slapping my face. He gave me three weeks of "glass house" in a darkened cell, without mattress, blankets, deprived of all means of washing, and with about half a pound of bread per day as sole food.

I was pretty weak when I came out, and the loss of weight. I was sent to Coldpring on July 17. Whilst there I recaptured a bit, and had arranged an escape together with a chap well known to the Germans and was put to work in an escourt camp. The other chap succeeded. Bad luck for me. The journey was an eventful one: we took eight days. The first man I ran into when being entrained was A, and the second was B. We had various adventures, all were handcuffed the whole time, 19 men in one compartment and 18 in another. We could not move, being packed like sardines. The gates of the compartments were padlocked and we had very little air—food.

We were given one day’s rations which had to last five days; luckily some had Red Cross parcels or we would have starved. The train we had escaped was a special train and we had a very narrow shave. Our escorts ran a left hander; then the train caught fire and we were burnt like trapped rats. We had to stop at Suur-Bricken for three days in a punishment barrack and reprovals and camp, and were beaten up on arrival. As usual I seemed to attract particular attention and got well and truly slapped and cuffed. We were confined for three days and nights, 37 of us in a hut 9 ft. by 7ft. It was Hell.

We then came on to this place, Bouchernah. On the way our escorts plundered and stole practically all our effects. Never believe a word about German honesty; they are the biggest thieves, liars, bullies and cowards I have ever met. In addition they delight in torturing people and gloat over it. Upon arrival, which took place at about midnight, we were locked up in disinfestation quarters and next morning were very nearly hanged summarily, but temporarily restrained. We were stripped, completely shorn, and dressed in prison rags. Taking our few remaining belongings, and 26 of us, including B, were told to report to a certain place.

**I Was There!**

We never saw them again and found out that they were hanged without trial on the night of September 11-12. They have been cremated, so no trace remains of them. We are now awaiting our turn. There are 170 airmen (British and Americans), brought down and captured in France, but they are being treated as "terror fliers" and sleeping in the open, living under appalling conditions in violation of all conventions. They ought to be treated as prisoners of war. Men die like flies here.

I sent a message to you through— I hope you received it, but I have no means of telling. The bearer of this letter will give you all details: whatever he tells you is Gospel truth and he will never be able really to do justice to the horrors perpetrated here. For God’s sake see to it that our people never let themselves be softened towards the German people, or there will be another war in 15 years time, and all our lives will have been sacrificed in vain. I leave it to you and others to see that retribution is fierce. It will never be fierce enough.

**DIARY OF WORLD EVENTS**

**Flash-backs**

- **1939**
  - September 22: Fall of Warsaw.
  - October 4: Combined Operations raid on Sark, Channel Islands.

- **1940**
  - September 27: Trgipstrate Pact between Germany, Italy and Japan signed in Berlin.
  - October 1: German troops entered Romania and occupied the cities.

- **1941**
  - October 6: Two-pronged assault launched by Germans under Von Bock.

- **1944**
  - January 4: Recapture of Crete announced by Russian Command.
  - October 1: S.P. Army took Naples.
  - October 8: British captured at Dieppe and Dunkirk enviourned.

- **1945**
  - April: Combined Operations raid on Sark, Channel Islands.
  - October: British captured at Dieppe and Dunkirk enviourned.
CLAIMED TO BE THE WORLD'S FASTEST FIGHTER is Britain's jet-propelled de Havilland Vampire (1) which first appeared over London on September 15, 1945. A single-seat, its speed is described as 'hazardously, in excess of 500 m.p.h.' It is powered with a single gas turbine and was intended as an answer to the latest German jet-propelled aircraft. Designed for battle in the stratosphere in the Westland Walsin (2), the world's biggest single-seat fighter, with a speed of 500 m.p.h. All the secret (September 15, 1945) to the Stenhouse-Priestman's Fireball (3), in which single-seated (250 h.p.) torpedos-carrying aircraft, with a speed of 500 m.p.h. Believed to be the fastest propeller-driven aircraft is the de Havilland Hornet (4), capable of 475 m.p.h. Photo: Charles D. Brown
developed by rocket-driven aircraft. The latter were developed by the Germans when the R.A.F. and American and Allied air forces drove the Luftwaffe off to the defensive

Indeed, that effect may be said to have occurred in the Battle of Britain, although the actual air offensive against Germany did not really begin until 1942. As the wearing down of German air defense grew, continually stronger, the enemy concentrated ever more on interception, and the Messerschmitt 163 rocket-propelled inter-
ception, the Komet, was literally a flying rocket.

This rocket-like aeroplane normally took off under its own power, jettisoned its wheels in the air, and landed on a skid. It climbed to 30,000 feet in just over two minutes and a half, and was capable of a level speed of 550 m.p.h. It carried the pilot, two 30-mm. guns, and was built partly of wood. A later model, the 163-C, used a special rocket unit with a second jet to give cruising economy. Its endurance under power was about 12 minutes, and its maxi-
mum speed was 390 m.p.h.

NORMAN MACMILLAN
M.C., A.F.C.

by CAPTAIN

Hornet's Great Improvement on British's Famous Hurricane

British aero-engine horse-power are steadily increasing. The two Rolls-Royce Merlin engines fitted in the de Havilland Hornet fighter (which was first delivered to the R.A.F. in February 1945) give a total of 4,140 h.p. for take-off. This fighter can fly 2,500 miles non-stop when fitted with long-range tanks, a great improvement on the fighters with which Britain entered the war; for then the Hurricane had the greatest duration—about 750 miles. But to cover this distance non-stop it was necessary to fly at such a reduced speed that operationally it was of little value, and the maximum strike power of the early fighters did not exceed about 120 miles. It was the loss rate of the American Eighth Air Force heavy day bombers that brought about the urgent need of long-range escort fighters, thus ma-

NAVAL AIR ARM'S NEWEST WEAPONS include the all-metal Seeadler Mark IV (top), with a single 2,000 h.p. engine, and counter-rotating airscrews. Speed is about 400 m.p.h., span 34 ft.

11 in., length 22 ft, 11 in. Weight 9,000 lbs. Can carry 500-8 inch. (See illustration on facing page), also in service is tail-end view (below).
BERKLEY SQUARE has been in the news and in the newspapers for the greater part of its 247 years of existence it has been reckoned one of the most beautiful, if it certainly was one of the most exclusive, of London's backwaters, long famed in history only because of the many famous people who have lived and died there, and variously celebrated in poetry, drama and song. And it was not at his house in Berkeley Square that Kipling's Tomkinson gave up the ghost, when the spirit which had gripped him by the hair? In the popular play of the 1920s to which the square lent its name it was made to symbolize all that was fragrant as well as all that was nauseating of the eighteenth-century gilt-golden age to which so many romantic souls have longed to return.

As for song, throughout the summer of 1940 we were assured ad nauseam by Eric Maschwitz, who wrote the lyric, and Norah and Sherwyn, who wrote the music, that a nightingale sang in Berkeley Square, though I for one found this difficult to believe. Still, there were always plenty of leafy plane trees there and the fact that it is almost unique among London squares in being set on a recognizable hillside gave the garden at its best a small effect of a miniature parkland, so possibly a solitary nightingale may have made its nest at some time.

W hen I first knew Berkeley Square the houses and the garden were very much what they must have been in, say, 1774, when Lord Berkeley, an enthusiastic greenhouse practitioner by committing suicide at No. 45. There was only one shop, an old bookshop. And never were garden gates kept more jealously locked. One of the rarest of all books had been in luck and, with Landseworne House to the south of the square, and he was invariably dressed in a scarlet coat. The story ran that Lord Cork kept him supplied with soldier's cut-downs from his hunting wardrobe. In short, Berkeley Square had a unique flavour compounded of equal parts of the Grolier, the Lavender and very rare old lace. In recent years this has all been changed. Today it is only for a few paces on the west side, and only then at night, that the last vestige of imagination could think in terms of powdered wigs, powdered wigs, buckles and brocade, linkboys and sedan chairs. Gen- tility has fled before the tide of commerce, and the sedate old houses have given place to modern office blocks. I never went in with a very acute intelligence, no doubt, but not Berkeley Square. The bombs came. Then those precious railings and the cast-iron balusters and E.W.S. tanks went up. The busy public leaned on them, and the windows on the ground, and every blade of grass has vanished. Now the Westminster City Council has agreed to restore at least the garden to its former glory. Never again can it be preserved as a ple- saurableness of aristocracy; but that there is no reason why it should not be made an oasis to gladden the heart of Mr. James and Miss Smith as they scurry past it to and from their work.

Discovery of the Gestapo's secret list of British people and British institutions marked the end of the war for a time the ever-pertinent query: "What would have happened if ...?" I wonder what the answer would be today. The imminent collapse of Britain, did not make the list, not the list of the Polish campaign, Baptism of Fire, for the intimidation of the fans, and by the caravans which were not by no means first with the idea of saying it with threatening pictures. After the defeat of the Spanish Armada an enemy ship was seen one dryfounding about in Bridlington Bay. A board of local trouts rowed out and scuttled her, presumably killing the enemy crew. Among the foot they brought back were a dozen pictures painted on leather, showing horrifically and in unmistakable terms what the Inquisition proposed to do to all Englishmen who were not Catholics. These old propaganda paintings, after being hidden for a time lest Good Queen Bess should demand them for herself, have been preserved to this day at Howsham Hall in the East Riding.

It is twenty-one years since Imperial Air- ways was founded and started its first London-Paris service. Since then the history of British civil aviation has hardly been a glorious one—largely thanks to misguided subsidies and the fact that none of our Governments since that time had the courage to go "all out" on the question. I am reminded of this by the timely publication of Tomorrow's Airliners, Airways and Airports (Pilot Press, Inc.,) by Mr. S. E. Yeale, which I do not hesitate to describe as the most readable and most informative book on the subject I have ever read. Mr. Yeale is no mere Westminster dreamer: his pages are spattered-cocked with odd and curious facts. Did you know, for example, that an attempt to bring international air services under a unified control was first made as far back as 1910, when delegates from eighteen countries assembled in Paris? Or that the following year (1911) a Frenchman, Captain Ferber de Rue, forecast jet-propulsion when he wrote: "In order to go higher—and man will try to go higher—"

Cigarette CHARLES HAZLITT UPHAM, awarded in September 1946 a bar to the V.C. he had been awarded in 1945 for his act of bravery, is the first soldier to be thus decorated in the Second world War. In the New Zealanders' gallant attack on El Ruesul Ridge, in the Western Desert, in July 1942, though badly wounded and with his arm broken he destroyed, with grenades, a truckload of Nazis with a several guns, capturing the position.

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In Britain Now: Helping Our Ex-Servicemen

TIMELY WARNING ON THIS POSTER outside the demobilization centre at Olympia, London, is being considered by a soldier about to re-enter civilian life. He is reminded that there are sharks ashore as well as at sea, and that ex-Servicemen have to be careful to whom they entrust their gratuities.

Photo: The Evening News

BANANAS

The Ministry of Food have authorised the importation of bananas and information is required as to the facilities available for handling and distributing this fruit.

Will those firms who have BANANA ROOMS, and who have not already been requested to send in particulars, please communicate at once with

COVENT GARDEN MARKET WHOLESALERS' DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE,

Floret Hall,

Covent Garden, W.C.2.

BANANAS ARE ON THE WAY if one may judge by this appeal posted in Covent Garden, London, during October 1943, for Banana Rooms, of which there are about a hundred in the market; many lay empty during the war or were used as air-raid shelters. In these rooms green bananas just arrived from the docks are ripened in five or six days, heating being provided by gas-generators and humidity controlled by a system of restrictors. On the Clyde, bananas loads are being discharged and immediately rushed to readiness for resumption of this trade with Jamaica and the Cameroons.

LEARNING TO BUILD TOMORROW'S BRITAIN, ex-Servicemen are training at Elly's Estates, Edmonton, London, where workshops have been erected for them to study various crafts. Much use is made of models: trainees (above) are at work on a model staircase; others (top) are perfecting themselves in bricklaying as an introduction to the construction of railway tunnels and bridges.
Rocket Bomb Helped to Swell London Savings

THIS V1 ARRIVED IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE BY LORRY as main attraction of London's Thanksgiving Savings Week display, September 28-29, 1945. Captured during our advance in the Low Countries, it weighs over three tons; its height of 49 ft. may be gauged in comparison with that of the workmen erecting it in its launching position. It was disclosed on September 28 that in June 1944 an unexploded V1 landed approximately in Sweden, was handed over to our agents and dispatched to Britain by air.