

Vol 10 *The War Illustrated* N° 232

SIXPENCE

MAY 10, 1946



BRITAIN'S LEADERS IN WAR AND PEACE, the Rt. Hon. Winston S. Churchill (right), and the Rt. Hon. Clement R. Attlee, Prime Minister, leaving Westminster Abbey, London, after the memorial service to Field-Marshal the Viscount Gort, V.C., on April 10, 1946. The service, conducted by Canon A. C. Don, was also attended by high-ranking officers of the Royal Navy, the Army and the R.A.F., and by representatives of Malta, Gibraltar and Palestine. See also page 11.

Photo, P.A.-New's

Edited by Sir John Hammerton

NO. 233 WILL BE PUBLISHED FRIDAY, MAY 24

Calais After the Siege: Dauntless in Defeat



UNCONQUERABLE IN THEIR SOULS though Calais had fallen, after a fight beyond reason, the last round of ammunition expended, expressions of these British troops (1) marching away to captivity tell the story of their indomitable courage. Equipment of the defenders, including an anti-tank gun (2), lay shattered in the battle-torn streets when the Germans occupied the town on May 26, 1940. Burning and smoke-wreathed, the wharves (3) took heavy punishment from relays of dive-bombers. See facing page.

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Photos. Associated Press

Great Stories of the War Retold

BREAKFAST in our comfortable château just outside Ardre was a pleasant meal on that lovely May morning in 1940. Even the Adjutant seemed quite serene, despite the rumours: "Boulogne has fallen." . . . "St. Omer is captured." . . . "The Germans are heading your way for Calais." . . . and so on. As we had no official information none of us took these rumours seriously. They were too fantastic; they just didn't make sense!

But sense was bludgeoned into our disbelieving minds by a sudden, shattering roar of gunfire. We rushed on to the veranda. In the valley, two miles away, we could see yellow fumes of cordite rising slowly into the still air. And to our ears came the harsh clattering of tanks and a bedlam of cannon-fire.

Into a cloudless blue sky roared a formation of dive-bombers that began to peel off into screaming attack. Another moment and our Hurricanes and Spitfires were attacking them. To our incredulous eyes the air became filled with whirling, twisting, diving, fire-spitting death. Flaming planes crashed to earth; others limped off in clouds of smoke. Parachutes floated calmly down. Then the sky emptied again save for an intricate pattern of vapour-trails; but the noise of battle continued in the valley.

It was all as sudden as that! We goggled at each other. A telephone screeched, and a voice, commandingly insistent, said, "Everybody to R.H.Q. . . . immediately." A few minutes more and we found ourselves in our own little hell. Enough only need be said of our isolated action to give the picture of many similar actions that were taking place or had taken place all over the countryside around Calais. Sufficient to relate that a column of German tanks, men and field-guns, assisted by spotting-planes and parachuted snipers, were held up for a whole day by a handful of clerks, cooks, batmen and officers comprising the R.H.Q., who barricaded themselves, with ration-lorries, inside the rectangular farmyard which was Headquarters, and fought like veterans.

Victims of Fifth Column Snipers

The end, of course, was a foregone conclusion. But we denied the enemy the satisfaction of capture. For, as the evening came on, and screened by the smoke from the now blazing farm-buildings about us, we slipped out of our garrison, waded waist-high along a nearby dyke and safely reached the main road that led north to Calais. In a weary "crocodile" we marched the nine miles to the outer perimeter of the town amid whining shells and the bursting of explosives. We found the railway-siding, canal and dykes which formed this perimeter sparsely manned by platoons of the K.R.R.s. We entered Calais.

We could hear the sounds of battle away to the west of the town, and learned that partial siege had already been laid by the enemy two days before. Gunners, Pioneers, R.E.s and a few Welsh Guards who had trickled back from shattered Boulogne had held the west side of Calais until reinforced by untried units of K.R.R.s, Queen Victoria's Rifles and the Rifle Brigade. These had arrived that morning and gone straight into action. The main fighting so far had been

The Last Stand at Calais

By Rev. CLIFFORD LEVER
Author of *On My Heart Too*

on that side of the town, as the Germans, moving up from the south, had not yet arrived. We knew they were on their way!

A ship loaded with ammunition, equipment and some tanks, accompanying these units, could not be off-loaded because of the failure of the electric power to the dock-crane and the disappearance of the French dockers. (The ship, later, had to return to England still fully loaded save for a few tanks that had been manhandled on to the quay by our own men. These must have been the tanks we had heard in action that morning.) We were warned that it was necessary to be on the alert for Fifth Column snipers who had already killed some of our men.

As we walked warily down the shattered streets, dodging flying slates, splintering glass and chunks of masonry, the last four tanks the garrison possessed passed us on their way out. Before we reached the end of the main thoroughfare the largest tank, battered and broken, was back again. The other three did not return. From this the inference was simple: the Germans from the south were now with us!

The shortage of men and ammunition soon became apparent. That night, as we crouched in a cellar while bombs rained on to the town, we could hear, between bomb-bursts, the chattering of rifle and Bren-gun fire becoming louder and nearer—so near that it meant the outer perimeter had been abandoned and we were now fighting on a shorter line to hold the inner perimeter.

Next morning the smouldering inferno of the night blazed up white-hot; an inferno that made Dante's pale fantasy beside this fiendish, stinking hell. Rifle, Bren-gun, tank-gun and field-gun fire; crashing walls; flying slates and glass; men crawling from street-corner to street-corner, firing as they crawled; men blazing away through glassless windows at an enemy who seemed amazingly expert at this kind of battle; men fighting from flaming roof to flaming roof; bodies

falling out of windows and from the roof-tops; streams of bullets smacking the cobbles and zipping past your crouching body; stretcher-bearers creeping along, ignoring their own danger in the greater purpose of mercy; water from burst mains flooding down the littered streets—water with a pinky tinge as it lapped around your feet; red-hot dust choking lungs and nostrils. All this and, over all, the cataclysmic din and that insidious awareness of death that blacks out reason and leaves only naked instinct to motivate one's actions.

Pioneers Held the Inner Bridges

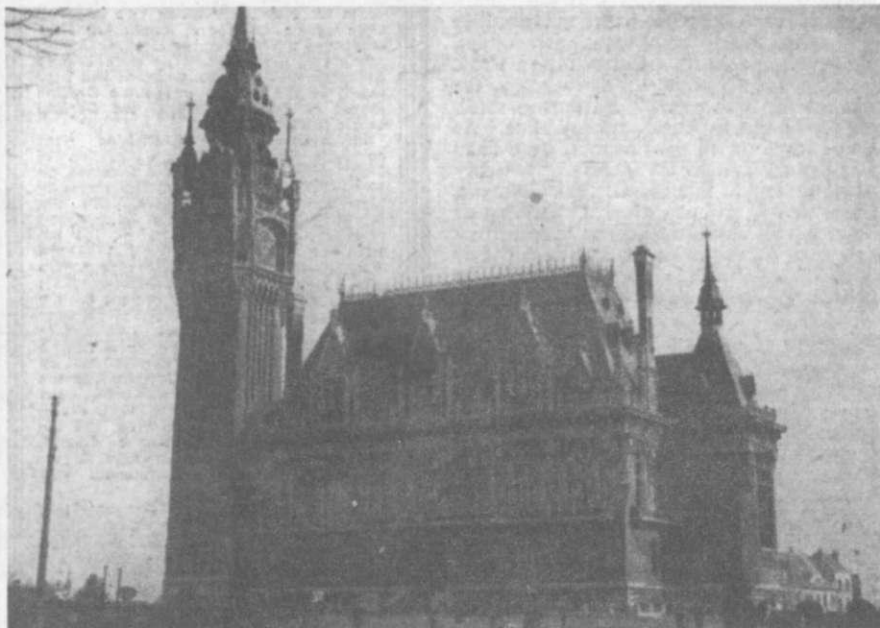
The trained infantry units were now fighting bitterly—fanatically—on the inner perimeter which half-circled the town, every shrinking yard claiming its percentage of life. The Pioneers—old veterans of Mons and some, I swear, of Mafeking—toothlessly grinned as they held the inner bridges and stopped loose-roving tanks by the sheer rate of their Bren-gun firing. (These were cunning old men who neatly piled up German dead to make fire-parapets for themselves.) Gunners and R.E.s, now turned infantry, blazed away with their unfamiliar rifles. Time and time again the Nazis broke before them.

In roared the dive-bombers . . . ineffectually. The fighting was too close-contained. They sheered off, to wait until the situation cleared. Slowly, as the terrible days and nights vaguely punctuated this unrespite agony, the situation did clear. It was inevitable. You cannot fight tanks and armour for ever with rifles, Bren-guns and anaemic anti-tank rifles, especially if you are so few in number that you cannot get any relief save the snatched moment of twitching sleep. No matter how high your courage or how tenacious your obstinacy, rations that become more and more frugal and ammunition that dwindles without replenishment will make the end inevitable. Street by street, square by square, the area of the town held by us shrank. It was all so simple—for the Germans!

Two German tanks at one end of a street two at the other with no tanks to oppose them—then their infantry would fight a way with sub-machine guns and grenades into the first house of the street, blast a hole through



CLIFFORD LEVER, C.F.



THE TOWN HALL AT CALAIS with its well-known clock tower as it is today. After the siege of 1940—described above—from 1941 to 1943 this ancient French town was the frequent target of R.A.F. bombers and long-range guns sited at Dover, and again saw heavy fighting when the Canadian Army recaptured it in 1944.

Great Stories of the War Retold

the internal wall into the next, and the next, and the next. Slowly our men, fighting on every floor, on every roof, would expend their ammunition. There would be no replenishment. Vainly they would charge, collectively and individually, with butt, bayonet and often with bare fist—the ending was always the same: into the street finally, to find the two ends sealed off by four enemy tanks. It was all so ruthlessly efficient, so logically achieved.

The Nazi flag fluttered from the tall tower of the Town Hall. That meant that half the town had now fallen. The fighting concentrated on and around The Citadel where Brigade Headquarters still desperately held out. Around the docks and near the medical-post in the railway station, over the shattered bridges, on the smashed lock-gates the battle went on. Every previously abandoned vehicle on the quay (and there were many) became a flaming point of resistance until the ammunition ran out.

"So British . . . I Salute You!"

Until the ammunition ran out . . . The same monotonous theme! If ever banner could have been unfurled over the blazing, splendid ruins of Calais, on its scroll could truly have been written in letters of unfading blood, "We fought on until the ammunition was spent."

The whole town suddenly became very quiet. We were startled by the unfamiliar silence. We wondered what it could mean. Some of our optimists started to cheer; they thought we had won. It soon became known, however, that the Germans had sent an emissary, under a white flag, to ask for our surrender.

That silence was very brief. The inferno blazed up again. The answer had been given. Weary as they were, every man cheered and the rattle of rifle-fire became more defiant than ever—with a new, inspired defiance. It was magnificent, but short-lived. Slowly, on that final Sunday morning, as the dive-bombers, at last coming into their own, screamed down on The Citadel, the rifle-fire died down until, apart from an occasional shot, the whole town stilled into silence. Finally, even the occasional shot ceased and nothing could be heard save the crackling of flames in the sunshine. It was the end of the splendid epic that was Calais.

Squads of Germans with sub-machine guns at the ready crept cautiously about, rounding-up prisoners. German Red Cross personnel helped ours to carry away the wounded of both sides. Rations of stew were served out to friend and foe alike. As evening came on all the prisoners were lined up in the big square, all so very, very weary that many slept as they stood. The Germans, equally weary, grouped around, standing or sitting, gazing curiously on this ragged, tiny remnant of an Army which had defied their efficient might so long. They gazed curiously and with grudging admiration.

THREE German staff cars came up, and stopped. A General stood up in the second car and gazed long and steadily at our men. In his face of granite was a softening compassion and admiration. Nobody called out an order but, unconsciously, our men and the Germans, despite their weariness, stiffened into some semblance of attention. Somebody whispered, "It's Rommel!" Whether it was or not nobody could be sure; it didn't matter. He spoke, in stilted, halting English, "Bloody, bloody fools! . . . So magnificent . . . so hopeless. So British . . . so futile . . . but still . . . magnificent. I salute you!"

He gravely saluted to the front; saluted to the half-right and again to the half-left

and, still standing at the salute, passed out of sight as the cars moved on. Almost before he had gone the men, British and German alike, flopped down on to the hard cobbles of the square. As night drew her dark cloak about them, enemy and friend slept side by side in the uncaring abandon of utter exhaustion.

The days that followed almost beggar description. Long columns of exhausted prisoners were forced-marched fifteen kilometres a day through French villages whose inhabitants stood silent in the streets with tragic hopelessness. Many of our men were badly wounded, but if they could stagger along at all they were made to do so. One

major, in particular, with rough bandaging round a bleeding hole in his back, limped along in a delirium of agony through all the never-ending hours of a stifling day until the angry, blasphemous protestations of our own men—risking being shot in voicing them—finally forced the Germans to send transport; next day he and others like him were taken on ahead. The rest staggered on, footsore, and frantic with thirst, yet not permitted to stop for a gulp of cold water proffered by the pitying wayside peasants.

ON the third day it rained a little and eased the agony. Our men put on their gas-capes. The Germans were intrigued by these and gleefully took them. In fairness to the enemy let it be said that the treatment by these front-line fighting troops, though rough, was humane, and the meagre rations of soup doled out to our men were exactly of the same quality and quantity as their own. It was later, on the fourth or fifth day, when they were handed-over to the base-personnel, that our men felt the full harshness of bitter and gloating enmity.

The first night after this handing-over some of our men were comfortably housed in a brickworks; too comfortably! In the middle of the night the Commander of the Guard had them turned out and they were made to sleep in the storehouse on pyramids of brick. They lay, as best they could, on the sloping sides. If they slid down they were booted back by the guards; if they protested they were prodded with loaded rifles or banged with the butts.

Finally, in some wayside railway station in Belgium, they were loaded into open cattle-trucks—cramped so tightly that it was impossible for them to sit or lie down. The next four days of the journey through Belgium and Germany into Poland were spent standing, all day, in blazing heat; and at night, by contrast, in bitter cold. The nightmare journey at last ended and they were drafted off into the different forts in Poland that were to be their prison-camps. Here the conditions were appalling.

After a few weeks of this, when everybody was crawling with lice and bitten by bugs, our doctors firmly protested to the Camp Commandants, only to be blandly told that it was not worth while making any serious attempt to change the conditions as the War would soon be over now and our men repatriated! It was only when England refused to give in and the War looked like going on for some time longer that the Germans got down to the problem of the prison-camps and made a real job of it.

To Await the Moment of Escape

Not all our men arrived in Poland. A few died on the way, but many more, not caring to spend the rest of the War in captivity, slipped out of the prisoner-columns as they passed through some familiar French village. There they sank into the background of peasant-life to await the moment of escape. One officer found a French farm intact, complete with cattle, pigs and poultry, and donning the clothes left behind by the hurriedly departed farmer he calmly ran the farm for some three months.

He even supplied the German Officers' Mess across the way with milk, butter and eggs. At last, being "tipped off" that the Germans were beginning to suspect his true identity, he left the farm; cadged lifts on German military lorries to Cherbourg, and there, helped by friendly fishermen, finally got a boat across to England: to receive a Military Cross. In him is typified the real spirit of the epic that was Calais and of men who fought, refusing to be daunted and even when defeated remained unconquerable in their souls.



Colours: White "Y" on Brown

BRITISH 5TH DIVISION

RE-FORMED in France in October 1939, by the late Field-Marshal Lord Gort, V.C., the nucleus of the Division comprised three regular infantry brigades, and was commanded by Major-General (now Lieut-General) H. E. Franklyn. Destined to a globe-trotting fighting existence it became known as the "Gipsy Division."

The Division fought on two fronts in 1940, two brigades in France and one in Norway. On the Western Front two noted actions were fought which materially assisted in the successful evacuation of the B.E.F., May-June 1940. The first was in the defence of Arras (May 21) and the second along the Ypres-Comines canal (May 27-28). In both, severe casualties were inflicted on the enemy, and sustained by the Division.

The other brigade, transferred to Norway, landed at Andalsnes (April 23-24) and repulsed heavy attacks at Kram, 160 miles away (April 25). In a second battle at Ota (April 28) it again proved its superiority. After being withdrawn the brigade rejoined the Division in England, in October 1940.

EARLY in 1942 and now commanded by Major-General H. P. M. Berney-Ficklin, the "Gipsies" sailed for South Africa en route for Madagascar where two brigades, after landing on May 5, fought brilliantly and paved the way for the capture of Antsirane two days later. The third brigade had proceeded to India, where it was later joined by the other two, and the Division moved to Persia in face of the German threat to the Caucasus.

In January 1943 the Division went to Syria, trained for the invasion of Sicily and, landing south of Syracuse on July 10, 1943, took the town of Syracuse by nightfall, and Paterno later. With the 8th Army the Division, under the command of Major-General G. C. Bucknall, led the assault on Italy on September 3, 1943, and immediately captured Scilla. In nine months campaigning Muro was taken (September 25); Lupara, after a heavy engagement on the Biferno, in October; and Forlì (November 9). The Garigliano was crossed on January 18, 1944, with the 5th Army, and Minturno taken two days later. Commanded by Major-General P. G. S. Gregson-Ellis the Division became part of the bridge-head force at Anzio from March 1944, subsequently crossed the Moleta river and advanced until the fall of Rome on June 4, 1944. In this last phase Sgt. M. W. Rogers (2nd Wilts) earned a posthumous V.C. (portrait in page 376, Vol. 8).

AFTER refitting in Palestine the Division, now commanded by Major-General R. A. Hull, reappeared on the Western Front (April 1945) and assisted in driving the Germans across the Elbe and entered Lubeck. By VE Day the Division had completed a trek of 30,000 miles and won for itself a glorious reputation by its doggedness and fighting qualities.

Redundant Now: Not Again to be Fired in Anger?



IN NEATLY MARSHALLED RANKS hundreds of redundant guns stand mutely just beyond Park Royal Station, Middlesex, in a huge depot spreading from Western Avenue across the fields. Among them are some of the finest pieces of British artillery. In the foreground can be seen Bofors 40-mm. A.A. platforms. To the rear are the famous 25-pdr. field guns, and the 17-pdr. anti-tank guns designed originally to counteract the 88-mm. weapon mounted on the German heavy tanks, and later used by our Airborne forces.

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Photo, Keystone

Slovakia Goes Gay on Year-Old Liberation Day



THROUGH THE STREETS OF BRATISLAVA, capital of Slovakia, on April 4, 1945, marched the people who for six years had been under Nazi "protection," like others in Bohemia and Moravia. The occasion, the first anniversary of the city's liberation by Russian troops, was marked by a speech delivered by Dr. Fierlinger, Prime Minister of the Czechoslovak Republic, in one of the city's squares (top), and by a procession of Slovak girls in picturesque and colourful national costume (bottom).

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Photos, Keystone

Invasion Anniversary Remembered by Denmark



TWO MINUTES SILENCE WAS OBSERVED throughout Denmark on April 13, 1946, to commemorate the sixth anniversary of the German invasion (April 9, 1940) and in homage to those who lost their lives in the long and bitter struggle to free their country from Nazi tyranny. In the Town Hall Square, Copenhagen (top), crowds massed for the observance; many remained at the memorial cross (bottom), erected to those Danes who had suffered in enemy concentration camps.

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Photos, New York Times Photos

HIS MAJESTY'S SHIPS

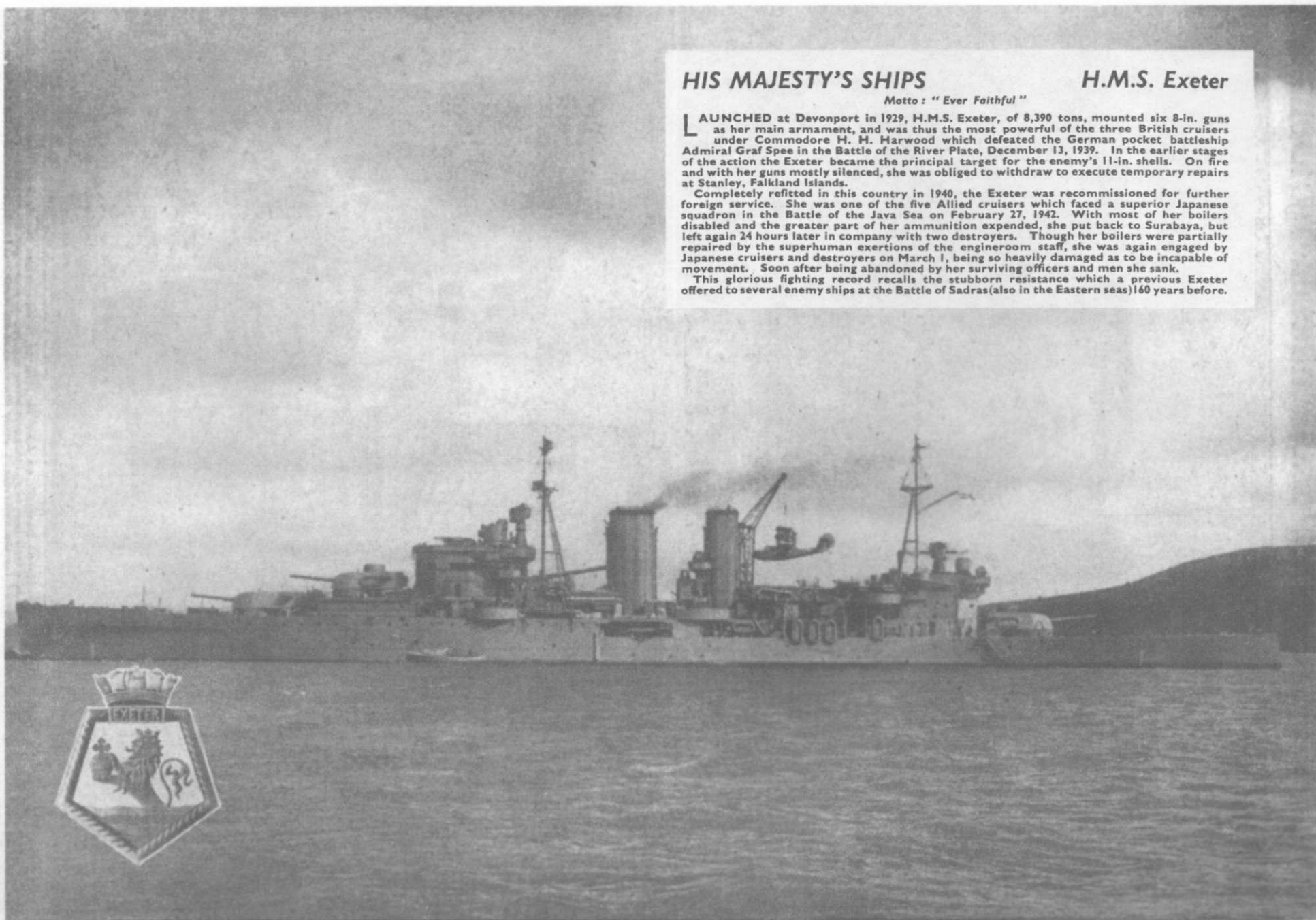
H.M.S. Exeter

Motto: "Ever Faithful"

LAUNCHED at Devonport in 1929, H.M.S. Exeter, of 8,390 tons, mounted six 8-in. guns as her main armament, and was thus the most powerful of the three British cruisers under Commodore H. H. Harwood which defeated the German pocket battleship Admiral Graf Spee in the Battle of the River Plate, December 13, 1939. In the earlier stages of the action the Exeter became the principal target for the enemy's 11-in. shells. On fire and with her guns mostly silenced, she was obliged to withdraw to execute temporary repairs at Stanley, Falkland Islands.

Completely refitted in this country in 1940, the Exeter was recommissioned for further foreign service. She was one of the five Allied cruisers which faced a superior Japanese squadron in the Battle of the Java Sea on February 27, 1942. With most of her boilers disabled and the greater part of her ammunition expended, she put back to Surabaya, but left again 24 hours later in company with two destroyers. Though her boilers were partially repaired by the superhuman exertions of the engineroom staff, she was again engaged by Japanese cruisers and destroyers on March 1, being so heavily damaged as to be incapable of movement. Soon after being abandoned by her surviving officers and men she sank.

This glorious fighting record recalls the stubborn resistance which a previous Exeter offered to several enemy ships at the Battle of Sadras (also in the Eastern seas) 160 years before.



Truth About the Submarine Seal Revealed at Last

MYSTERY surrounded the fate of one of Britain's newest minelaying submarines when in May 1940 the Admiralty announced that "H.M. submarine Seal is overdue and must be presumed to be lost. Foreign reports suggest that some of her crew may be prisoners of war." The Times Naval Correspondent commented, "The mention of 'foreign reports' probably refers to an account,



Lieut.-Commander R. P. LONSDALE, R.N.

published in Germany and Sweden on May 6, of the capture of prisoners from a disabled British submarine in the Kattegat by a German seaplane. The German report went on to describe how the submarine was subsequently taken in tow by a German minesweeper and captured, but that part of it was probably fictitious."

Six years were to pass before details of the loss of the 1,520-ton Seal became generally known—as the result of two courts-martial convened at Portsmouth: the first on April 9, 1946, when 27-years-old Lieut. Trevor Agar Beet, R.N. (now of H.M.S. Victory) faced charges of failing to sink the ship to prevent her falling into the hands of the enemy, and was honourably acquitted.

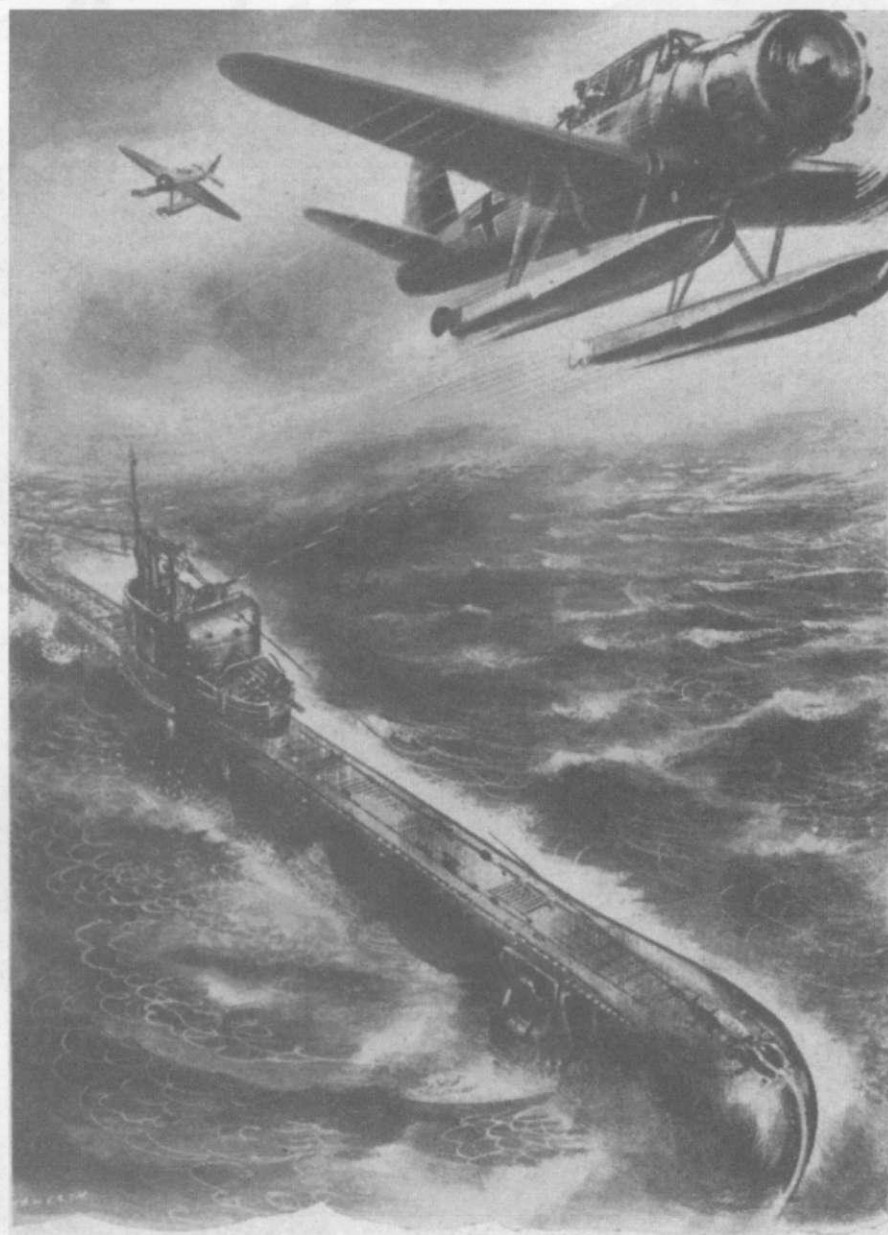
In evidence, Lieut.-Commander Rupert Philip Lonsdale, R.N., who was in command of the Seal from April 29 to May 5, 1940—and, with his men, from then on for five years a prisoner of war—told how they left the Humber on April 29 on a minelaying expedition in the Kattegat and were attacked by a hostile aircraft but suffered no damage. Later, having successfully laid her mines, the Seal was proceeding out of the Kattegat when she struck a mine.

Tense Drama on Bed of the Sea

The mine exploded and the Seal, 20 per cent flooded, hit the bottom of the sea-bed and lay there with her bows up, at an angle of 18 degrees. Strenuous but futile efforts were at once made to close a water-tight door through which water was cascading in. Oil and water were pumped out of the tanks, to lighten the submarine. All this, the Lieut.-Commander said, "made continuous and ever-increased demands on the physical and mental capacities of the crew." The men were dizzy, and panting for breath.

There occurred then a never-to-be-forgotten scene. The Commander summoned all hands, and together, as the Seal lay crippled and helpless on the sea-bed, officers and 60 men repeated the Lord's Prayer. Eventually the motors started again and the submarine surfaced, after having been submerged for 22 hours. Code books and other secret documents were placed in weighted bags and thrown overboard and periscope and Asdic detecting gear were smashed. Four at a time the crew went to the conning tower for air; but some of their number were in a comatose condition, unable to move.

Helpless as she lay on the surface, the Seal came in for further attack by German aircraft. Now the engines failed altogether to respond, and when the main motors were switched on they blew up. It was impossible for any of the crew to go on deck; those who attempted it were subjected to streams of machine-gun bullets. The odds were too tremendous to continue, and the Commander hoisted a white sheet from the



bridge—but not until the first Arado seaplane had been joined by two others and (it was stated in evidence) Lieut.-Commander Lonsdale himself had fired at them with Lewis guns, until the guns jammed, as shown in our artist Haworth's spirited impression.

One of the seaplanes came down close to the Seal, and the Commander was ordered to leave the submarine and swim over to the aircraft. Finally, all the crew were taken aboard a German trawler and the Seal taken in tow, reaching Denmark only just afloat.

AFTER the Commander had left the ship, everybody aboard (said Lieut. Beet, in evidence) thought she was in a sinking condition and would go down; and a depth-charge set in the Seal would go off when she sank. In these circumstances it did not occur to him to hasten the sinking. This grim story from the past so far brought to light, the Court was cleared whilst the judges came to a decision.

When the Court reassembled, the position of the sword, which (in accordance with Naval tradition) had lain lengthwise on the judge's table throughout the hearing, had been changed. As Lieut. Beet re-entered he

saw the hilt pointing towards him, and with a smile the President of the Court returned the sword to its owner.

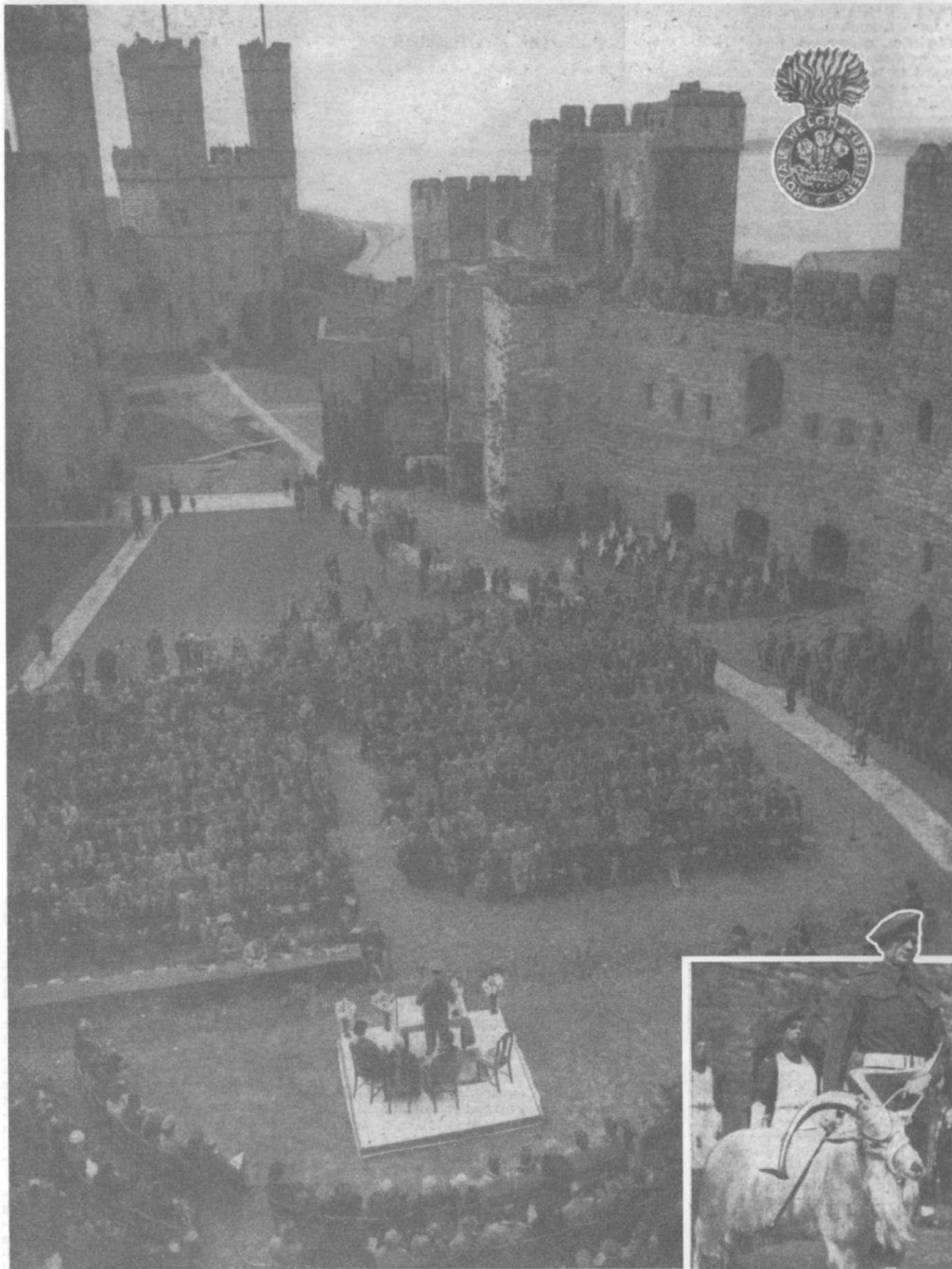
The following day Lieut.-Commander Lonsdale faced the court-martial on charges that he had failed to take immediate action to engage the enemy aircraft that attacked the Seal, and had failed to take steps to see that the submarine was sunk when it appeared possible that she might fall into enemy hands. He also was honourably acquitted.

Of matters concerning the Seal which may still remain unsolved there is the mystery of the submarine's final disposal by the enemy. Close investigation has revealed that she was never used operationally by the Germans, but no trace of her has been found in German and Danish U-boat yards.



Lieut. TREVOR AGAR BEET, R.N.

Caernarvon's Freedom for Royal Welch Fusiliers



THE 13th CENTURY CASTLE was the setting for the presentation of the Freedom of Caernarvon Borough to the 6th Battalion Royal Welch Fusiliers on April 11, 1946. The Battalion, now stationed in Düsseldorf, Germany, was represented by a detachment led by the Commanding Officer, Lieut. Col. F. F. Laughier, who is here seen addressing the assembly during the ceremony. "Taffy," the Regiment's famous mascot (right) was among those present.

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Photos, Topical

Records of the Regiments: 1939-1945

EVERYWHERE the Fleet has been, Royal Marines serving as ships' detachments have also been in action—manning between a quarter and a third of the armament of every ship, from a cruiser to a battleship. In all the big actions of the Second Great War in which such ships have been engaged—the River Plate, Matapan, the destruction of the Bismarck and the Scharnhorst, the battles in the Java Sea and the Pacific—the Royals have formed a substantial part of the ships' companies, their detachments numbering from 60 to over 250 according to the class of ship. Royal Marine officers serving with the Fleet Air Arm distinguished themselves in actions from the days of Norway and Taranto to attacks on the Japanese.



The ships' detachments are also trained to act as a land striking force under the Naval Commander-in-Chief. Marines from the cruisers Sheffield and Glasgow made up the major part of the first British force to land in Norway in 1940, forming a bridge-head at Namsos for an Army expedition. At Aandalsnes a few days later Marines from the battleships Barham, Nelson and Hood landed to discharge a similar task, and also remained to cover the final evacuation as a rearguard. Another force of sea-service Marines carried out a swift occupation of the Faroe Islands to forestall the enemy.

At the Hook of Holland, Boulogne and Calais, when the German armoured scythe was sweeping all before it, parties of Royal Marines carried out special tasks. At the Hook they covered the escape of Queen Wilhelmina and her Government. At Boulogne they protected a naval demolition party destroying harbour facilities while the Germans were in the outskirts of the town. At Calais they landed for the same purpose, and most of them remained to take part in the now immortal defence.

In Madagascar in 1942 the Marines of H.M.S. Ramillies made a daring landing in

The Royal Marines

By Major W. R. SENDALL

NO comparable unit of the Armed Forces can lay claim to such a variety of War service as the Corps of Royal Marines. They have been everywhere and done nearly everything. Their badge is the Globe itself, surrounded by laurel, awarded to them more than 100 years ago as a symbol of their universal service. They have borne it not only by sea and land but under the sea and in the air, in every theatre of War from the River Plate to the North Cape, from Hongkong to Iceland.

the rear of the defences that expedited the capture of the naval base of Diego Suarez. In the Aegean in 1944 H.M.S. Aurora's Marines captured the island of Levitha. And in 1945 a force drawn from the East Indies Fleet chased the Japanese out of Cheduba island off the Burma coast, later re-embarking to take their place at the guns for the bombardment of Ramree.

THAT, briefly, is the record of the soldiers of the Fleet. In the main their story is that of the ships in which they serve, and as a fighting ship is a highly integrated team it would be impossible, even if it were desirable, to attempt to disentangle the story of one particular component. But among those not to be forgotten are the Royal Marine bandsmen, the fighting musicians, who man the fire control instruments—the nerves of a ship of war—when Action Stations sounds. Perhaps their best story is that of H.M.S. Penelope's band who for two days played to the men unloading a precious cargo in Valetta harbour, Malta, while the Stukas screamed down on them incessantly. While the bombs burst around they played steadfastly from a lighter to keep up the spirits of those at work.

The ships' detachments, though still the basic role of the Corps, are at present only a minority, the great majority of Marines having served in the wide and varied field of Combined Operations. Around the tiny nucleus left at the end of 1939 after the Fleet's



General Sir THOMAS HUNTON, K.C.B., a Jutland veteran, Commandant-General of the Royal Marines since 1943. He retired from the Service in April 1946. Photo, Associated Press

requirements had been met, a Royal Marine Brigade and the first Mobile Naval Base Defence Organization were built. The former was the first British amphibious assault force to be formed during the War; the latter was an elaborate organization to establish and defend advanced bases for the Fleet in any part of the world.

A battalion from the Brigade was dispatched, after the invasion of Norway, to forestall the enemy in Iceland, and within a week of receiving its warning order was deployed in that island over a front of 70 miles. Throughout the desperate summer of 1940 the R.M. Brigade stood by for action as the only force in Britain capable of counter-invasion role. In the autumn it sailed to take part in the Dakar operation which, to the great disappointment of the Marines, was broken off before they had an opportunity to show their mettle.

Record Bag of Enemy Aircraft

The Mobile Naval Base Defence Organization (M.N.B.D.O.) was deployed in Home Defence of Great Britain—which, of course, is the world's greatest naval base—manning anti-aircraft and coast defence guns. The Marine anti-aircraft batteries claimed a record bag of enemy planes, one Regiment shooting down 98 and one battery alone claiming 44 in 40 days, figures which have never been excelled. With the Germans mounting long-range guns at Calais, the Royal Marines manned two great naval guns and a pair of long-range guns on railway mountings near Dover, to counter them. Their two original guns—Winnie and Pooh—remained in action constantly until 1944, when they fired their last rounds across the Channel in support of the Canadian attack on the Boulogne-Calais area.

Early in 1941 the M.N.B.D.O. sailed for Crete, to establish a defended anchorage for the Fleet at Suda Bay. When only a portion of the Organization had landed, the German airborne invasion broke upon the island. The Marines, all specialists (such as A.A. and Coast gunners, signallers, etc.), took to their rifles and fought in the rearguard that covered the evacuation from Sphakia. Their splendid performance was an outstanding justification of the Corps training policy: that every Marine, no matter for what specialist role he may be destined, is trained to be a first-class infantry soldier, this taking precedence of all else.

The first M.N.B.D.O. reformed in the Middle East after its heavy losses in Crete. Its component units were employed far and wide in many different functions, in particular the fortification of Addu Atoll, a



AMONG THE FIRST BRITISH TROOPS TO LAND IN NORWAY in 1940, these Royal Marines went ashore at Namsos to seize and hold a bridge-head for the Army. Their ships, H.M.S. Bittern and Afridi, were sunk after the evacuation. At a South Coast port, one of them wears a French sailor's hat as a souvenir. Photo, Topical



ROYAL MARINE COMMANDOS ENTER OSNABRÜCK STATION, in April 1945. Among the first to cross the Rhine (1st Cdo Brigade was in the spearhead of the British crossing), when Field-Marshal Montgomery unleashed his last offensive, they went on to clear this big industrial town whose capture opened the way into the Hanover plain. Later, Marines took part in the first crossings of the rivers Weser, Aller and the Elbe, where they seized bridge-heads for our armour to pass through.

Photo, Sport & General

remote group of tiny coral islands in the Indian Ocean, as a defended anchorage for our ships against the Japanese menace. When the Japs entered the war the A.A. batteries of the M.N.B.D.O. were deployed in defence of Ceylon, taking heavy toll of enemy aircraft in the raids of Easter 1942 on Colombo and Trincomalee.

Besides their part in the naval actions, Marines ashore helped to meet the Jap eruption. A tiny detachment fought gallantly in Hongkong. After the loss of their fine ships, the R.M. detachments of H.M.S. Prince of Wales and Repulse formed with the remnants of a battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders a composite unit known as the Plymouth Argylls, and as such played a distinguished part in the last defence of Singapore.

In Burma, a small band of volunteers, detached by the M.N.B.D.O. in Ceylon, manned an improvised flotilla of river craft on the Irrawaddy, which protected the flank of the Army during the famous withdrawal from Burma. They fought ashore and afloat under the White Ensign on the Irrawaddy, and later the Chindwin, until the Army retired across the latter river, when they destroyed their craft and marched back over the mountains to India, having lost nearly half their numbers in action.

AT home, 1942 saw the beginning of two roles that were to be of great importance to the Corps: the formation of the first Royal Marine Commando and the manning by Marines of the armament of a new type of craft for Combined Operations, the Support Craft, designed to give fire support to landing operations from closer inshore than destroyers could venture. These craft distinguished themselves in their first action at Dieppe, and were used in ever-increasing

numbers in every major amphibious operation subsequently. No. 40 R.M. Commando also saw its first action at Dieppe, where it suffered severe casualties attempting a landing on a beach swept by German fire.

The Commando role was, of course, traditional in the Royal Marines, but the prior demands of the M.N.B.D.O.'s and the expansion of the R.M. Brigade into a Division had previously absorbed the whole of the Corps' slender manpower. Now to No. 40 R.M. Commando was added another—No. 41; and both these units were engaged in the invasion of Sicily, where they were the first to land from the sea, striking at coast defences on the flank of the 8th Army in a night landing that was a complete success.

At Termoli They Avenged Dieppe

The Support Craft were engaged off the Sicilian beaches while the Marines of the second M.N.B.D.O. were also there, their A.A. batteries being deployed first in defence of Malta during the mounting of the invasion and later in defence of the naval anchorage at Augusta, while the Coast Artillery component manned captured Italian batteries at Syracuse and Augusta. Other units were employed in the supply and maintenance of the 15th Army Group.

When the assault on the Italian mainland was launched the Royal Marine Commandos and the Support Craft were again in the van. No. 40 Commando made assault landings at Vibo Valentia, and later, in company with Army Commandos, at Termoli on the Adriatic coast, where they took part in a bold move to outflank the German line facing the 8th Army. The Marines surprised a German parachute regiment in the town of Termoli and took their revenge for Dieppe in the street fighting which followed. At Salerno,

No. 41 Commando landed with an Army Commando to seize and hold the Vietri defile on the main road from Salerno to Naples. For four days they repelled attack after attack from crack troops of the German Hermann Goering Division, until the main Army forces fought their way up to the pass from the beaches. Later they suffered bitter casualties in another desperate battle to stem a German drive for the beach in the neighbourhood of a small village called Pigoletti.

BACK at home in the summer of 1943 attention was focused on the coming invasion in the West. It was decided that the Royal Marine Division, which was too lightly armed to be suitable for Continental warfare, should be split up into six new Commandos—Nos. 42, 43, 44, 45, 46 and 47—while the balance of the troops, supplemented by men of the M.N.B.D.O.s as they returned to the United Kingdom, should be formed into crews for vast fleets of minor landing craft that would be required for the Normandy operation. The number of Support Craft was also greatly increased, the smallest of them—the L.C.S.(M)—being entirely taken over by Marines.

Two of the new Commandos—42 and 44—departed for the Far East, while 41 in Italy was relieved by No. 43, 41 returning to re-form for a task in the invasion. Early in 1944 another R.M. Commando—No. 48—was formed from the 7th Battalion R.M., which had served in Sicily first as the nucleus of a beach unit and later in the line in the battle for Catania. All were concentrating now on their invasion tasks.

About 20,000 Marines went into action in Normandy, ashore or afloat, over ten thousand of them on D-Day itself. Two-thirds of the assault craft that carried in the first waves of infantry were manned by

The Soldiers of the Fleet in Diverse Roles



IN THE STEAMING JUNGLE OF BURMA or the icy Arctic seas the Royal Marine has to be equally at home. In tropical kit, this Marine (1) points to the scar on the neck of a native who was rescued when a R.M. striking force drove the Japs from Cheduba Island, off the Burma coast, on January 26, 1945. The man had been hanged by the Japs—but survived. Duty at the guns of battleships and cruisers took Marines with the Russian convoys through the depths of Northern winter: cleaning guns on the snow-strewn deck of a light cruiser (2) in April 1943. R.M. Commandos (3) who stormed the great German batteries which dominated the Scheldt estuary sight the lighthouse tower of Walcheren, where they made their historic landing at dawn on November 1, 1944. PAGE 45 Photos, British Official



Records of the Regiments: 1939—1945

Marines, and the whole of the huge fleet of tiny craft in the "Build-up" Squadrons, many of which crossed the Channel under their own steam—no small feat in the prevailing weather conditions, when heavily loaded. R.M. Commandos were in action ashore, their outstanding achievements being the capture of Port-en-Bessin, the storming of strong-points such as Langrune, Petit-Enfer and Douvres Radar station, and the clearing of the river Mue valley. Later they helped to hold the left flank of the Allied bridge-head east of the river Orne, alongside Army Commandos and Airborne troops.

MANY Marines were operating in the naval forces, some at the guns of battleships and cruisers, others in Support Craft which, after supporting the assault, took their place in the "Trout Line"—the line of ships and craft that covered the assault area at sea from incursions of German midget submarines, explosive motor boats, and other mosquito craft during the covering action known as the Battle of Seine Bay.

Many, too, were among the "frogmen"—the Landing Craft Obstruction Clearance units that broke a way through the underwater barriers erected by the enemy to stop our landing craft. Another unexpected Royal Marine role was the R.M. Armoured Support Group, the first Marine formation ever to use tanks; these took part in the assault as a novel type of amphibious assault artillery. As the Royal Navy occupied ports and the famous Mulberry was established, many Marines were employed on vital transport and communications work in the naval base organization.

The R.M. Commandos fought on the flank until after Falaise, when they took part in the advance to the Seine. After the fall

of Antwerp, 4th Commando Brigade, consisting of three R.M. and one Army Commando, began planning and training for their part in the attack on Walcheren—which opened the estuary of the Scheldt to our ships. The amphibious assault on the Westkapelle Dyke in Walcheren was the outstanding Marine operation of the War. Three Royal Marine Commandos landed in the gap blown in the famous dyke by Lancasters of the R.A.F. to storm the great batteries by means of which the Germans dominated the estuary.

The assault was covered by the Assault Squadron, Eastern Flank, a large Support Craft force with many Royal Marines at the guns, as well as the battleship H.M.S. Warspite and the monitors Erebus and Roberts. The Support Craft fought an amazing duel at point-blank range with the big German guns in a rmouredcasemates, suffering severe casualties but sufficiently subduing the enemy fire to enable the three R.M. Commandos to get ashore in the gap. One after another the batteries fell to the determined attacks of the Marines, till the R.M. Commandos linked up with No. 4 Army Commando that had been the spearhead of the Army attack across the river against Flushing. With this junction the sea-way up the Scheldt was effectively cleared for our minesweepers.

Up the Rangoon River to the City

Later, 1st Commando Brigade was in the spearhead of the British crossing of the Rhine. No. 46 R.M. Commando was the first unit across at Wesel. These Marines continued in the great drive through Germany, helping to win bridge-heads across the rivers Weser, Aller and finally the Elbe.

Meanwhile, in the Italian theatre, after

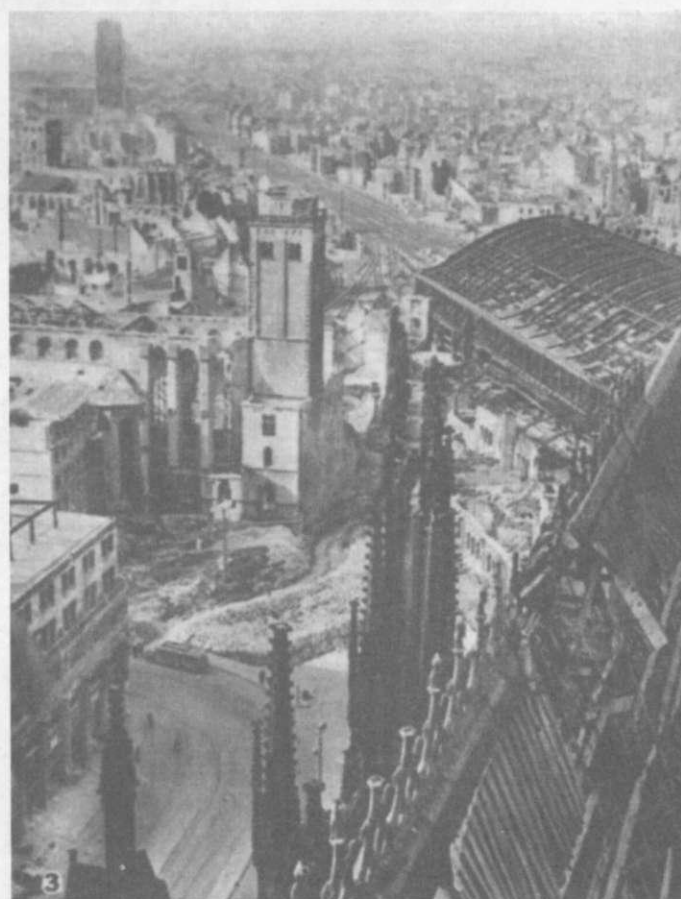
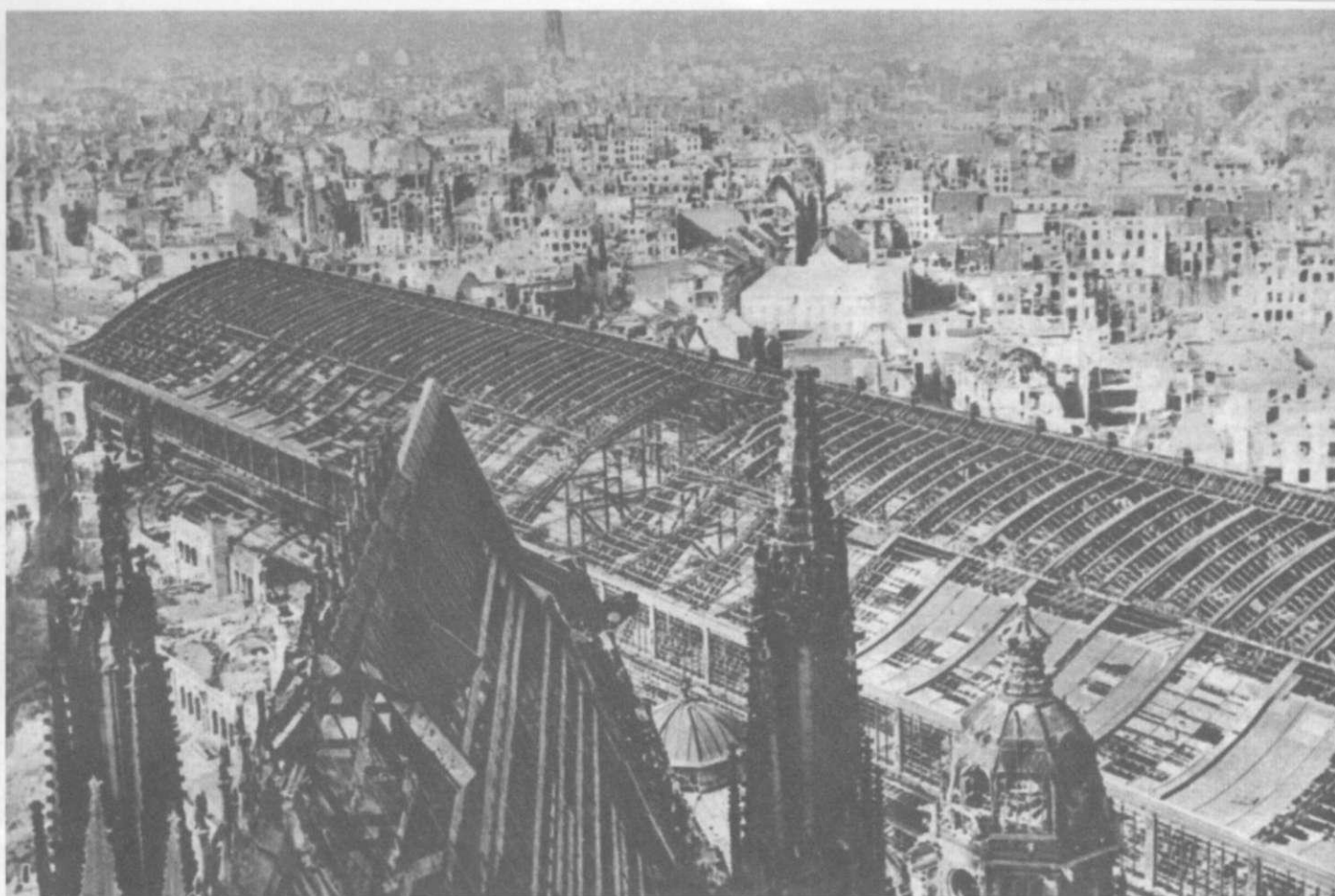
taking part in the crossing of the Garigliano and Anzio, Nos. 40 and 43 R.M. Commandos crossed over to the Dalmatians for an exciting spell of amphibious warfare among the islands, co-operating with Marshal Tito's partisans in some hard and bitter fighting. They returned to join, with the remainder of the 2nd Commando Brigade, in the fierce action on the shores of Lake Comacchio that was the prelude to the 8th Army's final offensive, in the course of which battle Corporal Tom Hunter of No. 43 R.M. Commando won the V.C. (portrait in page 376, Vol. 9).

IN the Far East, 44 R.M. Commando was engaged in the Arakan early in 1944, harassing Japanese lines of communication from the sea. In 1945 both the Royal Marine Commandos in that theatre took part in the series of landings at Akyab, Myebon and Kangaw, which brought the Arakan fighting to a victorious close. Royal Marines in landing craft also took part in these operations. Over 900 Marines manned landing craft in the force that made the longest run in assault craft in history—up the Rangoon river to the reoccupation of that city.

This very rapid sketch of Royal Marine operations during the Second Great War has not paused to mention such episodes as the canoe raid up the Gironde to destroy enemy ships near Bordeaux (see illus. page 623, Vol. 9), the performance of R.M. anti-aircraft batteries shooting down a record number of flying bombs in defence of London and Antwerp, of the R.M. officers with the Airborne forces in Normandy, of the Landing Craft Marines who turned themselves into infantry again to take part in the final battles of North-West Germany and the occupation of the great German naval ports.



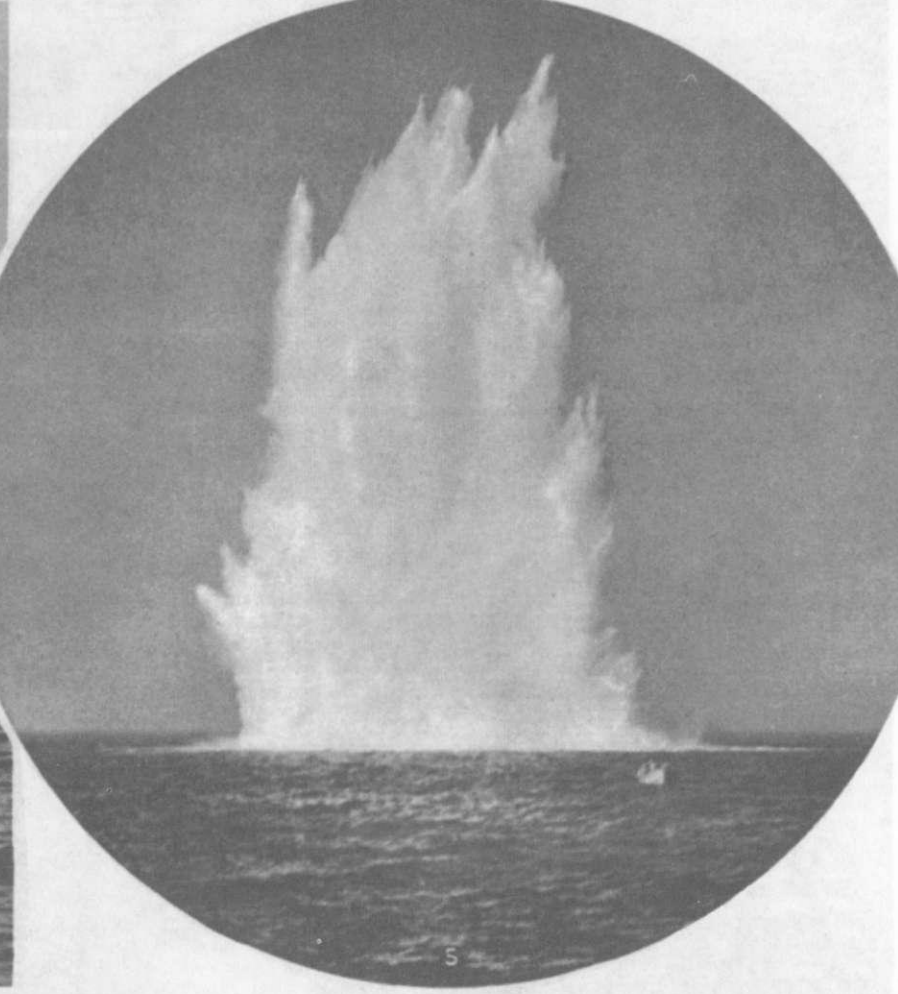
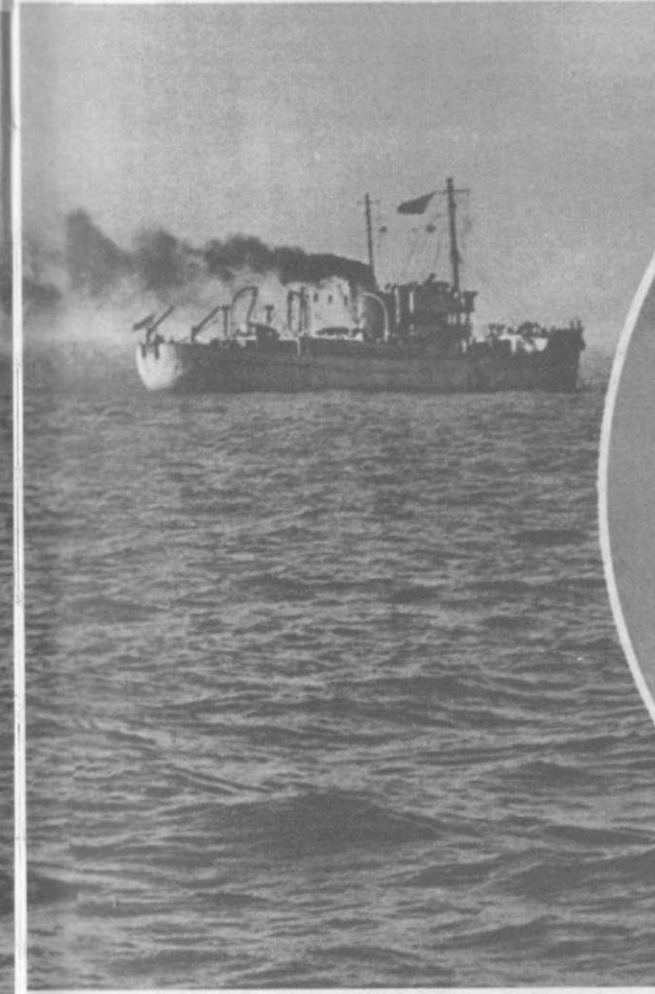
DEDICATION OF MEMORIAL TO Cpl. TOM HUNTER, of No. 43 R.M. Commando, the only Royal Marine to whom a V.C. was awarded during the War (for magnificent courage on the shores of Lake Comacchio), took place on March 12, 1946, at the R.M. Depot, Lympstone, Devon, where he did his initial training. The Bishop of Crediton is seen dedicating a ship's bell, which will be struck every half-hour, day and night, in the Corporal's memory. See portrait in page 376, Vol. 9.



Photos, Planet News

Past Glory to be Restored to Cologne Cathedral

In Allied air raids on Germany's third largest city the Cathedral received fourteen hits—due to its close proximity to the main railway station and the Hohenzollern Bridge. Part of the roof of the north transept (1 and 3), with station and city beyond. A view from the south-east (2). Half of the roof had been covered with zinc by March 1946. Temporary repairs to the building—which was one of the finest examples of Gothic architecture in Europe—will be effected by the year-end.

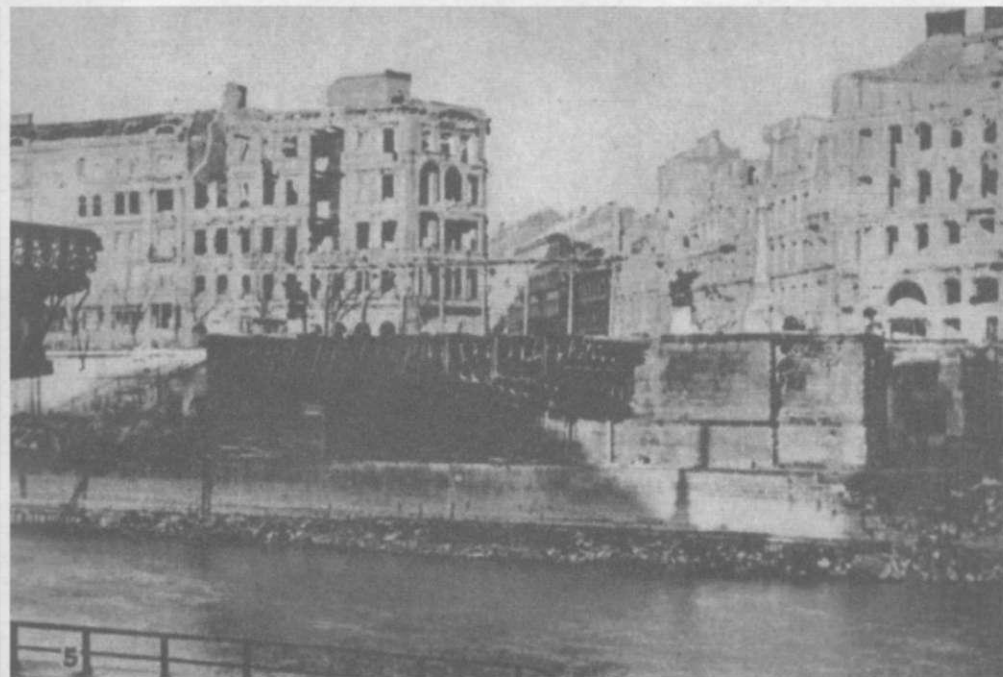
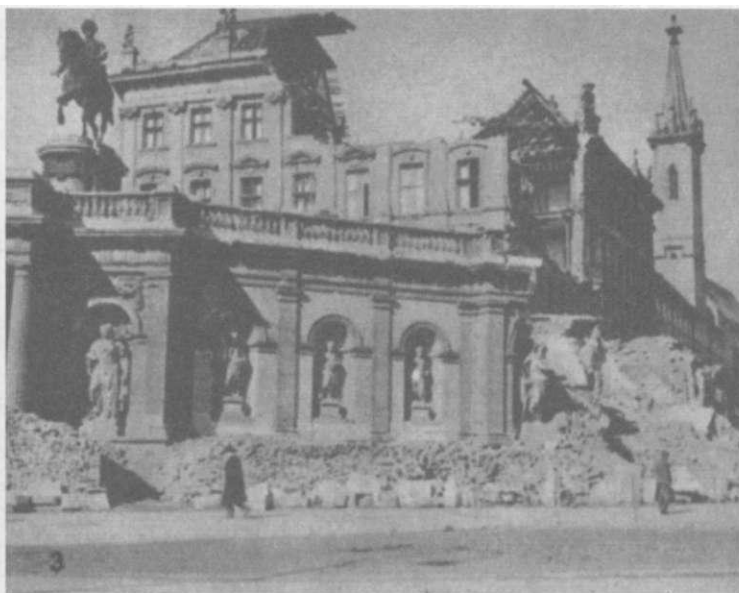


Shattering Sunken Wrecks by Depth-Charge—

Legacy of six years of total warfare, many submerged vessels present a menace to shipping today. When salving of these wrecks is impracticable depth-charges are dropped to blow them to pieces. Engaged in the clearance of channels leading to the Thames is the Sheerness-based 450-ton trawler H.M.S. Lundy, here seen operating, together with a cutter, above the sea-bed hulk of the minesweeper Myrtle, a 550-ton trawler which fell victim to a mine on June 14, 1940.

— Clears Britain's Obstructed Shipping-Lanes

The wreck having been located by the cutter, by means of echo sounding apparatus, fifteen depth-charges, involving 5,600 lb. of T.N.T., are prepared (1), and lowered from H.M.S. Lundy to the cutter (2), from whose bows they are then suspended (3). The cutter proceeds to the buoy-marked area (4) above the wreck, leaving the Lundy at a safe distance, drops the charges and with a shattering roar and uprush of water (5) the Myrtle is disintegrated—a menace no more.



Life in Austria's Once-Gay Capital Revives But Slowly

Photos, Associated Press, Keystone

All eyes turn in admiration as mounted members of the British Corps of Military Police (1) patrol past the burnt-out Opera House (seen also at 4) in the Inner City of Vienna, occupied by the Four Powers jointly. At the Soviet H.Q. are displayed (2) portraits of Lenin (left) and Stalin, with the Red Star in between. A monument of the Emperor Franz Josef I (1830-1916) still stands amid the ruins (3). Spanning the Danube Canal, which divides Vienna, this bridge (5) was completely destroyed by the Germans. Strenuous efforts are being made to speed the flow of traffic. See also facing page.

Europe's Wartime Capitals in 1946

It was a year ago, in April 1945, that the first Russian troops entered Vienna and penetrated unopposed as far as the Ring, in a taxi. That was only a reconnaissance, it is true, if of an unconventional kind, and there was plenty of fighting before the capital of Austria was captured; still, at that time much of it was undamaged, and when, two months later, the first Allied mission to Marshal Tolbukhin drove in from Carinthia we had only the vaguest notion of what we were likely to find.

There had been a spate of rumours, owing to the fact that no official observers had been allowed into Vienna so far. Ugly stories had spread about. As usual, no tale was altogether true. But what nobody had foretold was the astonishing and, I believe, sincere welcome we received from the Viennese.



ALAN PRYCE-JONES
Photo, Hugh Cecil

Our little convoy of staff cars had passed through the ruined industrial wilderness of Wiener Neustadt and over the dreary road by which Vienna is entered from the south. Suddenly we reached the Ring and there, beside the old Imperial gardens, stopped in the middle of a Viennese crowd, all exclaiming "At last they are here!" with embarrassing enthusiasm. It was an absurd situation, many times to be repeated in those early days of liberation.

The crowd flocked around, the Russians looked on with more or less benevolent indifference, and the handful of Allied officers, remembering the rules against fraternization, tried to show a detached interest in the battered architecture around them. But it was no good. The Viennese liked us and were determined we should know it. And so for weeks wherever a British soldier appeared a crowd tried, much to his confusion, to treat him as a saviour.

They turned to us with touching faith in the British Empire to bring back normal circumstances of daily life with a wave of the wand. And indeed the reality was grim. Picture a city which has been heavily bombed—the overall damage was assessed by the Russians at over 20 per cent of the whole built-up area, much of it done during the autumn and winter raids—then captured after intermittent street fighting, set on fire by the Germans in retreat, and finally looted by its own underworld, with some help from the conquerors. It had been left without water, gas or electricity except in limited areas. Not all the dead were buried.

The wonder is that there was no breakdown. I remember being told at the city hall that within a week the municipality had been ordered back to work, and that even the collection of rates and taxes had not been held up for more than that week. The main obstacle to be overcome was that there were practically no civilian vehicles at all.

Medical supplies were running out; for weeks on end the banks and shops were shut; the tiny sums which could be withdrawn from the savings banks were useless, and any distribution of goods inside the city broke down almost as a matter of course, in spite of a rationing system which looked reasonably fair on paper. Yet somehow there was no total breakdown. And for this miracle the Viennese must thank not

VIENNA

by ALAN PRYCE-JONES

formerly Lieut.-Colonel on
General McCreery's staff in Austria



only the Russians, who during the time when they were the sole occupying force showed considerable powers of improvising first-aid measures, but a really exceptional team of local administrators, many of them quite without experience of office, and some just out of concentration camps.

NEVERTHELESS, the task was almost unbelievably hard. To run a city without vehicles is bad enough; when there are no post-office facilities and few telephones it becomes next to impossible. Added to these physical difficulties was the overriding fact that pretty well everyone in a responsible position had been a Nazi, even if a half-hearted one. Some were arrested; the Russians, however, had so much on their hands that no scientific purge was carried out. The thorough-purging of all public life at the outset would have meant still greater chaos; but the absence of any thorough purging, even if inevitable, has led to a world of recrimination since.

It was autumn, 1945, before the occupying forces took up their stations in Vienna beside the Russians, and only then was real work started to clear the city of wreckage. Here again unexpected difficulties arose. The ration scales were so low that there was not available labour with the strength to undertake heavy work. Even the British headquarters in the palace of Schoenbrunn could not be repaired to a time-schedule. By November there were still no windows in whole blocks of the palace.

Fantastic Prices Still Rising

Far more, therefore, did the Viennese themselves go without. And though the food situation has improved since the early days, especially so far as distribution is concerned, it is still woefully insufficient for anything above bare existence. Proof of this is the case of an old English governess I know who returned to this country at Christmas. In three months of British rationing she put on over two stones in weight.

Of course there was always the black market. This had flourished under the Germans and at first dwindled under Russian occupation. During the summer, however, it became the only means of doing any shopping whatever. Anything could be bought in the black market, from a ton of coke to a pound of coffee, but at steadily rising prices. For instance, in June butter cost 800 marks, or £20 a pound; by October the price had doubled. Luxury articles fetched enormous sums. An Austrian friend of mine was seriously advised to invest the legal equivalent of £300 in a secondhand typewriter as an altogether exceptional bargain—a sum which he could only scrape together by first selling a winter suit and an overcoat. Prices are still rising.

Gradually, however, some appearance of surface normality has been restored to the city. The trams work—many of them—the underground railway is functioning again; there is less danger every week of some burnt-out façade in a main street collapsing on to passers-by. It is no longer unsafe to walk alone at night, and the sudden appearance of energetic, but unlawful,

visitors to remove the radio, some carpets, and all clothing, need no longer be reckoned with as a likely possibility.

But no real resumption of ordinary life is possible until Vienna can again function as the capital of a united country. Until that day, business must remain at a standstill, and no solution to the problems of housing, reconstruction and unemployment can be attempted; even the final eradication of Nazi elements is made immeasurably more difficult owing to the division of the city into national zones. And what a work will remain to be done!

A large part of the centre of the town will have to be rebuilt, including the main shopping street. On both sides of the Danube Canal (see facing page) an area as long as London's Oxford Street and several blocks deep has been destroyed. The industrial suburbs are largely in ruins, including many great blocks of workers' flats. Almost every public building, notably the Cathedral, will need complete reconstruction.

The Vicious Circle of Misery

Housing will be one of the first problems to be tackled. Overcrowding at present is extremely severe, in spite of a big drop in population. The battered houses are crammed with people, living as best they can behind boarded windows and under leaky roofs. Luckily the winter has been bearable, otherwise there must have been a grim toll of deaths from cold and hunger, for only a very small minority can offset these discomforts by warm clothes or a good fire. The fortunate ones are those who, in the general breakdown of civilized life, happened to be overlooked by the looters.

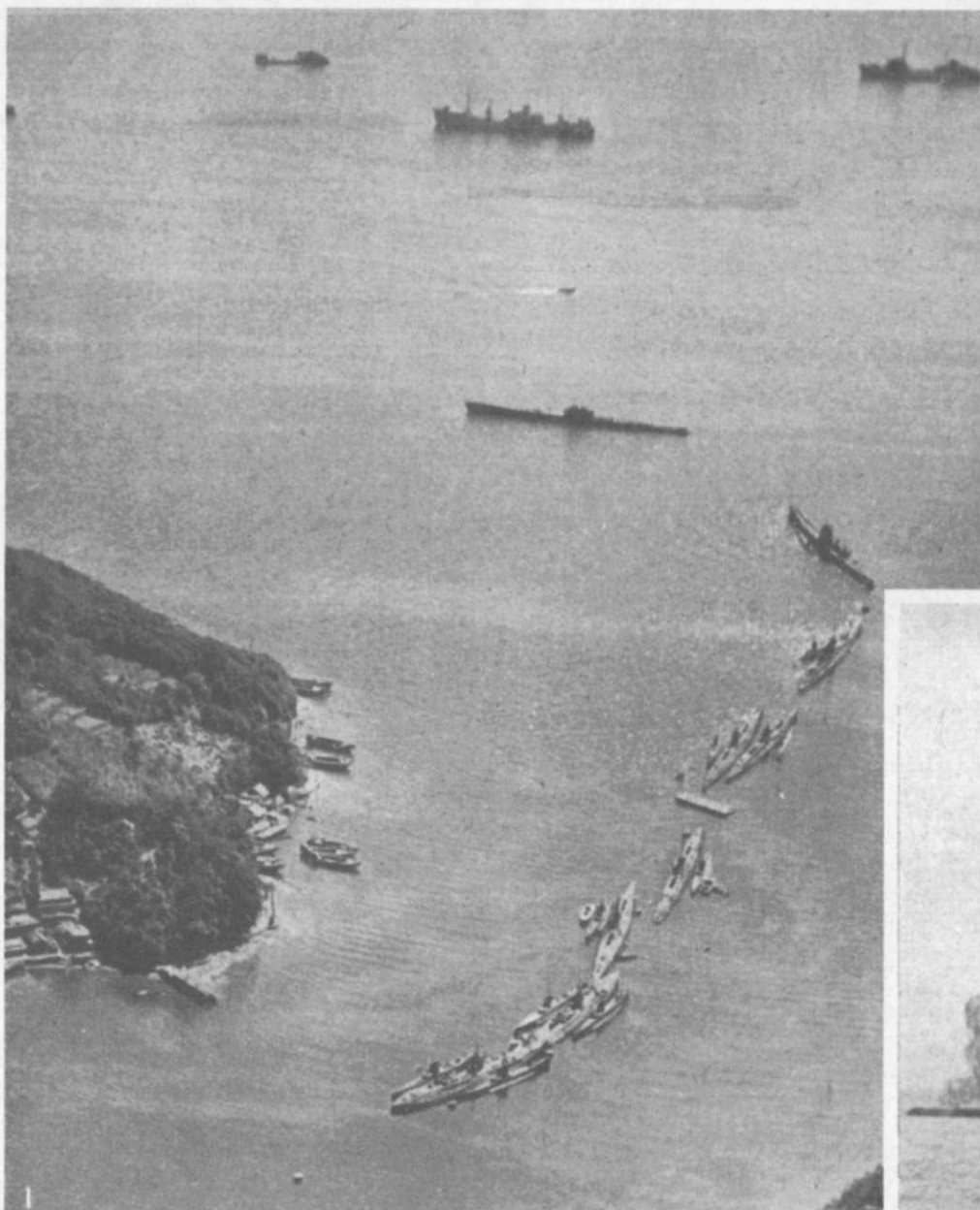
The people you see on the streets; therefore, are a drab crowd. Any hoarded stocks have been eaten by now—though it must be remembered that Vienna did not know any privations until the last months of the war. The general lack of food in Europe is reflected in a growing shortage of all essentials, and the eyes of the crowd are lack-lustre as they saunter past the empty shops. Only in the theatres and concert-halls do they revive. The Viennese passion for music and the stage is the one emotion strong enough to conquer the misery of the outside world.

THIS misery goes in a vicious circle; as long as there is no food there can be no work done, and until work is begun there can be no food. One of the most striking features of the country around Vienna, and especially in the food-producing lands to the east, is its utter emptiness. There seem to be neither people nor beasts. So that while the housing problem is being tackled inside the city, the equally serious problem of restocking the farmlands will have to be undertaken.

The requisitioning which has been going on for nearly a year has stripped most of the factories of their equipment. Apart from manual labour, therefore, there is hardly any work to be had; and since the wreckage has still not been cleared, even from main thoroughfares, despite the efforts of local authorities, it is evident that on present rations sustained heavy work is impossible.

The Viennese have always liked taking life easily, and, in addition, one has the feeling today that they have no incentive to work while the Occupying Armies bear the full responsibility for keeping Austria on its feet. Money is certainly useless, for there is nothing to buy. From a haircut to house-carpentry any service can be obtained much more easily for half a dozen cigarettes than for a handful of schillings.

Japanese Submarines Towed to a Shameful Doom



FROM THEIR BASE AT SASEBO twenty-four Jap submarines were recently towed into the deep waters of the Pacific and there sunk by destroyers of the United States Navy, this operation forming part of the Allied programme for the complete destruction of Japanese naval power. All Japan's remaining warships are to be scuttled, with the exception of 38 destroyers being distributed among the four Allied powers—Britain, U.S.A., Russia and China.

Assembled in a creek (1) near the formerly important base, preparatory to commencing this last voyage; among them is the notorious I58, on which Vice-Admiral Robert H. Griffin, Commander of Naval Activities, Japan, is seen (2) examining an A.A. gun. The I58 sank the U.S. cruiser Indianapolis shortly before the end of hostilities, in August 1945, after the cruiser had successfully discharged her cargo of atomic bomb material. Charges of T.N.T., and direct hits from the guns of the American destroyers deputed to this task, ended the I58's career for all time (3).

Photos, L.N.A.

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Our War Leaders in Peacetime

MOUNTBATTEN

BORN in Windsor, Berkshire, in 1900, "Dickie" Mountbatten—Rear-Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Supreme Allied Commander South-East Asia—was brought up in the Naval tradition. Second cousin of His Majesty the King, the son of Admiral of the Fleet the Marquis of Milford Haven, he was a naval cadet at 12, and at 14 saw action as a midshipman in Beatty's flagship H.M.S. Lion.

And keenly as ever today, whether engaged on Service matters or at home with the girl (Miss Edwina Ashley, daughter of Lord Mount Temple) he married twenty-four years ago, and their two young daughters, Patricia and Pamela, he studies naval matters.

The Mountbattens have a town house in Westminster, London; a country house at Romsey, Hampshire; and a castle in Co. Sligo, Ireland, where, before the War, they entertained the great names in the land. At his country residences Mountbatten used to shoot, fish, ride, and drive a car. He likes outdoor pastimes, but he is also keen on study and reading and spends hours poring over technical books.

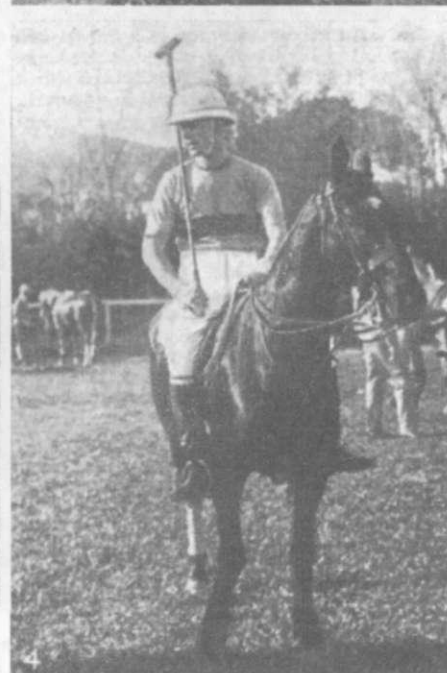
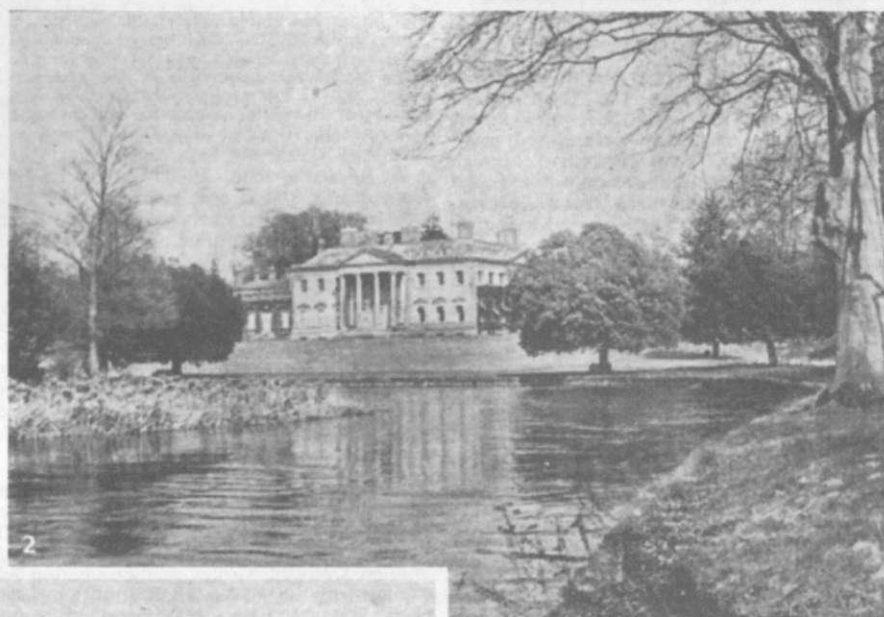
ALL his life he has been making notes and committing his conclusions to writing. His friends pull his leg about this propensity, but from it has grown a number of books, pamphlets and manuals on a variety of subjects, for writing is among his favourite recreations. His notes on destroyer design are reflected in the new-type bridge fitted to the Tribal class and later destroyers. Mountbatten evolved this masterpiece in naval construction in his spare time. Also he has worked out several developments in naval radio technique.

Mountbatten is particularly interested in radio; ever since he passed out first in the Long Course at the Royal Naval Signal School 21 years ago it has been his main hobby. He wrote the first Admiralty Handbook on Wireless Telegraphy, and this he is constantly bringing up to date. But it is five years now

since he spent any length of time among his technical books at his London home.

He concerns himself with a new subject so enthusiastically that he becomes an acknowledged expert in it; polo, for instance, at which as a player he has but limited success. He just does not possess the natural qualities for this exacting game; but having arrived at that conclusion, he studied the game scientifically and then sat down and wrote: "Introduction to Polo." His own polo did not benefit to any extent; but the book by "Marco" became a standard work.

When Lord Louis returns home the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews will see him, and once again he will appear at the Royal Motor Yacht Club. Yachting is another subject on which he has written authoritatively. Meanwhile, the man who directed the war in Burma is making notes on military government and colonial administration.



REAR-ADMIRAL LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN shoulders his cousin, Prince William, son of the Duke of Gloucester, Governor-General of Australia (1). At Broadlands, home of Lord and Lady Louis, at Romsey, Hampshire (2), Pamela strolls with her parents in the grounds (3). As sailor-sportsman, after a polo match (4).

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Photos, British Official, Associated Press, Topical

Our Empire's Proud Share in Victory

BRITAIN'S LIFE-LINE in the MIDDLE EAST

By HARLEY V. USILL

FROM the very day that war was declared, in 1939, Great Britain had to face the two-fold problem of creating and maintaining an impregnable island fortress at the same time as she was waging war wherever Germany and, later, the Axis Powers might decide to strike. Her task, as we shall show later, was made much more difficult after the fall of France, and necessitated a radical change in her initial strategic plan. But in every phase of the war the strategic disposition of the Colonial Empire played a vital part.

The weakness of Britain's position lay in her reliance on long lines of communication for the reception of the raw materials of war, including the food without which she could not remain the spearhead of resistance, and also in the enormous difficulties she experienced in transporting and maintaining her forces overseas. It was essential, therefore, that she should keep intact her lines of communication with the outside world; and, if one or more were broken, be in a position to change her tactics accordingly. The Colonial Empire was able to give her that indispensable mobility of action.

Imperial Defence and Middle East

At the outbreak of war the main arteries of the British Empire ran through the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, and across the Indian Ocean. They were served primarily by shipping, but a secondary, although growing form of communication was provided by air transport whose main lines of development ran considerably north of the Mediterranean, across the Levant, Iraq and Persia, to India and beyond. Along this vital axis Britain had developed in the course of centuries essential defensive positions, the maintenance of which depended mainly on sea power.

These comprised Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, the Suez area, Aden and Socotra, Mauritius, India, Burma, Malaya and Singapore. This was an effective line of communication, particularly when there was added the flanking possessions of France. In the Mediterranean, too, France could add half of the North African coastline and the hinterland of Syria and the Lebanon. In the Indian Ocean she could contribute Madagascar, and beyond India, French Indo-China formed with Malaya and Burma a compact bastion for the defence of the Dutch East Indies and against Japanese penetration into the Indian Ocean. All this was altered at a blow when France fell in 1940, and it was then the value of those British Colonial territories which come within this sphere became so apparent.

The Mediterranean Colonies

Britain's sole remaining possession on the Continent of Europe—Gibraltar—stands guarding the entrance to the Mediterranean. The Rock has always played an important part in British naval strategy, the main function being to allow free access to all ships of the Royal and Merchant Navies, and those of other friendly Powers. This function, however, was seriously upset by the fall of France and the entry of Italy into the war, events which necessitated the division of the Mediterranean into two defensive zones—the Eastern and the Western.

In the Western zone Gibraltar continued to play an important part; a British destroyer force guarded the vital Straits, and Force H, as it was called, assembled at Gibraltar under the command of Admiral Sir James Somerville for the defence of the western Mediterranean, or for operations in the Atlantic.

The island of Malta (with Gozo) lies in the narrowest part of the Mediterranean, about 58 miles from the nearest point of Sicily, and about 180 miles from the nearest

point of the mainland of Africa. It stands at the junction of the sea routes from Gibraltar to Alexandria and the Suez Canal, and from Sicily to Tripolitania, and until the entry of Italy into the war the island was only on the fringe of hostilities, but from then on Malta became a vital link in the Allies' defence line. The official account of the Air Battle of Malta says:

"The island was not a single weapon wielded as an isolated arm; it had an integral part to play in Mediterranean strategy as a whole. . . . Every theatre of war in the Mediterranean was within range of its aircraft, and not the least important task of its pilots was to watch from their central position all the movements of the enemy. The battles in the Mediterranean hinged upon supplies, on the capacity of both sides to reinforce themselves across a limited area of sea and across desert land. The geographical situation of the island was vital to the Allies in the supply conflict; but for Malta, Rommel in 1942 might well have pressed on to Alexandria."

At all costs, then, Malta had to be kept from enemy hands, and great were the risks and losses involved in this vital task. When the siege of Malta had been lifted, the island turned to a fury of assault on enemy bases. El Aouina (airfield of Tunis) was raided by night and day; farther to the east the Malta bombers attacked Tripoli; to the north they ranged over the airfields and ports of Sicily and Italy. This hard-pressed island was not only getting its revenge but its very existence as a base for air operations spelt the death knell of Axis dreams in North Africa.

THE island of Cyprus, too, has played an important part in the strategy of the Eastern Mediterranean. Situated some 240 miles north of Egypt, 60 miles west of Syria and 40 miles south of Turkey, her occupation by enemy forces would have had a most serious effect upon the whole Mediterranean situation. Real threats to Cyprus did not develop until 1941, when the Allied evacuation of Greece and then of Crete, 350 miles to the west, brought the island into the main Middle East defence line. At one time it looked as if Cyprus might become the main point of Axis attack, but hostilities in Russia, and the British occupation of Syria, stabilized the position in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In 1942 the Middle East was again threatened, and Cyprus became important as a forward base against the enemy forces in Greece, Crete and Rhodes. It was then that Mr. Churchill named Cyprus as a part of the line through the Middle East which safeguarded the Allied communications with Turkey, Iraq and Russia.

AGAINST considerable odds the British maintained control of the eastern basin of the Mediterranean, but it was essential to Hitler's main strategic plan that this hold should be broken. While, then, the reinforced Italians with Rommel's Afrika Korps were to strike back in North Africa, Germany herself planned to overrun the Balkans, press down the British-controlled eastern basin, and from there exert pressure against Turkey.

Meanwhile, Russia was to be attacked, and the main weight of the German land forces, diverted from the postponed invasion of

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Britain, was to be driven eastwards to the Caucasus and beyond. Simultaneously, a successful African drive would establish an Axis domination from Europe to the Persian Gulf. A major part in the defeat of these plans was played by the British Mandated territories of Palestine and Trans-Jordan.

From bases in these two territories advances were made into Syria, and at the end of a five weeks' campaign the occupation of the Levant States was complete. Then followed the race against time to control Iran, which was won when the British reached Teheran and the Russians got to Tabriz; by the success of these two campaigns the main structure of security in the landward areas of the Middle East was complete.

It is impossible to exaggerate the disastrous effects which would have fallen on all the Allies if this German plan had been successful. Against such an aggregation of power as would then have faced them, Britain and America would have been in the utmost peril. Events in the Middle East in general, and in the Mediterranean in particular, were critical for the progress of the whole struggle for world power, and in the successful issue of that struggle Gibraltar, Malta and Cyprus, and the two British Mandates of Palestine and Trans-Jordan played a vital part.

How Aden Guarded the Back Door

After the fall of France and the entry of Italy into the war, the sea route to India and the Far East via the Suez Canal and the Red Sea was to all intents and purposes unusable and Great Britain was compelled to send most of her convoys round the Cape. There remained to Aden, however, a very important function to perform in regard to the whole Middle East defence scheme. While Britain retained possession of Aden (and Port Sudan) the initial successes of the Italians, particularly after the fall of British Somaliland, were not so serious as they might have been.

They were on the wrong side of the Red Sea, but if they had been able to capture Aden they would have had unhampered access to Saudi Arabia and thus constituted a very real threat to the eastern basin of the Mediterranean and the whole Middle East position. As it was, Aden was used in 1941 as one of the jumping-off grounds for the recapture of British Somaliland, and when British troops landed at Berbera the Italians marched out as quickly as possible.

THE fact that Aden virtually dominated the entrance to the Red Sea, even during the Italian occupation of British Somaliland, enabled British reinforcements from India to reach Port Sudan, and it was from here that General Platt launched his attack on Kassala and crossed the Sudan border into Eritrea. In the campaign which followed he was helped by naval and air forces based on Aden.

The Abyssinian campaign, in which the African Colonies played such a magnificent part, is the subject of another article, but neither this nor the campaigns in Iraq and Syria could have been waged successfully unless the Red Sea had remained a safe supply route. That was the strategic background to Aden's part in the war, a background which will become even clearer as we consider the Colonies in the Indian Ocean.

It is equally true that if the Mediterranean and Middle East campaigns had not been fought to a successful conclusion our position in the Far East might have been irreparably undermined. With the initial Japanese success the position was bad enough; but, in other circumstances, the Japanese might have reached Africa and thus formed a junction with the Germans on the Nile.

Our Mediterranean Bastions: Gibraltar and Malta



COLONIES WHOSE STRATEGIC POSITION PLAYED A VITAL PART in maintaining the Allied Middle East defence line, especially after the fall of France and the entry of Italy into the war, included Gibraltar and Malta. Searchlights probed for enemy raiders over the "Rock," gun flashes marking the A.A. positions (top). In Grand Harbour, Valetta, Malta (bottom), casualties from Sicily were disembarked from the St. David, the first hospital ship to arrive there, in the summer of 1943. See also facing page.

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Photos, British Official

United Nations Security Council Debates Persia



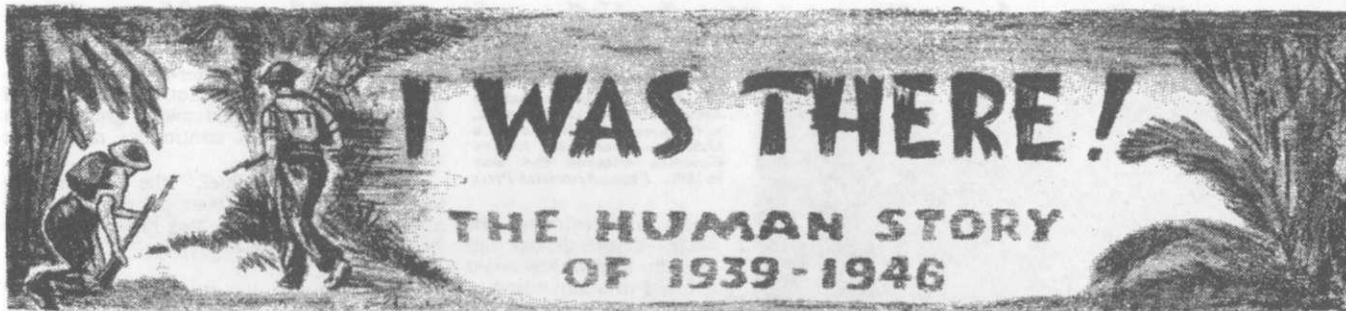
PERSIA'S CASE AGAINST RUSSIA, opened by the Security Council of the U.N.O., at New York, on March 27, 1946, provided a dramatic episode when the Russian delegate, Mr. Andrei Gromyko, walked out following the rejection of his proposal for the hearing to be postponed until April 10. Persia intimated that the presence of Soviet troops on her soil after March 2, 1946, constituted a threat to the country's security. During the hearing a treaty was signed between the two countries, on April 5, Russia undertaking to remove her troops by May 6. Persia withdrew her complaint on April 15, but the Council decided to retain the case on its agenda until May 6.



HUSSEIN ALA, PERSIAN DELEGATE, seated second from right (1) at horseshoe table, addresses the Security Council; the vacant chair (extreme left) had been occupied by Mr. Andrei Gromyko. Hussein Ala (2) presents the Persian case. Sir Alexander Cadogan (3, left), U.K. and Mr. Edward Stettinius, U.S. Mr. Gromyko leaves (4). Members voting on the motion to shelve the dispute until May (5). (left to right, front row), Sir A. Cadogan, Mr. Stettinius, Mr. Byrnes (U.S.), Col. W. R. Hodgson (Australia) and Dr. Vellasco (Brazil).

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Photos, Associated Press, Keystone



I Was Chief Engineer of a Floating Volcano

Awarded the O.B.E. for his share in the events narrated here, also the Lloyds Medal for Bravery at Sea, Ernest Edward Vick, of the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company's liner *Duchess of York*, relates how the ship, afire—with ammunition in the holds—after a German air attack ended her career in the North Atlantic on July 11, 1943.

THE 20,000-ton transport *Duchess of York*, commanded by Captain W. G. Busk-Wood, O.B.E., under whom I was serving as Chief Engineer, had left a Scottish port and was proceeding southward through the Bay of Biscay in a small convoy consisting of three other merchant ships, with two destroyers and one of the new frigates for escort. The notorious Bay was in genial mood, and the setting sun spread a cloth of gold over the smooth Atlantic swells.



Chief Engineer
ERNEST E. VICK, O.B.E.

All was peaceful as a holiday-cruise, until with startling suddenness the strident blare of Klaxon horns gave warning for Action Stations. Nothing could be seen in that clear sunset sky, but hostile aircraft had been detected by the radar apparatus. Most of my day had been spent in the oily warmth of the engine-room, and I was in my cabin relaxing with a book and cigar after an excellent dinner. It was just another "alert," I supposed, and on going below to my post on the starting-platform I had no premonition that never again would I see the inside of that spacious cabin with its soft carpet, modern furniture, books, photographs and all the small personal treasures that made it a home from home.

Those of us in the engine-room and stoke-holds deep below the waterline saw nothing, of course, of the earlier phases of what was an unusually daring and persistent enemy air attack. Five Focke-Wulf Kuriers, long-range Atlantic bombers, came flying in at about 10,000 feet, then fanned out and swooped from different directions upon the large merchantmen that offered such tempting prey. The first sticks of bombs crashed into the sea perilously near two vessels of the convoy. The sky flamed and thundered with bursting shells from our ack-ack guns, but the German pilots manoeuvred with skill and came roaring down several times in power-dives to unload their deadly cargoes.

With a deafening explosion two large bombs now struck the *Duchess of York* simultaneously, and the precise time of the disaster was recorded automatically as all the electric clocks in the ship stopped at the moment of impact. Serious casualties occurred. Among other effects was the destruction of the main switchboard; instantly the engine-room and stokeholds were plunged in darkness. Soon two fires broke out and flame swept through the debris.

The bombs struck the ship with barely a second's warning to those of us below.

Instinctively I flung up my left arm to shield my face, and both the hand and arm became deeply pitted with scraps of flying metal that otherwise might have blinded me. Fumes came from the decks above, water cataracted through the hatch from the fractured fire-mains, and the reserve tank emptied itself over the engine-room gratings.

All communication to Captain Busk-Wood on the bridge was broken—telegraph, telephones and voice-pipes. The forced lubrication pumps were put out of action, and this stoppage automatically operated the safety controls and stopped the engines. Agitated voices sounded amid the splash of seawater and the dull roar of the blaze spreading rapidly. The heart of the *Duchess of York* had ceased to beat, and her dead body was in process of cremation.

I HAD no time to heed either an injured left arm or the discomfort of being drenched to the skin. A rapid survey had to be made and certain emergency repairs effected, if possible. So I switched on a pressure torch and groped my way to the main switchboard. The thing lay spread over the deck in chunks of debris, and tests applied to the lubrication pumps proved them to be totally useless. Meantime, the attack by the enemy Kuriers continued in the face of heavy defensive fire from the convoy. Three minutes after the *Duchess of York* had been stricken, a thunderous explosion sounded the doom of a second big merchant ship.

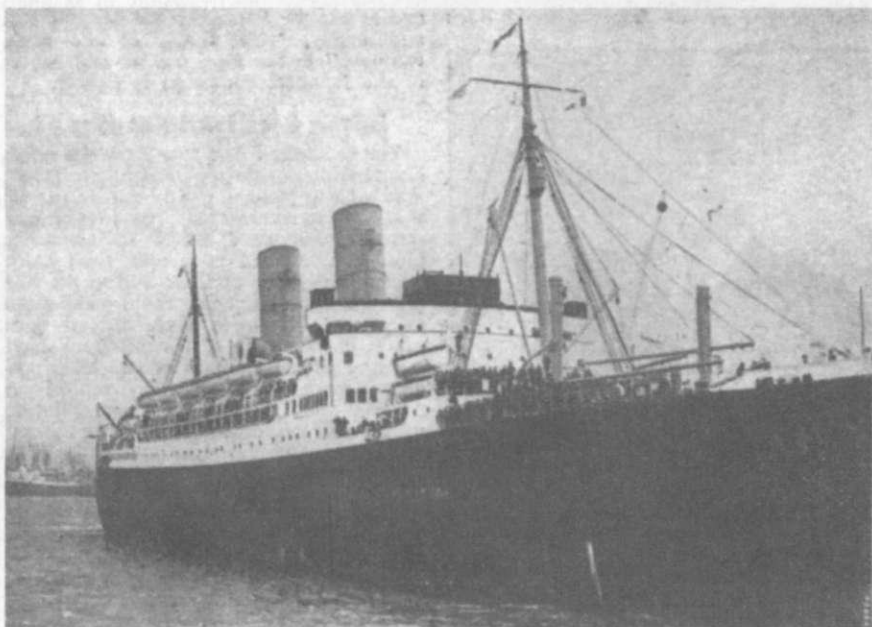
A further rapid survey convinced me that the engine-room and adjacent compartments would soon become a death-trap. So, unable to communicate with the Captain, I assumed responsibility for ordering my entire staff to clear out before the spreading fire between-decks cut off all means of escape. When all others had gone, I gave a last look at my engines, from which the life had been drained, then clambered up an iron ladder and emerged on the B-deck alleyway.

Only ten minutes had passed since the bombs had found their target, but already a barrier of fire athwartships prevented anyone from going forward along this deck. Looking in that direction I saw one of my subordinates, clad in a blue boiler-suit and fantastically illuminated by the flames. I shouted out to him, "How are conditions in the boiler-rooms?"

Made a Bridge of His Own Body

He bawled an answer above the roar and crackle of burning woodwork. "All lights have gone and the forced draught fans have stopped. One steam-pipe burst. I've shut off the oil supply to the furnaces!" He did not mention then that he had been badly scalded by the steam-pipe bursting. Nor did I learn till later that another member of our crew, Third Butcher Hughes, had made a bridge of his own body to enable many shipmates to climb over him to safety. Many other heroic deeds were performed that tragic evening while officers and men strove to stem the fire with inadequate means and to save life both before and after the Captain had given the order to abandon ship.

Unable to go forward, I found a way to the open deck by means of a companion ladder aft. It was good to breathe the sea-air! For a moment or two I paused to survey the

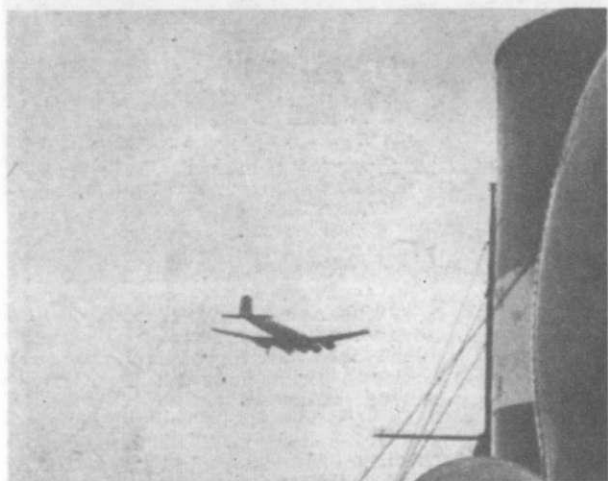


THE DUCHESS OF YORK, whose "heart ceased to beat" after two German bombs struck the vessel simultaneously, disrupting all communication with Captain W. G. Busk-Wood on the bridge and sending flames racing along the decks, as graphically described by her Chief Engineer. Survivors were rescued by a British destroyer.

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Photo, Topical

I Was There!



FOCKE-WULF CONDOR, prototype of the Focke-Wulf Kurier, employed by the Germans for attacking Allied vessels in the Atlantic, is here seen circling over a U.S. merchantman before America entered the war in 1941. Photo, Associated Press

hope of stemming the blaze—despite the risk that the ship might blow up on account of ammunition in the holds.

My decision to return to the bridge was made none too soon. By this time the ship was a floating volcano from which fire would erupt with cataclysmal fury directly the growing pressure of pent-up heat overcame the resistance of the strained upper deck. Part of that deck bulged ominously when I crossed it; many of the seams had opened and were fringed by darting flames; there were nests of fire over which I had to jump to regain the bridge ladder.

A few seconds later, when I stood beside Captain Busk-Wood again, deck-boards were upflung in smoking fragments and the fire raged unchecked about the tophamper of the ship. Men still on the boat-deck were driven away by the heat, and two lifeboats burst

into flame on the davits. The mainmast became a torch; the after-funnel and deck-plating glowed white-hot; the forward funnel, its paint peeled away, grew red in the furnace-heat. A continuous moan was emitted by the siren.

"You clear off, Chief," the Captain said to me. "There's a boat on the port side about to leave, and you may just about make it. I wish you luck!"

"And you, sir?"

"I shall leave directly you have gone." A wall of flame had advanced to within ten feet of the bridge, and small-arms ammunition and signal rockets had become ignited to give a devil's pyrotechnic display. The boat to which I had been directed was full, and by another mischance that caused further delay I was the last man to leave the ship. I plunged into the sea and swam toward the destroyer a cable's length away—and the five Kuriers returned to make a final attack before leaving the scene, with only one of their number showing signs of damage.

It took the warship three and a half hours to collect us survivors, adrift all over the sea, while the two merchant ships blazed like beacons in the growing darkness of night. Then torpedoes were loosed at them both, and the crowded destroyer sped southward, leaving the shattered hulks to sink amid clouds of steam and smoke.

Thus did the Duchess of York meet her fate in the North Atlantic.

dramatic scene. A merchant ship was stopped half-a-mile distant, with flames licking her tophamper and masts, and with several lifeboats in the water alongside. A destroyer, weaving patterns of white foam, was smearing the sky with the vomit of her guns, and the rest of the convoy were streaking southward belching clouds of covering smoke. More smoke was writhing from the strained upper deck as I went forward and climbed to the navigating bridge to report to Captain Busk-Wood. Then the threatening roar of aero-engines sounded.

"Look out!" the Captain shouted. "Here they come again! Take cover!" Three Kuriers dived upon us. More bombs screamed down and crashed into the sea, and the Germans zoomed skyward, miraculously unharmed by the destroyer's gun-fire.

Worried lest anyone had been left in the engineers' quarters and adjoining compartments near the seat of the blaze, I retraced my steps aft and approached a mess-room on the port side. I turned the handle, the door flew open with a violence that hurled me flat on my back, and a storm of flame and smoke swept over the deck. No living man could be there, and after prolonged investigations elsewhere I went to rejoin the Captain while the lifeboats were being lowered and got away.

The task of abandoning ship was proceeding calmly, yet many men refused to leave and fought gamely for an hour in the forlorn

With Dagger Division's Guns to the Chindwin

Captain R. R. G. Blackmore, 115th Field Regt., R.A., recalls astonishing feats of road-making and servicing by the 19th Indian Division during the 14th Army's final advance from North Burma, in the autumn of 1944, through some of the most difficult country in the world.

OUR Regiment was part of the Divisional Artillery of the 19th Indian Division, better known as the Dagger Division. Its commander was that Napoleon-like figure, Major-General T. W. Rees, D.S.O., M.C., affectionately known to all of us as "the Green Gremlin," "Dagger Rees," or just "Pete," and whose flamboyant scarlet silk scarf will always be remembered.

One day in the autumn of 1944 the Division found itself on the edge of the Naga Hills, north of the Imphal Plain, at approximately milestone 113 on the Manipur Road; which was the jumping-off place for the Division on its great advance across the Chindwin to Shwebo, across the Irrawaddy to Mandalay and across the Sittang to the Mawchi Road and finally, "the Battle of the Breakthrough," in the Pegu Yomas and the end of the Japanese campaign in Burma.

Driving 8-ton Lorries at 40 m.p.h.

The Manipur Road runs from the railway line at Dimapur through Kohima to Imphal. And what a road it was! Before the War it was a mere cart-track. By 1944 it was a tarmac main road which curled around mountains, skirted precipices, took hairpin bends in its stride and declared to the world that the Army engineers could make a road anywhere. Down it there moved incessantly, day and night, thousands of lorries carrying all the supplies of five Divisions—ammunition, food, petrol, medical and canteen stores, amenities, guns, reinforcements, aircrews, coolies to work on the road, everything and everyone; nursing Sisters and pressmen, visiting officers from other theatres, Staff Officers from G.H.Q., and E.N.S.A. artists from home. All, in fact, that goes to make a modern army went down the Manipur Road.

The drivers of these "Rice Corps" vehicles—so-called because rice is one of the main items of the Indian Army's food, and as a pronunciation of R.I.A.S.C., abbreviation for the Royal Indian Army Service Corps—

were Indians, men of the villages who had offered their services voluntarily, with the other 2,000,000 who flocked to the Colours.

Many of them, when they joined the Army, had never been in a motor vehicle, far less driven one, but they were eager to learn and they eventually contributed their share to victory by many weary hours of concentrated effort up and down the Manipur Road.



Captain R. R. G. BLACKMORE

They hoped to get four hours sleep in every 36 hours. They did not drive in convoy but were organized for "loose" or "free" running. Each driver and his relief driver accepted the responsibility of getting his load from the rail-head to the correct dump in Imphal as quickly as possible.

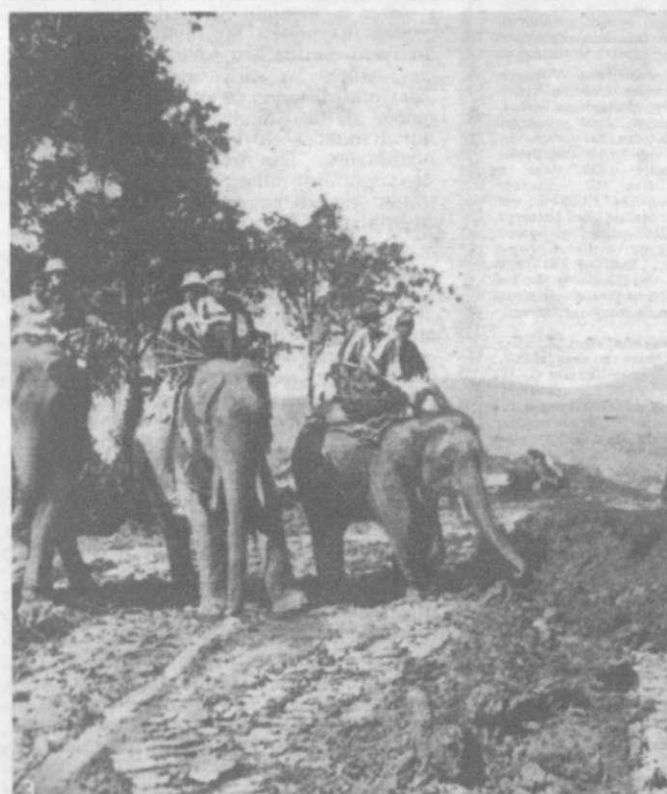
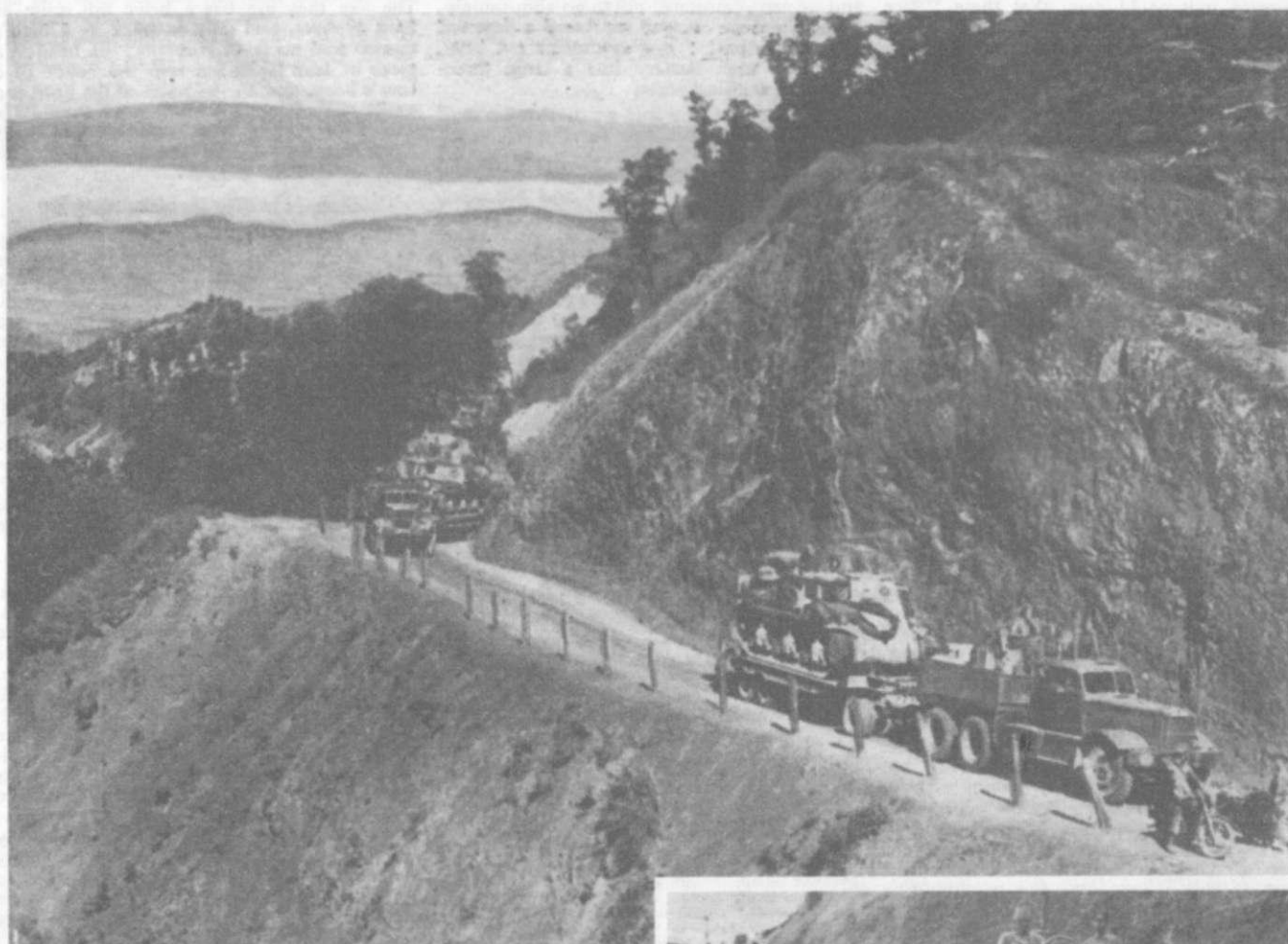
Their speed was terrifying—men who had never driven anything faster than a bullock cart carrying a few maunds (a maund is 80 lb.) were taking three-ton, five-ton, eight-ton lorries filled to capacity over more than 100 miles of tortuous mountain roads at speeds which often touched forty miles per hour. As it was free running there were no restrictions against passing, and time and again my jeep was left standing by a huge lorry which, piloted by a confident Madras or Sikh, appeared to be possessed with magical ability to hold the road.

I imagined that dozens of lorries must be lost over the side of the slope. But I was wrong. Accidents were few and far between, which is in itself an argument in favour of the protective beneficence of the Gods of Ind, or the training of these men, or both. Or was it that they knew that the men down there, down on the road, were fighting for



Capt. W. G. BUSK-WOOD, O.B.E., commanded the Duchess of York on her tragic last voyage, in 1943.
Photo by courtesy of Canadian Pacific Railway

Battling With the Nightmare Roads of Burma



ON THE WINDING IMPHAL-TAMU MOUNTAIN ROAD British armour (1) proceeded with no great hindrance after Sappers and Miners had toiled to convert the fair-weather track to a main supply route for 14th Army troops then closing in on Mandalay from the north-west. Jeeps and trucks during monsoon fighting struggled through treacherous mud of the Palel-Tamu Road (2). Elephants and bulldozers worked side by side (3) to drive the Ledo Road forward to junction with the Burma Road. See also facing page. PAGE 59 *Photos, British and Indian Official, Keystone.*

I Was There!

their lives? They are proud men, these Indians, and no right-thinking man of any forward unit could deny that these "Rice Corps Wallahs" were risking their lives from minute to minute in their feverish haste to get the munitions of war to the front.

I visited a Naga village in the company of a colonel who had spent much of his service in the district and spoke the language. This village was perched on the top of a spur of a mountain and was surrounded by a stockade, the entrance being blockaded at night by thorns. When we entered everyone vanished, leaving a few dogs to greet us. We walked to the centre and in a few moments the Head Man appeared and welcomed us. Near to where we were standing was a large barn-like building in which I learned the adolescents of the village lived until they married. At one end of this "lodge" was the skin of a tiger on a bamboo frame, which the men of the village had slaughtered.

By this time curiosity was getting the better of fear and we found ourselves the centre of a small group of children, while the women emerged one by one and went on with their work. The women had their hair done in a quaint style, cut in a stiff fringe all the way round. Their dress consisted of several strings of highly coloured beads, a short blouse, and a length of cotton cloth wound round their middle as a skirt.

3 Hours by Jeep to do 18 Miles

The men also wore beads, but their sole garment was a black loincloth with black bands of the same material round the legs above and below the knee and above the elbow. They carried a blanket over one shoulder and a bow and several arrows. One had a magnificent pillarbox-red blanket presented as a gift from the King-Emperor for specially valuable services rendered to our Forces. On inquiry I discovered that the men of this village and the neighbouring villages had acted as guides and scouts to our Forces and had also indulged in sniping the Japs with their arrows; in the jungle, where visibility is short, an arrow is quieter and, if the man who draws the bow is a good shot, just as effective as a rifle.

The Dagger Division had been trained to fight in the jungle, to do combined operations and to be airborne, and at this stage no one knew when, where or how we should attack the Japs. Then, one day, the orders came and we moved forward down the Manipur Road to Imphal, thence to Pael, then up on to the mountains which separate Pael from the Kabaw Valley. Earlier in the year there had been fierce fighting in this area when the 20th Indian Division fell back to take part in the defence of Imphal. These hills were even more trouble to the Sappers and Miners, (the Indian Engineers) than the Naga Hills, but the indefatigable men triumphed.

The road was not tarmac or in any way so grand as the Manipur Road, but they got round difficulties by making two routes, one on each side of each hill, and having one-way traffic, and if you kept to about ten m.p.h. there was no real danger of falling down the hillside. The work was still going on as we went over the road, the Sappers and Miners working day and night assisted by the women and children of the Nagas and scores of coolies from India and Assam.

At the eastern end of the mountains we found the small town of Tamu, but instead of proceeding straight on down to the Chindwin we turned north up a track through the teak forest to the Taret river. It was not a good track; in a jeep it took approximately three hours to go 18 miles. We were now in the Kabaw valley, and we heard that groups of B.T.A., the Burma Traitor Army, were operating in the area and that occa-

sional Jap patrols came across the Chindwin. There were reports of attacks on lone men and we were cautioned not to go about singly. Near where we camped we found a deserted Jap vehicle park; our mechanics got busy, and soon each Battery had a large three-tonner in working order.

We were next told that we must cut a road over the hills from the Taret river valley near Thanan to the Chindwin, so we all became pioneers swinging the pick, or engineers blowing the rocks and big trees. It was during this period that I first saw Burmese woodmen at work with their elephants. Teak trees are magnificent. They stand straight and tall for a hundred feet or more and the wood is, I suppose, as tough as any. The Burmese woodmen tackle them

with what appear to be most inadequate weapons but are really astonishingly efficient. The axe they use has a helve not quite as long as ours, and only as thick as a man's thumb and made of bamboo; its head is a piece of teak fashioned into the shape of a cow's horn, and on the point of the horn is a small steel blade with not more than three inches of cutting edge. Before the blows from this light-weight axe the largest teak trees bow to the ground.

Records in Big Boulder-Shifting

The road we built from the Taret valley over the hills to the Chindwin gave us great pride although we were responsible for relatively only a small portion of it. Our orders were to make a road without a surface suitable for vehicles up to nine tons gross weight, to move one way in good weather. There was a road already in existence, but it was so narrow and steep that we could not take the guns over it. The Engineer officers surveyed the new cut, and then all the units detailed for the work drew lots. We were lucky and drew the lot which involved making the first section of the road on the lowest part of the hill. It was hard work, but most satisfying.

We laboured from 7.30. a.m. to 4.30 p.m. each day with a short break for lunch, hacking the road out of a steep hillside and throwing the soil over the edge. Often there were large boulders, five or six feet through, which had to be moved. Soon we were all engaged in a competition to create records in boulder-shifting. When we pushed one over it would go crashing down the hillside, flattening even biggish trees before its headlong rush. Fate alone determined where and when it would stop and who or what should be broken by it. We were assisted by Sappers and Miners for the more tricky problems; they showed us how to use ammanol and gelignite and we had some exciting moments blowing huge cotton trees and solid rock faces.

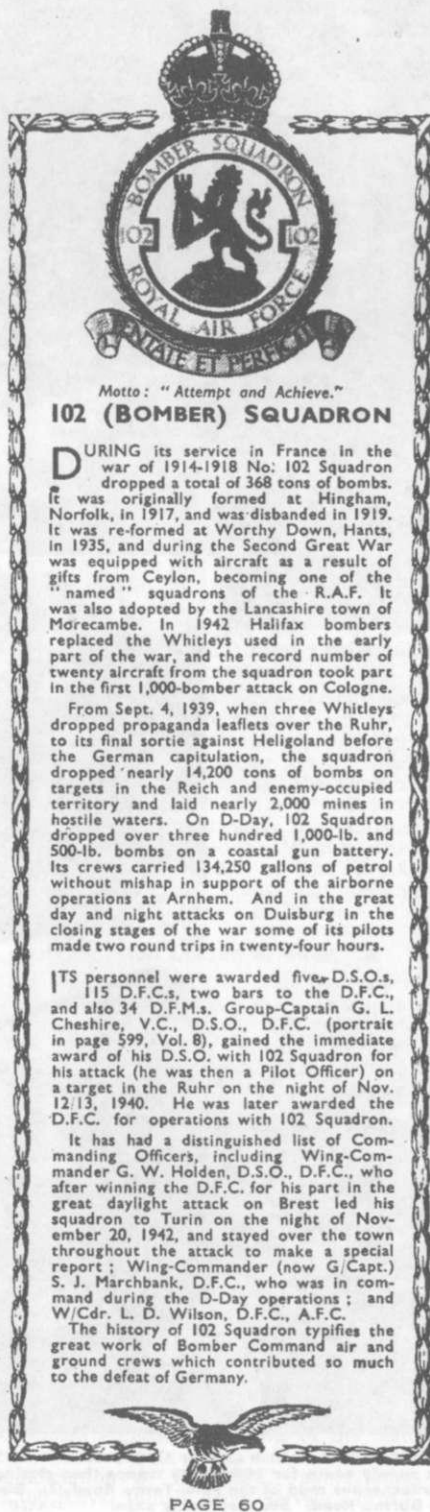
After a fortnight of road-making we had orders to move. My battery went first—and we were the first vehicles to use the new cut, which we christened Artillery Road. The total distance to our destination on the banks of the Chindwin was only 12 miles, but it took us 13 hours. It was a night of nightmares. The first portion of the road, say about four miles, was easy enough. Then things started happening. The way was so steep that my jeep could not pull its trailer up.

So we had to unload the trailer, take the jeep up and then ferry the big accumulators and other heavy gear to the top, a distance of about half a mile. The surface was clay, and the heavy dew made it so slippery that even in Army boots, studded as they are, you could hardly keep your feet. Gun tractors with their heavy loads were winched slowly from corner to corner, and slowly we pushed on.

Half Over the Valley of Death

At one point the new cut had not been completed and we had to use the old original road. Here the hill was exceptionally steep, the road running round it on a ledge which had been cut out of the hillside, so that the nearside was a sheer face of soil and on the other side a drop of 30 feet, then steep rocky hillsides going down to an invisible bottom.

At this point all the gun detachments dismounted and the drivers, quite alone, took the guns over. They gently brushed the nearside of their vehicles against the hill; but even so only half of their off-side wheels were on the road, the other half being suspended over what seemed to be the Valley of Death. But they were good drivers, and gently they coaxed the heavy vehicles and trailers and guns over a very unpleasant 100 yards of road and then on again.



I Was There!

Even when daylight came, after what seemed a lifetime of night and trouble, all was not well, because the road down by the Chindwin passed over a place where a small tributary ran into the big river. We had to ford this, and as it was not monsoon season

the bed of the stream was almost dry; it looked easy until we got off the firm ground into the soft, silvery sand. Before we knew what was happening we were belied in it, and were extricated only with the help of two elephants and a Sikh with a small bulldozer.



Major-General T. WYNFORD REES, D.S.O., M.C. (centre), commander of 19th Indian ("Dagger") Division, with some of his officers and men at Mandalay, Burma, in March 1945. Right, the Division's famous badge.

Tanks versus Submarine on the Way to Tobruk

During the months of Tobruk's siege, from April to December 1941, reinforcements and supplies were regularly sent in by the sea route from Egypt. How one detachment of tanks from the Western Desert Force, loaded on lighters, slowly battled their way to the beleaguered garrison under air and submarine attacks is told by Lieut. Gilbert Smith, 4th Royal Tank Regiment.

IN the bars of Cairo and in tented messes in the Western Desert there was talk, during September 1941, of a coming autumn offensive. The 4th Royal Tank Regiment, equipped with Matildas, was in the area south of Matruh, when suddenly there came an operational order for us to reinforce Tobruk's garrison. A hundred miles west of Halfaya Pass, the most easterly German position, Tobruk fortress was in the sixth month of its siege.

We moved down to Mersa Matruh on September 30 by squadrons, and embarked in lighters—blunt-bowed, flat-bottomed, nine-knot craft, powered by high-octane petrol motors. Each could carry four tanks. My troop went aboard one afternoon, spending two perspiring hours running our four tanks up the bow ramps and manoeuvring them inside for quick unloading. We sailed at about five in the evening, in company with two other lighters—Nos. 13 and 18.

All that evening we chugged our way slowly west. About nine o'clock we saw a flight of German bombers en route for Mersa, but they left us alone, and happily we watched the sun sizzle out on the horizon. The night was deliciously dark until eleven, when a large and hateful moon came up—and soon we heard the buzz of an aircraft. The 2-pounder pom-poms were manned, and after ten minutes' suspense the aircraft went away. An hour or so later he came back with others, and we were bombed, off and on, all night. One bomb landed just under our stern: the little lighter lifted, the propellers raced, there was a deluge of water, and the lights went out. We were certainly surprised and pleased to find ourselves still afloat—but speed had to be reduced slightly.

On we ploughed up Bomb Alley, past Sollum, which was German-held, with aircraft always above us. Now and then we could hear the brief noise of a motor ticking

over as a plane glided slowly down over our phosphorescent wake, then a quick whistling rush and the crash of a bomb. They dropped all round us, but did no damage apart from a few strained plates. We were uncomfortably conscious of our high-octane petrol tanks covered only by thin mild-steel plating!

Dawn came, and the attacks stopped. All that day we went on, seeing an odd aircraft, and getting more and more nervous, though the R.A.F. had promised us fighter cover past that part of the coast which was thick with enemy aerodromes. At 12.30 a single enemy recon plane came and had a look at us, and from then on the tension was considerable. At 1.40 the look-out reported a squadron of enemy aircraft coming up to port, very high. Our hearts sank, and I'm afraid we cursed the R.A.F. We knew we had no chance at all from daylight bombing, with our inadequate A.A. protection, and we also knew that one small bomb was enough to sink us.

The formation flew past us, turned, and came back. Suddenly the lookout cried: "Aircraft coming up on the starboard quarter!" and we looked up. There was our escort—twelve beautiful Hurricanes—and hastily we apologized to the R.A.F. The German bombers saw them too, and turned off and beat it southward very quickly indeed. The rest of the day was enjoyable enough—just chugging along, the tank

crews sun-bathing on the canvas hatch covers, with our escort wheeling overhead. But towards evening our fighters left.

Just before dark a gunner, Trooper Weech, asked permission to mount his Besa heavy machine-gun on deck. He unshipped it from his tank in the hold and brought it up, and as there was no suitable fitting for such a heavy weapon he lashed it to a steel stanchion, then saw to a supply of ammunition. The gun was very unwieldy, and it was not easy to get high elevation; but it worked. When the moon came up the bombers returned; for two hours they dropped bombs around us but never a sight did we get of a plane.

None Left Alive on the Deck

About one in the morning I was on the little bridge, trying to cheer myself up by chatting to the captain, and watching the other two lighters wallowing along, when suddenly the lighter farthest from us fired a burst from its pom-pom. It seemed odd to us that the tracers didn't go up in the air but along the water. The captain at once put up his night-glasses. "There's something over there—I think it's an E-boat!" he said. I stared and saw a dim, long shape moving across the bows of the farthest lighter, and a white light ticked from it. The signalman beside us read the message. "He's asking for our numbers, sir," he said. "What! In white light?" asked the captain. (Our own craft signalled in blue light, I learned later). "He's a Jerry, for sure!" He turned and told the port pom-pom to train on the dark shape. The signalman, his voice showing his excitement, said, "No. 18 reports enemy submarine, sir. He's going to ram!"

We heard the noise of a heavy-calibre gun, quickly followed by the explosion of a shell. The submarine had opened fire. It was then ahead of the centre lighter and coming towards us. It fired again, and hit No. 13, farthest from us. No. 18 had altered course and was bearing down on the submarine, sparks shooting up from the exhaust funnel. But the more manoeuvrable submarine evaded the clumsy lighter and, still shooting, came closer to us. We could clearly see the conning-tower and the long shape of the gun forward of it. Suddenly there was a stream of tracer, and a fast rattle—our Besa had opened fire. The bullets swept the forward part of the submarine and the gun stopped firing. Now our gunner concentrated, and we heard streams of armour-piercing bullets rattling on the conning-tower. Two-pounder pom-pom shells were bursting there, too. By now the submarine was not more than 100 yards from us. There could not have been anyone left alive on the deck, and in a moment or two it had sheered off in the darkness to our stern. We took evasive action, at our full nine knots, with a plume of sparks showering from our stumpy exhaust.

AN hour later we made contact again with No. 18, but could get no reply from 13 on the radio. We had seen her hit, and we felt upset about our friends on her—and the tanks, too. We knew how badly they were wanted in Tobruk. At 3 o'clock we saw two dim green lights to shorewards. They were the markers for the Tobruk harbour bar. We went in and unloaded in the middle of one of the biggest air-raids Tobruk had ever had. It was tricky work getting the clumsy tanks out of the narrow bow and one of mine became jammed half-out, with the result that it pulled the lighter up the beach with it.

The men guiding the drivers in pitch darkness were showered with fragments of the barrage, but we rolled off, up through the shattered town, shaken but whole. Two days later No. 13 turned up. She had turned back to Mersa Matruh, damaged, and with casualties. Of the three lighters which brought my squadron along to Tobruk not one survived the trip back.



Lieut. GILBERT SMITH

I Was There!

We Battled with Exeter's Unexploded Bombs

Lieut. Ronald G. Walker, G.M., Royal Engineers, Section Officer of a Bomb Disposal Section of R.E.s based at Plymouth, in May 1942, describes how he dug up and dealt with stray bombs—and was presented to Their Majesties the King and Queen for his high-speed work on the railway line.

At 5.30 on the morning of May 4, 1942, the phone rang in my quarters at Plymouth and I was told, "There is a bomb on the railway line just outside Exeter Station. Will you come?" Our life consisted of a series of mad rushes, clearing bombs for a few days, then spells of boredom doing odd jobs. This was one of the rushes!

I hastily dressed, and roused Taffy, my batman-driver, who had so many things to say about Hitler and the Luftwaffe and the war in general that he was fully clothed long before he had finished. A few days previously Exeter had suffered a raid and there had been three or four unexploded bombs for us to deal with, and to save travelling time I had billeted my Section in the city; so on this day working-parties were already standing-by awaiting our arrival. And as we were exempted from all speed limits



Lieut. RONALD G. WALKER, G.M.

and traffic restrictions whilst on priority bombs, so we managed to complete the 40-mile journey and contact the railway officials at St. David's Station, Exeter, within an hour. After a short walk along the track we found the bomb-hole, at the junction of the lines, on the embankment by St. Thomas's goods yard. The hole was about 30 inches in diameter, which gave us a clue as to what lay at the bottom of it.

Avoiding Unnecessary Casualties

We judged it to be a 500 kilogram general-purpose bomb, which is approximately four feet long and 18 inches in diameter—the larger diameter of the hole being accounted for by the bomb wobbling during flight and as it hit the ground. We used a long stick to try to touch it, but the bomb had curved in its downward path and we could not get round the bend. However, it was possible to estimate its position and for our excavation we marked out a shaft six-foot square.

This was done by my Section Sergeant—Sergeant Parrish—and myself, the remainder of the working-party remaining behind the brick wall of the goods yard weigh-bridge house about 70 yards away, outside the danger area. The procedure of limiting the number of persons actually around the bomb was always observed to avoid unnecessary casualties should an explosion occur whilst preliminary work was in progress.

The setting-out of the shaft completed, the remainder of the party came up and work commenced with the removal of two rails and half-a-dozen sleepers which were in the way. The working party consisted of one N.C.O. and three sappers, the N.C.O. in a Bomb Disposal Section doing his share of all digging and timbering. We had three shifts in the 24 hours: from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., and 10 p.m. till 6 a.m. This was our normal method of working on a priority bomb when speed was vital. I arranged with the local barracks to have a cook on duty at all hours to prepare hot meals for the men before and after leaving the job. Meanwhile, sandwiches were provided, and enormous quantities of tea brewed by the lorry driver who was standing by with his vehicle.

It did not take long to move the rails, then two of the men commenced digging. The other two were busy carrying timber from a stack in the goods yard to the site; as the line was on an embankment the soil would be too loose to hold on its own, so we would have to timber the sides as we went down.

The digging was carried out by the men working in pairs, one with a pick and one with a shovel, for a 20-minute spell, then the other pair took over for 20 minutes, an arrangement which could be maintained throughout the eight-hour shift. As the hole became deeper there was room for only one man on the bottom, and he threw the soil on to a staging half-way up, a man on the staging throwing on to the surface, and one on top shovelling the soil away so that the ground round the shaft was kept clear.

We Decided to Operate Immediately

As we dug down so the timbering was placed—planks ("runners") varying from eight to 12 feet long and nine inches by one and a half inches section, positioned vertically against the sides of the shaft and held in place by "walings" of nine-inch by four timber which formed horizontal frames wedged against the runners. As we went deeper so the runners were lowered and other frames put in at approximately four-foot intervals. It was on one of these frames that the staging was supported.

Whilst this was going on I had a look around, and saw a small greenhouse (which had collapsed) about 20 yards away in a back garden at the foot of the embankment. I decided to investigate, and found that a bomb had fallen through the greenhouse roof. On probing, I felt something hard about five feet down. I sent Taffy to collect another squad, complete with tools, and they got busy on the debris to clear a working space. This second bomb complicated matters, because the explosion of one would almost certainly cause the detonation of the other and casualties would be doubled. However, our work had to continue.

About two o'clock in the afternoon I received a message from the Exeter Control Centre that another unexploded bomb had been found, in a public convenience about a mile away; this was causing a large area to be evacuated, and would I go over?

THEIR MAJESTIES the King and Queen congratulating Lieut. Walker, at Exeter Station, in May 1942, on his work in rendering "safe" and removing the 1,000-lb. German bomb (story above) which had buried itself 28 feet deep in the path of the Royal Train.

Photo, Western Times

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This piece of news was brought to me on the railway line by a police messenger. I left instructions with the N.C.O.s on the railway job as to where I was going, and Taffy and I rushed over in the car to this latest incident.

There was the bomb with its nose buried and the remainder sticking up in the air. We decided to operate immediately. The roads were closed, and my driver took the truck along to a safe spot around the corner and informed the policeman on duty what was happening, whilst I got busy on the bomb, first clearing away some of the bricks and rubble so that I could identify the fuse. After a few minutes' fiddling with the latter, which was now nicely exposed in the side of the bomb, I was able to announce all clear. On reaching the truck I found a crowd waiting for the news that they could return to their homes. I told the policeman that the bomb was now quite "dead" and that a squad would arrive later to collect it.

Back to the railway by four o'clock, to discover, much to my relief, that all was well and work proceeding smoothly; by now, of course, the second party had taken over. I had one more call during the day. This concerned a small 50 kilogram bomb which had plunged through the roof of a house and a bedroom floor and was resting peacefully beside the fireplace in the dining-room. After a few minutes' work on the fuse I carried the bomb out on my shoulder, put it in the back of the truck—and that was that.

At 10 o'clock the third party took over, and so into the night, when we had to use lights. As we had to observe the blackout as much as possible we fixed up a temporary timber framework over the top of the shaft and covered it with a tarpaulin from one of the lorries. This looked most unsafe, but it served the purpose. The lighting consisted of a couple of large electric hand-lamps borrowed from the local A.R.P. people.



I Was There!



1,000-lb. BOMB BEING RAISED at Exeter (left). The fuse had broken, and T.N.T. had to be melted out. Working-party consists of Sgt. Parrish, L.Cpl. Casey, Spr. Tatlock, Spr. Chadwick, Cpl. Woodworth. Looking down the shaft (above), showing method of timbering. The N.C.O. is holding part of tail fins which have just been recovered.

At 2.30 a.m., whilst I was in the shaft digging with the men, the party working at the greenhouse shouted that they had uncovered the bomb—a 500 kilogram (approximately 1,000 lb.). This meant ceasing work on both jobs, for the parties to take cover whilst I “drew its teeth.” Fortunately all went well, and one party departed for bed, whilst the rest of us returned to work. Six o'clock came, and once more the parties changed. By now we were about 15 feet down and still had not touched what we were after. The railway officials paid us periodic visits to see how we were progressing, and about midday we touched what we thought was the bomb. It was another five feet down, making a total depth of 25 feet. Our work went on with renewed zest.

During the afternoon a G.W.R. official came along and, calling me aside, asked when I could get the bomb clear as Their Majesties the King and Queen were due to pass through in the Royal Train at 8 p.m. I promised it should be done by 6 p.m., which would leave two hours for the company's gang to fill in the excavation and relay the lines. It was agreed that an engine with truck and crane would be standing by half a mile up the line from 4 o'clock onwards. This I intended to call up to lift the bombs from the holes and take them down into the sidings in the goods yard, to be loaded on to our lorry for final disposal. By now excitement was tense, but when we uncovered what we had hoped was the bomb it proved to be only the tail fins left behind on its downward path. However, we could touch the bomb now, another three feet down, and on we went, racing against time.

“Three feet to go and two hours to do it!”

There was no time for timbering as we “rabbited” down. We were all absolutely exhausted. Picks and shovels seemed twice their normal weight. And when one of the men working at the bottom hit the timber above his head with his pick he muttered in a very weary voice, “Sorry, timber!” A sure sign that we were all just about at the end of our tether!

At last we uncovered the base-plate, which was just inside our shaft, the nose of the bomb pointing away from it. This meant going down another two feet and tunnelling around the bomb—most awkward in this confined space, but we scratched the earth away somehow and finally reached the fuse in the side of the bomb case about midway between nose and base-plate. It was another 500 kilogram, partner to the one that had wrecked the greenhouse.

The party retired to the safety of the weigh-bridge house for a brew-up whilst I operated on the fuse and made the bomb safe for handling. When this was finished, one of the men went along to bring up the engine whilst the rest of us cleared more soil from around the bomb and loosened it ready for removal. The time was five minutes past six and we had excavated 28 feet, timbered the shaft and dealt with the bomb, besides

Roll of Honour

THE large number of photographs already received is now being prepared for reproduction, and the first page of our Roll of Honour will appear shortly. Meanwhile, those readers who sent stamped and addressed envelopes can be sure that their photographs will be returned in due course. No correspondence on this subject can be considered.

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disposing of the other incidents, in 34 hours.

Up came our special train, the jib of the crane was swung over the hole and the hook lowered. Having made the bomb secure by wrapping the chain around it the weighty missile was hoisted up, swung round, and deposited in the truck. Now we turned our attention to the one which was still lying in the debris of the greenhouse and treated it in similar manner.

We Cheered as the Train Passed

The bombs clear, a party from the railway company shovelled back the soil, the timber being left in the hole for support, the lines were relaid, and within half an hour the first train rattled past. At that time we were rolling the bombs from the railway truck into our lorry, but we managed to raise a cheer as the train passed by. That night, Tuesday, I had a sorely needed wash, a shave and a meal—my first in comfort since the Sunday, as I had never left the job except for the short intervals to deal with the other incidents—and straightway went to bed.

The next few days were spent uneventfully in clearing up numerous other bombs in less important places, such as minor roads, parks and outlying districts; one was in a sewage tank, which necessitated working waist-deep in the sludge. Fortunately, during this period we had the assistance of other Bomb Disposal Sections who had been drafted into the city. It was whilst I was hard at work—and plastered with mud—that I received a summons by dispatch rider to report at Exeter Station in half an hour to be presented to Their Majesties the King and Queen for my work on the line. Then back to our station, to await the next call.

A Bomb-Fenced Road in the Island of Crete



REMINDER OF ALLIED AIR ATTACKS on Crete during the period of German occupation is this fence of bombs (rendered harmless) edging a road there. The peasants now go leisurely about their accustomed daily tasks, with but occasional memories of the guerilla warfare they waged against the Huns for four years. When Allied troops arrived in May 1945 Cretan patriots, assisted by secretly landed British officers, had already cleared most of the island and penned the German garrison into one corner.

Photo, Associated Press

Printed in England and published every alternate Friday by the Proprietors, THE AMALGAMATED PRESS, LTD., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.
 Registered for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Sole Agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Ltd.; and for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd.—May 10, 1946.
 S.S. Editorial Address: JOHN CARPENTER HOUSE, WHITEFRIARS, LONDON, E.C.4