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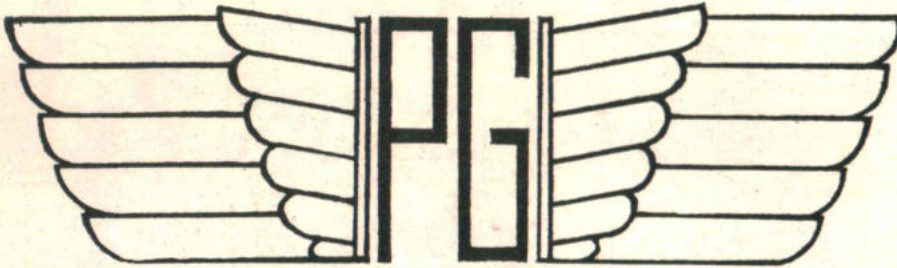
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December, 1942

PARKINSON.





"PUKKA GEN."

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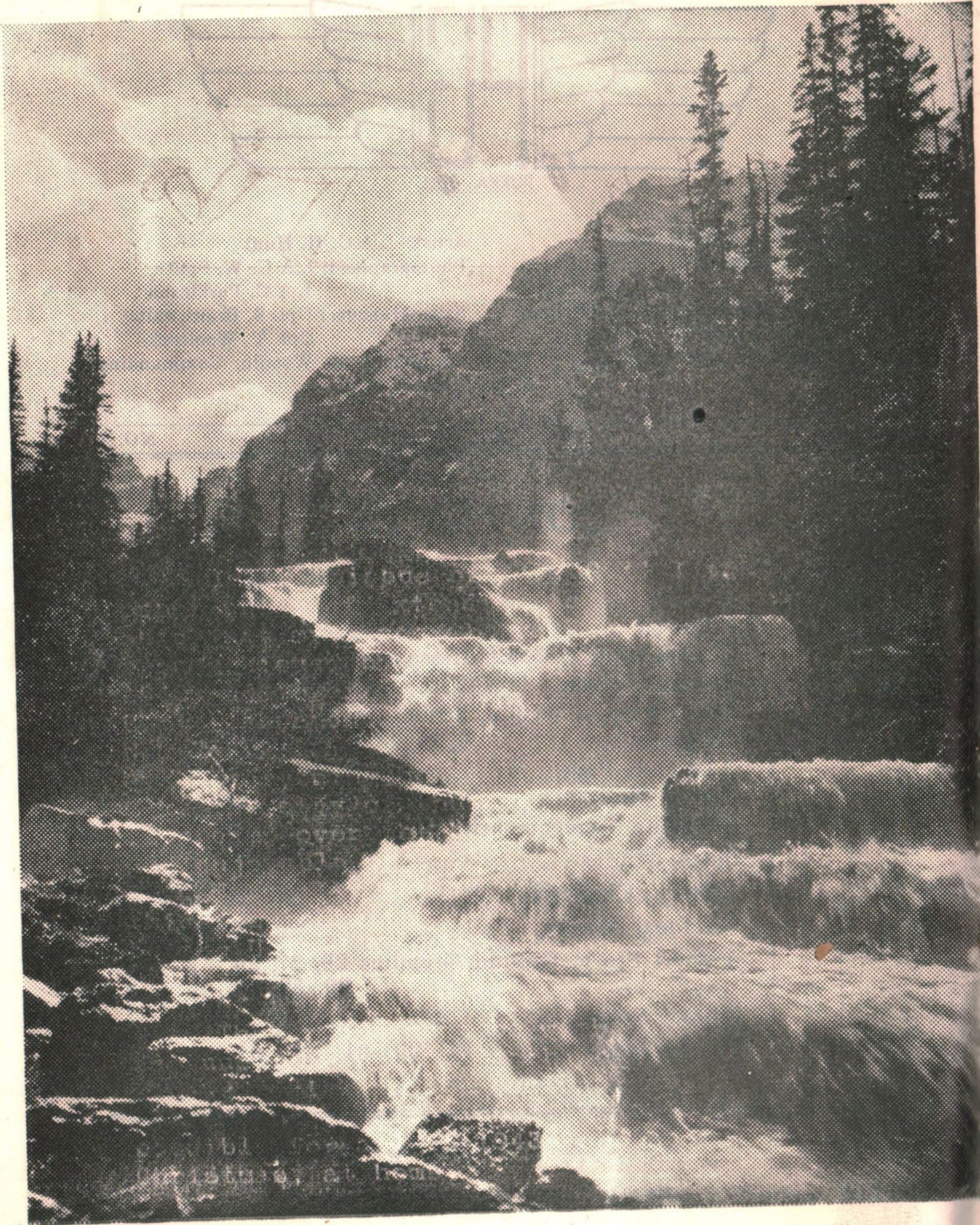
NO. 3

## CONTENTS

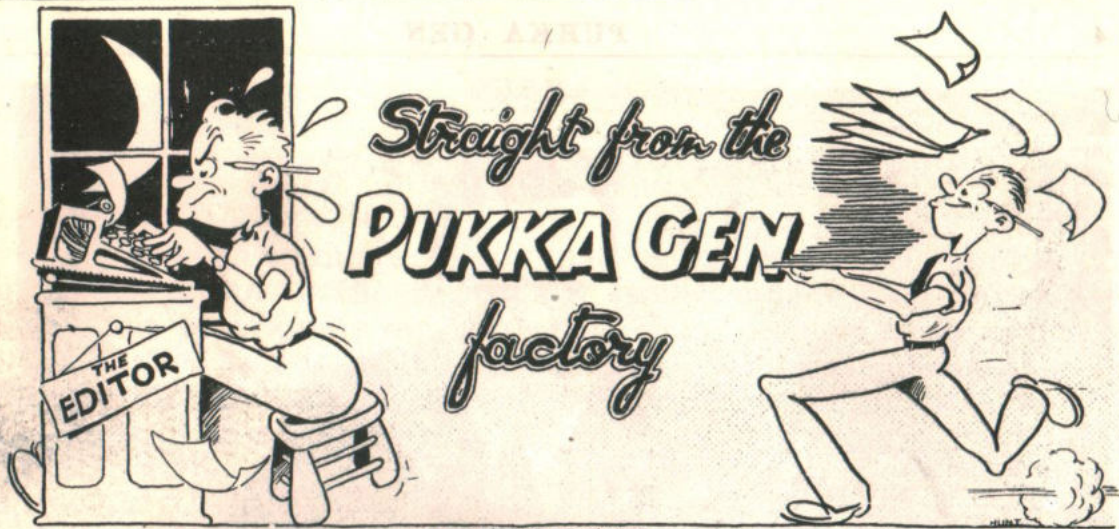
	Page
Editorial.....	3
Commanding Officer's Message.....	4
Station Cinema.....	5
Short Story, a Wisp of Straw.....	6, 7, 8, 10, 11
Cartoons .....	9, 19, 28, 33, 37, 40, 46
Y.M.C.A. Page.....	12
Girl of Month.....	14
Canadian Twelvemonth.....	15
Poem, Winter.....	18
A Story, Cinderella .....	20, 21
An Ideal Wife.....	22, 23
A Short Story, Ground Gremlins .....	26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33.
Library Notes.....	36, 37
Photographs.....	24, 25, 31, 34, 48.

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**EDITORIAL**

Once more we have the profound pleasure of bringing to you, a further issue of P. G. It being the Christmas number, we have tried to make it as Christmassy as possible with the material on hand. There are special Yule-tide messages from the Commanding Officer, the Padre, our Y.M.C.A. representative Reg Dunn, and A.C. Peewee. There are cartoons, photographs, short stories, articles and poetry. With hosts of new writers to amuse and entertain you over the festive season.

For quite a few, this will be a second Christmas in Canada. Perhaps because we are away from home, we tend to lose sight of how very lucky we are, to be spending another festive season in relative peace and quietness, with food and drink in plenty. Let us by no means forget the reason we are able to spend it so. It is because our fellow service men will be fighting in the front lines all over the world on that day. We must think of all those men; and of all the women and children in occupied countries; of our men in enemy prison camps. For Christmas being the anniversary of the birth of Christ, it is also a time for thanksgiving, therefore let us be truly thankful and happily content with our lot.

Let us generate the spirit of goodwill. Let us resolve to start the New Year—not with a hang-over—but with some really slap-bang resolutions which we intend keeping. Perhaps if we pause for a moment on Christmas day, and allow our minds to dwell in the past, and remember our 1938 Christmas, we shall recall that we spent it with loved ones. Santa Claus was present in all the big stores. There was holly and mistletoe, and festive decorations in abundance. We wore paper hats, pulled cracker bonbons. We listened to carol singers; the bells of Bethlehem; and the Kings' speech to the Empire, whilst sitting beside a log fire cracking nuts. Let us remember those halcyon days, and resolve once more to quicken the day of Victory. So that the children of the world may wake on Christmas morn, and find their stockings full. That their gay laughter may ring out, as they dance round the colourful glitter of a tinsel draped Christmas tree. Let our New Year's resolution be, a resolve, to do our utmost to help win this war before another Christmas.

Finally, we of the Editorial staff wish all our readers a very happy Christmas, and a prosperous and victorious New Year, and that we may all soon be with our loved-ones once more.

EDITOR



In this issue of "P. G." I take the opportunity of extending to all personnel of this unit my personal thanks for all that has been achieved by their individual efforts in 1942 and to offer my best wishes for a happy Christmas and good luck in the coming New Year.

Everything possible has been done to make the stay of those who cannot get away from camp over the holiday an entertaining and enjoyable one.

Naturally the thoughts of all will at this time be with those at home, whether it be the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, or whatever part of the world home means to each of us.

That you cannot be with them is the fortune of war but "each to his task" with renewed drive in the coming year, will bring nearer the realization of What I hope will be possible for all in 1943--a peaceful Christmas, at home.

*John Woodhouse*

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## THE STATION CINEMA

The new 35 m.m. projector made a triumphant debut to an enormous crowd in the Recreation Hall Sunday, 13th December. The whole programme ran through without a single hitch, and high praise indeed is due in the first place to the Commanding Officer for the interest and kindness shown, which made possible the installation of this new equipment, and also to the small band of volunteers who put in so much spade work under the expert guidance of P/O E. J. K. Hall.

As is always in these days of rapid progress, its "Off with the old and on with the new." In recording a hearty vote of thanks to the people concerned in the installation of the new equipment, I would like to acknowledge a deep sense of appreciation to the Y.M.C.A. for the many free cinema shows they have provided over the past nineteen months. Their's has been a thankless task in some respects and I would like to express to them through the Magazine, the thanks of all of us who have truly appreciated their efforts.

Appended below will be found a forecast of shows to be given in the new Cinema. It is pointed out against possible disappointment that although these films are definite bookings, there is always that odd last minute hitch. However, ample warning of any changes made in the programmes will be given on the Notice Board immediately outside the Recreation Hall.

There will be five shows per week running Monday-Tuesday, Thursday-Friday and Sunday. There is a possibility that there will be two showings on Sunday nights only; this point, however, has yet to be settled. Prices of admission are as follows:—

Officers.....30c  
Senior N.C.O.'s25c  
Airmen.....20c

Dependent on the size of attendance at these shows, there is a possibility of a reduction of 5c on the above charge, but this also is a point that remains open at the moment.

Finally, it cannot be emphasised too strongly that the laws of this country prohibit smoking in cinemas and unless this ruling is strictly adhered, the cinema will not be permitted to open.

Sunday, December 20th. "Juke Girl," with Ann Sheridan and Ronald Regan.

"Brace Lottle Bat."

"Shoot Yourself some Golf."

"Points on Arrows."

Monday, December 21st. "49th. Parallel," with Leslie Howard.  
Tuesday, December 22nd. Laurence Olivier and Raymond Massey, "Community Sing."

Thursday, December 24th. "Big Store," with the Marx Bros.

Friday, December 25th. "Them Thar Hills," Laurel & Hardy.  
"Acro-Batty," Peter Smith.

(Continued on page 24)

## A WISP OF STRAW UNDER EACH PLATE

Short Story by Noel E. Roberts

It was Christmas eve, and Peter Veronski was wending his way homeward with a bundle of wood on his back. He lived among the forest-clad Carpathians, near Zakophane. Having lived there nearly all his life, and being a true son of the soil, he loved it all with that passionate devotion common among the Polish peasantry.

He paused in his climb, to regain his breath and to give his shoulders a rest, and turning round he viewed the scene. He could see the dwarf pines and the junipers, their tips just showing above the snow. Over to the right, the smooth glass like surface of the frozen Vistula reflected the last rays of the December sun. He breathed in deeply of the cold, wine laden mountain air, and sighed.

How well he knew it all; and yet how changed it was since the coming of the Hun. He remembered many such winters as this, but they had been cheerful winters, cheerful with the fun and frolics of winter sports in full swing. There had been skiing, bobsleighing and tobogganing. Zakophane had been full each season, with happy care-free people who danced and played; the music had been superb; the very mountains had echoed and re-echoed with the joyful shouts and cries of the happy go lucky throng. The memory of it all brought tears to his eyes.

The scene changed, and he could see fields of shimmering golden corn, fields that were bordered with forests alive with game. He saw exquisite carpets of alpine flowers lining the valleys, while on their picturesque slopes grazed cattle and sheep; and the air was once more filled with the sounds of rushing torrents, of tinkling bells, and the sweet music of shepherds flutes.

The swift flowing streams were still there, and the flowers would bloom again, but, the cattle and sheep had gone, and music and dancing were things of the past. Thank God we still have our spirit, reflected Peter Veronski.

He turned away with a heavy heart, and picking up his wood bundle, he continued on his way. Here and there, as he climbed, water cascaded downwards from beneath glittering white arches; cool, clean mountain water, unpolluted as yet by man's virulence. Arriving at his destination, a low wood and rope cottage, he deposited his load outside and entered.

The room that he came into was typical of the austerity of his life. It was bare and empty looking, a hard wood table and a few chairs comprised the furnishings. The only cheerful thing about the whole room was a large log fire which blazed merrily, casting flickering shadows around the naked walls.

In a large chair near the fire sat his wife, Mari, who had been busy stirring a large cauldron on the fire, and had glanced up to see who had come in before she had continued stirring.

"Hello my dear, that stew smells nice, and I have an enormous appetite." With these words he wandered into the kitchen, and returned a few moments later with a bowl. He made himself comfortable in a chair on the opposite side of the fire.

"Well, here we are with another Christmas upon us, and as poor as ever. Not even a decent meal in the house. And no chance of getting one."

"Don't grumble now Peter," his wife admonished, "at least we have a fire and a roof above our heads. For that we should be truly thankful."

They were devout Catholics; and Peter Veronski crossing himself said, "Yes, I should be thankful for those small mercies, and the Gestapo leave us in comparative peace. I suppose we are a lot better off than some."

His wife nodded her approval. He finished his soup, and threw some more logs on the fire, and stretched out his legs. Gazing into the heart of the flickering flames, and listening to the pop and crackle of the burning wood, he fell into a reverie.

He could remember other Christmas eve's, when things had been different. There had been huge feasts, starting sometimes at four in the afternoon, and lasting well into Christmas day. As was customary in these parts, there had always been a wisp of straw beneath each plate, as a symbol. While outside in the barn there had been a manger, partly filled with straw, on which lay a beautifully dressed doll, to show where Christ had been born. How different it was this year, he reflected bitterly, now the manger had to be in the cellar along with the crucifix and the prayer books.

There were no church bells to chime out their message of "Peace on earth and goodwill towards men." No carol singers with their long robes and tall hats, carrying their Szopka, (a model of a hut containing the holy family). There would be no music and dancing; except in a few isolated cases, where there would be no fear of the Gestapo interrupting.

His thoughts were suddenly interrupted by a sharp rat-tat on the door, which resounded harshly through the room. His wife looked across at him with terror showing in her eyes. Then she was calm once more, with that resigned calmness of a conquered people. Peter rose, and with a quick glance around the room, strolled over and opened the door.

In the twilight of a December dusk, he saw a well built old man with a long flowing white beard. He was dressed in a dun coloured garment with a cowl attached, similar to those worn by monks, on his feet he wore black boots, the tops of which disappeared beneath the garment. All this Peter Veronski took in. Then in a deep guttural voice which seemed to come from a long way off, the stranger spoke:

"Pax vobiscum," he greeted, "may I come in and warm myself by your fire for a short while, the night is cold and I have travelled far this day."

Peter, his anxiety gone, stepped back dumbfoundly, and with a sweep of his arm he bid the old man enter. Peter closed the door, and following the stranger in, he drew a chair up to the fire for him. Bowing low to Mari, the old man asked if he might partake of that delightful smelling soup. After the old man had been served, Peter, his curiosity getting the better of him, enquired:

"Have you travelled far today sir?"

"Many leagues, many leagues," replied the old stranger, waving his hand vaguely in the air.

"Where are you heading for—Zakophane?"

"No my friend, I know not where I go, for I am not tied by the restrictions of this world; I always arrive at my correct destination, even though it takes me a whole year. Time has no meaning to me. I am old, yes, so very old." After this strange speech, delivered in a hollow monotone, the stranger stood up and looking around him he went on: "This is a fine and fitting place to spend Christmas, have you food and wine?"

"Why no sir, we are poor. The Huns have taken all the food, we have another stew for tomorrow," replied Peter. He wondered dubiously whether the stranger was contemplating stopping.

"Poor fare, poor fare indeed for Christmas feasting. Come with me and bring a sack with you." Peter looked enquiringly at his wife; for the stranger had not asked him to go with him, but, "come with me," in such a way that one did not ask the why and the wherefore, but did it, knowing that it would be the correct thing to do. His wife nodded her head, and Peter followed the stranger out into night.

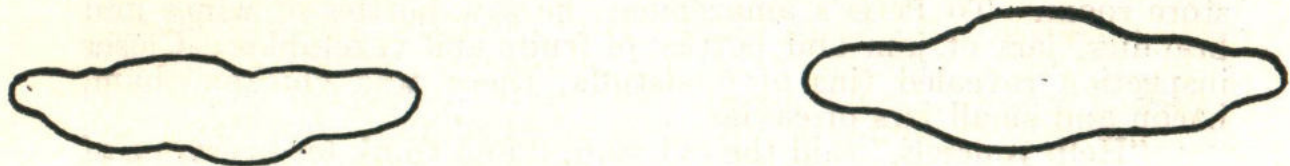
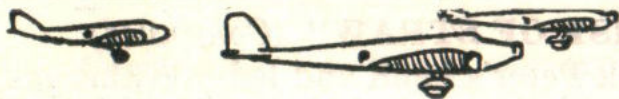
Outside it was now quite dark and the white mantle of snow looked clean and fresh beneath a clear cold sky that was studded with the brilliant lustre of gold splashes. The crescent moon lay on its back, and all was coldly serene.

The old man led Peter sure footed down the rock strewn path, with an almost uncanny confident glide; he neither spoke nor turned his head. So that Peter began to wonder if the old fellow knew that he was following. After a while, Peter realised that he was keeping in step with the old man, in spite of the unevenness of the path, and the distance between them. Later he thought that he could hear a most beautiful choral version of "Good King Wenceslas," it was ethereal in its splendor, and seemed to be all around them and yet mystically elusive.

On arriving at the outskirts of Zakophane, the heavenly music ceased, and the stillness of the night swept down. In Zakophane the streets were deserted, and the buildings were ugly and sinister in their darkness. The old man, still in the lead, led Peter down a dark alley that branched and twisted so much that Peter feared he would never find his way out.

The old man finally stopped in front of a large dilapidated, squalid house, that had an air of emptiness about it, which the boarded up windows confirmed. He opened the door and led the way into the house. He paused in the dark passage and Peter could hear him fumbling with another door; and then he was following the old man down some steps into a dimly lit cellar. The place smelt musty, and damp. Here and there, gas-jets spluttered and flickered, throwing grotesque and eerie shadows on the sweating walls. At the far end were numerous alcoves. It was towards these that the old man led him. At the back of one of them the old man pulled at a racked cupboard, which swung inwards on invisible and silent hinges.

*Continued on 10*



"Last Man Down's a Sissie."

HAROLD HUNT

**“A WISP OF STRAW”** *(Continued)*

The old man took Peter's hand and led him through a narrow opening; turning a bend they found themselves in another cellar, similar in appearance to the last one, except that this one was half full of broken cases, bottles and debris. It looked like a disused store room. To Peter's amazement, he saw bottles of wines and brandies, jars of jam and bottles of fruits and vegetables. Closer inspection revealed tins of foodstuffs; there was chicken, ham, bacon and small jars of caviar.

“Help yourself,” said the old man, “and think for everyone of your family and friends. You shall spend Christmas this year, with enough to eat and drink.” Poor Peter could hardly believe his ears, certainly not his eyes. He pinched himself rather dubiously, to make sure that he was not dreaming. The old man seemed highly amused.

“Why thank you sir, this is the most wonderful thing that has ever happened to me..... What is your name sir?” enquired the bewildered Peter.

“Don't thank me. Thank God, for he is the giver of life and all things on this earth. My name does not matter. I find my eternal happiness in making other's happy..... Come, let me help you pack.”

Some time later Peter Veronski [was once more making his lone way up the mountain path. The strange old man had left him on the outskirts of the town, disappearing into the night with these final words:

“The spirit of Christmas I give unto you. Pass it on to your family and friends. Keep the goodwill spirit by you always..... Farewell my friend.” And he had gone, suddenly and completely. If it wasn't for this sack I have here, mused Peter, I should think that I had been dreaming.

Arriving once more at his cottage, Peter entered. He lowered the sack at his wife's feet, and bid her examine it. She opened the neck of the sack and peered in rather timidly, and then catching sight of the bottles, she led out an exclamation. She looked up at her husband with fear and suspicion showing in her eyes. She said “Tell me.....?”

After he had finished telling her the amazing story, she said, “Come, we must go below and thank almighty God for this blessing.” Later Peter went out to fetch in the neighbours, while his wife bustled around, preparing the food and wine for a party.

The party was a huge success. There was music, there were carols, and above all there was food and drink for everyone. Under each well-filled plate was placed a wisp of straw. Toasts were drunk to the bearded stranger; speculation ran riot as to who he had been. They drank a toast to an early peace, they toasted one another. Later they danced. They danced Muzurka's and the Cracovienne, and many more. It was not until the first streaks of dawn on Christmas day that the party was broken up. Most of them hurried away to go to secret Mass, which was always held in a shepherd's hut, well off the beaten track in the forest. Others hurried home, to get in before the Gestapo started their morning patrol.

Concluding "A WISP OF STRAW"

Peter Veronski and his wife started clearing up the mess as soon as the last guest had left. They had to hide all traces of the nights revelries, in case of unwelcome callers. Peter found a magazine on the floor that one of the older women had brought with her, and in the excitement of getting away, had forgotten. He flicked over the pages. He noticed that it was a Christmas number four years old. Suddenly he stopped. His body stiffened. His gaze became rivetted on a full page coloured painting.

"Holy Mary" he exclaimed in an awestruck voice, "Mari, quick.....look at this...." The urgency in his voice, prompted his wife to hurry to his side.

"What is.....?" his wife broke off. Peering over her husband's shoulder she saw the painting. For a moment neither of them spoke.

"Why its our bearded friend! !" said Mari in astonishment. Peter Veronski, just nodded his head in dumb confusion.

"Here, let me see what it says underneath," said Mari. She took the magazine from Peter's grasp. He leaned over her shoulder, and together they read:

Saint Nicholas.....the spirit of Christmas, internationally known as Santa Claus, excellently portrayed here by the artist Lapernicus. Legend has it that the spirit of St. Nicholas visits parents on Christmas eve and imparts to them the spirit of Christmas.....

Once more Peter Veronski could hear the ethereal choir singing "Good King Wenceslas'.....!"

## FLIGHT MECHANIC'S 23RD PSALM

"Carefulness is my watchword, I shall not want another.

"It maketh me to remember to check each point before I put my O.K. on the plane.....for otherwise my plane's pilot might crash into green pastures or dive out of control into still waters.

"It restoreth my confidence in myself, for I know that being careful I am keeping our planes in the air so that we can win the war.

"Yea, though I sit in the plane and work on it for hours, I do not fool with the ignition switch nor do I taxi the plane across fields just for the thrill of it and those about me fear no such evil for my wrench and my screw-driver comfort me and I do my work well.

"I prepareth the plane for the pilot in front of our enemies. I caress my plane with loving care and see that each part of it is in good working order and annointeth its engine with oil until it has just enough.....and is not running over.

"Surely smooth flying and success will follow my plane wherever it is and by being careful I will be able to keep it flying forever."

## SINCERELY YOURS, AT CHRISTMAS TIME

Reg Dunn, Y.M.C.A.

If this issue escapes from the printer in time, and if you read this page, it will convey to you the Christmas greetings of the Y.M.C.A. By the term "Y.M.C.A." I mean, first of all, the staff which you have come to know on this operation, for after all, you have made up your minds what the Y.M.C.A. is by your contact with this staff. So, for all of us: myself, Mr. Trenholm, the canteen manager, and the crew of young clerks who have been at your beck and call for the past year, all our best and most sincere wishes for a good Christmas season. Then, too, "Y.M.C.A." means more than the people you have known with the "YM" badge here. Greetings come to you from our National War Services Committee, in Toronto, and our local leaders in Halifax. Countless people you will probably never know are as "shadowy beings" who toil that the Y.M.C.A. may be of service to you here. We are here because they were there first. They think of you as do we during this season and hope for a good Christmas season for you.

Pause with me for a moment and you'll know that our greetings are not ones "put on for the season." One purpose of the Young Men's Christian Association is to prove by its spirit and its attitude that the feelings of Christmas can be universal and can be operative all the year through. Maybe you think we are "cracked," but nevertheless we think it possible. I know we disappoint the ideal again and again, but that's not the fault of the ideal. Anything Christian should be able to feel the same way, but if it doesn't then in that measure, it defaults in its Christianity. I hope you'll have something of that idea of the Y.M.C.A. in your heads when you return to your homes after this mess is over. After all, if the ideals of an organization do not stay with you after the organization is no longer in actual touch with you, they haven't been too evident at any time.

I have just written: "when you return to your homes"—much as we like to have you with us, even more we would like to know that you are home, especially in this season. For home and loved ones generate the spirit of the season as it should be normally. That's where you really found your idea of Christmas. But this is the fourth wartime Christmas you have known—away from home, living in abnormal times, uncertain of the future—we know it can't be the best Christmas, but we pray it can be a good Christmas. Most of you have found a home away from home, and you will spend your leaves there. Wherever you are—at Christmas and at New Year's turning, too—we hope you'll find a spirit of friendliness wherever you go.

For Christmas, then: "Peace and goodwill;" for the New Year: happiness and a sense of certainty in the future. Our best wish for you; that Christmas of 1943 will find you at home.

REG DUNN, Supervisor,  
Y.M.C.A. War Services.

## A CHRISTMAS QUIZZ

1. What is a CESTUS?
  - (a) A form of boil.
  - (b) The last lines of a sonnet.
  - (c) A type of glove once used by bearers.
2. If you were shown a herse, what would you observe?
  - (a) A type of boat.
  - (b) A carriage for conveying bodies to the grave.
  - (c) A portcullis.
3. Presented with a PATTEN, you would?
  - (a) Wear it.
  - (b) Smoke it.
  - (c) Put it in a cage.
4. The acceleration of a falling body is?
  - (a) 25 feet per second.
  - (b) 32 feet per second.
  - (c) 38 feet per second.
5. If asked to join in a game of Mah Jong, you would wear?
  - (a) A face grill.
  - (b) Padded gloves and Leggings.
  - (c) Your ordinary clothes.
6. Pinochle is?
  - (a) The highest point of a mountain.
  - (b) A native dance.
  - (c) A card game.
7. A sonnet is a short poem containing?
  - (a) Eight lines.
  - (b) Fourteen lines.
  - (c) Sixteen lines.
8. The Stone Age was followed by?
  - (a) The age of Chivalry.
  - (b) The dark ages.
  - (c) The Bronze age.
9. In ancient Mythology, Apollo was?
  - (a) The Sun God.
  - (b) A God of Music.
  - (c) A God of wisdom.
10. Would you refer to a group of hogs as?
  - (a) A sounder.
  - (b) A litter.
  - (c) A herd.
11. AMBERGRIS is?
  - (a) The name of an African native tribe.
  - (b) A solid which floats on the sea.
  - (c) A valuable jewel.
12. A firkin is a beer or ale measure equivalent to?
  - (a) Ten Gallons.
  - (b) A quarter barrel.
  - (c) Nine gallons.
13. A PARAKEET is?
  - (a) A special dance floor.
  - (b) A sunshade.
  - (c) A kind of parrot.

THE LAST GIRL OF THE MONTH



## CANADIAN TWELVEMONTH

By Drew Alison

Nineteen-forty-one, having a final look round prior to the whirl of war-subdued gaiety which would mark her passing, brought me as a parting gesture, to Canada. To a country not entirely strange, but one that I was happy to have the opportunity of visiting.

Unbroken grey, canopied the passage of our ship as she carefully nudged aside the spiritless waters of a disembarkation port. Stray snowflakes hovered to watch our progress before wandering from view. Darkness took possession of a moody sky.

Before a lazy sun, reluctant to commence his daily ethereal round, began rubbing the sleep from his eyes, we berthed. On the rail of the ship icicles had claimed vantage points during the night. Despite persistent efforts of a gelid wind to force me below deck, I stood looking down on the wharf where all manner of motor vehicles plied to and fro. A strange warmth permeated my humble being. Due perhaps to the proximity of terra firma, or maybe I had imbibed heat from the many electric lamps patiently waiting to be relieved of their duty by the somnolent sun. Mid-day found my tour of duty on Canadian soil begun. That was all but a year ago. How time passes.

Since that day, through the medium of duty, travel, and various social activities, I have had the opportunity of meeting and learning to like the easy-going Canadians.

Despite their apparent indifference I have found them fully aware of the responsibilities of war. Aware, and willing, to accept their share of sacrifice in the cause of victory.

Canada's younger generations remain something of an unknown quantity to me. I shall have to study them more fully before commenting earnestly upon them. Although I have enjoyed many pleasant and, I might add, memorable hours in their company, I find it difficult to appreciate the casual frankness and air of abandon that pervades their life.

Amongst the older people I have discovered a depth of understanding and warmth of appreciation comparable to any I have previously experienced. Sympathetic co-operation, infinite kindness, and often rather embarrassing hospitality have planted seeds of cordial relationship. Seeds which have taken root, prospered and borne fruit. The fruit of loyal and undying friendship; to me a very essential ingredient of living.

Though far from my native heath, I am happy in the land of the maple leaf, and proud of my association with its people.

## THERE'LL ALWAYS BE AN IRELAND

---

Dedicated to One Good Irishman by Another One—Not so Good

There'll always be an Ireland,  
While there are little pigs,  
As long as people mourn at wakes  
And dance at Irish jigs.

There'll always be an Ireland,  
Where folks throw bombs about  
And blow up their own houses  
And knock their neighbours out.

There'll always be an Ireland,  
While there are cows in Kerry,  
As long as banshees dance at night  
On the plains of Tipperary.

There'll always be an Ireland,  
Where they utter words of blarney  
And ride in little jaunting cars  
From Wexford to Killarney.

There'll always be an Ireland,  
Where they wake the kids at night  
And feed them milk and porridge  
When they should be sleeping tight.

There'll always be an Ireland,  
Where they wear old bowler hats  
And carry heavy blackthorn sticks  
And raise Kilkenny cats.

There'll always be an Ireland,  
Where the snakes refuse to grow,  
(St. Patrick did the trick himself  
Some years ago, you know).

There'll always be an Ireland,  
Whose potato crop is grand,  
And where the flax grows blue and tall,  
And shamrocks dot the land.

There'll always be an Ireland,  
Where they make the world's best stout,  
And where the North Part fights the South,  
Though they don't know what about.

There'll always be an Ireland,  
That will always be my land,  
And they always will be skittish,  
When the whole damned world is British.

## ORDERLY ROOM ODDITIES

- W/O. Smith: (A hardy annual—Has been around): Escort! Accused! Atten-TION! Right turn. Left Wheel. Right Wheel. HALT!
- N.C.O. i/c Discip. (An up-to-date correspondent: writes a "crafty" letter): Anybody got a three cent stamp?
- F/O. Walduck (His job is a Mess): Where's my ration strength?
- L.A.C. Freestone (D.R.O. King—Knows his keys): I take a dim voo of this. I'm—well brassed off!
- P/O. Brown (Looks "browned" off," but always the gentleman): Thanks, awfully.
- Cpl. Collins, "Tee Hee" (ex Arizona Flier, about to transfer his affections—Very loquacious): Look here, Ellington! That's enough from you. The next time you give me any more of your impertinence, I'll have you put on a charge.
- Cpl. Allen (Intelligentsia—The Erk's friend): Have you a chit?
- Cpl. Braithwaite (Alias Brainfag—Prefers a pipe): Take your feet off the table, you silly little thing, you. Otherwise, get beetled.
- L.A.C. Johnson (Retchistry Carnera—A love victim): Coo!!!
- Cpl. Rickard (Ship'ped 'In'n from Cornwall): Love is 99 per cent sex. I'm on my benders.
- Cpl. Scott (Infant Imitator): "ME—I—A!!!!" "B—A—A."
- Cpl. Wilson (Willy for short—Recently tied the nuptial knot): Damned Funny.
- L.A.C. Sewell (City bred, but has a partiality for country air): You've had ME, boy! I'm going to Springhill this week-end.
- L.A.C. ("Flash") Pollard (Lancashire boy who made good): I'm in a flat spin. Oh! Lor!
- L.A.C. "Jock" Murray (A good runner on a bicycle): Wrap up!
- L.A.C. Johnstone (from Haggisland—Writes shorthand for long): Do you think he'll ever come bawk?
- L.A.C. Johnnie Walker (Not Scotch, but doesn't object to a "wee half"): "I still maintain the battle of Waterloo wasn't won on the playing fields of Eton." "It makes you think."
- A.C. 'Arry Pountney (usually after "Lights Out"): Let's 'ave a bit of peace and quiet. Eh!!
- L.A.C. Pow (Li'l Arthur—Keeps a Good Store): Wot the devil! Wot wretched lad is making all that noise?
- Duty Clerk (answering phone): Johnson 'ere. Wot! EH! NAAW! YOU'VE 'AD THAT, CHARLIE!
- Cpl. Rickard (With his eye resting longingly on a familiar figure seated on a rock) (See wall photograph): Any English mail in for me?
- A.C. Lawrenson ("Curly" for short): You've had your time, chummy!
- L.A.C. Murray (D.R.O. distributor—Can roll 'em off): Youse people keep out of my dooplicating room.
- Cpl. Allen (troubled with his vocal cords: Bawls fairly well, but coming on): "Because you came to me."—"There will always be an England."

L.A.C. Pollard (morning after complaint): I've never 'ad such a busy time in all my life. It's always the same when I'm on duty.

N.C.O. i/c Orderly Room: (ominously): Get a hair cut.

Cpl. Scott (blond beauty): Yes, Flight. But I only 'ad it cut las' night.

L.A.C. Ellington (Signals "Mercury"): "S/L. Tiny sez as 'ow I 'avent ter accept nuffin wivout a number."

## WINTER

A Poem by William Porritt

In winter now,  
 April seems the vision of a frenzied mind,  
 When all the past, and all that is to be  
 Are the spinning flakes of snow's bleak destiny.

Imagination cannot thaw nor hold  
 Within the icy recess of its spaces  
 Any dew or dancing flowers;  
 Nor feel the urge of thrusting roots  
 That call the cry of rushing tides  
 Rebelling against the moon of time.

Yet caprices play like harps sometimes  
 Upon the icicles of phantasy:  
 When whimsy sees mimosa blooms  
 Like fur-spun lemons, fresh and rare;  
 And the body pants in fancy's heat  
 For a pool of spring amid the trees  
 Where ice has only now surrendered.  
 And a robin hides his fiery feathers  
 In anger of the linnet's gown  
 Which knows of thyme and thistledown.

Yet caprices fade and sags the heart  
 When fancy has its end.  
 For winter stabs with [cold contempt:  
 I am here and here [shall [stay.]

Should frosted fingers reach my heart  
 And take what little warmth remains:  
 No hand will quench the hidden spark  
 Fired by the winds of faith.

I shall pray—

To be alive. Alive. Not dead.  
 To feel the sap of nature fed  
 To the rarest calls in my heart,  
 When life will feel far more  
 Than the thrusting of a plough through snow  
 Difficult and tortuous.

# MORE THINGS WE SHALL NEVER FORGET!!

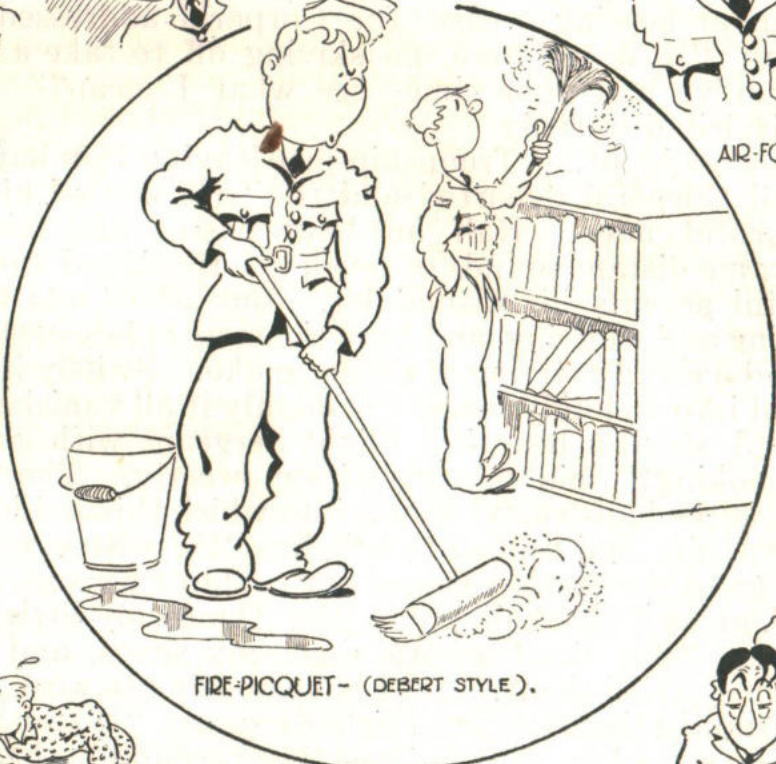


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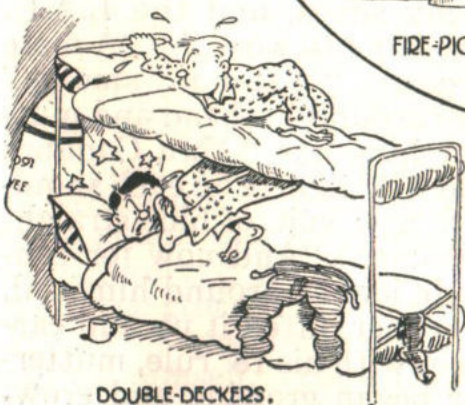


HAROLD HUNT

AIR-FORCE GRAMMAR.



FIRE-PICQUET - (DEBERT STYLE).



DOUBLE-DECKERS.



THAT FIRST "JANKERS" FEELING.

## Cinderella---Or, The Poor Little 'Erk'

Sid Braithwaite

Once upon a time (it was at Christmas), there were three Clerk/G.D.'s an A.C. 2, a L.A.C., and a Corporal.

The A.C. 2 was sitting forlornly in front of a typewriter because he was 'Duty Stooge' and he wanted ever so to go to the Station Dance which was being held that evening. In the same room, the L.A.C. and the Corporal (who were both very ugly) were dressing themselves for the occasion in attire most of which had been borrowed from the poor little 'erk.' Smoothing his hair down with a final dab of bearing grease, the Corporal addressed the A.C.2 menacingly; "Now see here, no skiving off to take a peek at the girls, or you've had your time—see what I mean?" The A.C.2 was too dispirited to reply.

[Singing gaily of a "Troopship just leaving Bombay," the ugly L.A.C. and Corporal departed and the 'erk' settled himself down with mournful mien. Half an hour passed and faintly on the night air came distant sounds of revelry. He sighed and bemoaned in sorrowful accents his dismal lot. But what was that? There was a hissing and whirring, and from the mouthpiece of the telephone there issued a steady stream of dense smoke. Swiftly it burst forth and formed into a cloudy mass. Suddenly it all vanished and there in its stead stood a beautiful Flight Sergeant with golden wings. "What's cooking?" said this apparition sweetly. The 'erk' roused himself from the half-fearful stupor into which this sudden visitation had thrown him and replied that he was 'Duty Stooge' and wanted ever so to go to the Station Dance but couldn't because he had been fixed. "And so you shall go to the Dance my little man," said the vision. "But the Corporal's got my shoes, and the L.A.C. my best blue," cried the A.C.2, "I have nothing to wear." "A mere nothing," replied the beautiful Flight Sergeant, "Watch my smoke!" With this he waved an 18" rule three times around his head and muttered an incantation which sounded something like "Abra Cadabra—roll on the boat." He then tapped the 'erk' lightly on each shoulder, who was immediately arrayed in a new suit of blue straight from the Stores. He looked very handsome. "And now for conveyance," said Fairy Flight Sergeant. He looked around him and, seeing a Duplicating Machine lying in a corner, lifted it up and carried it outside. He tapped it three times with his 18" rule, muttering as before. Instantly the Duplicator began growing and growing, changing form at the same time, until finally it resolved itself into a glittering taxi. "And now" said the beautiful Flight Sergeant, "I must be off." "How can I ever repay you?" cried the A.C.2. "Let me scrub your bunk for the C.O.'s inspection every week for three months; let me.....," but the Flight Sergeant interrupted him: "No, no, I am the good spirit of all Flight Sergeants who love you lads and want to help you. You must be very careful to leave the Dance and return here at 23.59. hours because at that time precisely your nice new blue will be changed back into

your usual scruffy tunic and trousers. Have a good time, and good-bye now." With this, and a waggle of his golden wings, he exploded into a cloud of fog and disappeared.

Rejoicing, the 'erk' hopped into the taxi and was swept away to the Drill Hall. Here, with his new suit of blue, and handsome features, he was easily the most distinguished looking airman present (apart from the Officers, of course), and all the beautiful ladies hacked each other on the shins for the privilege of dancing with him. And so the evening progressed with the once poor little 'erk' having the time of his young life. Almost before he realised it, the hands of the clock were pointing to 23.57 hours. "Coo," he muttered, "I've gotta scram!" He released his hold on the enraptured being he had been holding tightly to his manly bosom and began to beat it down the Hall. His pace was so frantic that, as he passed through the door, his foot was caught fast and, in his anxiety, his right shoe was torn off and left behind. Without pausing to retrieve his loss, the A.C.2 leaped into the waiting taxi which immediately shot off towards Station Headquarters. It was just on 23.59 hours when a screeching of brakes heralded his arrival at Headquarters and as the taxi rolled to a dead stop it immediately began to shrink and shrink until at last the 'erk' found himself clothed in his scruffy old blue, sitting on top of the Duplicator. "Boy, what a night, never missed a dance," he said to himself as he tottered into the Orderly Room carrying the Duplicator. "Pity about the shoe, but I daren't stop."

Unbeknown to him, however, one of his very beautiful partners had seen his precipitous dash from the Hall and had hastened to pick up the dropped shoe.

Several days later, the A.C.2 was puzzled, in common with the rest of the Camp, to read on D.R.O.'s that a 100% parade was to be held in the hangar. Speculation was rife on the day appointed as everybody was marshalled into Sections and ranks, and the curiosity was only increased when the Adjutant appeared on the scene accompanied by an attractive young lady.

Then began a long procession down the ranks, and to the mystification of everybody it was seen that the Adjutant's fair companion was carrying a man's shoe, which each airman was being ordered to try on for fit. The poor little 'erk' recalling to mind the story of "Cinderella" suddenly became aware of the significance of the Parade. "Cinderella lived happy ever after," he said to himself, "Here's where I lob in!" So he smoothed down his hair, put straight his tie, and hoped that the big hole in his sock wouldn't be noticed in the general excitement.

The shoe passed from foot to foot without finding a claimant and before long it reached the 'erk.' He recognised it as the one which had adorned his foot at the Dance and, sure enough, it fitted his foot perfectly. "Did you wear this shoe at the Station Dance?" asked the sweet young thing in honeyed tones. The A.C. 2 blushed and whispered shyly "Yes." "Well where the blazes is the packet of Wrigleys that I gave you to look after?" shrieked the lovely lady

## AN IDEAL WIFE

So many young people nowadays take marriage lightly that I think it is well to bring certain matters to their attention. Having asked all my male acquaintances if they planned to marry in the near future and having received assurances that they did—except from some who are now happily mated—I confirmed my suspicion that this subject is very near the surface of the normal male mind. But when I inquired further as to their idea of the suitable wife I found their thinking is ridiculously hazy and hopelessly loose.

Having thought my own way through this problem I may be in a better position than most to proffer advice to the confused masses. I shall, therefore, draw for you a verbal blueprint of the lucky lady to whom I shall promise to love, honor and obey until the sexton's spade do us part. I wish that my blueprint will prove as practical a guide to you as it does to myself.

In the first place I am not anxious that she shall know anything about cooking. I want a companion, not a chef. Restaurants are reasonable and they furnish music and dancing. Besides I have no stomach for cold bacon and warm bread.

I prefer that she shall never have heard of ju jitsu, take no interest in either boxing or wrestling, and possess no firearms. I wish with all my heart that she be neither an amazon nor an hypochondriac. Having observed how relations are strained by a constant recital of one's miseries I shall oblige her to begin each day by telling me what ailments she does not have and confessing the others to her physician. Being of an extremely sympathetic disposition I shall have a special sound-proof chamber to which she shall retire whenever she feels like weeping.

She shall not be so beautiful as to be able to poke fun at my countenance and perchance desire consolation from fairer faces. Nor shall she be so ugly that strangers will smile when they see us out walking. If she have any deformity as a Roman nose, hare-lip or club-foot then she shall have some special off-setting charm, such as a trim ankle, soulful eyes or a modest demeanor.

If she be pretty she shall dress plainly. Indeed unless she be homely as a hedgehog she shall, at all times clothe herself simply without being overdressed.

Intellectually, she need not undertsand the intricacies of decimal fractions, profess a passion for poetry, nor have read Freud. If she have the wisdom to admire the occasional orations I am in the habit of making I shall ask no more.

Emotionally, I shall not worry when she does not gush over the wonders of nature, rave on the unspeakable raptures of grand opera, or argue about the unquestionable beauty of Hollywood stars.

As to any of her former boy-friends, who, in her opinion, happen to be more or less virtuous than myself, I shall be resigned if Providence sees fit to shut them up in a tomb full of toads, lizards and vermin. I am not anxious that her relatives be poor, prolific, or fond of visiting. Her parents may be living, provided they

can appreciate an in-law or else are vacationing in Poland.

But if the lucky lady fall below my high standards she may still be eligible if she has a net income of not less than fifty thousand. I make this stipulation not from any low mercenary motive but from a burning passion for economic reform. My plan for the re-distribution of the world's wealth is so simple that it is complex.

Let each rich man marry a poor girl, and vice versa, and the wealthier the one is the more poverty-stricken the other shall be. Although I am naturally charitable and fond of the poor I nevertheless yearn for equality of income.

If my readers will pursue this policy with the persistence that I have these many years we may yet find freedom from pecuniary embarrassment. May heaven have mercy upon any who happens to get the wife he deserves. But be of good cheer, for, in spite of the world's envy and malice, this is well-nigh impossible.

L. R. MAC.

## FROM THE BREEZES

By "Windsock"

Our ["hello" boy is still a champ having lost only one set in a recent challenge contest.....

Gee! does it ever feel good to become an uncle? Ask uncle "Butch".....

Some F/Sgts are worried by the proximity of the boat; and the prospect of "handing over" their out-of-camp inventories.....

I'm told the camp cuisine is improved by adding dashes of "Mum and Mable".....

Some airmen still manage to "drown their sorrows" immediately prior to pay day. Which perhaps "accounts" for the signals boys' insomnia.....

Notice the Orderly Room staff prefer to dine in "security" these days.....

I believe that idol of musicians, Knight of the clouds, had a spot of trouble with his "G" string during a recent performance.....

Several section officers may now cease to sigh for relief. They've got it.....

Our celebrated "click-box" expert who remained "on the wagon" during his visit to "the big city" had to get "plastered" whilst on duty. Is that a nice thing?.....

Wonder if a certain officer will find his benevolence taxed when he contributes to Sgt's mess maintenance.....

At least two members of the Sgt's mess are determined to "fill the boots".....or go down with them.....

This is dedicated to that "ray o' sunshine" which beams on us during meal collection in the airmen's mess. No, his name's not Samson.....it's.....

Studious members of the hospital staff conduct 'hair-raising' experiments in spare time. Would a microscope prove useful boys.....

"Philanthropic" N.C.O. of "popular" section, frequently awards "ten cent cigars" to his colleagues (and anyone handy).....

**THE STATION CINEMA**—Continued from page 5

Sunday, December 27th.	"Caught in the Draft," Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour. Shorts.
Monday, December 28th.	"All through the Night," Humphrey Brogart and Conrad Veidt.
Tuesday, December 29th.	"Bug Parade." U.S. Cavalry Band and Glee Club.
Thursday, December 31st.	"Belle Starr," Gene Tierney, and Randolph Sutton.
Friday, January 1st, 1943	March of Time—F.B.I. Front. "All out for V."
Sunday, January 3rd.	"Rise and Shine," Jack Oakie, Linda Darnall. "Torrid Toreador." "Glacier Trails."
Monday, January 4th	"Keep 'em Flying," Abbott and Costello. Shorts.
Tuesday, January 5th.	"Navy Blues," Ann Sheridan and Jack Oakie.
Thursday, January 7th.	"Saddle Silly," "King Salmon."
Friday, January 8th.	



Courtesy C. N. R.

Dock Scene

**THE STATION CINEMA--Concluded**

Sunday, January 10th.	"You'll never get Rich," Fred Astaire and Rita Hayworth. "In Sweet Pie and Pie." "Community Sing."
Monday, January 11th.	"Ship Ahoy," Eleanor Powell and Red Skelton.
Tuesday, January 12th.	"Fraidy Cat." Nostradamus (feature).
Thursday, January 14th.	"One Night in Lisbon," Madeline Carroll and Fred McMurray.
Friday, January 15th.	Shorts.
Sunday, January 17th.	"King's Row," Ann Sheridan and Robert Cummings. "Cagey Canary." "She Knew all the Answers." "Community Sing." "Jungle Fishing." "Who's Zoo in Hollywood."
Monday, January 18th.	
Tuesday, January 19th.	
Thursday, January 21st.	"Sun Valley Serenade," Sonja Henie, John Payne and Glenn Miller's Band.
Friday, January 22nd.	"Wonders of the Sea."



Courtesy C. N. R.

Pastoral Scene

## THE ROMANTIC TALE OF THE FIRST GROUND GREMLINS

A Short Story by Kennet hEwen

In a patch of short, coarse marsh grass, whose sharp and spear-like tips shot skywards about a foot and a few inches from the ground, stood a group of pixies. Jaunty, coloured feathers bobbed merrily above the grass tips, disappeared for the breadth of a sigh, and then thrust themselves far enough out of the grass to reveal their white, slender quills, fastened by means of locking wire, to flat-topped tricorne hats. One of the pixies, smaller than the rest and unable to see over the grass, even standing on his toes delicately balanced like a ballet dancer, stepped fearfully out from the thicket into the mud and slime of the marsh. His soft, pointed suede shoes were heavy with mud; his bright green breeches and red jacket with a ruffle at the neck were stained with dark spots of oil. He shivered, hugging himself and bending his knees. A forlorn little figure was he, whose exquisite and impulsive spirit had snatched at the winds far above the clouds, and had been borne topsy-turvy through a brief land of fancy to join the other pixies in the world of the gremlins, where he became known as a widget, or baby gremlin. His eyes gazed sorrowfully at the bomber on whose ailerons he had so recently disported himself, dancing with twinkling toes along the level surfaces, and causing the ailerons to flutter like the heart beats of the unfortunate pilot.

The bomber lay gently across one of those numerous, small, salt water creeks that intersect the wide marshes in these parts of the east coast of England. Its cracked nose, sticky with soft mud, sniffed the sea half a mile away. Its rudder, incredibly high in this flat land, reared into the sky like the flat head of some fantastic sea serpent, risen without sound from the creek; or like a detached and austere sentinal standing guard over the plane's ravished body and eager wings. Behind the rudder for a distance of perhaps a hundred yards, was a neat shallow furrow, scooped out of the mud by the nose and belly of the machine. Bits of metal, ripped from the urgent body as it had scudded towards the creek, studded the furrow at infrequent intervals.

And the sun shone this early morning, and the seabirds wheeled in great screaming arcs, and the wind swept across the lonely marsh and whistled through the little holes in the metal fuselage of the bomber.

The gremlins were for the moment sad and stunned by a misfortune, for in accordance with one of their many strict and peculiar codes it was stated (and the words are traced by sunbeams on many a gold flecked cloud) that from the moment a gremlin crashes in a machine of the R.A.F., it shall never again haunt the other cold and beautiful domain that exists above our own profane and mundane world.

Was there any wonder therefore, that the gremlins should feel lost and bewildered, deserted as they were upon a naked curve

of the earth? There is a gentle nobility about those who work and play amongst the unrestrained clouds that sprinkle the heavens with rainbow colours conceived by sympathetic dawns and sunsets. It is as though they had held communion too long with the immortality and greatness of nature's wondrous imagination. The war was being fought over a world whose earth-bound inhabitants were blind to the beauty of a celestial battlefield. Those who embraced the earth would never accept the existence of the little men and women whose capricious natures played dangerous games with the men who dared the brave bomber trails, and who rode the harsh fighter merry-go-rounds in a sky red with the flames of a thousand burning aircraft. This was the world of gremlins and flyers of the R.A.F.

Incredulous flyers had long scorned the existence of air borne pixies, but the legend grew and the sceptics found themselves ill-favoured whilst their superstitious oppos swore that their faith in the little creatures had frequently saved them from accident. Willy-nilly as the mood took them, the gremlins made life miserable for both good and bad pilots. At other times they assisted many who, limping home from successful raids, found fresh endurance and skill visiting them in the hour of their greatest need.

The gremlins, like the men who flew the fighters and bombers, were lost when cast defenceless upon the earth. But like the airmen they were quickly adapted to changed condition and adverse environment, so that in the first few hours of their fate they had wandered without direction or thought, but shortly became resolved to make the most of their predicament and now awaited the airmen they knew must come soon to salvage the bomber that lay upon the marshes as helpless as a lame duck.

A mile away to the west was the high, green bank that protected the rich fenlands from the enroaching tides. Three desolate figures were standing on the bank, looking out over the marshes in the direction of the bomber. Soon there came the noise of a motor truck, roaring above the pop-pop of a farm tractor in a distant field. The truck slowed down on the rough country road, changed gear and charged up the bank in a place where farm carts, come there in the winter, had left their deep rutted wheel marks.

Airmen, dressed in blue overalls and soiled caps and wellington boots, slipped, tumbled and jumped from the closed back of the truck, laughing and shouting into the wind, and shading their eyes to gaze towards the sea. An officer jumped down from the front of the truck and walked over to the three civilians. He spoke to the man, but it was the woman who pointed across the marshes, and it was the child who danced and shouted in high glee and excitement when it heard that these men were going out to the bomber which had crashed presumably in the early hours of that morning.

When the maintenance gang approached the gremlins, one of the widgets was caught by a particularly rude gust of wind, and was blown slithering and sliding across the black mud, finally coming to rest against a tuft of samphire where he clung frightened and breathless, lest he be seen by the airmen. From their hiding

*Continued on page 29*



"F" for Freddie calling".

**THE ROMANTIC TALE** *Continued*

place in the grass the rest of the gremlins watched in quiet desperation and horror, for as yet they were uncertain of their powers of invisibility now that they had reached the earth. Up there, in the clouds they had been invisible, revealing their presence through the medium of wayward and frivolous tricks which soon became recognised, so that evasive action had to be planned to forestall them. The females of the gremlins known as finellas, and whom nobody has been able to describe, often transformed themselves into the image of the pilot's loved one and her beauty was reflected and magnified a thousand-fold on the windows of his aircraft, becoming more desirable the longer he was in the air. The spandules, or middle aged gremlins, were however the toughest and most dangerous, for they rarely bothered with aircraft flying below 10,000 feet. Invisible and ruthless they breathed icicles over the bombers' wings and watched with sardonic grins the pilot's fighting attempts to regain lost altitude.

The widget, large enough and most certainly conspicuous enough to cause a commotion anywhere, was obviously unseen by the approaching airmen. Realising that they still possessed the priceless advantage of invisibility, the gremlins came out from hiding and watched quizzically, their heads cocked funnily on one side whilst the airmen prepared to strip the bomber of all its removable and more valuable equipment.

A gremlin who appeared to have a certain quality of distinction, owing perhaps to his fifty operational daylight sweeps over France with a fighter squadron, held up his hand and spoke thus:

'Look, you are entering upon a new life in a new country; I know you're browned off—so am I. But as soon as we get organised I think I can promise you a good time. For the moment, no pranks. I repeat—no pranks. We've got work to do. Do it well. Work together, play together, and be happy together. That's all.'

He stuck his thumbs under his armpits and swaggered away like a flight sergeant surveying a brood of sprogs.

The gremlins set to work with a will that would have surprised the airmen had they possessed the secret of penetrating gremlin disguise. They did however, remark on the ease with which various complicated components were dismantled.

One little Rigger whose screwdriver must have been designed by the devil for purposes related to cloven hooves, swore that the screws he usually found so difficult to remove, practically unthreaded themselves. An engine mechanic, head and shoulders lost in an intricacy of cables, rods and whatnots, and attacking a recalcitrant petrol feed pipe, stated in a voice thin with surprise, 'cor' it came away in me blinking 'and.'

A wireless op. trying to locate a missing aerial, found it lying neatly coiled on top of his toolbox.

Meanwhile the motor truck had been coaxed over the marshes, a difficult feat of navigation considering the winding creeks that crept serenely through the mud and then retraced their steps

a million times before reaching an outlet; but a gremlin who had been briefed for navigational duty had sat on the radiator cap and communicated his thoughts to the driver of the truck who was congratulating himself on a display of crafty driving.

When the truck was loaded, the gremlins climbed on to the shoulders of the airmen and were carried back to the R.A.F. camp, about ten miles distant.

Thus on this early summer's morning were the hangers and billets of the R.A.F. invaded by the first ground gremlins.

If anyone had asked you what the maintenance flight was like on this particular camp you would probably have replied:

'Well, by normal it's pretty good. We've got a few binders, but chiefy shoots 'em down when they get too binding. Chiefy's O.K., but just lately he's taken to binding. We ain't got a lot of work. Fitters do the majors, flight mechs do the minors. Start about half seven in the morning and finish somewheres around half five. Normal that is. Only just lately it's been a bit binding. Things happen that shouldn't happen. T'ain't carelessness exactly; you see, chiefy's O.K., the erks know he'll take a rap for them, so they're pretty careful he don't have to. Still things happen. It ain't bad, but you get browned off.'

Now either a flight is good or it's bad. There's no middle mark. Normally that is. If a flight's good it's usually because chiefy's a sport and the servicability's O.K. If it's bad it's usually the fault of a few binders who spoil it for the rest. But there are cases where a flight is both good and bad for no reason at all. Servicability flucuates like the weather, and so does chiefy's temper. There are days when everything's fine, and other days when nothing goes right and chiefy's temper is like something bad he ate for breakfast.

That's what the maintenance flight was like on this station. And nobody was able to explain why a flight, once as serene and calm as a savings bank, should suddenly become as erratic and fickle as a woman.

Nobody for instance, had suggested that the freakish happenings in and around the hanger had anything in common with the gremlins' pranks that bothered pilots. Yet in substance the trouble had a certain nameless power, which the erks when faced with a crop of smashed wing tips, were apt to call 'fate.'

In a way they were right, for gremlins are the embodiment of fate in a rather charming form.

The late autumn sun came through a niche between the heavy steel doors and stabbed a blinding point of light into the corner of the hanger where the gremlins sprawled, relaxed after their morning's campaign of devilry.

A widget came cart-wheeling across the concrete floor of the hanger. He stopped, executed a neat back flip and sat down.

'It's done,' he said giggling.

'And what, little one, have you been up to now?' queried an indulgent and perfectly charming finella.

'Well you know the erk that's always scrounging, the one with black hair and waves?'

*Continued on page 32*



**Harry Pickering**  
**Reg. Leech**

**Vic Benney**  
**Ray Atkins**

**Al Callcut**  
**Ray Johnson**

THE ROMANTIC TALE *Continued*

'You mean the one with a white handkerchief stuck up the sleeve of his overalls,' said the finella with a silvery laugh that was like music.

Eagerly the widget nodded assent. He jumped up, clapped his hands, turned a somersault and sat down again with a jolt that tipped his hat over his eyes. The finella set it right for him and he looked at her with frank admiration in his big baby eyes.

'Well, he's going out tonight. Sneaking off at half four he told his oppo. Got a date or something. He pressed his pants last night!'

'Ha, ha,' laughed the finella, 'and you.....'

'You bet,' said the widget. 'I did a bit of sneaking too—into the billet—and I stripped the creases from his pants as clean as a whistle, top to bottom and both sides.'

'We've been around too,' said the finella. 'We got browned off doing nothing. When we got cracking we went haywire. We fixed that new sergeant first of all.'

'Oh,' cried the widget, 'the ladykiller—the one with the lisp?'

'Yeah, that's him, he's as phoney as a glasseye. They call him Gremlin, but he's real scaly.'

'How'd you get him?'

'He was on the tiller bar, yelling two-six at the erks. Chiefy was in the cockpit with the brakes on. We gave the erks a hand and waited until the kite was almost through the hanger doors and then we heaved the whole damned thing sideways into the wall. Look.'

The widget looked. The wall looked like a blitz had hit it. 'Look.'

The widget looked to the other side of the hanger. The kite's mainplane had gone for a horrible burton, and the tail unit looked like it had sat on a bomb.

'Stop scratching yourself a minute and listen,' said the finella.

'We went into the armoury and threw sand in all the breech blocks. After that we altered all the wind drift instruments on the serviceable kites after the erks had done their D.I.'s, knocked the switches off three times when chiefy was running up that new kite, and then we beat it for the link trainer building and played hell with the track recorder.'

The widget doubled up with laughter and rolled along the hanger floor like a ball of wool. The finella bent over and slapped the shiny green seat of his oily breaches.

'Tomorrow,' continued the finella, 'we're going to have a locking wire removal blitz on A flight. Oh yes, and there's that duff tractor driver—I don't like his flat face. Hang around, Widgy, if you want to see some fun. We'll unhook the towing bar when he brings 894 up here, and oh boy, will she go for a burton.'

'By the way' said the widget giggling impishly, 'my oppo's got a new trick. Next time he gets tight on lockheed blue, he's going to breathe on the engineer officer's buttons—and you know he's more concerned about his buttons than the kites.'

'I've thought up a new one today.' The finella imitated a sweet smile. 'When chiefly asks for a machine to be started, jump on the erks shoulders and stick your fingers in his ears.'

'I'm hungry,' the widget stated longingly. 'I'm going to try that new tin of Bostick. Have you had some? It's pukka.'

He skipped away imitating an air raid siren, leaving behind him a group of amused gremlins, and a noise of running feet.

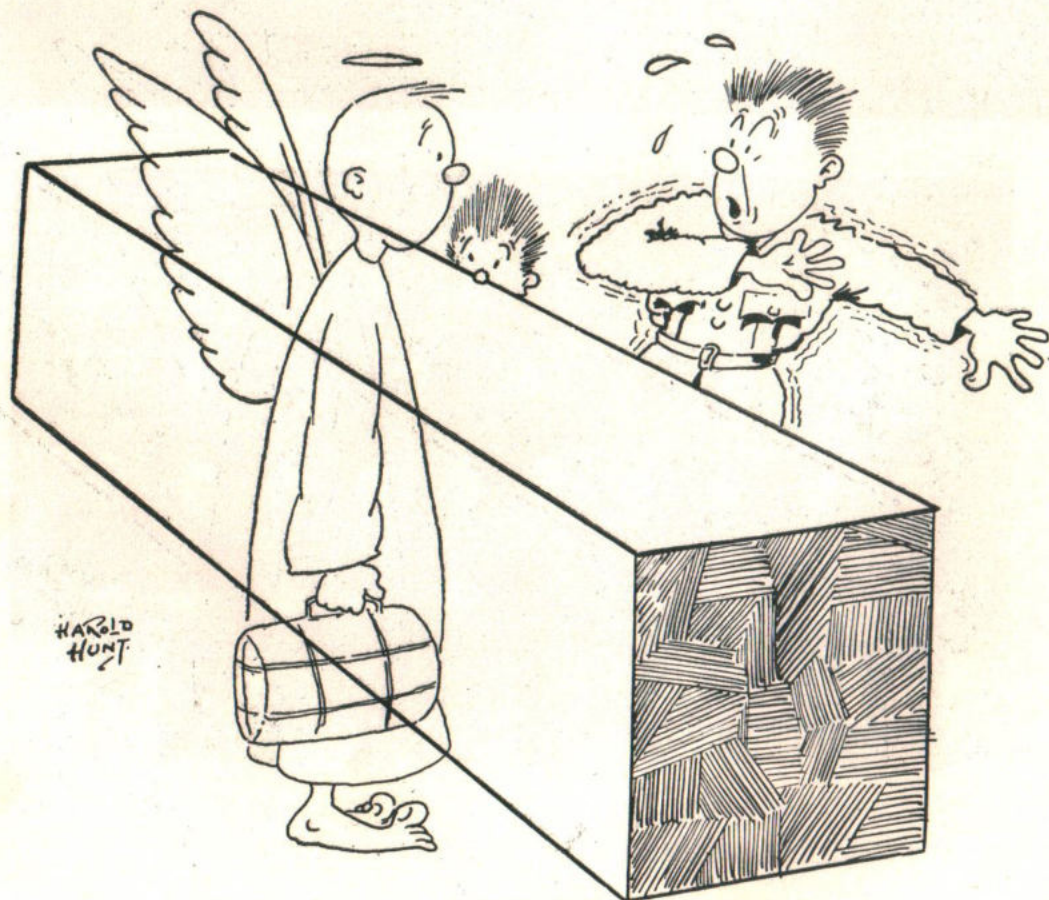
It is a well known fact that gremlins can be found in large numbers on most R.A.F. stations. It is also a well known fact that gremlins have a distinct aversion for erks who profess a complete disbelief in gremlins. And to such foolish erks who scorn the little people it must be stated, 'be careful,' for anything's liable to happen.

If the gremlins are listening (as of course they are all the time), cross your fingers and say:

'I believe in gremlins.'

It won't make it any better, but you'll feel easier.

'I believe in gremlins.'



**You said if it doesn't open, bring it back.**

**STATION DANCE BAND**



**MALE VOICE CHORUS**

## STATION CHOIR

Now that the prospect of the boat is looming ever nearer we are constantly seeing new faces around the camp and it is to these newcomers to the Station that this article is primarily addressed. Whether we enjoy our stay in Canada is largely up to ourselves and there are several organizations on the camp which are intended for the purpose of providing entertainment. The one which I should like to say a few words about is the Station Male Voice Chorus, or as the good people of Truro call it, the R.A.F. Glee Club. I know that the popular conception of a Male Chorus is that nobody under 85 is allowed to join and beards must be worn on both face and music! I think, however, that we have managed to get over this false impression to a large extent by doing music which is of quite a light character as well as by managing to get over to the audience the fact that we enjoy putting on a programme as much as they enjoy listening to it.

The Choir was formed in the early part of this year and gained a certain name for itself at the Musical Festival held at New Glasgow. We then had barely enough members to raise the necessary twenty to enter the competition. We have gone far since those early days and now have a strength of thirty lads, all very keen to see the choir make a reputation which will make R.A.F. Debert a household word in musical circles throughout Canada. Our two broadcasts have certainly helped considerably in this respect.

It is not to the past that I want to draw your attention however, but to the future. We would like to see the choir double its present strength within the next few months so that we can tackle music which is at the moment debarred to us, and it is only possible to do this if you will co-operate. I am perfectly sure that there are dozens of fellows on this camp who sing at their work, in the ablutions, etc., and yet would not dream of coming along to rehearsal to see how they would enjoy it. A knowledge of music is not necessary as we are going to have a series of talks on music and we hope to give the interested ones a sufficiently good insight into the so-called mysteries of music to enable them to follow reasonably simple pieces of music. Please don't think that these talks will be lectures in the worst sense of the word. Rather will they be discussions, and the whole affair will be run on the democratic principles which have always prevailed in choir activities. One further word, don't think your voice isn't good enough because you have heard Tauber sing and are not in his class. The thought of a choir of soloists gives me the shudders. We have to guard against any one voice being heard above the others in choral numbers and so you won't be heard individually. It is the choir as a whole which will benefit by your presence.

In closing I would like to say that we hold regular choir practices on Mondays and Wednesdays and that if you would like to come along then we shall welcome you with open arms. Help us to put Debert even more firmly on the map, and build up a stock of happy memories which you can take back home with you.

L. D. ALLSOP.

## LIBRARY NOTES

Hello, everybody, [here we [are [once again. Another month has past and you know the worst, perhaps this will be the last occasion that we shall have the pleasure of saying our little piece. So assuming that is the case, may we say how much we have enjoyed joining the slender ranks of those few stalwarts who, through the medium of this magazine, have endeavoured to give a little boost to the social side of the Station. We have had an occasion to "bind" you periodically but that has been largely your own fault. However, we have tried to do that in the nicest way we know, after all, we are quite harmless really and are only out to help you all to get what you want.

Should, therefore, this be the last time we can "get at" you all, may we assume that you will not forget us (we don't think you will, somehow, especially as the latest traffic regulations appear to be designed to exile us completely from external distractions) you know where we live, straight through the Airmen's Billiard Room, or straight across from the Canteen, and we are open six evenings out of seven from 18.30.-20.30. If we do have to keep you waiting a minute or two that is due mainly to the fact Librarians must eat, but we assure you that we get "cracking" as soon as we possibly can.

The undermentioned list of Books purchased during last month brings the total of Books in the Station Section of the Library up to about 300 or a little more, which "although we say it as shouldn't" is quite a creditable performance considering the time we have been organised. Most of these have been acquired at the suggestion of yourselves and we still welcome any suggestions which you may like to make. We only ask you to find out the *Publishers* as well as the authors of the Books you want, as this will greatly assist us [in getting [the books as quickly as possible.

### List of Books

Anthony Adverse  
 Agent Extraordinary  
 My Best Detective Story  
 The Light that Failed  
 The New Adventures of Ellery Queen.  
 Meet Mr. Fortune  
 Invitation to Live  
 \*Mr. Nobody of England  
 \*Russians Don't Surrender  
 Black Orchids  
 Two Black Sheep; Kitty; I Live Again  
 \*Adolf in Blunderland  
 \*Global War  
 \*Let's Make Mary  
 Closed Range  
 The Damon Runyon Omnibus.  
 The Ships and The Shore  
 \*Land Fall

### Authors

Hervey Allen.  
 Spencer Bayne.  
 Various.  
 Rudyard Kipling.  
 F. C. Bailey.  
 Lloyd C. Douglas.  
 Andrew Soutar.  
 Alexander Poliakar.  
 Rex Stout.  
 Warwick Deeping.  
 Max Keslir.  
 E. Ancel Mawrer.  
 Jack Harby.  
 Bliss Lomax.  
 Vicki Baum.  
 Nevil Shute.

I Knew Hitler  
 Too Many Cooks  
 Take It Easy  
 Mrs. Miniver  
 Endless Story  
 The Nights of London  
 Week end Woodehouse

Kurt Ludecke.  
 Rex Stout.  
 Damon Runyon.  
 Jan Struthers.  
 "Taffrail."  
 F. V. Morton.  
 (Omnibus).

\*These are personally recommended.

Special reference should be made of Landfall by Nevil Shute and "Mr. Nobody of England" by Andrew Soutar. These two are two very interesting novels. Subscribers who find a growing desire to "brush up" their "smooching" by intensive study of "Let's Make Mary" are again reminded that a fine of 1 cent per diem is levied on books remaining out after the allotted seven days, and in this particular case the fine will be STRICTLY ENFORCED, together with the request for any addresses or phone numbers of any suitable "subjects" found within the radius of a 48 hour Pass. The latter incidentally will be treated with the utmost confidence.

Before we say Cheerio, however, may we extend the heartiest thanks to those public spirited subscribers who have kindly donated Books to the Library. These donations are really appreciated and we feel sure we merely echo the thanks of all those who have been enabled thereby to enjoy these books. Incidentally we are always pleased to receive further donations. "Every little helps etc.!!"

H. H. & F. D.



Why don't they let U/T Aircrew, etc.

## OFFICERS MESS NOTES

With the odd party or so arranged for the Holiday Season, the end of the month augers well. Despite vociferous protests from "Foxley," it appears that Daddy Grogan will don the red robe of Santa for the entertainment of the children and others but especially the children. The exact basis of these protests is not known, but it is hoped that they were not fostered by fear of a situation similar to that which arose in a well known Damon Runyon short story.

All of which reminds us, for no reason at all, that unless Daddy puts in some pretty fast work pretty soon, he is liable to lose his hard earned title of "Nitter No. 1" to a more recent member, who has been showing excellent form lately.

The Mess Choral Society, with their vocal chords duly liberated by the Bishop's oysters, held their first serious meeting for some time, one day last month, and this has been followed by one or two informal gatherings. The absence of their erstwhile tenor-bari-tone is deplored, as several other members display shortcomings attributable to lack of practice. No new method has been devised for countering the eccentricities of a certain variety of fish, and the usual indignities are suffered by a particular avuncular relative; which may go to show that the Society requires new blood, or may not, at that. In any case, the winter season should, at least, provide more opportunity for rehearsals.

It is now history since, on November the Eighth, the Mess Ruggers fielded their bum squad against the Airmen's turnout, but it must be recorded that they tucked in their stomachs well, and at the final blow-down were hipped only to a 3-10 let-down, "Mouse" tallying our only chalk-up. Our paucity of language precludes a vivid portrayal of the game, although to conform with local custom, we must state that the Mess line-up included at least 6 internationals from home circuits.

Notification of the departure of "Dollars" and H. J. L. tended to raise the hopes of several other members that their pennant would soon be hoisted. Nevertheless, we wish these two pioneers of Debert nothing we might not wish them to wish us in similar circumstances. And whilst on the subject of wishing, why not all wish ourselves a Merry Xmas?



## OVERSEAS

I thought I saw a form I knew,  
 While walking in the evening still.  
 The step was like, as straight, as true.  
 It was but Fancy fooling Will:  
 I knew it could not be.

I trod the carpet 'neath the pines  
 And heard them whisper to the breeze,  
 That I was wandering through their lines,  
 All idly trying to appease  
 A want that could not be.

I heard two pairs of footsteps nigh  
 And wondered at their slow-set pace,  
 If even now was passing by  
 A likeness of that once held grace,  
 The while withheld from me.

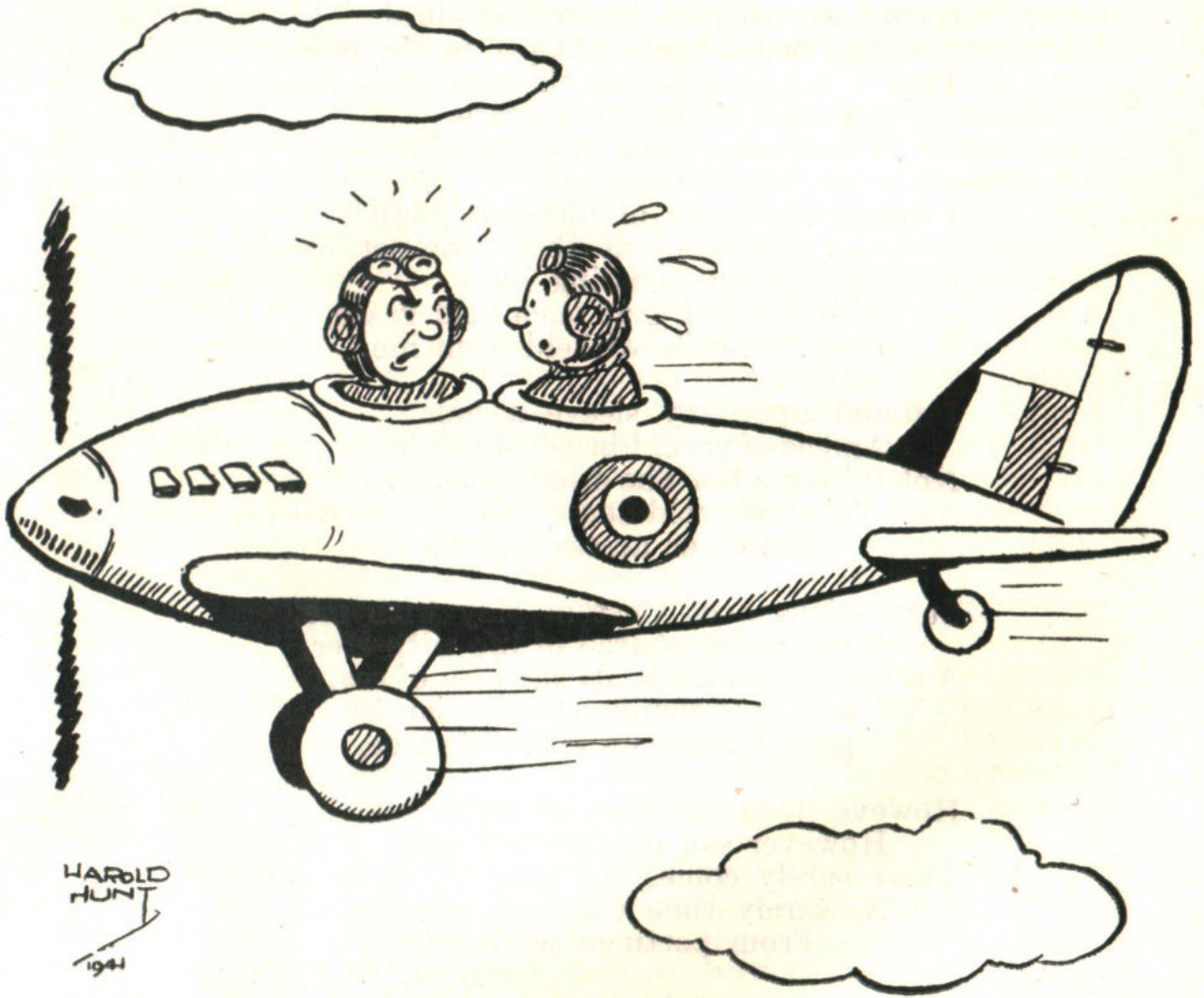
I found upon my sleeve a hair  
 And as of yore, I brushed it free,  
 Not thinking but She'd left it there.  
 'Till stern, cold Sense cried "Can that be,  
 With her across the sea?"

Such tricks does Custom play with me,  
 Who having shared of life with Her,  
 Am now constrained, by breadth of sea,  
 To with my thoughts alone confer  
 And muse on erstwhile glee.

However long the dark of night,  
 However sad my lonely heart,  
 There surely comes the morn's respite  
 As surely time will heal my smart  
 From partings set me free.

N. J. BRITTON,  
 S.H.Q. Sigs. /2B.





“Good Lord Man, Why DIDN'T YOU THINK OF  
THAT BEFORE WE CAME UP?”

## CHORAL CONCERT

### Tommy Tootell Reporting

On Thursday November 5th the Recreation Hall was the scene of a concert of popular classics presented by the Station Choir under the direction of their very able conductor L.A.C. Alsop. The concert opened to the strains of "Dear Land of Home" adopted from Sibelius' "Finlandia" and which has come to be regarded as the choir's signature tune. This was quickly followed by the familiar ballad "Come to the Fair" by Easthope-Martin, long a favourite amongst amateur singers. The quartet then made their appearance in that famous song of Wales "All Through the Night," this beautiful melody losing nothing by the perfect rendition which it received. Then came the String Trio with the "Two Indian Love Lyrics" favourite drawing-room ballads of the latter Victorian era but seeming as fresh as ever. L.A.C. "Jack" Taylor then took the stage and in his own inimitable light baritone gave us "The Yeoman of England" and "Smiling Through," numbers which need no introduction. Then again came the choir with a further two songs, "Sylvia," and "I've Got Sixpence," which were followed by A. C. Lockwood, something of a discovery, lending his fine tenor voice to the two well known songs "On with the Motley" (Pagliacci) and the "Serenade" from the "Student Prince." L.A.C. Knight then entered with his fiddle and rendered "Siciliana," and "Simple Aview," which was followed by the choir singing "Gypsy John" and Handel's "Largo." A short interval then took place which was followed by the choir again singing "My Heart Commends" and a number requiring no introduction "Waltzing Matilda." Following these two numbers were several short solo items featuring L.A.C. Knight, A.C. Lockwood, the Quartet, and the String Trio. The final item was the "Pilgrim's Chorus" from "Tannhauser," and in this number the choir, who had more than convinced us of their excellence, really surpassed themselves and gave this glorious piece of music the magnificent treatment which it so richly merits. The small but enthusiastic audience left the hall highly pleased after such an excellent and well balanced programme firmly convinced that the choir had proved its worth. For those interested the Station Choir is now open for new members who need not have a knowledge of music. Anyone wishing to enroll may hand his name to any one of the present members.



## NO. 1 CON. SQUADRON

by Peep-Keyhole

I see that L.A.C. "Gremlin" Pitts is at present engaged in reading "Gone with the Wind," could it be that this title is connected with a certain boat he'd been hoping to see? The winter season on the tarmac has now opened, and quite a few familiar faces are prominent by their absence—maybe the hanger is the longed—for "better 'ole!"

One certain L.A.C. (G. C. plus) is wondering where to spend Christmas—it'll be a wonder to see him spend anything!

I wonder if the recent order concerning haircuts was pointed at A.C. "Close the door!" Tootell and A. C. "Knock 'em for six" Wilkinson.

A certain Flight member has bought himself a pair of brown shoes for Xmas—maybe it was because they match his teeth?

Cpl. ("Broth of a bhoy") Gray was recently admonished at the N. G. Services Hut. It appears that he's so used to bawling "Wakee-wakee!" at 6.30 a.m. he'd forgotten he was on "48." B/O Bedder has been spending so much time in the crew-room recently, that the powers—that —be are seriously considering the placing of his name on the inventory-board.

Personnel who travel on the "shuttle" at rush-hours may now obtain an insurance-policy from the driver. The premium however is extremely high!

For, and on behalf of the personnel of No. 1, I should like to say how sorry we are to lose popular F/Sgt. Dodd, on his return to the U. K. At the same time I should like to extend a hearty welcome to F/Sgt. Gilbert, may his stary be a happy one.

With best wishes for the Christmas season from No. 1 Sqdn.



## NO. 2 SQUADRON NOTES

### Short Circuits

By "Two Six"

Who can predict? When the "Janker" escapologists career will end in tragedy? Isn't it Sill(y)it,

Sharps the word and Sharps the marriage.

Efforts to unite are in the vogue. It being evident by at least one more 'Erk.' May all the chips hewn by the Mason's be little ones.

There seems to be much chasing around these days. All we need now is Charley's aunt.

Who's the senior N.C.O. who quotes this verse all day long???

All I need is a tall ship??

And a star to steer by.

Is it a Fad (yen) or the magnetic influence that causes one member to spend his spare time at Trenton?

Dances, drinks and an early call

Even a "Smudge" is liable to fall

As, up in the morning, rise and shine

Get those Hudson's out in time.

And a very Merry Christmas to you all from No. 2 Squadron.

## NO. 3 OPERATIONAL SQUADRON

### Shooting-the-line

by Charlie

Pip Yeoman once told me that he had no particular ambition, no money and no job, but by the looks of his private case, the contents of which would turn any girl green with envy, I should say that he considered setting up as a silk stocking and lingerie salesman. He intimated though, that he might be going back to his old job as 'Donkey Walloper' on Redcar sands. There are only two classes of people live at Redcar. Any of the boys in the flight will tell you what they are. Pip is taking lessons in English from a well known master of the language—'Elk Ewen'—he has now learned to say, 'where's that boat'. Upon being asked the answer to this question he invariably replies, 'ah doan't know,' which isn't exactly good English. It is rumoured that the Elk' is now taking English lessons from 'Pip'.

'Hell Fire' Kell and 'Elysian Fields' Porritt are getting married next week. Congratulations. They will however, continue to occupy single beds.

Fifi Crosthwaite who is suffering from 'intelelectumania,' is engaged at present upon beating out a new order for the benefit of the masses. The idea seems to be 'down with everything and up with you know what.'

The Wild Man of the flight who is given to nocturnal wanderings around the washroom in search of beauty, last week added to his store of cosmetics a stick of lip salve. Kay definitely refused to act as a research medium.

Taffy Thomas, the Welsh peasant, phonologist and Olympiad is endeavouring to find time from his many flight duties in order to confirm the extent of his vocal metamorphosis. I wonder if he suffered from the business end of those Mount Allison football boots on his last visit to Sackville.

I would like to know who eventually availed himself of Peewee Elliot's stupendous offer of a fountain pen. Peewee—Philanthropist.

Seen last week—'Pop' Howe moving heaven and the best part of earth, to eradicate his name from the sailing list. So, you don't want to go home Pop?

Pop and Frank have found a new use for 'Black Magic' boxes. Pop can't sleep at weekends until half an hour after the departure of the last train from Halifax.

Cheers and a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

### WHISPERS

We hear of a 24 year old Sgt. who brings his 14 year old daughter to the Sgt. Mess Socials.

The M. T. Section arranged a celebration dinner. Did they have it???

Latest Gen!!! The Bay of Fundy to be renamed Hudson Bay.

We understand that Kaiser the ship-building genius has now received the plans for THE BOAT.

Heavy Rock (Y)s should not be allowed on the ice.

Who was the Airman who saluted a corny conifer at East Camp, and who put the said conifer on the flag staff???

## A Very Merry Christmas



## QUEER CHARACTER

I saw him for the first time at about a quarter past eight one morning. His brow was furrowed; his face haggard and unshaven. He gave me a tense look as he passed, but I had the feeling that he had not really seen me. A vague sense assailed me that here was something out of the ordinary, but it was not until he had shuffled out of sight into the fog, muttering as he went, that I realised what it was.—Whereas it would soon have been the normal hour for the workers of the world to walk jauntily down the road to their daily tasks, he was going in the other direction.

I saw him again later that evening. He still wore a harrowed look; was still muttering to himself. I chanced to overhear a remark addressed to him concerning the news, and his toneless reply "I wouldn't know: I have only just got up." Odd, I thought that he should choose to be in bed, while the normal populace is up and doing. But I did not tax him on the subject.

The third time I came into contact with him was in the middle of the afternoon of the next day. I happened to look into the dining room, and there he was, in solitary state, idly toying with a dog biscuit. His movements were listless; his eye glassy. My curiosity, by now, was thoroughly aroused. Why is it, I asked myself that he should behave in such an unusual way? Why does he work while others sleep? Sleep while others eat? Eat while others work? Is he just eccentric? Or has he some secret sorrow which so weighs him down that he has no cognizance of night or day or time at all?

While I was thus musing, he abstractedly tossed his biscuit onto the floor, and shambled out. Unable to contain myself any longer I accosted him at the door and begged him to tell me the sad truth; to confirm my surmise. "No," he replied wearily "It is none of these things. Would that I could be normal, but I cannot. I am an Operations Room Controller."





Kitty Hawk goes into a dive!

**A LETTER FROM "POP"**

Box 43. Thorburn, N. S.  
November, 1942

Editor,  
P. G. Magazine,  
Debert, N. S.

Sir:

I have just received the October issue of P. G. and believe me I have read it from cover to cover. It is a fine magazine, and I appreciate the kindness of Peewee for sending me one.

If it was not for Peewee I should be out of touch with the boys, for (shame on them) it appears that since I left the 'Hut' at New Glasgow, the lads have forgotten myself and the Missus. Oh well I know the attractions of Pictou County, and the boys can hardly find time to visit me here at Thorburn.

I know that Peewee's heart is in the States now, and rumour has it that he is getting his American Citizens papers. Naughty Peewee. I wonder if Jock M. has his teeth yet? and whether all is well once more at Trenton? Is it a wedding this time Jock? Did Paddy Mitchell get elected Mayor of Abercrombie? or did Johnnie Vince beat him out at the Polls? How are Jock Duffus, Jock Brant, Sid White, Frank Brown and all the lads? How are W.O.'s Smith and Fraser? I liked the cartoon of Paddy Pettigrew. How's Fraser Street Paddy? I would liked to have seen Tony Locke dressed as a girl, in "Roll on the Boat," also Wimpey and the gang; by all accounts it was a good show.

I should like to see you all again, but I rather think, that is now out of the question. So lads, Nellie, John and I want to wish you all a very merry Christmas and the very best to you all, is the wish of an 'old Country' man to his friends. I also hope that all of you anxious to get home, that the boat will be here soon and that you will be in good old Blighty before long. You are all welcome, to stay with us any time.

Well Cherio lads, have a pint for the old Man.

Your old friends

DICK and NELLIE CHOLMONDELEY

**AN APPEAL**

Many of you will remember Bob Mitchell and the unfortunate circumstances in which he suffered a serious injury during a game of Rugby against the Anzacs last season.

Bob is at present in the Royal Neurological Hospital Montreal, and likely to remain there for some considerable time. This is an appeal, to any of you chaps likely to be in Montreal at any time, for you to call in and have a few words with him. He will be more than pleased to see anybody from Debert, so just make a special point of this.

## CHOIR CONCERT

There will be a Choir concert in St. John's Church, Truro. Admission 25c in aid of the R.A.F. Benevolent Fund, on Dec. 21.

## QUIZZ (Answers)

- |        |        |             |
|--------|--------|-------------|
| 1. (C) | 5. (C) | 9. A.B.C.   |
| 2. (C) | 6. (C) | 10. (A)     |
| 3. (A) | 7. (B) | 11. (B)     |
| 4. (B) | 8. (C) | 12. (B) (C) |
|        |        | 13. (C)     |



Courtesy C. N. R.

Matapedia Valley



**Suggestion for 'Old Debertian' Tie.**



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