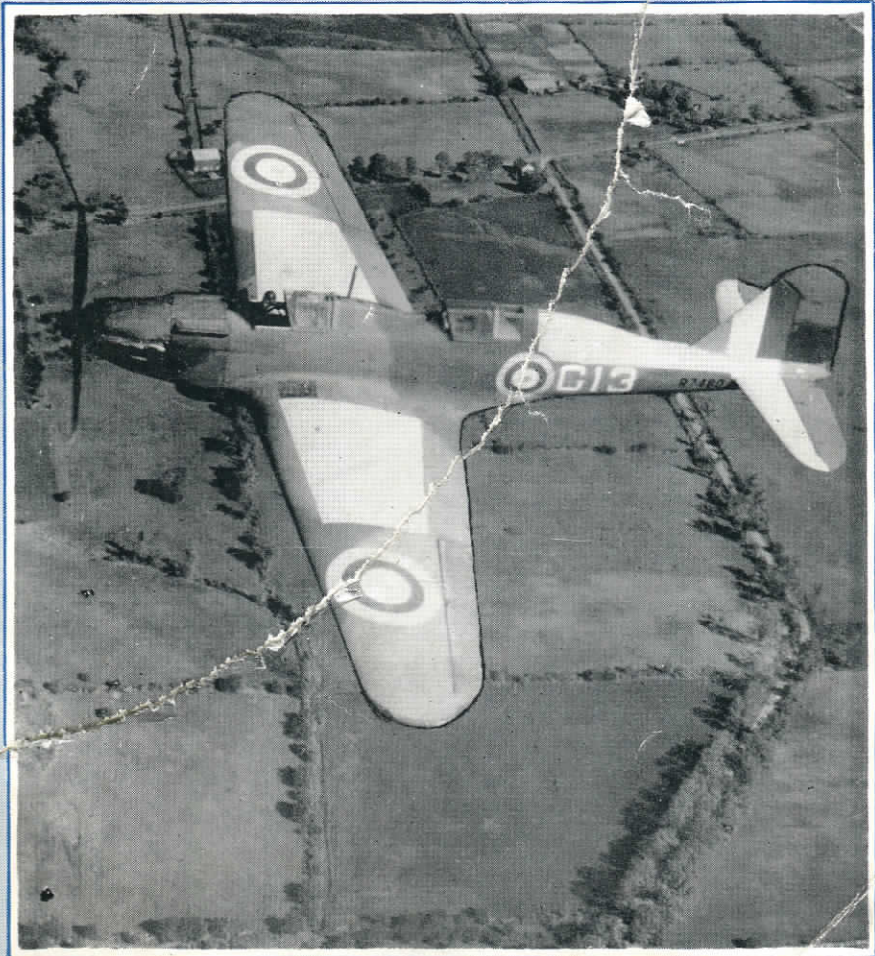




WINGS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE R.A.F. PICTON



No. 8 - Feb. 1942

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THERE IS SOME PLACE
LIKE HOME!



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"A GOOD PLACE TO EAT"



If England was what England seems,
An' not the England of our dreams,
But only putty, brass, an' paint,
'Ow quick we'd chuck 'er! But she ain't.

—Kipling

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School, Picton



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But iron sacrifice of Body, Will, and Soul.

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Contents of February Issue - -

	PAGE
WANDERINGS BY CANOE (by L. Wheatley) - - -	4
IN PASSING (by P.J.E.) - - - - -	8
BROWNING (by Rose) - - - - -	9
YOUR ATTENTION IS DIRECTED (C.H.K.) - - -	11
THE THINKER (by F.E.B.F.) - - - - -	12
ROUEN (by Eagles) - - - - -	15
THE KNITTING BEE (by F.S.) - - - - -	17
APART FROM ALL THAT (Trinculo) - - - -	18
STATION HERALDRY (by W.S.) - - - - -	21
NEW PHOTOGRAPHY (George C. Ward) - - -	22
THE TEA SWINDLER (by Alf. Ball) - - - -	26
THE GAS STOVE (by E. Raeder) - - - - -	27
ROUNABOUT (by Various Contributors) - - -	32
ALL I ASK (by Smale) - - - - -	33
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR - - - - -	43
THE MINIATURE RIFLE CLUB (by T.E.) - - -	45
HOT AIRS (by F. Rigby) - - - - -	47

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WINGS

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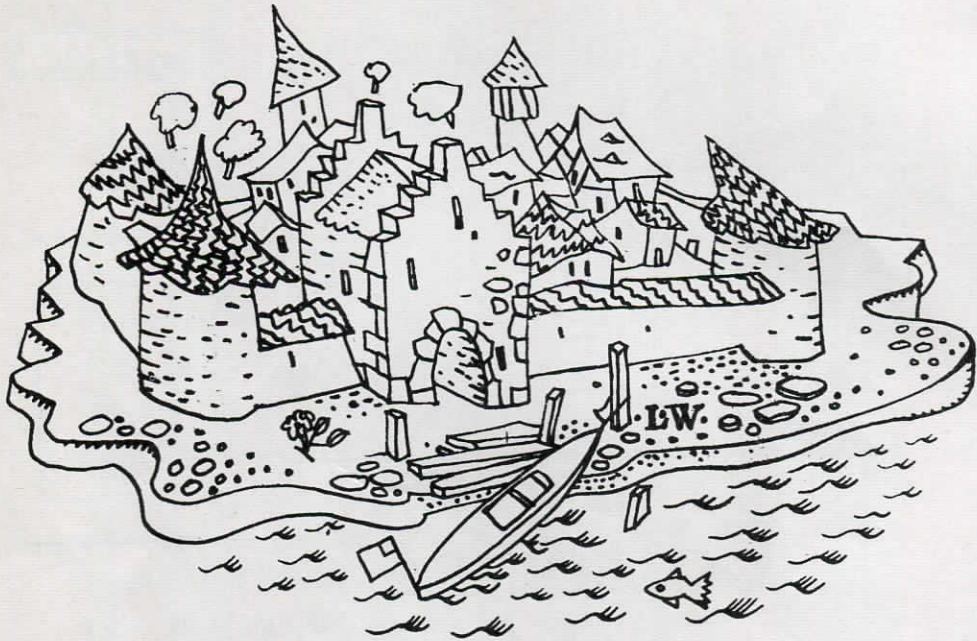


WE regret that for the future we are unable to sell the magazine to the general public, service personnel are however, permitted to send it to their friends and relations. With your co-operation, it will still be possible to maintain the same standard as in the past, but to do this, it is necessary for all members of the camp to see that their friends and relations continue to receive their copies. It would greatly facilitate matters if those of you who wish to have copies sent out, would hand your names to any member of the Magazine Committee who will then arrange for their dispatch. The future of the magazine is entirely in your hands, and your support will enable us to continue to provide entertainment for ourselves, and an account of our activities for the folks at home.

J. Mason Knot writes:

It ain't the guns nor armament,
Nor funds that they can pay,
But the close co-operation,
That makes them win the day.

It ain't the individual,
Nor the army as a whole,
But the everlasting teamwork,
Of every bloomin' soul.



Wanderings by Canoe

IT was in the Summer of 1932 that I first arrived in Hamburg by tramp steamer from London. The rising strength of the Nazis had not yet attained sufficient power to enable it to assume control of the country—nor was it destined to do so in the forthcoming elections. Hamburg was alive with rioting and disorder some seventy people being killed in a suburb the evening of my arrival.

Large concentrations of idle merchant ships in Bremen, Cuxhaven and Hamburg, and the dirty desolate buildings, block of empty flats, untenanted offices and shops of Berlin bore testimony to the years of economic depression Germany had experienced. A state of martial law had been proclaimed in the capital where political slogans and emblems were chalked on every wall and pavement; broken windows, bullet scarred buildings and barricaded streets were evidence of grim disturbances. The mad political fever sweeping the country did not pass by the quiet and peaceful waterside villages of the pleasing land of lakes and rivers around Berlin. After a day's fine canoeing, I would spend an evening in some friendly rowing club, Kanu Verband, or Gasthaus in Mecklenburg and Brandenburg. Over bowls of cold chocolate soup, well cooked schnitzel and mugs of light beer conversation would turn inevitably sooner or later to the pending elections. Being both ignorant of politics and mindful of my freedom I refused to do more than compliment the boasting, blustering, bullying Brownshirts on their excellent taste in copying their uniform, so arrogantly worn, from their good friends the French! To put the badge of party and uniform of membership on to the simple and humble peasants transformed them at once into insufferable tyrants and domineering brutes, a change of habits seeming to occur simultaneously with their change of habit.

From Roland's Brandenburg and Frederick's Potsdam, from Durer's Nuremberg to Beethoven's Bonn and the Eisenach of Bach, in Bavarian village and Frankonian town, those people not yet drugged by promises and deafened by boasts were asking—"And what if this man Hitler should come to power? God help Germany and Europe!"

How well in tune with Great Frederick's flute might be the words and actions of his imitator, yet how out of time with Potsdam's placid peaceful beauty the storming of brownshirts and waving of swastikas in that Imperial City basking in the reflected glories of former splendour.

To canoe down the Saar and through the wine country of the Moselle, the Neckar, Main and Rhine, past waterside mediaeval walled villages, of comical, conical towers, noble gateways, of sculptured Saints by Riemenschneider and churches by Neumann, through Dettlebach of the potent wine and delectable muckazenen by Kitzengen, Sulzfeld, Marktbreit, and ecclesiastical Wurutzburg, all apparently so little changed since Duer journeyed this way to the Netherlands four hundred years before me; thus did I meet German people of all classes and creed and political belief. Charming, friendly and hospitable as they almost invariably were, I ever felt, as all subsequent visits to their country, that I was an alien on enemy territory.

After the madness of the political strife of Germany it was a relief to canoe through complacent France down the slow moving sombre Saône and mighty rushing Rhône. How superb was the view of the ramparts of Avignon as seen from a sudden turn in the river! To negotiate the rapids by Rocquemoire, the fast fierce current by Pont St. Esprit, to paddle gently along the cypress Canal du Midi by the Mediterranean and onto the Pyrenees was, however, to experience canoeing very different from that known in Germany, where journeying by water was a popular and accepted mode of travel.

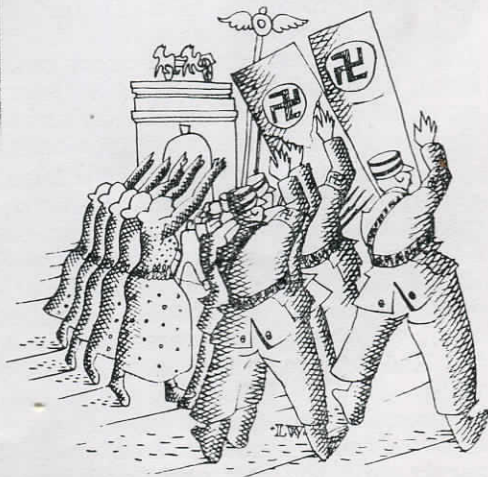
Some three years were to elapse before I was again to hear the familiar "Grusse Gott" greeting of Bavaria, three years in which so many more people had become caught up in surging torrent of Nazism. Years in which Hitler had already threatened the security of thousands of lives in Europe. Years of preparation, scheming, planning and producing. In retracing my watermarks through many a familiar village and town I observed little apparent change in the manner of the people save for the monotonous "Heil Hitler" form of greeting. The peasants plodded their rural ways as before, and it was naturally in the cities that superficial changes could the more easily be detected. A dangerous enthusiasm, a forced smartness, a sinister reluctance to mention by name the name of any leader but Hitler, and the changed names of the Streets and Squares all were signs and portents of a new regime.

But it was a few months later, in the Spring of 1936, that I was to experience more fully the glamour, glare and glitter that Nazism portrayed to the crowds gathered in Berlin for the celebration of May Day. I was returning from a visit to the Soviet Union by way of Warsaw and Berlin and chanced to be in the German Capital for the Labour Day demonstration. In Moscow I had been deeply impressed by the calm reverence the people expressed in their daily patient queues waiting round the Red Square to file past the embalmed remains of Lenin beneath the walls of the Kremlin. The people's respect for Lenin was now become their religion though Ikons were still quietly worshipped in some of the dwelling houses I entered. Incidentally it was in Moscow that surely only the tact and good humour of an aristocratic and charming

English Lady saved me from the grim hands of the Ogpu! I was at a reception and, missing her name on introduction, was chatting to one who, to my relief, spoke English fluently. I had been that day to visit an experimental penal settlement at Bolshevo and, probably warmed by vodka and the excitement of the evening was criticising the system in no uncertain manner. I was to realise later that my patient and tolerant listener was Madame Litvinov, the English born wife of the distinguished diplomat. I am for ever grateful for her forbearance. In the various cities of the U.S.S.R. that I visited I was much impressed by the quality of all manner of equipment provided for the Army and the splendid facilities for recreation and education. I had a quiet faith in this Red Army. The stoical stillness of the bayoneted soldiers around Lenin's tomb was as impressive and well disciplined as those other guards of opposing beliefs, black uniformed S.S. men mounting guard over the graves of the early Nazis in Munich.

Having noticed the experimental achievements of Russia, the superficial brightness of pageantry in Berlin on May Day was to be but impressionable and not impressive. The frantic heartiness of the people, their brittle excitement and gaiety, streets and squares reddened with banners and garlanded with flowers, created an effect brilliant and gaudy as a music hall. The regimented members of the Labour Corps with shouldered shining spades, the dull expressionless countenances of the troops and the early members of the Hitler Youth Organization all already blinded by promise and drugged by lies, passed by me as they marched down the Unter Den Linden. Simply dressed with right arm raised curiously in a manner so inimitably his own came Hitler in an open car to the Lustgarten. I was particularly fortunate in having a permit enabling me to see and hear the Party Speakers; the glib Goebbels, gorgeous Goering and fanatical Fuhrer. Their words of promise and boasts of achievement carried threats and were sinister and menacing. The crowds cheered. At night the glaring torch light procession, the wild gaiety and hysterical heartiness in the Potsdamer Platz, the frenzied enthusiasm of the mobs was for what? Few among them dared still to ask.

But a few months later came the Olympic Games in Berlin. A glorious athletic festival marred by propaganda and regimentation, ruined for competitors and spectators alike by the distortion of healthy patriotism into a frantic manifestation of nationalism. I escaped from the glare of the city to the rugged grandeur of the Bavarian Alps to stay for some days with a schoolmaster of a delightful village above the Hintersee. Admirable fellow though my host was—he proved a splendid walker, climber, talker and an accomplished musician—throughout my stay in his charming house I had no doubt that despite his culture and intelligence so blind was his faith and fanatical his belief he would have had no hesitation in shooting his guest had his Fuhrer so ordered him. Maybe our close proximity to Bedchtesgarden af-

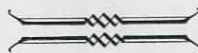


fecting his powers of reasoning and caused the expression of awe to appear at mention of Hitler's name. It were generous to think so. But perhaps the most amazing manifestation of Nazi fervour I was to experience occurred the following year.

One night as I was resting in the Stubaital, perhaps the loveliest of all Tyrolean villages, I looked up to see a representation of a huge swastika suspended, as it appeared, in the sky. I was as amazed as I was relieved the following morning to learn that this was no phenomenon of nature but was produced by Nazi demonstrators who, forbidden to display their symbol in the town of Innsbruck below; illuminated beacons on the mountain sides in profession of their belief. Dolfuss had been murdered and Schuschnig ruled his troubled country uncertainly and was endeavoring pathetically to suppress the activities of the followers of the Austrian Corporal. The swift and final tragedy of Austria was to move to its inevitable climax in but a few more months.

Some weeks later I was wandering by car and canoe through careless France, indifferent Switzerland and insolent Italy. Leaving the car in Venice I went on by water to Yugo Slavia to canoe down the Dalmatian coast and sail among the many lovely islands. The modern pieces of sculpture by the great Slav Metkovic are perfectly conceived and tower above the narrow streets and the ruined splendour of Diocletian's Palace at Split. Curiously, surely, sullen, pro-Nazi Croats and Slavs would frequently mob my frail craft in eager inquisitiveness while well armed soldiers examined my papers and probed me with questions—with no knowledge of Croatian, hesitant Italian and limited German I had many anxious and amusing moments. One particularly anti-British Captain of a merchant ship on one occasion caused me to spend an extremely hot and uncomfortable afternoon in the gendarmerie at Split before I was allowed to leave. But to arrive at any Yugo Slavian town or village after leaving Zara, an Italian possession as I did and travel down the coast was to invite suspicion from the authorities. The most amusing example I saw of the smooth working of the much advertised Axis was the management of the admirable restaurant at this Italian port run by a fat German proprietor and his Italian hausfrau.

And so again to Munich on my return journey to drive along the new autobahn cut straight through the forest, admirably designed and so easily adapted for military purposes, to Frankfurt to visit the Graef Zeppelin and to enjoy a beautiful production of a mediaeval play in the Marktplatz. And from Cologne to busy Paris, less boisterous and gay than I had known it a few months earlier when it had been so cheerfully illuminated by the visit of the Royal Family. But Paris that year was very different from the sombre sober, shuttered Paris I was next to see on the eve of war. Now France was mobilizing with frantic despair as I drove rapidly from Provence to the coast to be forced to leave car and canoe on the quayside at Dieppe. But a few days later Poland was invaded and we were at war with Germany.



In Passing

If Winter Comes

A biting frost whose icy fingers seek
To paralyze the flesh and dull the mind,
The blinding snow and leafless trees so
bleak,

If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

A snow-glazed road, a bend, a narrow
squeak.

Or worse perhaps, your upturned car they
find,

While you, poor fish, a lift for home must
seek.

If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

The frost, a thaw too bad! the pipes all leak
With bits of rags the gaping holes you bind,
The plumber says the systems quite unique,
If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

When summer's here, the heat will reach its
peak,

You seek the shade, and find the shadows
kind,

Mosquitoes from a nearby swamp or creek
Convince you that the winters' much
maligned.

Collective Nouns

An insignificance of P/O's,
A "Flutter" of Flying Officers,
A Hysteria of F/Lts.,
A Satisfaction of S/Ldrs.
A Worry of Wing/Cmdrs.

An Accretion of A.C.'s.
A Nausea of UT/OBS.,
A Furiosity of Corporals,
A Stagnation of Sergeants,
A Frustration of F/Sgts.,
A Wariness of W/O's.

Per Verse

When into my room I creep,
Nightmares keep my eyes from
sleep,
Numbers ringing in my head,
Letters dancing round my bed.

O.O.,N.C.O., i/c,
A.F.S. and A.R.P.
295 and 252,
A.N.S. and O.T.U.

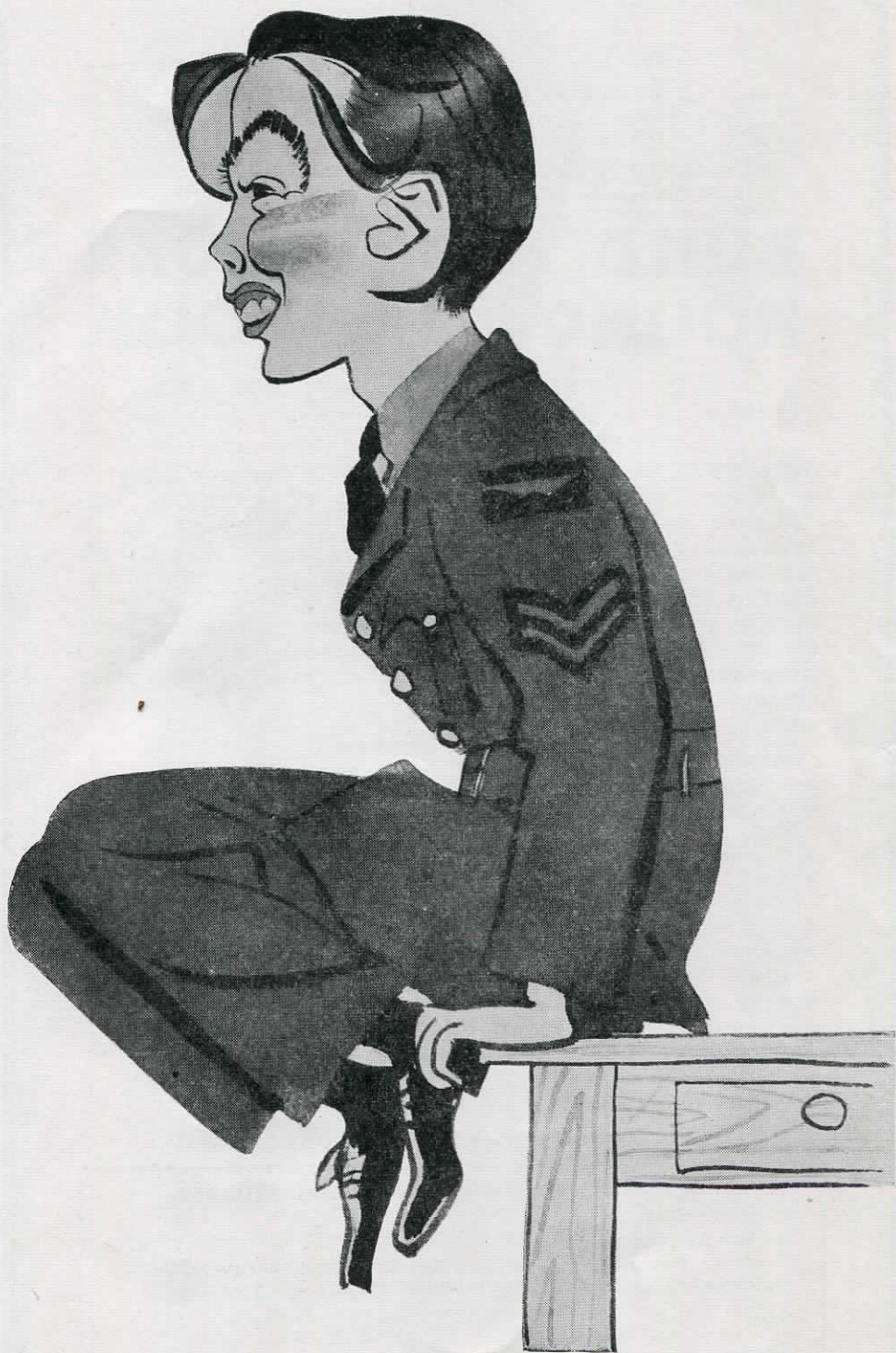
F/O., M.O., round they go,
F.N., B.P., V.G.O.
A.M.O. and G.I.S.,
Leave my muddled brain u/s.

K.R.R.s and 664
Dancing on my bedroom floor,
S.M.O. and F.F.I.
Utter this unearthly cry.

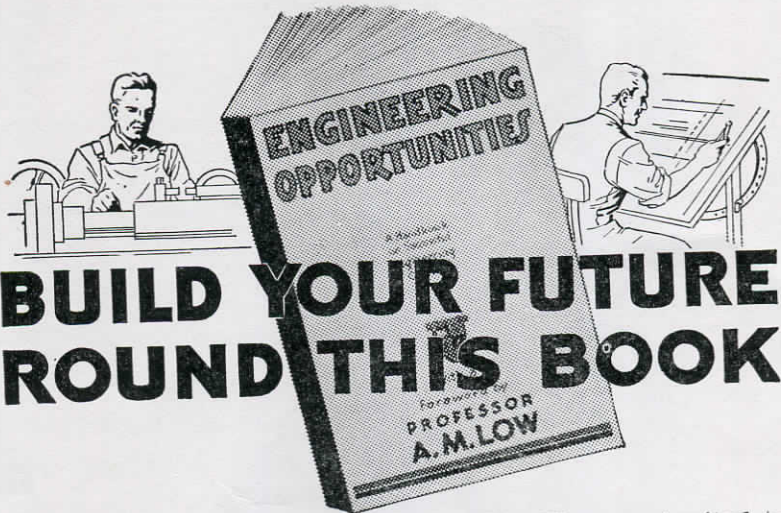
A.M.L. for Obs/ut,
R.A.F.V.R., "G.D."
Ach. and C.S.C.
Wake up feeling N.B.G.

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Your Attention is Directed - - -

Now some must fight, and some must write
To help to win the war,
But those I hate are those who wait,
For me to break the law—
“Your attention is directed

Much time I waste, with brush and paste,
Amending up to date;
Or adding clause to changing laws
Myself to educate—
“Your attention is directed

I go to bed with aching head,
Whilst orders bow me down;
Will good intent make them relent
Or do I earn a “brown”?
“Your attention is directed

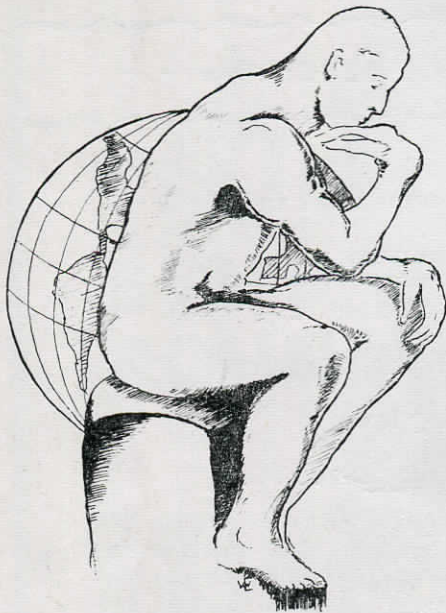
It mattered not the slightest jot
That boots were needed **now**;
I had not read K.R., they said,
No issue they'd allow!
“Your attention is directed

The form came back—I'd signed in black
Instead of using red;
A mere delay of one more day;
Imagine what I said!
“Your attention is directed

The ration meat, unfit to eat
Was walking off alone;
But I had not the M.O. got—
I'd “sentenced” it alone.
“Your attention is directed

But when, indeed, one is in need
Of help, clear and concise,
You'll look in vain and won't obtain
A word of sound advice.
“Your attention is directed

The guide that's best, and stands the test,
Is judgment, born of years:
For they are fools who worship rules—
And weep their midnight tears.
“Your attention is directed.



The Thinker

ONCE more, with the flare up of war in the Far East and the loss of Hong Kong, the old cry has gone up—"It's the 'old school tie' brigade, that fuddled, muddled, meddling, crowd who govern us." What is this old school tie, the butt of the English system of education? Is it just a gaily colored bit of neckwear denoting membership of some order, or merely a joke about which the Western Brothers wrote a song? Yes, that was it, "egg, green and egg! Or, is it just a phrase coined by some critic in the dim distant past, which has ever since been bandied about by the cliché addicts, who never could think for themselves!

"All the problems of the world could be easily solved if people would only think."

Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler

The public schools were the forerunners of the Grammar school and secondary schools. All have Matriculation and Higher School Certificate as their standard of education. They were founded in many cases long before America had ever been discovered. Yet, the products of the New World system of education make the same blunders and mistakes as the old. The trend of events, culminating in the tragedy of Pearl Harbour, show that. The New World has no schools with their roots sunk far in history from which to draw its governing body, and on which to lay the blame. But, whenever the government is elected the same type of governing body always seems to emerge.

Every member of the community has had some sort of education, and if the members cannot elect a governing body, and cannot see when trouble is coming, the blame does not lie only at the door of the leaders. The fault rests with those who put them in power, and the lackadaisical who let them get there. Surely there is some explanation for this policy of "laissez faire" followed by the democracies. Is it the education the leaders have received, which turns them into nothing but polite little gentlemen, or the education everyone has received, which causes us to sit back and do nothing.

Different creeds and different countries use education for different purposes. The German system has superficially produced a far more disciplined nation. The German people are educated to fight and obey implicitly the orders of the unscrupulous. Whereas the English speaking countries use schools for a different end; not solely to serve state, but to serve the individual, and enable him to get a job. The end in view being ability to earn one's living; in Canada this seems even more stressed than in England. Education is the first tentative step on the ladder of position and power.

Education, however, does not always depend on book learning, but the higher the ambition or objective, the more book learning is necessary. The eaglet is taught to fly by being pushed from the eyrie—a very practical method; anyway poor bird it could not understand the theory of flight. The apprentice receives his education at the hands of the master craftsman. The student learns from his text books and his tutor. The majority of education we receive at school is book learning; such as Algebra and Latin, which is of little use in later life to most of us. Unfortunately, the exam counts, not the subjects; a man's potential clerical or executive ability is first judged by the written examination which he has passed.

Here lies the essence of the trouble. The test of knowledge is all too frequently a written exam based on book learning; this is so in Civil Service and other competitive exams. Originality is frowned upon as frivolous; the examiner is probably a conservative intellectual with a morbid fear of setting a dangerous precedent, so, the chances of a man with new ideas getting in are stifled at birth. That is probably the best thing that ever happens to the candidate. He can count himself lucky he has been ploughed. He will be able to enjoy life, and make double the civil service income in a nice quiet advertising agency.

Some men by their shrewd skill and judgment have been successful in spite of very little education. La Guardia and Ernest Bevin are two well-known examples. The outstanding example resides in Europe. Hitler's knowledge of human nature and how to handle men has served him well, and his application of that knowledge has shaken the world.

There is a tendency for those who have little education to value it too highly. The intellectual is often worshipped by those who do not understand him — as if anyone ever could understand a walking encyclopedia; that would be a nightmare best confined to a Walt Disney fantasy. Knowledge gives power, because, to control it is necessary to understand, if education fails that is not always the fault of the system, but the fault of the mind. A mind may still pass exams but be incapable of applying a grain of commonsense or perception to the job on hand; there, we have one type of intellectual mind. The owner of that mind is the black sheep of all education systems, he either sets up as a leader of thought for those who will follow him, or has a knack for obtaining government work in places where intellect is useful, but where his lack of understanding may lose a business, an island or a country. Like Koko, the public executioner in "The Mikado," we all "have a little list, and they'll none of 'em be missed."

Democracy has not given us quite what we wanted, and now the cry is always heard that things must be different after the war. They will be; but not on the strength of sloppy, ambiguous phrases like that. It is as empty headed a cliché as "the land fit for heroes to live in," which was to be built after the last war. There may, God forbid, be a school of thoughtlessness which reasons — "democracy is no good as a form of government, it has caused too many wars, too much poverty, so sack it. Let's have one man to lead, a virtual dictator." Thyssen, the German industrialist and his associates backed Hitler. Nearly every industrial country is run by business men and capitalists, and the British Isles is industrial. Of course Hitler and Mussolini stand as shining examples of the devilment of the system. Nevertheless, we had Cromwell, and these days Stalin is not so unpopular as he used to be. Although to some it may seem impossible, such a school of thought could gain ground.

Dictatorship is retrogressive, it leads us back to the Dark Ages. England has passed through the despotic era of the Tudor kings; of the Stuarts who tried to retain the powers of their ancestors. The climax of that struggle for freedom culminated with Oliver Cromwell, the Protector, our one and only dictator. Luckily he had a conscience and no grudge against humanity.

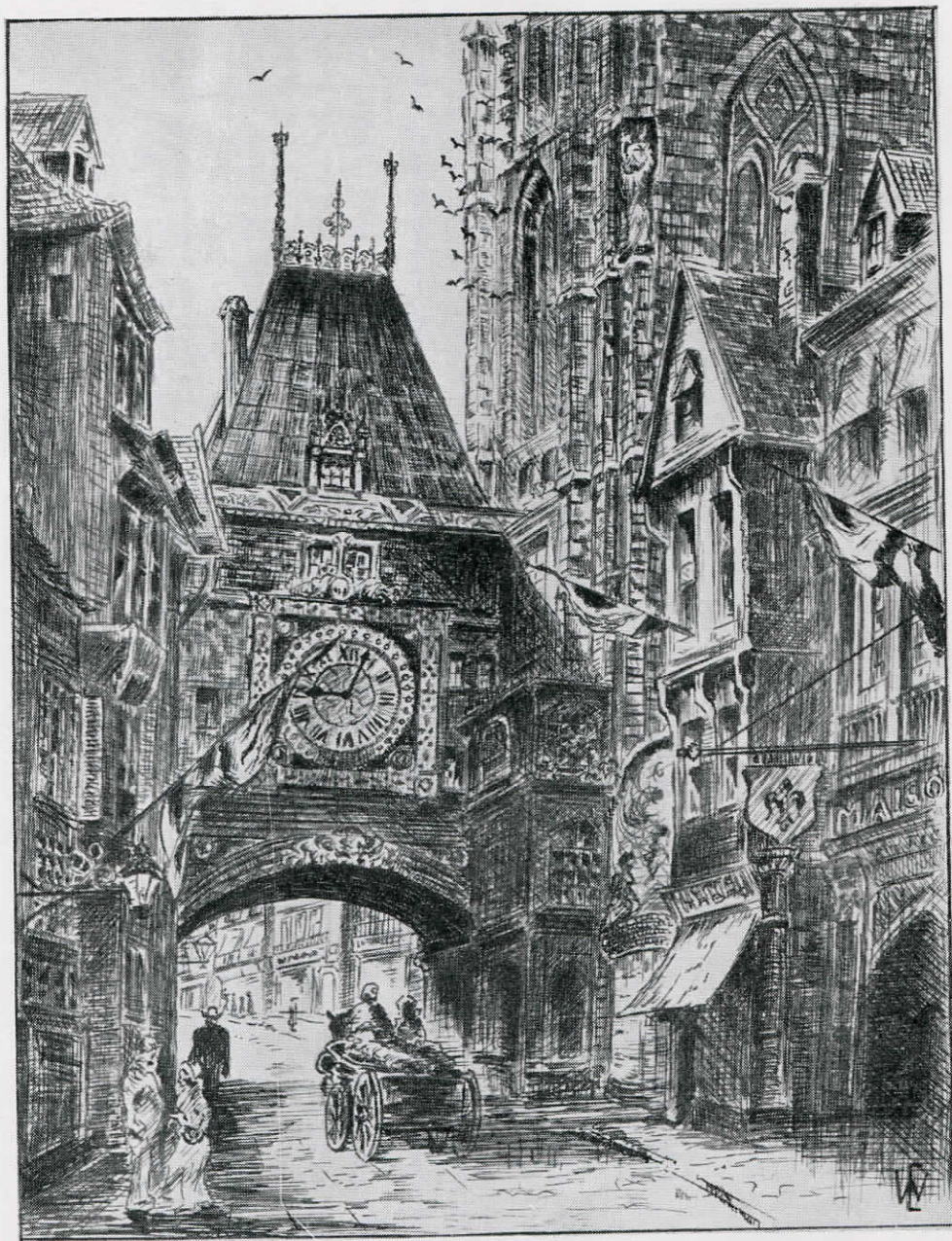
A leader must be strong and experienced, but not a dictator. A strong unbiased team must assist him. We have the leader, but the team has weak members. There are many who say "Churchill will not do after this war." Why, I don't know. In a country where the people elect their representatives at the polling booths, everyone should learn to recognize where trouble lies. Whether it be a dangerous creed, or a dangerous leader. We can do that by seeing the fraud for what it is, but to see, to understand we must have knowledge, we must educate ourselves and think for ourselves. We laughed at Churchill, Wells and Douglas Reed. We must learn at what to laugh, to sift sense from nonsense, fact from fiction, but to do that knowledge is needed. How else can we understand? That the nation has never understood is certain, if they had, the rush of events stretching from 1918 to 1939 would not have run their course; the hey-day of the post-war period; the Great Strike; the slump and the steady march of crises towards this war.

"The fault, dear Brutus, lies not in the stars, but in ourselves."

In this mechanized age the very machinery which seems to be destroying us, gives us the opportunity to acquire knowledge. The higher living standard, the higher efficiency of machinery will give more time for leisure; the leisure in which the Victorians basked. Unlike them we must not sleep, stagnate, and grow narrow minded. The spare time we have should be used to gain the knowledge necessary to take an interest in our own life and that of the nation. To gain that knowledge a high standard of education is not necessary. There is plenty of spare time to read, to listen to talks on the wireless, to discuss and debate. There is plenty to read, there are the papers, Penguin books and other paper backed books, novels and magazines, the Readers' Digest, Picture Post and Time; the literature is legion, and sometimes lewd, but I am not advocating the latter. I am advocating material from which we can learn about our own country and other countries, instead of letting things slide and someone else do the thinking. A broader outlook and more diverse opinion will develop. Slowly knowledge will be gained, and eventually with that knowledge comes the power to think for ourselves and understand.

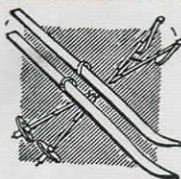
Someone must be at the top as the leader, but let us eschew men with lack of experience, and the narrow-minded views of the bigots who have grown up in a steely circle where ideas need armour piercing qualities to get through, and where originality is despised. That brigade is not peculiar to the English education system, it is found throughout the world. It is not "the old school tie" on which cliché addicts harp, but the **old school**; those who cannot think for themselves, who cannot see beyond their noses, who fear criticism which shows them for what they are, whose ages range through the seven ages of man, they need not be physically old, but they are mentally decrepit. They wrap up their machinations in a conspiracy of silence, and if necessary use every form of force and coercion open to them to preserve themselves from sound criticism and comment. They are those who would wag their heads knowingly and tell us that one swallow does not make a summer.

[Continued on Page 17]



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The Knitting Bee

ON November 12, 1941, Mrs. Keith asked all R.A.F. officers' wives to tea to discuss what we could do as our own war effort here: the majority of wives were present, and it was finally decided that we should knit, as none of us seemed to think much of our own sewing abilities. Then came the big question—which deserving cause were our needles to click for! Since the R.A.F. have been in Picton, the I.O.D.E. and the Red Cross have done their best—and very ably too—to entertain us, so we decided to knit alternate months for these two deserving institutions.

Our wool is given to us free and consists of pale blue and pink for clothes for children in Britain and all the necessary colors for the services and hospitals. The garments when complete are divided between the Red Cross and the I.O.D.E., who send them wherever there is the greatest need. We pay an entrance fee of 50 cents and then 15 cents weekly, which is likewise divided between the two institutions. Meetings are held once a week in the houses of those wives who are lucky enough to have a room capable of seating 21 women armed with knitting needles or crochet hooks. So far this has been possible at the homes of Mrs. Keith, Mrs. Lowe-Holmes, Mrs. Avent, Mrs. Lang, Mrs. Bergin, Mrs. Holland-Martin and Lady Seton.

At the Red Cross display on January 17th, we were able to send twenty-five completed garments so the bees have not done too badly when one takes into consideration the Christmas and New Year festivities which naturally slowed down the knit one, purl one. We are, however, hard at it again and we hope to continue enlarging the circle as more wives come out.

V

The Thinker (Continued)

But what is the good of the first swallow skimming through the April afternoon if it cannot raise a vaunted hope or encourage us to defy what is gloomy and dull!

Every opinion or idea should be open to criticism and discussion, and if given honestly and openly, without ulterior motive, it can stand up to criticism without resort to force; if criticism proves it wrong, so much the better, it is to be hoped the critic will be constructive and put forward another idea, until the final suggestion is accepted by the majority. Once we have the ability to understand and a critical and common-sense line of thought, then we might wing away to seek the truth, discern the truth, and drag out the naked truth into the light of day.

Surely we should have passed the era when "little boys should be seen and not heard"; the age of bloomers; the age of tight lacing, both of mind and body. We have to live on this earth so we should do well in the future to learn how to take an intelligent interest in its management.

APART FROM ALL THAT

Extracts From Official Correspondence

(SIGNALS)

From: RAF Station Little Thundercloud.
To: A.F.H.Q.
15.2.42.

F/O Sea sick stop request relief stop
duties Station Sick Quarters.

From: A.F.H.Q.
To: R.A.F. Station, Little Thundercloud
15.2.42.

F/Lt. Cock arriving 16.2.42 duty Sta-
tion Sick Quarters.

From: R.A.F. Station Little Thundercloud.
To: A.F.H.Q.
16.2.42.

Cock not - repeat not - arrived stop Sea
still sick - repeat sick - stop - work stop-
ped - S.S.Q. - stop - where is Cock.

From: A.F.H.Q.
To: R.A.F. Station Little Thundercloud.
16.2.42.

Cock stopped - repeat stopped - bad
weather - stop - advise when Sea expected
fit stop - why is Sea sick - stop advise.

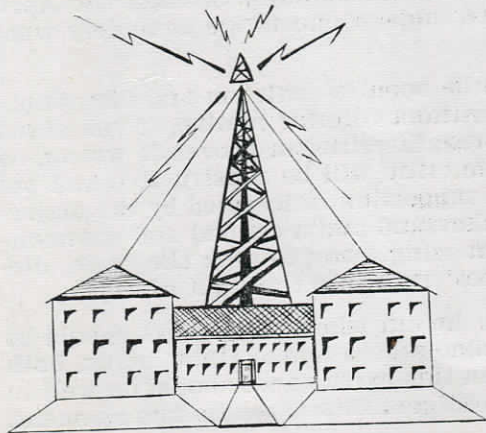
From: R.A.F. Station Little Thundercloud.
To: A.F.H.Q.
17.2.42.

Sea sick no longer - stop - stop sending
Cock - repeat - stop sending Cock.

Extract from D.R.O.'s R.A.F. Station Little
Thundercloud.

F/Lt. Crypt (Signals Officer) posted
with effect from 18.2.42.

Authority A.F.H.Q.



Which reminds me of the story of the
two chorus ladies standing chatting in the
wings. Said the first lady with warmth:
"So I said that it may be the only place
it doesn't show, but it's a hell of a place
to be vaccinated."

Passed to the M.O. for action please.

Conversation With Pilot Officer Awkward

Pilot Officer Awkward—I say
Long Suffering Brother Officer—Well.

P.O.A.—This rubber shortage.

L.S.B.O.—What about it?

P.O.A.—Extremely disconcerting.

L.S.B.O.—Well so what?

P.O.A.—Take my girl friend.

L.S.B.O.—I have no desire to take your girl
friend anywhere.

P.O.A.—Affects her very considerably.

L.S.B.O.—I think perhaps we should change
the subject.

P.O.A.—Not at all—her em bon point.

L.S.B.O.—Her what?

P.O.A.—Besides, how will they keep up?

L.S.B.O.—How will what keep up?

P.O.A.—They are sort of fastened—on you
know.

L.S.B.O.—Look here, what the devil are you
talking about?

P.O.A.—Stockings of course.

L.S.B.O.—I don't get it.

P.O.A.—Fastened on to it and if she doesn't
have one, I mean to say.

L.S.B.O.—(To Mess Steward weakly) Bring
me a large whisky.

P.O.A.—They simply must produce a sub-
stitute for . . .

L.S.B.O.—(Gulping whisky) Now—let's get
this straight.

P.O.A.—I take an extremely dim view.

L.S.B.O.—Now let's start again—you said
rubber shortage.

P.O.A.—Quite right — Creates a situation
that . . .

L.S.B.O.—Shut up — what the deuce has
this got to do with your girl friend's
stockings.

P.O.A.—Foundation garments.

L.S.B.O.—What !!!

P.O.A.—You know, girdles and all that sort
of nonsense.

L.S.B.O.—Well alright, so what?

P.O.A.—What will she do without it—if they
run short?

L.S.B.O.—Stick out in places, what the hell.

P.O.A.—And what about the stockings?

L.S.B.O.—They'll fall down and you can pull
'em up, go away and leave me alone and
stop nattering . . . (P.O.A. departs dis-
consolately)

Our Adopted Film Star

You might like to know that the consensus of opinion has fallen upon Paulette Goddard. It is hoped that our next issue will contain a message from and a photo of the charming lady of our choice.



A State of Mind

Oh sound the drums, let cannons roar,
 Draw swords and let us charge,
 Fire salvoes broadside at point blank,
 That gun sounds mighty large.
 Your aircraft has been shot away,
 You've bailed out oft before,
 In fact when you get time to think,
 You might know we're at war.

Not so the Raf. in Canada,
 We're safe and eating well,
 No bombs or blackout, desert thirst;
 And yet we have our hell.
 We've lots of time to sit and think
 Of dear ones way back home,
 Of little greens and country lanes,
 Of places where we'd roam.

One day there'll be a moment when
 We'll feel so really proud,
 The question will be, where were you?
 We'll stand and shout out loud,
 I fought the war from Canada,
 Three thousand miles away.
 My wife she stayed and put out fires,
 And worked like hell all day.

Maybe before the party's done,
 They'll let us do our share,
 Yes someone's got to do this job
 Of that we're all aware,
 But which is worse to fight or think,
 To sit around and brood,
 To go to lots of parties and
 To eat up endless food.

And if I had my choice again,
 With knowing all I do,
 I know where I would chose to go,
 Perhaps it goes for you,
 No mental hell in safety,
 In places where there's peace,
 I'd go to places where there's war,
 And let this thinking cease.

With Apologies to The Soap Operas

Squadron Leader Again
 The story of a Squadron Leader with
 apologies to Helen Holden, the Washington
 girl, Station C.K.L.W., etc., etc.
 (Organ music).

The scene is set in the beverage room
 of the local hotel in "Stenographer." (Being
 the nearest translation to the quite unpronounceable Indian name).

The Squadron Leader is drinking his
 beer and talking to an old timer about
 hunting bears.

Old Timer: Yes, I've done lots of
 hunting bears, lots of it.

Squadron Leader: That's fine. Would
 you care to come out with me and show me
 round?

O.T.: (Thinking rapidly and not very
 keen about it) Surely, but this hunting bears
 is very much over rated.

S/Ldr: How d'ye mean?

O.T.: Well the really tricky part is the
 skinning . . . anyone can shoot bear, they just
 rear up on their hind legs and you have
 plenty of time to shoot. Now you go out and
 do the shooting and I'll do the skinning.

But here is the announcer . . . Are you
 getting mosquito bites? . . . you are? . . .



That's too bad . . . Get "Stop It." . . . just a small bottle for a few cents, rub it on, and no more mosquito bites. Won't you call up your drug store now and order it? . . . And if you get the large size bottle you save 20 cents.

(Back to the S/Ldr.) It is now next morning and the S/Ldr. is setting off from the cottage with a rifle . . . the old timer is doing the cleaning up and awaiting bears to skin.

S/Ldr. Well chin chin, I'm off.

O.T. Good hunting.

The S/Ldr. walks about 100 feet from the cottage and sure enough there's a bear . . . the bear rears up, just as the O.T. said he would. The S/Ldr. takes a pot shot, drops his rifle and tears back to the cottage, running for his life with a wounded bear lying second . . . reaching the cottage the S/Ldr. trips over the steps and falls . . . The bear unable to stop, trips over him and bursts the cottage door open, falling inside.

The S/Ldr. with great presence of mind grabs the door of the cottage and shuts the bear in with the old timer, saying as he shuts the door, "Now you skin that one and I'll go and get some more."

. . . . And don't forget to order that "Stop It" you'll never regret it. . . .

(Organ Music)

This is station C.K.L.W., etc., etc.

Tailpiece

Myself—Now I'm snookered.

Good Gremlyn—What goes on?

Myself—Cannot cope with —

Good Gremlyn—To what do you refer?

Myself—Got to get to end of —

Good Gremlyn—End of which?

Myself—Page—stupid — don't exhibit your iggerance. Complete colyoun of nonsense must be finished off.

Good Gremlyn—Quite! Quite!

Myself—Otherwise Editor—a heartless man withal and compassionless — fit for mountains and barbarous caves — he

shall be pushed through the window.
A fate he richly deserves.

Good Gremlyn—Kindly omit personalities and do not abuse the hard working editor.

Myself—Very well.

Good Gremlyn—Well indeed.

Myself—There the matter rests at present.

Stupid Pome

Lots of snow has come and stayed,
Lots of rain has come and made
Lots of snow extremely mucky,
That is why it is so lucky
Overshoes can be got (good for trade).



Good Gremlyn

Albert E. Grindrod

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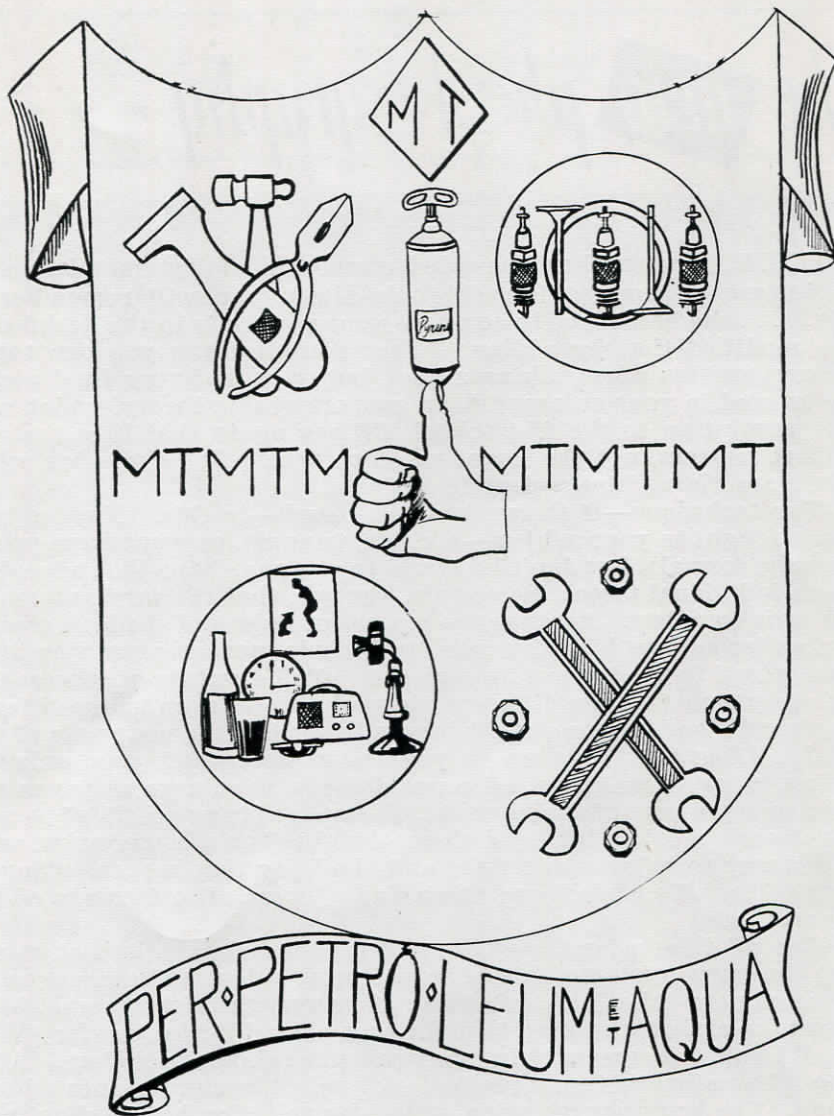
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CONTINUING with our Heraldry, we give to you this month, one which has been known since the R.A.F. was first formed. The coat of arms is divided into four quarters in which are represented the tools of the trade and also their side life. In the first quarter are the hammer, pliers and movable Spanner. These have their various uses particularly in breaking and entering. The second quarter shows Plugs, Valves, with a spare tire in the background. You will notice that the items drawn in the third quarter pertain to their habits, good and bad, of which you will see sometimes portrayed on the faces of the members. There is one habit in particular which is certainly noticeable on one of them, and I will not mention any names, but believe me he carries it well. The fourth quarter shows two hefty spanners which come in very useful, both at work and settling arguments, and as for the nuts, well you can use your own imagination. PER PETRO LEUM ET AQUA, means to the lesser educated by Gas AND Water.

★ the new photography ★ ★ ★ ★

GEORGE C. WARD

CONTINUING our rather one-sided discussion of last month, on the technique of composition (1942 fashion), you will remember we said: ". . . . the best place to compose your picture is in the darkroom." But we modified that by adding: "That doesn't mean you can totally ignore composition when taking a shot, but only that your final picture will be created in your enlarger." In support of this theory, which must be pure revolution to the f.64 school, I'll say again that it is the final result that matters, not the negative. I've yet to find the salon where negatives are "hung" instead of 10 x 8's.

The technique—if it can be called such—is this. First a basic outline is sought in your subject—a circle, triangle, or what-have-you (if you must be formal), but don't be afraid to use any shape that appeals to your own individual taste. Be certain, though, that the form, no matter what it is, is complete. Arrange the masses of light and shade to create a rhythm as far as possible. It's safer to include more in your viewfinder that you intend to use in your final picture. To be certain of success take more than one shot—from different viewpoints, and even under different lighting conditions if your subject is worthy of it. It is not waste of film material. After that it is up to your own taste—and your enlarger. Excluding in your final print all unwanted space, enlarge as far as possible the selected part of the negative. I say "as far as possible" because it is much easier to do a little judicious "dodging" on a larger print, when it is necessary to balance the light and shade by that means. "Sunday Evening," "Tired Tourists," and "Quo Vadis" were all offsprings of this technique.

Now all this is far too vague and far too brief, so let's start way back at the very fundamentals of good composition. The chances are that your camera takes either horizontal or vertical pictures and, being about to take a shot, the first thought that should strike you is: "What way shall I hold the camera?" In many cases the choice is obvious. A tall building falls naturally into a vertical picture, a large group into a horizontal one. The beginner too often omits this selection before shooting—to the detriment of his composition. So think twice next time before releasing the shutter. I do not think it would be out of order to record at this point my undying devotion to the square format. It permits me to take every shot with the camera held in the same position which makes for speed and steadiness. I do not have to worry about whether I shall take the picture upright or horizontal—that is decided at leisure when making the print. Again, my $2\frac{1}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{4}$ negative includes actually more than a $2\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{4}$ format, though on a smaller scale. But that is another story, which has nothing to do with this anyway.

The next principle—which is an all-important one—is: keep it simple. The hall-mark of the beginner is that he (or she!) tries to take too many things at one and the same time. Think of the photographs which have impressed you. The majority of them were essentially simple, with only one theme. Do not overcrowd your picture with a mass of conflicting influences which only lead to confusion, and leave your eye

[Continued bottom of following page]

Picture of The Month



"BREAKING THE ICE"

—Ward

—V—

The New Photography (Continued)

wandering all over the print unable to settle on any one point. The expert strips his subject of all unnecessary accessories, and achieves a perfect order and arrangement which helps accentuate his centre of interest and creates far greater clarity. One large basic element should run through the whole photograph and can be of any form which lies satisfactorily within the borders of the print. But do not make your subject subservient to the frame for that is not the way your eye sees things. A picture should be complete within its borders, but should not appear to have been forced into them.

Taken at the masquerade in the Officers' Mess, our picture shows the C.O., very piratical, leaning against the fire-place in the anti-room.

To the left the S.M.O. and Mrs. Burgin have taken great pains to make themselves indistinguishable.

F/O. Boucher and a friend are seen at the extreme right.



The diversity of costumes will be seen in the group. Despite appalling weather conditions the evening was greatly enjoyed. When can we have another dance?





We are able to show on this page pictures of officers and officers' wives in the Old-English card-room recently erected as a private enterprise by officers.

For the conception and design, we are indebted to Group Captain Keith, who will leave behind him a tangible memory of one we shall sadly miss.

The work has been admirably executed by Mr. L. C. Ward, Contractor, of Bloomfield, and his two sons. Considering that it is his first attempt at Old English style of construction, he is to be greatly congratulated. Already, we hear that he has been asked to erect a complete house in this style.

As will be seen from the pictures, the room gives the impression of an old English Manor, such as may still be found in England.

The top picture gives a view of the serving bar, with its apple-barrel stools, wood settles, and, in the corner, the octagonal dining alcove. The lower picture shows the other end of the room with its old stone cubbyhole.

It is unfortunate that the C.O.'s posting came just at the time when the room was at last ready for use.





The Tea Swindler

CERTAIN clues showed that the tea swindle was being robbed of minute portions of sugar every night. So we decided first to photograph the culprit at work and later catch him.

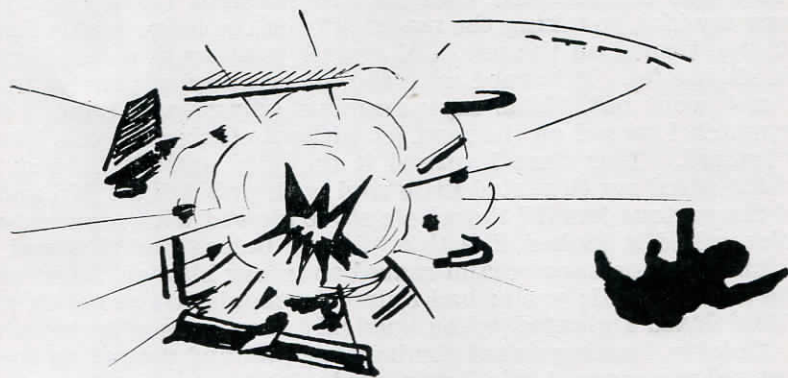
Fortunately the room concerned was conveniently a dark one. So the method decided upon was to leave the shutter of the camera open and arrange for him to operate a photo-flash bulb himself.

Lightly sprung contacts were carefully placed under a sheet of white paper and wired up to a 12 volt battery and to the flash bulb, by our "musical" electrician, LAC Dooley. Tests being made so that the circuit would make at the slightest touch. Sugar was sprinkled on the paper above the contacts and a suitable layout of cups etc. were arranged to give a light background. With camera set on a tripod, focussed on the sugar, stop at F11, and the flash bulb slightly to the side, all was set. The lights were then switched off, the shutter opened, and left until morning.

After probing around in the dark, I eventually found the shutter release and closed same. Anxiously the lights were then switched on. All had gone according to plan.—The bulb had flashed O.K.

Since the scoundrels method of approach was uncertain, sufficient room was allowed either side of the sugar, with the object of trimming the picture afterwards.

Having photographed the culprit at work, I am afraid the sudden flash has shocked him to the extent that the nightly visits have ceased to be apparent.



The Gas Stove

FROM my earliest days gas-stoves have held a fascination for me. Perhaps some other object would have played this role in my life, had it not been for an incident which occurred during my childhood, soon after this mode of cooking became popular. My father was of the enthusiastic type, who must always be first with something new; and so it happened that my earliest memory of excitement was occasioned by the arrival, of what was to me, a magnificent, if awe-inspiring, gas-stove. Looking back, I realize that this was an ordinary cooker; but it could not have made a greater impression on my childish mind had it been some herculean monster, such as I pictured in the stories told me by my mother. Here was something in the "flesh," something I could see and handle! For days I roamed the house entranced and frequently had to be taken by force from the room where my enchanter stood. Whenever it was lit, especially if it gave a pop, I was as moved as though the demons of hell had been let loose. Curiously enough, this caused me a sort of fiendish delight, indeed, I never remember being afraid; perhaps because I was certain the explosions could be controlled.

One day, doubtless after my mother had forgotten my interest in the mysteries of gas, I was left alone in the house. For some time I struggled against the temptation to examine more closely this object of fascination, for I knew that any contact with the gas-stove was forbidden and would be punishable by whipping, an art of which my father was no mean exponent. However, I was unable long to resist, and creeping up to the stove, in an attitude which had something of worship in it, I surveyed it with lively anticipation. Soon my fingers were tremulously touching its glossy surfaces and when they encountered the rough iron portions, a thrill of exultation swept through me.

Yes, there could be no doubt about it—the gas-stove was mine, for I alone understood its inmost soul. I began talking to it, half in the language of a child and half in the gibberish of an idiot. My throat became uncomfortably tight and little puffs of froth stood at the corners of my mouth and slowly resolved themselves into streaks of saliva. When occasionally I caught sight of my eyes in the common tin trays which stood on the stove, I noticed with devilish pleasure that they had a wild, unearthly look.

This was the supreme moment, the moment I had coveted since first I saw my idol, so taking the matches from the ledge beside the stove, I struck one, turned on the gas, and almost panting in a helplessness of triumph, lit the jet. It burned with the uncertainty of quarter pressure, popped and went out. "Was my paramour going to fail me?" Seizing another match I turned on the next jet without closing the one I had previously ignited. This time I turned it on fully until it burned with a force which filled my thwarted little soul with evil delight. Up and down I turned the various jets till the whole stove glowed with regal splendour.

Never had it looked like this. Never before had this god of my childish imagination snorted and roared so in our kitchen. And we were alone, he and I; and I; yes I; had found the magic way to such a fulfilment! Half dazed I gloated, when suddenly there was a footstep on the gravel. Quickly I extinguished the burning jets and retired to the other room, but nobody came. Again I struggled with the temptation to return; but having once fallen I could not now resist, so, taking the matches I again struck one.

Exactly what happened, I did not know. There was a blue flash, a feeling that I had been violently boxed on both ears, a myriad of lights before my eyes and then quiet. Quiet, oh, for so long, troubled sometimes by far off voices; uneasy, perspiring movements as consciousness slowly returned, and then the most splitting of headaches, the throbs of which seemed to be in rhythm with the voice calling my name. Slowly I realized that the voice was my mother's and that it was her blurred face which troubled my dreams. Tears were streaming down her cheeks, and I remember thinking, in a puzzled sort of way, how beautiful she looked.

I will not describe the immediate circumstances which followed that event. Few people can beat a sick child; but my father was the exception. Looking back I am inclined to think that had my mother's remonstrations with him succeeded, it would have been the end of the matter; but whippings encourage resentment and often make a determined child more obstinate. So it was with me; I soon forgot all the unpleasantness connected with the actual happening and only nursed a fierce hate against my father for separating me from the object of such frenzied attraction. As the years passed this was softened and replaced by an interest in gas engineering and in gas-stoves in particular, coupled with the determination to purchase one when I became my own master.

Many were the arguments we had at home in the year which preceded my leaving school: I had made up my mind to become a gas engineer, but my father had other ideas for me. He had decided that I should become a lawyer. Why, I could never understand; except perhaps, that clear thinking might eradicate what he considered crooked in me. To this end I was sent to Cambridge where, after once having ploughed my little-go, I was entered as a fresher. Part one, of the law tripos presented few attractions to me; and I was early reconciled to the fact that I should be lucky to get a "special."

Throughout the whole of my first year I was conscious of an undercurrent of discontent due to my being allowed to have a gas-fire and not a cooker in my rooms. Halfway through the second year, however, I moved into lodgings in Thompson's Lane and it was not long before I visited the local gas showrooms with the object of buying a cooker. The salesman seemed to understand my case perfectly. He, apparently, had a great affection for the goods he was selling.

"Yes," he said, rubbing his hands, "I'm never so happy as when I feel them;" and he handled, with evident delight, the one by which we were standing.

Here for the first time since I had "come up," was a man to whom I could pour out my heart. He showed me many models, and, long before I left, a mutual friendship had sprung up. There were large ones, small ones, black ones and others with enamel which looked like porcelain, and I had almost decided on one with five burners, a griller and a regulo-controlled oven, when he turned to me rather hesitantly:

"I wonder if you would consider a second-hand stove? If so, we have the king of stoves out the back in practically new condition."

"I'll see it."

I fear my tone did not evince any great enthusiasm; but by this time I felt so at home in this company that I did not wish to break the bond that was growing between us. We went back of the building where, in a separate room, were a number of stoves and other articles. In the middle of these, as though it had been purposely put there so that its refinements should not pass unnoticed, stood a giant cooker. My new friend had spoken the truth; its condition was new and it had every conceivable gadget, including automatic lighting control.

I had never seen anything like it before and I felt myself purring before I touched it.

"It's wonderful," I stammered, unable to retain my enchantment, "Wonderful, but I'm certain I could never afford it."

"Well, it's only a fiver—less than half the price of the one you have chosen."

"But why, why in heaven's name," I began. He looked at me searchingly as though about to communicate something of interest, and then said in an offhand manner:

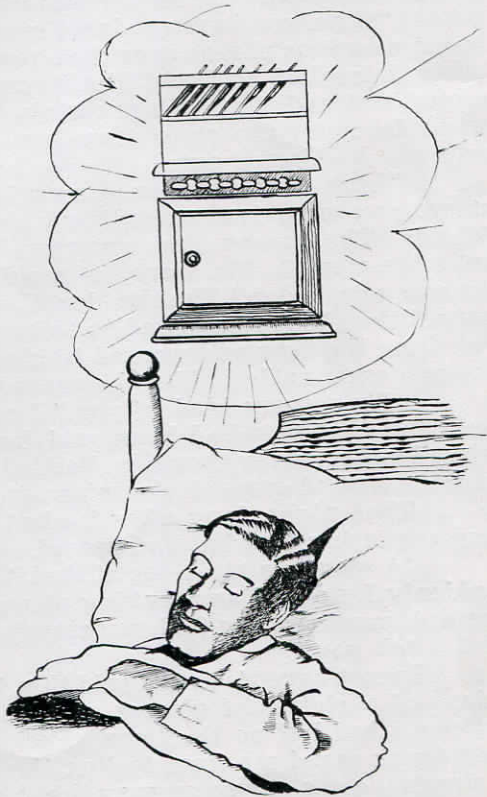
"We acquired it in rather peculiar circumstances and if we get £5 for it we shall be showing a reasonable profit."

My mind was made up, so I did not pursue the matter further; instead, I paid the money, thanked him cordially and invited him to supper one evening.

Many and varied are the objects which adorn the average undergraduate's rooms; but I still flatter myself that the acquisition of a full size gas-cooker was unique. It took second place to nothing. My camera, my books and my .22 rifle were forgotten, or only taken down to bathe in the reflected glory of my true love. I spent the first evening after its arrival in composing a sonnet, and though I no longer have the complete text, the opening lines began:

'Caressed in thy effulgent flames,
No casserole is mean.'

I remember feeling surprised that my landlady took no exception to what, to her, must have



appeared a strange article of furniture; but when I asked her whether she had any objection to my cooking supper for my friend from the gas showrooms, and she acquiesced with alacrity, I wondered if her acceptance of the situation was altogether disinterested. After all, there would be other evenings when cooking my own supper might be of great convenience to her!

This supper was to be a lavish affair. I would use every fitment on my new trophy! So, it happened, as I removed the top bar from the oven in order to lower it for the joint, I noticed the beginning of a sentence engraved on the enamel. My curiosity was aroused, I removed the paint which had been sprayed on to cover it up and was surprised to find an Italian inscription.

'Lasciate speranza, omni che intrate.'

I went to the door, called up the stairs to another fellow, who was reading modern languages, and asked him for a translation. He laughed as he exclaimed, "It's evidently some joke, the words are Dante's and mean, 'Abandon hope, all ye who enter!'"

I, too, saw the funny side and laughed uproariously with him and then returned to the preparation of supper; but somehow I could not get the words out of my head, and found myself basting the meat to the metre of: abandon hope, abandon hope, until I was glad to have the spell broken by the entry of my friend.

We dined magnificently and washed the whole down with liberal gulps of Sauterne, after which we sat and talked in the aroma of vintage port and small Havana cigars. This was an evening after my own heart and I had almost forgotten the inscription when my friend turned to me and enquired how the cooker was going.

"Fine, you have rendered me completely happy, but, by the way, I found a curious phrase over the oven door."

I laughed as I told him its meaning. He looked slightly disconcerted and had the same uncertain look in his eyes as he had the day when I bought the stove from him. Then suddenly as though he felt relieved, he blurted out:

"Look here, old man, I must be frank with you. When I sold the stove, you were just an ordinary customer, but now I count you as a friend. The reason that gas-stove was cheap was because it was a suicide's stove." He went on rapidly: "We often get them; but, just because people don't like the idea, they are kept out the back and sold for very little. We're supposed to tell our customers, of course, but I liked you from the first and wanted to give you a bargain without explaining the unpleasant side." Here he paused and looked at me apologetically.

"That's very kind of you," I replied with a half-smile, and then, realizing that this had been said for want of something better to say while I collected my thoughts, I added, "Anyway, you certainly gave me a bargain, and of course it doesn't matter—a stove's a stove for a' that."

That night, long after he had gone, I sat up finishing the port and cogitating on what had passed.

"A stove's a stove for a' that," I found myself repeating out loud. Suddenly I stopped and looking at my idol, shouted in a frenzy of suppressed emotion: "By God, my stove's no ordinary stove, it has a soul, a soul, I tell you!"

I must have risen as I said this, because I became immediately conscious of a clatter of glasses as I stumbled, sobbing, over the various articles I had left on the floor. Perhaps the fact that I was more than half drunk saved me from feeling the blow that my head received when it struck the gas-stove; anyway the thing I remember was finding myself

between the sheets with a splitting headache, and thinking a muddled way that my landlady's husband must have put me there.

I mumbled some apology as I went down to breakfast, but was only smiled at indulgently, which caused me to spend the rest of the day feeling like a naughty schoolboy. By the evening I was fully recovered, so that I could think on the events of the day before calmly. I played rigger the next afternoon and arrived back at my digs feeling that all was right with the world and perhaps, after all, gas stoves played a very small part in the life of a young man.

Bed was sweet that night and sleep came easily, so that to this day I cannot understand why I woke up round about 3.30, mumbling a mixture of: "Suicide's stove," and "My stove has a soul." I turned over in the darkness, rearranged the pillows and endeavored to get to sleep again, but still the same thoughts returned, so I sat up in bed and put on the light. It was just 3.45. I lit a cigarette, took down a copy of the Oxford Book of English verse and began to read Keat's Ode to a Nightingale aloud:

'My heart aches and a drowsy numbness stills my sense . . . hemlock I had drunk . . . some dull opiate . . . lethwards . . . lethe-wards . . .'

"Death, death," I shuddered; but was half asleep now and the rest of the ode with its stately rhythm was blurring through my mind.

Gas, I could smell gas! How I struggled to wake up, but my limbs were frozen. Then I remembered I had been told that in gas poisoning the mind is active long after the body becomes paralysed. But I must make the effort; I was out of bed now and in the room where the cooker was. Yes, a tap was slightly on. I closed it, but it opened again of its own accord. Several times I did this and then in childish despair I stood helpless with my fevered hand on the cool enamelled top. It was so comforting that I ran my hand along it just for the sensual pleasure it gave. Suddenly my hand was in contact with some rough iron portion. A cold shudder ran up my spine causing me to grip the stove hard till the veins stood out in my forehead. In a flash I saw the scene of fifteen years ago. Exultation filled me. I bent down to embrace more fully the object of my choice and in so doing caught sight of the words: 'Lasciate speranza . . . who enter here! So this was my destiny! This was why we had always understood one another. There was no exultation now—only an acceptance: we were wedded, this stove and I. No one knew our secret, and no one would ever learn why I had slept in her bosom. This would be no ordinary suicide. I needed no cushion for this fulfillment.

Slowly I kissed the cold exterior, opened the door with tenderness and placed my head inside. How sweet the gas smelt. Dreams, a whirring world of light, kaleidoscopic pictures of childhood, my father with the whip, school and the rhythm of a Latin declension, hic, haec, hoc . . . trailing off to a whisper of nothing, the river and the first girl I ever embraced, soft lips and moonlight, a flash from Rupert Brook: 'I will cheat drowsy death so far, 'so far, the upset canoe and helpless struggling, struggling, and someone calling my name afar off:

"Eric, Eric, old man, for God's sake wake up, it's 8.30 and the exam's at nine." The man from upstairs was standing there looking exhausted with shaking me.

"Don't tell them you found me," I began, and then seeing the bedclothes on the floor together with my Oxford Book, I stopped and jumped out of bed.

"No, I mustn't be late for the exam, but late or not, I'm going first to phone the gas people to ask them to take that cursed stove away!"

Roundabout

Being a Space Devoted to the Goings On in Camp

OFFICERS' MESS

The Caught Marshall

With some considerable umbrage, your long-suffering correspondent holds forth anent the above. The Press was in considerable difficulties, owing to (1) entirely unsuitable accommodation. (2) the aforementioned accommodation being located behind the defending counsel, (nevertheless and notwithstanding and without prejudice to). The K.C. in question suffered obviously from ants in the pants, as he was quite unable to keep still, and walked up and down so rapidly that the Press became dizzy, and finally quite u/s.

From the phantasmagoria that remained, one can only state that the opening address was very brief (for which many thanks), that one of the members emitted a loud hiccough, that Norah was obviously a very naughty young lady, that the prisoner was quite happily, we repeat happily, married, that he was always pleased to lend his ear to any of the cheap officers, that there seemed to be a considerable amount of acrimony between the prosecuting and defending counsels, that the award for stealing the show goes — quite rightly — to F/L. Looker. that after the above mentioned F/L. Looker's testimony, your correspondent fell into a state of coma, from which he was aroused many hours later.

Silly Pome Four bad boys they drank too much,
And were plainly told of such.
This month they will have a care—
They know they were treated fair.

The Snooker Club of Freedom

F/L. Looker is joined this month by F/L. Macfarlan. The qualification for membership is that of playing right through a game of "Volunteer" without getting free. F/O. Woodehouse very nearly qualified but got free on the pink, thus making himself ineligible for membership.

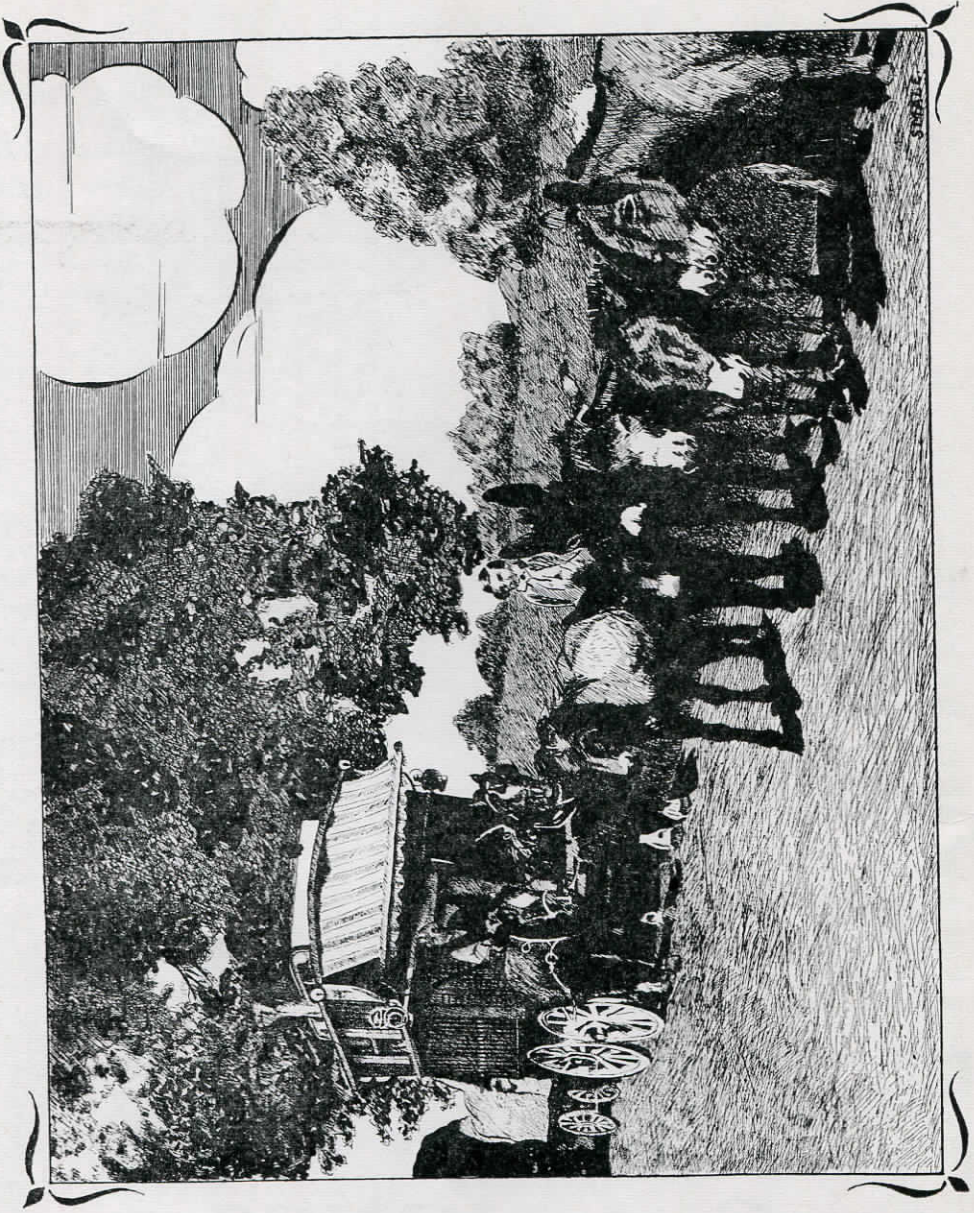
A Sore Point

It is requested that the word "taxi" be not mentioned in the presence of F/O. Watters or F/O. Mills.

On Posting

Finally, a word of good luck to our Adjutant, who leaves us for Port Albert. The Hon. Brian Lewis will be remembered to many of you as the racing motorist. Think of us sometimes, Brian.

[Continued on Page 35]



All I ask is the
open road and the
sky above me. . . .

by Smile



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CAPS YUKON

The Quality Store of Picton

C. A. JONES

Fresh Fruit and
Vegetables
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PHONE PICTON 6

ROYAL AIR FORCE
Parcels Packed Here
SEND QUALITY GROCERIES
TO ENGLAND

Roundabout (Continued)

Heard in the Mess

" . . . and if this cold weather lasts we'll all be skating back across the Atlantic." "

Stupid Pomes

I'm glad that Sandy's back from leave,
The work I've done you won't believe,
The files piled high, I got involved,
You've no idea the things I solved.
Still now he's here he'll take from me,
The Station, it weighed heavily,
Still one result deny you can't
They've made me Station Adjutant—

Blast it!

It is a most peculiar thing,
But still with truth the fact does ring,
Who is the bloke who never can
Crack off all night without his fan?
He feels the heat, that must be true,
What is the cause this is due to?
Who is it that exudes this heat?
Oh boy, she must be grand to meet.

I'll betcha.

THE SERGEANTS' MESS

Lately the Mess has been in a very fluid state. (Don't misunderstand me, the Sergeants don't drink.) There have been many additions, some from Moose Jaw and a couple from THE OLD COUNTRY. We welcome these to our warm and nourishing bosom, and there are some we have lost to the Officers' Mess—Frank Stringer, Ray Sturgess and John Sutton Edwards. Still, 'what's our loss is another man's poison,' as the adage 'as it, and we extend our sincerest wishes for a happy existence in their new sphere of influence. Among those we have to congratulate on their promotion is one W. O. Blackshaw of the Treasury. Also Sergeants Giles, Gleeson and Tupper. Judging from the amount of sweating and bobbing there should be more soon.

One or two members remember a successful dance being held on January 30th, and it is hoped that both guests and members had an enjoyable evening. There were also one or two notables missing for divers reasons, and we hope that the next dance will be able to welcome them. The Skaters' Waltz is still the hit tune of the Mess, it is noticed.

There has been some little confusion in the mind of the Mess Treasurer, owing to the definition of the terms Living out, (officially), and living out, (unofficially). Terms such as 'rations in kind,' 'casual meals,' and U.D.L.A.W. are thrown around willy-nilly, but it is hoped that Sergt. Ashton, with his comprehensive knowledge of the situation, will be able to clarify matters.

As most of the Sergeants conduct their affairs off Main street, it is with regret that I cannot give any further details of 'Life As a Sergeant Sees It' or 'Viewed from Below', but remember that many a rose is born to blush unseen. . . .

PICTON PEELERS

"Time," as some wit has said, "marches on," and it is once again our pleasure to purvey to you the news of the month.

Things have been very quiet here of late. WHAT'S HAPPENING? Are the boys reforming or have they some baffling new system of getting away with it?

There is a rumour current that one of our Cpls. is contemplating matrimony; in fact he has one Bare-foot in the church.

Congratulations to our N.C.O. in charge on his double promotion—one at home and one abroad.

In conclusion, we offer our heart-felt sympathy to our comrades-in-arms at Running Water upon their recent acquisition.

[Continued on Page 37]

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Picton

Roundabout (Continued)

"A" FLIGHT

According to news the COLEMAN doesn't call at Peterboro any more. "Is it Wright?"

Somebody they say has lost his nerve although he is very KEEN on his A.C. 1.

Ice skating seems to be quite a thrill these days, seems to give you that GUIRRON feeling, so they tell me.

Is it true that someone has taken the great Lover's shoes, over a girl named Audrey. He WOODFORD streams to reach her.

The shampoo's at the Sick Quarters seem to be a SHARPE way of scrounging these days.

Who is the lucky airmen JENNING up to be a first class tea swindler.

It makes me rather HILL to see our Quiz Champion losing his grip.

And lastly on behalf of the flight we give sincere congratulations to Flight Sgt. Stringer on his promotion to P/O.

"D" FLIGHT

Despite the aquisition of all the 'duff' aircraft, our recently formed Flight continues to steam ahead getting the 'hours' 'in. "A" Flight please note!

The bowser and tractor drivers theme song: ' . . . ye Banks and Breeze of bonny "D" Flight.'

'Crasher,' our own pet ace has given the chaps many shocks with his 'staggering' take off's.

Congratulations to our Sergeant on his recent promotion, we hear that he be-Giles the Belleville nurses.

We hear that our new P/O is just going to Burnham up, especially looking for computers.

We notice a shrill Scotch treble rising above the rest of the crew room conversation lately, time you stopped that Patter Son!

One of our airmen wonders how he can make acquaintance with the Canadian girls, our advice is — don't beat about the Bush.

SERVICING

We regret to report that our local Sweenie Todds, Messrs. Herr Kutt and Ivan Hacksoff are on the same shift. This is bad for trade.

Sheepwash has been employed as an aeroplane cleaner recently, a novel innovation perhaps, that will remove Grit & Stones from engines before work can progress.

The Asp in the flight plus all his airy persiflage is calculated to give us a headache; some day with the help of Professor Haldane and the other hanger aspirates whom we often see in deep debate when there is work to be done, he will set up a brain trust for servicing, perhaps they can Hawley'n that chirping cricket who reaps such a scanty harvest for such an efficient binding machine.

The trinity in the den 'ere are doing topping work—with the telephone—but robins on the wires cause many flutters; after all it's the early bird that catches the worm.

[Continued on Page 39]

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PHONE PICTON 99 J

Roundabout (Continued)

G. I. S.

The Spirit of this Hall of Fame
Bids me write about a name
Or two, and give a spot of 'gen,'
On several really famous men.

Pupils come and pupils go,
Plus "Chiefie" Edwards (now P/O).
Sadly all his bonds did sever,
While we, it seems, stay on for ever.

Teaching men is often gruesome,
True it is to say we Newsome;
And it would be certain folly
Not to mention someone Jolly.

A busy man is Corporal Bristles,
(Growing peas for policemen's whistles?);
So is Sandy Handford Packers,
Writing mottos for the crackers.

(Nobody can call THEM slackers).

ACCOUNTS SECTION

Well, folks, the first item in this month's session seems to be the brain-child of one of the saner members of this august (did we say that?) section. We're told it is symbolic. Of what we never found out—but your guess is as good as ours.

Famous Last Word: (dedicated to guess-who) "I tell you, it's at least seven inches thick."

Scandal Column: Ermytrude wishes to assure her fans the rumor that she's being fed anti-freeze is totally without foundation. The defroster is working perfectly, thank you. P.S. A camel has four legs, Miss Sargent.

To end on a serious note (doh), bouquets to the boys in the department for recently contributing \$10.00 to the Bombed Victims Fund. Nice going, men. How about you other sections?

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance continues the daily grind the uncommon task, uninterrupted by novelties such as night shifts, which until now, we always thought were a variety of old-fashioned nightshirt, the only similarity being that both are peculiar. One especial peculiarity being their ability to return at midnight to the Billet and settle down to resume their interrupted nap with the maximum noise. Their motto would well be "Let sleeping dogs lie." More and more supervision seems in evidence to prevent it becoming an evening debating society and correspondence course.

The holy of holies has disgorged a spate of green-backed inventories to keep readers employed; checking these must be a highly technical job.

The hangar bluebeards, Don Juan Casanova and the heavenly twins are magicians on Merlins by day, but we wonder how they survive the charms of Circe and Medea. Have these knights errant ever read their Odyssey? We doubt it. If so, we would recommend them to follow Ulysses example, to play a straight bat, but don't get caught in the slips.

Talking of ancient mythology reminds us that Sinbad the Sailor is also still overseas, he never travels unless he carries a notebook and pencil. What we want to know is what he puts in it, because at odd moments he murmurs: "I must make a note of that." Is he an artist in disguise or merely the local Gestapo?

Belated congratulations to W.O. C. E. Jones on getting his Warrant.

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- BREAD
- PASTRY

PICTON

PHONE 259

"C" FLIGHT

Looking back over the past month, we can't help wondering whether there are any Air Observers left in Canada who have not received gunnery training. Under pressure of work, a week-end has become a luxury—a blessed island in a sea of strife.

The recent discovery made during a flight over the lake by a certain Sergeant Pilot gives us to think furiously. It seems that there are some phenomena about this "blessed plot of earth" (we mean Prince Edward County—and you can take it any way you like) that we may have missed. However, try as we may, we cannot visualize the lake attaining the height of 1,000 feet.

Entering the Crew Room during non-flying hours, the casual visitor gains the impression that he has arrived in Wall Street during one of its more hectic and fluctuating days. Various portions of New York change hands freely, though with the utmost haggling over terms. He should not, however, rush out to consult the nearest mental specialist since these are but the outward manifestations of a disease known as "Monopoly."

Our "Push 'Em In, Push 'Em Out" sergeant has made the profound discovery that "C" Flight can digest more than his namesake's friend, the whale — or can it?

We commiserate the individual who returned from a station dance one night to find not the girl of his dreams but a dummy in his bed. Was he EVER disappointed?

What Corporal has lately shelved his office pen and taken unto him a tail-oleo spanner?

Tell it not in Gath, but the instrument-bashers are not doing too badly either if you think they can't work—go, look in the L.14's, brother.

The Flight Commander's enthusiasm for wireless appears to have increased — especially for car radios. We have our fingers crossed, hoping he does not have to buy a new one.

STORES

Oyez, Oyez. Whereas a certain LAC, known to one and all as a purveyor of "gen" (duff and otherwise) relating to aero spares, has been granted the honorary title of "Battle Axe." This was done without his consent and he has been heard to make cutting remarks about it.

One of our brighter (though smaller) stars has devised a brilliant new system for getting rid of "customers" who arrive for C.....g materials very punctually at the wrong time. Shooting a slight line about "no issues on Friday the thirteenth" or something equally plausible, he induces the unwanted one to return on the following day. This done, he makes an appointment with the Accounts section for the next morning, so that when the client arrives, he is politely, but firmly, shown the door. Returning to the Stores in the afternoon, our man writes a stiff note to the unfortunate individual, informing him that, since he did not call at the proper time, he will now have to wait for the next general issue, which takes place at midnight on the occasion of the next Blue Moon. This is a great satisfaction to one and all, and many people are made happy.

A Security Guard jolted a certain living-out member from stern to breakfast-time one morning. The hour was rather late when he arrived at the barrier, complete with bicycle, dinner pail and any amount of "bounce." Viewing the menagerie (beg pardon - menage) dispassionately, he enquired: "Do you work here?" (I may mention that sundry of the Store-bashaws think there is some reasonable doubt on this point.) All right, then. So it was me. Want to make anything of it?

In parting, we would like to mention the loss of F/Sgt. Fernhead, who was recently posted to a place with the distinctly unpronounceable name of Assiniboia (phew). Good hunting, Flight. We're sorry to see you go.

And so, for another month, your correspondent retires whence he came — rapidly, before the suits for libel can be filed.

M. T.

Congrats. to the C.O.'s driver — but I'm afraid the pig died, and so, incidentally, did the infatuation for Toronto.

"Woof" Archard did O.K. by the lake last week, and the farmer is still night nurse to a cow.
News in "Flashes"

"Crash" Horton is still open to a challenge for chicken-killing, but "Brom" Close makes a good runner-up. Any bets, Boys?

Pat O'Grady, "ex-motor-cyclist," is still wondering how he left the handles of his Five-Hundred Bristles. I guess the pay's better.

Who's the invisible man that keeps swiping the heater leads. We thought, since we had snow, that he would at least leave foot-prints. Any suggestions from you R.A.F. S.P.'s?

Cpl. Gibbons is still open to 5c bets on Biggest Capacity. Any takers? (Buy your own).

LAC. Piper is still wondering whether, if he found petrol in his radiator and his valve clearance in his gear box, he would find gold-fish in the tank. Somebody tell him, do.

We have good competition here for lady-killers, in the form and person of Cpl. Hinds (57 different varieties). Watch your step, "Pancho." Competition is getting very keen.

Congratulations and best wishes to LAC Johnny Long on his recent celebration of his wedding anniversary. Cheer up, John; I hear they've laid the "keel" but are finding difficulty in tradesmen. Maybe you should have been posted to the Clydeside.

Who cried when the Sergeant went "West," (or was it the weekend you spent in the Belleville Bush?)

We thought it was Love Blindness at first, but we hear from the M.O. that it was a "Pyrene" trouble. Cheer up Jock; you'll soon be dead.

Finishing off in a more serious vein (or do I have one?) we are sorry to lose two of the old originals in the persons of Sgt. West and LAC. Smith. Bon voyage, and keep the good old flag flying.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Catnip Villa, Picton, January 28th, 1942

The Editor, "Wings."

Dear Mr. Editor:

Please excuse me writing to you on a rather delicate matter, but I am sure you are kind and will help me.

I am a widow of 45 years of age and modest circumstances, and since my 15 children have grown up I have found life very lonely.

I am seeking the companionship of a middle-aged man of temperate habits, with a view to matrimony.

If you know such a man, will you please arrange for us to meet or arrange an exchange of photographs.

I have a comfortable home, 15 children, some private means, a cat, a dog and Spring in my heart.

Hoping to hear from you soon.

Yours very truly,

MABEL WAKKIT (Mrs.)

Ed:—It is with some hesitation that we print this letter, but it must definitely not be taken as a precedent.

I notice, in the Canteen, a box for contributions to "Wings." Whether it ever contains anything more than fag ends and spent matches I don't know, but if this letter gets into print I will know whether or not the Editor lost the key some dark night.

I should like to suggest that "Wings" carries more humorous items, humour without vulgarity must be plentiful on the camp, perhaps any spontaneous jokes could be dropped in along with the fag ends. I should also suggest after reading the January issue that a misprint competition should be run, if it achieved nothing more than to give readers an incentive to read every letter of print.

Yours truly, F. F.

Ed:—The Editor takes good care not to go out on dark nights.

"The Leading Lady"

I was always brought up to understand that the ladies were the weaker sex. That is supposed to be the case, but the influence of Canada seems to have altered our artist's views. I observe that in the drawing of the dancing couple at the end of the Entertainments section in the earlier issues, the lady leads the man. Although this is no doubt the case in practice, perhaps the more conventional position would be appropriate; anyway who is the lucky airman who has the doubtful fortune to have such a masterful partner!

Yours hopefully,

"OBSERVER."

Ed:—With so many airmen on their knees, this is not very surprising.

ERRATA

Our apologies are due to F/Lt. and Mrs. Holland Martin and to F/O. and Mrs. Holland.

The small boy shown on the slide in last month's issue with the C.O. is J. B. Junior, son of F/O. Holland and not F/Lt. Holland Martin as was stated.



Left:

F/Sgt. A. J. Lewis

The winning of the Dominion Marksman Expert Shield by F/Sgt. Lewis is a very creditable achievement. The necessary targets were all fired in a period of 10 weeks, which is a record time. It is hoped that this is only the first of many Expert Shields to be won by Club members.

Right:

Dominion Marksman
Expert Shield



The Miniature Rifle Club

THE Miniature Rifle Club continues to make most gratifying progress. The keenness and enthusiasm of all members has been maintained during the past month and with so many interesting competitions available to members the enthusiasm of all should continue to remain at a high level.

Club membership has steadily increased, present membership now being 203 Officers, N.C.O.'s and Airmen and nightly attendances have averaged 50 members. Ammunition Expenditure during the month has been 12,000 rounds.

The following have been awarded Dominion Marksman Prizes during the past month.

Expert Shield

F/Sgt. Lewis "A" Flight - - - Scoring 5944 x 6,000

Six Teaspoons

F/Lt. D. Maw "A" Flight F/Sgt. Lewis "A" Flight

Bronze, Silver and Gold Rating Prizes

Sgt. Matthews	F/Sgt. Lewis	AC. Coomber
Cpl. Brand	LAC. Turner	F/Lt. D. Maw
	Cpl. Walker	

Silver Rating Prizes

Sgt. Denyer	Cpl. Tupper	Cpl. De La Haye
LAC. Sharpe	LAC. O'Connor	Cpl. Goody
Cpl. Lindgren	Cpl. Dalton	LAC. Greenway
AC. Penny	AC. Bayliss	

Bronze Rating Prizes

S/Ldr. F. C. Stibbard	F/O. H. Kohler	AC. Hawkins
Sgt. Holland	Cpl. Wade	P/O. Tothill
LAC. Green	LAC. Slack	LAC. Roches
AC. Ferns	LAC. Guirron	AC. Darton
AC. Acres	LAC. Thomas	AC. Penn
	F/Lt. E. Y. Lapham	

Up to the time of going to Press verification has not been received from Dominion Marksman of the Award of Spoons and Gold, Silver and Bronze prizes to 44 further members of the Club. Their names will be published next month.

The "Da Costa" Cup Inter-Flight and Section Competition will be held during the last two weeks of March. The Rules and Details of this Competition have been circulated to all Flights and Sections and the Committee hope that all Flights and Sections will enter a team.

REGENT THEATRE

GEO. COOK, Manager

- Feb. 20-21—"One Foot in Heaven"
Frederic March
- 23-24—"Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde"
Spencer Tracey - Lona
Turner.
- 25-26—"Pacific Blackout"
- 27-28—Two Features—
"Small Town Deb"
Jane Withers
"Charlie Chan in Rio"
- Mar. 2-3—"Unholy Partners"
- 4-5—"Shipyard Sally"
Gracie Fields
- 6-7—"I Wake Up Screaming"
- 9-10—"Shadow of Thin Man"
Powell-Loy
- 11-12—"Looking Who's Laughing"
Fibber McGee - Molly
- 13-14—"Louisiana Purchase"
- 16-17—"Three Cockeyed Sailors"
- 20-21—"Tarzan's Secret
Treasure"



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HOT AIRS

THE station dance band lost its drummer, Nick Carter, late in January for he was posted out west, but we were fortunate in getting F/O Holland to take his place and everyone agrees that he does the job splendidly.

Before going any further we would like to wish Nick the very best of luck and hope that it will not be long before we hear of a band being formed at Swift Current. As a matter of fact it was largely due to his efforts that we have one, for he rounded up everyone that could play an instrument and introduced them to F/O. Fallon. From such small beginnings.!!

Sgt. Tony Welch has played with us on the last two or three occasions on accordion, but we hope shortly to be able to get a string bass for him. We have been looking for a bass player for some time and now it seems our wish has come true.

Talking of new instruments reminds me of the new clarinet, F/O. Fallon played for the first time at the Airmen's dance on January 28th. I think you should all know that the instrument is a perfectly good one and that the sustained high notes were apparently caused by cramp in one finger!

The Airmen's dances have so far proved very successful, and we hope they will continue to be so, for there are preparations being made to decorate the hall still further to give it a real night-club atmosphere.



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The Milky Way

The following extracts from letters to the Milk Office were published recently by The Manchester Guardian:

"Please send me a form for supply of cheap milk as I am expecting mother."

"Please send me a form for supply of milk for having children at reduced prices."

"I posted the form by mistake before the child was properly filled in."

"I have a baby eighteen months old, thanking you for same."

"Will you send me a form for cheap milk. I have a baby two months old and did not know anything about it till a friend told me."

"I had intended coming to the Milk Office today, but had fifteen children this morning."

"I have a child nearly two years old and looking forward to an increase in November, hoping this will suit your kind approval."

"I have a baby two years old fed entirely on cows and another four months old. Will I be able to have milk for baby as my husband finishes his night watchman's job on Thursday?"

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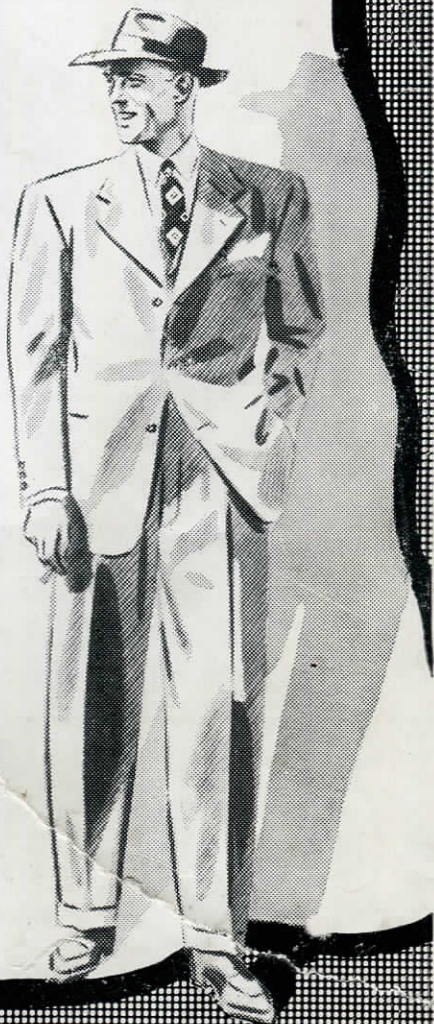
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