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the magazine of the rhodesian army



Vol. 16, No. 4. 15th August, 1976



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Editorial

Many sacrifices have been made and no doubt will continue to be made by the people of Rhodesia in their fight against those who would wish to impose change through the barrel of a gun. Many of these sacrifices have been grievous but they have not weakened the resolve to resist and overcome the present difficulties, in fact they have served to strengthen that determination.

In many lesser ways additional pressures have been brought to bear upon the normal conduct of life. Nowhere has this been more evident than in the impositions placed upon family life as a result of increased or continuous call-up of the Territorial and Reserve Forces. In these circumstances the women and children of the men affected have ensured that the 'home front' continues to operate with accustomed efficiency.

Where emergencies do occur on the 'home front' there is no lack of assistance from individuals and organised groups of people who, having no direct military commitment, offer their services in the national interest. Such assistance is warmly welcomed by the men in the operational area. The fact that South African citizens have volunteered to assist in this manner must be particularly disconcerting for our enemies.

Being the wife or mother of a serviceman requires a special kind of courage and it is evident that this is present in abundance among the wives and mothers of Rhodesian servicemen. There is a tendency to take their contribution for granted but it is a vital ingredient in the maintenance of morale and one which deserves more than passing recognition.

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'Wisdom of Years' is worldwide HIT



Maj the Rev. John Fall presenting a copy of "Wisdom of Years" to the Army Commander, Lt Genl G. P. Walls, MLM, OBE.

A padre in the top ten? A thought no doubt, and not beyond the bounds of possibility if it is "Wisdom of Years", a poem written and delivered by Major the Rev. John Fall.

On the 14th July Assegai were hosts at the Officers' Mess, Army Headquarters, for the launching of the record and their guests were those people who had in various ways been involved in the project.

Army personalities for the occasion were the Army Commander, the Chief of Staff, Colonel AQ and the AG. Guests from the civilian side

of the venture were the Gallo representatives who were responsible for production of the record, and the commercial marketing throughout Rhodesia; City Printers who, in conjunction with Lieutenant Mike Blackman and photographer Jim Tampin, were responsible for the record sleeve.

Local radio and television personalities have assisted in bringing the record to the notice of the public through their programmes and interviews. There is no doubt that the record has been well received.

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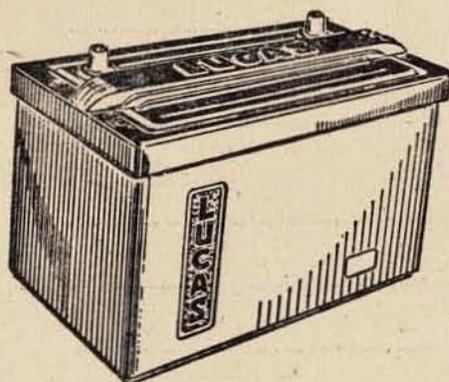
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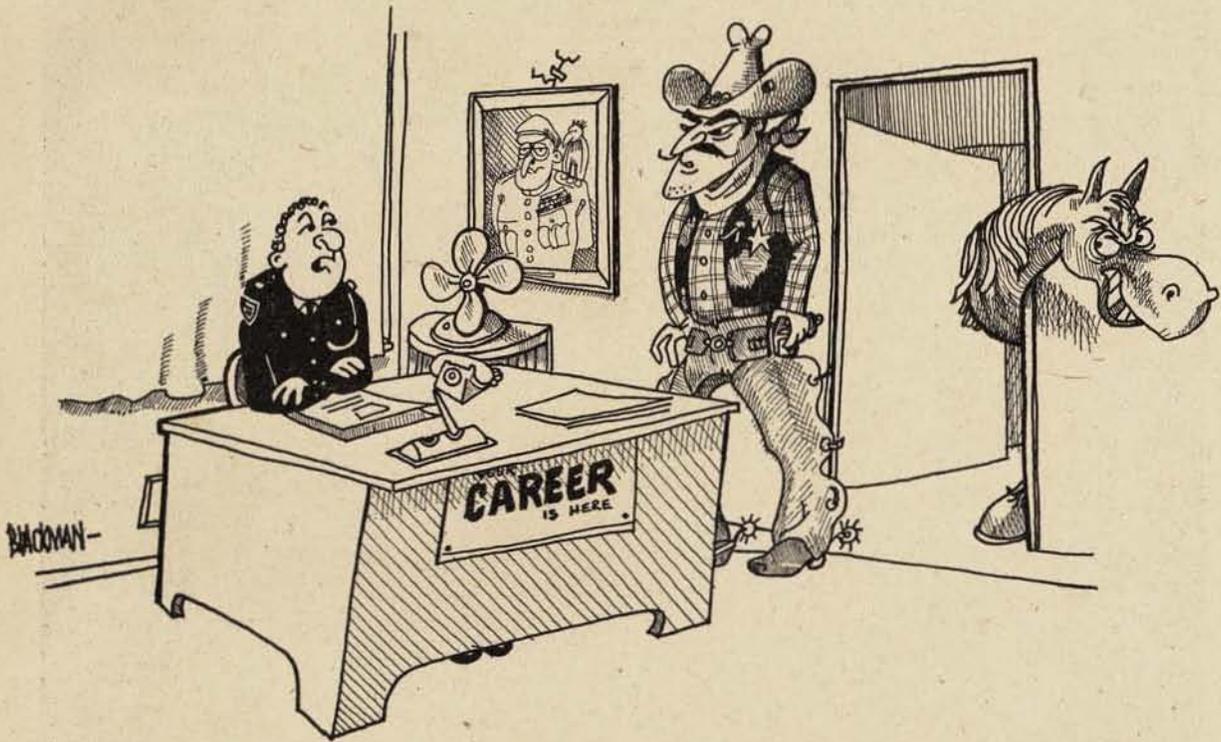
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CAPTION

— COMPETITION —



The response to last month's competition was the best ever, it has been a difficult task to judge.

Below is the winner with a selection of some of the other entries.

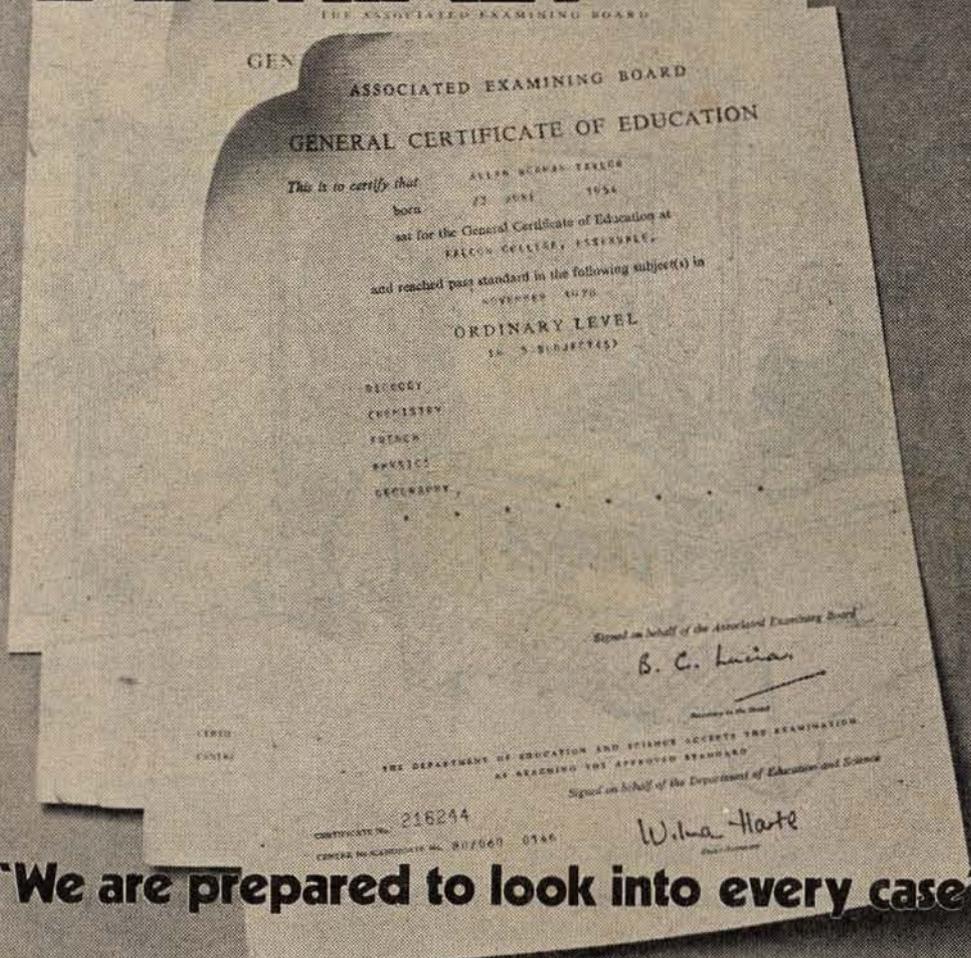
Winner of the \$5 for the best caption was Captain L. Kinsey, Signals, Army HQ.

"About these character references, where can we contact this chap Custer?"

CLOSE RUNNERS-UP

1. I'm sorry, Mr. Garrett, but I cannot reveal the whereabouts of Trooper Bonny.
2. How about trying the BSAP Corral? (RWS J. A. Kloppenburg.)
3. No. Tony, I don't think the Army Commander would approve the new uniform. (Anon.)

'OFFICER MATERIAL?'



'We are prepared to look into every case'

The Army will help you make the most of your G.C.E. as an Officer Cadet. Consider for a moment the possibilities. Rhodesia's modern Army can be compared to a large business. Just like any other business there's a number of departments that call for various special skills and abilities, not least of which is knowing how to get the best out of other people. In fact in today's situation, it is probably the most important single asset a potential Army Officer should possess. But whatever your talents, the Army will help you develop them to the fullest. That's up to and including University. How many employers would take you that seriously these days?

What do you have to do? Well, first of all you need to be between 17-25 with at least 4 G.C.E. 'O' Levels. If you're still awaiting exam results, then you anticipate that number of passes, or more. (You don't actually have to have them before you apply). Then you

contact us for an interview before our next Officer Selection Board, which will sit from September 13-20. At your interview we'll assess you as a potential member of our management team.

So if you think you could be Officer material, call our Major Nick Lamprecht in Salisbury on 707060, or write to him at Army Careers Office, Private Bag 7720, Causeway Salisbury.

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The Medics, a short history

By
COL J. F. AINSLIE

Prior to the founding of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland all medical personnel were members of the Rhodesian Staff Corps and subsequently the Rhodesia and Nyasaland Staff Corps.

It was only in 1957 that the Rhodesian Nyasaland Medical Corps was formed and became allied to the Royal Army Medical Corps. The first Director was Major (later Colonel) R. H. Bathgate Johnston. Detachments were posted to all Regular Units and formations in all three territories which comprised the Federation. A small Territorial Element was maintained but the existing Medical Companies which were essentially Territorial went into suspended animation in 1956.

From its very inception it was the role of the Corps to provide medical cover for the Army and the Air Force, a role which it fulfils to this day. However, now it also accepts responsibility for the newly-formed Guard Force and Internal Affairs Units.

When the Federation dissolved at the end of 1964 the Corps was re-formed as the Rhodesia Army Medical Corps, and it continued to be directed by Col R. H. Bathgate Johnston, MLM,

until his death in early 1973. He was succeeded by Col J. W. Drummond, OLM, who retired from the service in December 1975. The present Director is Col J. F. Ainslie.

Since the commencement of the present operation in December 1972 the Corps has undergone considerable expansion in all its existing Departments as well as the formation of new ones such as the Veterinary Section, which came into being this year. The Army Health Department and Dental Department have grown out of recognition and laboratories and Mobile Dental Units have come into operation. Members of the civilian Medical, Dental and Veterinary professions have freely volunteered their services.

Further expansion and reorganisation is in the process of being planned, but it is not yet certain when this will become an established fact. It is hoped that it will be later this year. In the meantime new equipment and material is continuing to be purchased.

A rehabilitation centre for men wounded and injured on operational duty is to come into operation this month. It is anticipated that this will fill a very necessary function regarding the future well-being of these men.

A MILITARY QUIZ

Questions:

1. In reference to Armoured Cars what does AML stand for ?
2. From what word does "Flak" originate ?
3. What is "Factor K" ?
4. What or who is "D.A.E." ?
5. What was the first major battle of the 100 years war ?

Answers:

1. Auto Mitrailleuse Légère.
2. Fliegerabwehrkanone.
3. Part of a projectile penetration of armour formula which permits comparison of armour plates of the same type but varying thickness using ammunition of the same type.
4. Director of Army Education.
5. Battle of Sluys 1340.

war and disease

by

MAJOR J. M. GOLDSMID

B.Sc. (Hons.) M.Sc., Ph.D., M.I. Biol.,

M.R.C. Path* RhAMC

When one thinks of health in relation to warfare, one tends to think of gunshot wounds, shrapnel wounds, burns and their treatment, usually by a surgeon. The emphasis is nearly always on the emergency treatment of men wounded by enemy action and treated by a surgeon.

Of the non-surgical doctor, one gives even less thought, and thus one military medical historian, Hans Zinsser once wrote that "to the average professional officer, the military doctor is an unwillingly tolerated non-combatant who takes sick parade, gives cathartic pills, makes transportation troubles, complicates tactical plans and causes the water to smell bad. Of course he is useful after an action . . . but otherwise he is almost, if not quite, a positive nuisance".

So much for the surgeon and the doctor. When it comes to the backroom personnel of the military preventive and laboratory services, even less is known.

However, war and disease are inseparably linked and thus wars uncomplicated by disease and epidemics are almost unknown. In one fell swoop, war can break down the work of years in the improvement of hygiene and related services, and widespread outbreaks of disease can, and do, result. Thus we can find fascinating historical references to the effects of disease on military campaigns and, in fact on history in general.

Xerxes, the Persian King and General, invaded Greece in 480 B.C. but was forced to abandon his invasion plans after losing 300 000 of his 800 000 troops due to disease. So too, in the Roman Civil War of 88 B.C., Marius proved the victor, not due to his tactical skill, but because his adversary Octavius lost 17 000 men

during an epidemic. In 425 A.D. the Huns abandoned their victorious advance on Constantinople because of a plague of unknown nature which decimated their hordes.

Even later, during the Crusades, Bubonic Plague, typhus, dysentery and other diseases had an enormous effect, and thus in 1099 when Jerusalem was finally taken from the Turks, the numbers of Christians had fallen from an initial 300 000 to 60 000 and after a further period of two years, this number had been further depleted to 20 000. Of these 280 000 dead, most had died from famine and disease rather than from wounds. In fact a later Crusade, the 4th, was completely abandoned due to an outbreak of Bubonic Plague.

Napoleon's army of invasion in Russia was severely afflicted with typhus, dysentery and enteric fever and, in Crimea, the British suffered 22 172 dead from disease and only 4 947 from wounds.

Closer to home, records of Rhodesian troop casualties in East Africa in 1914-1917 reveal that of a total of 148 deaths, 73 (49%) were killed in action or died of wounds; 68 (46%) died of communicable diseases such as malaria, typhoid and dysentery; and 7 (5%) died from accidents such as drowning. One can thus see the effect of disease. If we further consider that, of the 49% who died as a result of enemy action, some, at least, of those who "died of wounds" died, in fact, from bacterial wound infections, then we can truly assess the important role of infections in wartime.

Similarly, we find in World War II that the Americans in the Pacific suffered five times more casualties from malaria than from the Japanese. Thus can be seen the effects of disease on the

military campaigns of the last 2 000 years.

One can recognise essentially two types of disease problem in war, viz., wound infections and epidemic diseases.

a. Wound infection. Although the first attempts at prevention of infection were applied with varying degrees of success in the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902, the first glimmerings of success appeared during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. However, the problem of wound-infection was really brought home during the 1914-18 war where we read in *The Times History of the War* (Vol. VI): "Men seldom die of a clean wound if it be not immediately fatal, it is the poison in the wound and not the wound itself, which is lethal." In fact the rate of wound infection resulting from battles on the well-manured fields of Flanders and the Somme elicited the comment that "every fresh wound created a fresh victim, because every wound was infected" — so tetanus, gas gangrene and other wound-infecting bacteria reigned supreme. The early attempts at antisepsis of wounds were not very successful and, at first, World War I surgeons used strong carbolic acid and solutions of mercury and iodine which were swabbed into the wounds based essentially upon the teaching of Lister, who had worked on this problem in

the late 1800's. The trouble with these solutions was that, while they did kill the bacteria, they also killed the surrounding tissues making healing slow. Attempts were therefore made to find more suitable wound antiseptics, attempts which resulted in the development of Dakin's Solution and Flavine. These antiseptic wound-applicants caused a dramatic improvement in the general situation, resulting in the death-rate from wound infection dropping by 90%, the amputation rate dropping by 95% and the period of hospitalisation being reduced from an average amount of five months to about five weeks!

With further research, the development of better antibiotics, faster transportation to hospital and better surgical and antiseptic techniques, this problem has further improved although wound infection still takes a certain number of lives.

b. Communicable disease: The story of war and communicable disease is similar to that of wound infection. Thus again Zinsser wrote: "Soldiers have rarely won wars . . . they more often mop up after the barrage of epidemics" and typhus, plague, cholera, typhoid and dysentery have "decided more campaigns than Caesar, Hannibal, Napoleon and all the inspector

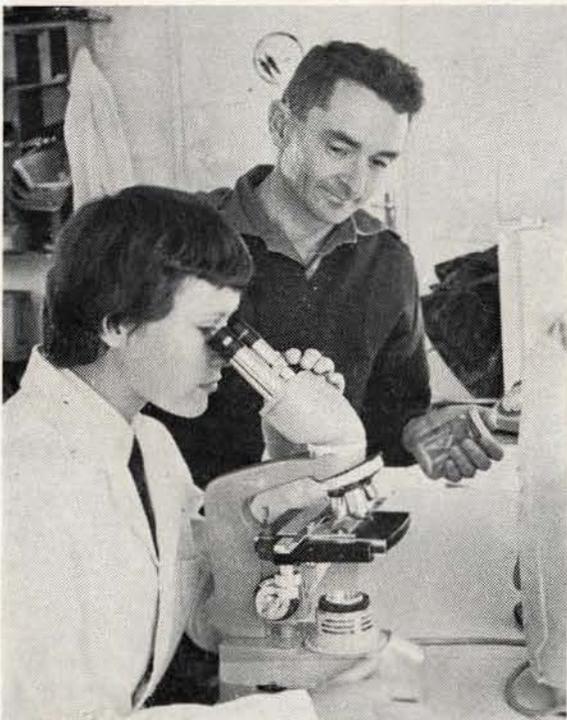


RWS Gwen Franks taking a blood sample from Rifleman Akis Ghioules.

CENTREFOLD PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE ARMY PHOTOGRAPHER



Taking bilharzia tests in the field.



RWS Laurretta Koen examining a slide for parasites. Overlooked by the author.

generals of history". As he puts it "the epidemics get the blame for defeat, the generals the credit for victory".

The same theme emerged in commentaries on World War I, where it was stated "the fighting man was exposed to a thousand risks, and usually in the end fell victim to one of them. Danger from the enemy was the least of all the menaces which threatened him". (Times History of the War, Vol. VI).

We find that the menaces threatening him included meningococcal meningitis, leptospirosis, bacillary dysentery, cholera, typhus and typhoid. These disease problems were multiplied a thousand-fold in the tropics where, in addition to the foregoing, can be added amoebic dysentery, malaria, sleeping sickness, schistosomiasis (bilharzia) and filariasis, not to mention a legion of other viral, bacterial, protozoan and helminthic diseases. So we in Rhodesia too, are facing similar problems. True, our war is different. We are faced with a terrorist war rather than with a conventional war. The disease problems are the same. Our forces are exposed to water- and food-borne infections (bacillary dysentery, typhoid, amoebic dysentery, intestinal helminths), to insect-borne diseases (malaria, sleeping sickness, filariasis, plague and such viral infections as Chikungunya) to contagious infections and animal diseases such as rabies. In addition cholera has recently entered Rhodesia — probably with the terrorists. Our troops are also constantly being exposed to bilharziasis. What is being done about it?

Most people are aware of the role of the army doctor and the medic. Few know of the role of the preventive services of the Army Health Unit and the Laboratory Services.

The doctors and medics are there to give inoculations to help prevent typhoid and tetanus (TABT injections); they ensure a supply of Deltaprim every Tuesday to prevent malaria; they give smallpox vaccinations. When one of the troops is wounded or contracts some infection, they give immediate treatment or arrange for his being casevaced to hospital with minimal delay.

The Army Health Unit is there to advise on camp hygiene, to ensure safe water supplies, to advise on control of insect pests by means of insecticide sprays and to offer advice on medical matters in general.

However, although the Army Health Units can help minimise the possibility of contracting various infections and although the doctors and medics can treat for such infections, the diseases when they occur, must be diagnosed — and for this purpose the Army Laboratory Service exists.

Their function is to educate the soldier in commonsense precautions to help him avoid becoming infected with the range of tropical diseases and other infections common in Rhodesia. The laboratory also gives a diagnostic back-up service to the medic and the doctor when such educational advice and preventive services fail to prevent infection.

It is easy to give advice on how not to get infected — on operational duties it is not always feasible to follow this advice. Take the example of bilharzia — undoubtedly our most important infection problem. It is easy to say in a lecture “avoid unnecessary contact with water”, but in a follow-up operation it is often necessary to wade through bilharzial-infected river to eliminate groups of terrorists.

For this purpose, the Army Laboratory offers a bilharzial diagnostic service. Bilharzia is seldom an acute infection, its most serious effects are those which develop over the long term — and the disease can persist in the untreated individual for 25 years or more. It is the responsibility of every unit commander and medic to ensure that the men under his control and care are tested twice a year for this disease. The laboratory staff are there and will be available where and when required.

Bilharzia has been recorded as a military menace in Southern Africa since the Boer War, when over 625 cases were recorded amongst British troops. In those days little was known of the disease and no effective treatment was available. The British recognised the dangers of the infection in Egypt and during World War I sent Lt Col Leiper to investigate the problem.

We in Rhodesia are also well aware of the threat of this disease to our troops. We have made provision for it — we cannot entirely prevent it in the armed forces where it can almost be considered an “occupational hazard”. However, we can diagnose it and we can treat it. So, too, can we diagnose all the other so often unconsidered killers — malaria, sleeping sickness, typhoid, cholera, and plague. This is the function of the laboratory service — to teach awareness, to diagnose, to investigate any outbreak of disease in the field. Wherever an outbreak of disease occurs, the laboratory staff will investigate, be it in a camp in Salisbury, Bulawayo, Gwelo or Umtali, be it in a protected African village or a small relay station in some remote area. All will benefit from this service, soldier or policeman, African or European, civilian or serviceman. The Army Laboratory can indeed be a useful adjunct to civilian health services in these troubled times to enable health services to cover all the areas of the country, operational or not.



Miss Astrid Williamson assisting Mrs. Avril Hurst with routine blood grouping.

Perhaps one can end with another quotation from *The Times History of the War*: “The man if science has often been impugned as ‘cold blooded’ and as lacking the good and warm impulses of his brother the doctor. It may be so. But this at least shall also be said, in the early days of the Great War he saved more lives by his ‘laboratory methods’ than all the engines of the war were able to destroy.”

I hope that this article will help the professional soldier to understand the role of the ‘back-room boys’ of the Medical Corps. I hope it will help him to see the overriding importance of health in the present, and indeed in all, military campaigns. I hope further that it will enable him to have more insight than the American Inspector General who was reported by Zinsser in his classic book to have completely ignored the “tempest of respiratory diseases and threat of enteric fever in his men” because he was so incensed that the Chief Health Inspector making the report had saluted with one hand in his pocket!



NEW HOSPITAL AT INKOMO

Brigadier Burnett-Smith tours the new Inkomo Army Hospital

(Courtesy: Rhodesia Herald)

This hospital was first opened twenty-five years ago to cater for members of the Annual Camps of Training which used to be held each year at Inkomo and also for the Camps that were organised for the School Cadets. This was before the concept of national service commenced at Llewellyn Barracks in 1955.

Existing farm buildings were adapted for the purpose, the Government having purchased the land from a farmer for use as a Training Area for which it has been used ever since. At that time it was manned by TF Volunteers and also by nursing sisters who volunteered for service each year.

With National Service the scene shifted to Llewellyn Barracks but Inkomo continued to be used by both the TF and the Regular Army as a training area and the hospital continued to function. It became a permanent establishment in about 1957 when the Regular Army started to use the area on a full-time basis and a permanent camp was built. It was then staffed by regular members of the then Rhodesia Nyasaland Medical Corps. TF continued to use Inkomo for Annual Camps and they also availed themselves of the facilities there.

Eventually from the Regular Army point of view Inkomo came to be used essentially for the training of African soldiers, thus the hospital became an African hospital, although European personnel were provided with out-patient facilities.

Inkomo gradually increased in size with the passage of time and more and more training of various kinds was undertaken there. All through this time the hospital continued to function although it was then situated about three miles away from the main camp.

It soon became evident that a new hospital would be required as the existing buildings were falling into disrepair, water supplies and cooking facilities were totally inadequate, apart from the distance between the hospital and the camp.

The late Col R. H. Bathgate-Johnston was the first to initiate moves for a new hospital and although the need was accepted it was only in 1975 that a start was made to build a new hospital within the annex of the existing camp. It was constructed according to plans submitted by PWD and the work put out to contract. It was completed in May this year and officially opened by the Secretary for Health, Brigadier E. Burnett-Smith, on 16 July 1976.

The hospital has 26 beds and 6 cots essentially for African use, and has a staff of both Europeans and Africans and a Medical Officer who visits regularly. It is hoped that in the near future a Medical Officer will be permanently stationed there. At present the population at Inkomo has been estimated to be approximately 6 000 men, women and children, all of whom may make use of the hospital facilities. The hospital is now the pride of RhAMC and it may be regarded as an indication of the expansion that has taken place in the Corps in recent times.

The Visiting Firemen

by
CAPT GEOFFREY BOND, PRO



(Photograph Courtesy Rhodesia Herald)

"Ah! made in Hong Kong," quipped Kenny Cantor as the army public relations man, Capt Geoffrey Bond, gave him a copper plaque of the army's coat of arms.

It has been a good year for 'visiting firemen' so far — and there are still several months to run. The comedy stars from UK have discovered that Rhodesia is to their liking — both as regards their livelihoods and their leisure hours.

These famous names of showbiz come to entertain and to be entertained and, to be good hosts, both facets should be equally enjoyable.

This discovery of another audience has, for the most part, been a slow process. Years ago

Matt Monroe came to sing and to take away pleasant memories of a sleepy little region somewhere in the middle of Southern Africa. Then there were The New Christy Minstrels, Mike and Bernie Winters; even — several years before — the fabled Danny Kaye.

More recently we have seen the late Dickie Valentine, Spike Milligan, Bob and Alf Pearson, Leslie Sarony, and dear old Sandy (Can You Hear Me Mother?) Powell.

Guy Mitchell appeared in Salisbury, singing

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the songs that made him famous, and The Seekers, the Australian group, took the trouble to see what made Rhodesia tick. Remember Eddie Calvert, 'The Man with the Golden Trumpet'? He's been here too, and enjoyed himself immensely.

Max Bygraves came and went, as did Ralph Reader, of 'Gang Show' fame, and Harry Secombe. What did they think of us, I wonder? These were all names that we couldn't afford to ignore, but on occasions we came pretty close to doing so. The people who are proud to belong to the theatrical profession, whatever branch, are deservedly well known for their open mindedness, generosity, and willingness to 'muck in'.

This was proved during the early part of the year when Jimmy Edwards and Eric Sykes were with us. Not only did they put on a memorable show under difficult conditions at very short notice, but when they left us it was to laud the cause of Rhodesia in other countries — and they risked their professional reputations by so doing.

Latterly there has been Kenny Cantor, star of the "The Black and White Minstrel Follies". Mr. Cantor, like his two predecessors, gave unstintingly of his time and talents, in providing a special show for the Forces — and a first-class show it was.

A problem which is usually faced in presenting these special shows is that of giving sufficient advance publicity to the intended audience. The Public Relations Office, acting as 'middle men' in such matters, makes every effort to give timely warning of events, but fully realises that in the present circumstances an audience is difficult to assemble.

The Public Relations Office is doing all it can to cement good feeling between the Army and the local theatrical entrepreneurs — and this is working — especially well with our friends of the Seven Arts, who have our cause very much at heart. Likewise the performers feel much the same, for Kenny Cantor told me happily enough that he would go through his act for four troopers ("Damn it all, I did it for eight censors!").

With such spontaneous enthusiasm from these visiting stars no one should miss the opportunity of seeing their shows, and the Public Relations Office hope that from time to time we shall be able to bring you more of the finest names in show business. I'm convinced that, from what they've been told by their fellow-stars, they'll be only too pleased to come and entertain us. But we must do our part also, because if not there'll be no more Visiting Firemen, and that will be a pity.

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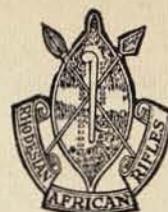
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TAP 22

NEWS FROM THE RAR



"A" COMPANY — SIMBA:

There has been a bit of a gap since our last contribution due to the 2IC having long leave and the new OC settling in and trying to cope with all the new faces, names and personalities — not an easy job when everyone has two names!

In recent months we have been involved in the elimination and capture of a great many terrorists. We have maintained a high kill ratio and intend to keep it that way!

CSM Nyagumbo Dzokesayi has left us on posting to Depot RAR. He has been with the Company for nine years and contributed a great deal to our many successes, both in the field and in the Champion Company competitions. A great pillar of strength for the young soldiers he will be sorely missed by us all. He is now training recruits so at least we will benefit from his experience in the long run. We all wish him luck in his new posting and hope he will keep in touch with us. Congratulations to CSM Kupara Yangama who has stepped into the vacant post. He was PWO of 2 Platoon before his new appointment, having been with the Company for three years. We are confident he will do well in his new post.

Welcome to 2Lt Chris Dudley and 2Lt John Aird who have just joined us from the ENS Officers' course at Gwelo. WO2 Matambo Tachiveyi has arrived on promotion from Support Company. Best wishes for an enjoyable stay to you all.

Congratulations to the following on their recent promotions. Matenda, Zviito and Khumalo to full Corporal and Benson to Lance Corporal. L cpl Benson has also recently joined us. Sgt Chiyanike Pesanayi did very well on a recent Senior Tactics course at Gwelo — a creditable effort.

"C" COMPANY:

Firstly it seems appropriate to congratulate all those involved in the first issue of our own Regimental Magazine (Nhowo). Each troopie got his own copy which undoubtedly was sent off to families all over Rhodesia, so like that famous magazine "The news is spreading".

Since our last effort at writing little has

happened of note. All our injured from our last bush trip are back with in one piece. The CSM, WO2 Gibson BCR, L cpl Richard and Pte Julius are once again active and well. Pte Julius, who was "ventilated" five times rather seriously, said when visited the day following his injuries and asked if there was anything he wanted — "yes, a couple of cold Castles, please".

Heard over the radio:

"3 this is fetch Sunray."

"3 Sunray fetched."

"Roger, just relax, don't panic but we're sending you a 'Sunray Minor.'"

There was a dull thud as OC collapsed and signaller replied:

"This is 3 Roger, my Sunray has lost the power of his body!"

Anyway, welcome to Lionel, our first 2IC for seven months — who knows, we might get the odd Platoon Commander. In fact, welcome back Norman Dolphin — two months of civvy street proved too much — we told you so!

Partywise we had a great time on our TC Day, 11 May 76. Due to Ops, it was all a bit of a rush as we were off to the bush a week early. We started the party at 2 p.m. so that the drivers would be sober the next day, and generally it was voted the party of the year, and the following day the path we wove to the Op area was fairly straight.

(Suggest you read the new Road Traffic Act. — Ed.)

Interesting to note, of the five African RSM's in the RAR and Inkomo, two were C Company bred, and RSM Mutambo who preceded RSM Tumbare was also a product of the company — quite a good record and should certainly encourage our young up and coming NCO's.

CHAWUYA CHAWUYA — CHOW.

HQ COMPANY:

It is understood that our notes have not been published for some months owing to their lack of intellectual quality.

In the meaningless and vulgar bustle of a Company Headquarters the grave and lucid prose that helps to permanently enrich our literature is admittedly sometimes lacking.

LIFE WITH THE TERR...



"Do you ever get that feeling you're being followed"

NEWS FROM RAR (Continued)

Possibly we should describe more records of intense spiritual struggles, and of ageless and elemental things tossed like straws in the seas of passion. However, the contumacious pen tends always to the aphorism (too much writing of signals perhaps?). Possibly we should have an agonising reappraisal of our style? On the other hand, perhaps we should stick to a style that the average RAR soldier can understand!

The comings and goings of Headquarter Company and at Rear go on as always, and faces change continually.

We continue to fire on the ranges as often as possible, and after several sessions recently standards are now much more satisfactory.

The Dog Dip which was officially opened in Methuen Barracks by the Commanding Officer, and Dr. Fayrer-Hoskins and Mrs. Fayrer-Hoskins is proving to be a useful and beneficial addition. The weekly "dip" is now quite a procedure and the queue of dogs and owners becomes longer each time. It is sometimes difficult to know

whether it is the dog or the owner who is receiving the treatment, as often they are equally soaked at the end.

WO2 Dube Itila, our Chief Clerk, continues to organise the football at Rear. He is somewhat hampered though by the fact that no sooner has he got a good player slotted into the team than the man disappears off to the "sharp end" on duty.

OC HQ Company has now added the proud title of "Museum Officer" to his many others, and he and WO2 'Fred' Richard are frequently seen checking piles of mysterious looking ancient weapons, flags, equipment and other unusual items. It is hoped that Phase II of the museum building will shortly be completed, then the more serious work will start of setting out all these items in a presentable form. One item on WO2 Richard's list of museum kit caused some consternation: it read "Three dead terrorists"! A hurried check revealed they were only tailors' dummies in uniform.

Women's World

by
SARAH DEVONSHIRE

The old army adage of 'never volunteer' took one pace, if not two, to the rear recently when a number of Army wives volunteered to master the intricacies of weapon training. Several bruised shoulders and oil-smudged hands later the volunteers for the 'Gun-fight at the Cleveland Corral'. Conditions on the range were ideal for shooting and with the absence of the Army Weapons Meeting this year we felt that tradition was being maintained. The meeting of the lady shottists from Army Headquarters on Saturday 19 June was the culmination of training which had taken place every Wednesday evening for several weeks.

Wednesday nights had become the highlight of my week. Going to Ladies' Weapon Training was certainly something to be looked forward to with relish and excitement certainly for me, an average working housewife. Our very first meeting was more than just a little traumatic. When I first sat down at my desk in the instruction room with a real live sub-machine gun in front of me, I panicked. I could feel my eyes darting around looking for the quickest and closest means of escape. I hoped nobody had noticed the pallor of my skin. I couldn't have run away because by that time my knees had turned to jelly and my heart was pumping twice the normal rate and I could feel the adrenalin rushing around my body in all directions.

Almost immediately I tried my well-used trick of psychology: "Wasn't I a normal, intelligent person, and if other people could handle such weapons so could I, and wasn't I also the wife of a big brave soldier? Wouldn't do to let him know he was married to a lily-livered, weak-kneed chicken; must be completely blasé about the whole wretched business — look bored, that'll fool 'em."

It worked all right, and not too many weeks afterwards I developed a certain affinity to the weapon. Soon I was touching and handling the pistols and rifles with a certain pleasure — almost like an heiress would be expected to

caress her jewels. 'Look at the lines, feel the balance, what a beauty — I wish it were mine.'

I suppose the instructors must have had a lot to do with the enjoyment of these training evenings. I always thought Army Instructors yelled at one, but not these chaps. They were models of patience and charm none of them yelled or even got cross or raised their voices, nor did one of them ever cast any doubt as to whether Mummy or Daddy were actually married or not. They just never got cross, not even the night we were stripping and re-assembling the F.N. I suppose I was getting a bit too sure of myself, anyway, I was the first to finish putting my rifle back together so I stood up, rifle by my side, with a sort of superior look on my face, then there was this awful, ghastly clatter, clank, clank, thunk, bounce, then unbearable silence that lasted, or so seemed, for ages.

When I opened my eyes, slowly, I looked at the Captain in charge — would he have a coronary or would he just pick me up by the seat of my pants and throw me ignominiously out of the door. Nothing happened at all. "My dear," he said, "You hadn't quite snapped the breech shut, had you?" I did notice that he had one of those enigmatic "Mona Lisa" type smiles around his eyes and mouth, but perhaps that's what happens to Army Instructors when they feel like throwing themselves on the ground and banging their fists and sobbing away the frustrations of the job they do.

The day on the range was enjoyed by all the shottists, Range Officers, troopies in the butts, assistants and spectators alike. I was full of confidence when I arrived at the Range and found I was numbered amongst those in the first detail to shoot. As we walked to the firing point I noticed a small, cream coloured ambulance parked near a small plantation of trees. "What's that for?" I said to my colleague, "Oh, nothing," she replied, "Just routine in case anybody gets hurt." I could feel that old familiar

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panic rising in the pit of my stomach, and thought back to the psychology bit. Wasn't it logical and practical to have an ambulance at the ready when firearms were being used? Wouldn't be at all surprised if they hadn't got John Fall parked somewhere behind those trees also, just in case it was too late for the ambulance to be of any use.

There were some remarkable scores notched up that day. Some of the ladies hit the target with every pull of the trigger, some missed with every pull of the trigger — to my mind it must be a jolly sight more difficult to totally avoid hitting the target for a whole day than to even accidentally have hit it just once or twice with a stray round. How many men could better such a record?

The day's shooting was concluded with drinks and a braai held in a nearby pavilion. It was quite noticeable to see the number of ladies who ordered stiff brandies, especially as one had noticed at various official functions they did no more than sip an occasional sherry.

Now that it is all over one wonders how are we going to occupy our time on Wednesday evenings — something safe like this perhaps. I've had a few suggestions — Karate, stock-car racing — even lion taming.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

SA RHODESIA ASSOCIATION

552 De Kock Street,
Sunnyside, Pretoria,
South Africa.

20 July, 1976.

Dear Sir,

We have just received the record "Wisdom of Years" by Major The Rev. John Fall and would like to say we found it most inspiring, moving, heart-rending, indeed I was deeply touched by the record.

God bless you all in Rhodesia, keep up the fight and be steadfast and firm in your endeavours.

Our prayers and thoughts are with you.

Best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

P. MCGOWAN-VAN HEERDEN,
Secretary.

UK MILLIONAIRE DONATES \$300,000 FOR SECURITY FORCES

Mr. Stuart Weaving, President and Founder of the Worldwide Weaving International Friendship Foundation, announced that his local organisation Friends of the Lion Association is to open its membership to all members of the security forces at no cost.

"I will gladly suscribe 1976 membership dues on behalf of all those magnificent men and their families who are giving their all for the cause of peace and the security of the Rhodesian people — so many of whom have connections in the United Kingdom," said Mr. Weaving. "Supporting civil organisations such as the War Widows Guild will be eligible for membership and," he said, "any other organisation amongst those too numerous to mention by name".

In addition to paying Forces' membership dues the Weaving International Friendship

Foundation is to make available to Friends of the Lion members up to \$300 000 worth of additional benefits to ensure that greater understanding may be fostered between the peoples of the United Kingdom and Rhodesia through exchange visits.

The new subsidy will be in the form of exchangeable vouchers and will become available to the new security force members immediately their memberships are processed.

"I have been so impressed with the spirit I have found," said Mr. Weaving, "I felt I just had to contribute something. Our local Association will be pleased to receive written enquiries addressed to the Membership Secretary, Friends of the Lion Association, P.O. Box 2955, Salisbury.

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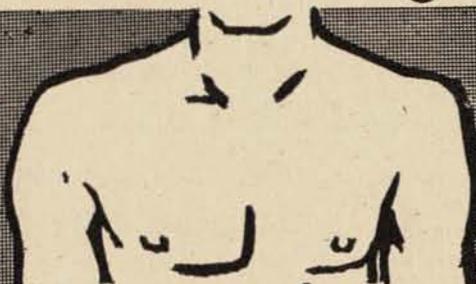
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by 22121762

Field Service Marching Order was obviously a hangover from the days of pipe-clayed gaiters, scarlet uniforms and flintlocks. It was certainly not the dress for today's highly mobile Army. For the uninitiated I had better explain what it was. Apart from the usual underclothes and battledress which one normally wore — the battledress of course with knife-edge creases in the trousers and box pleats in the blouse — there was a mass of other odds and ends which went to make up the soldiers' Haute Couture. Starting from the bottom one wore boots, and boots is boots until they become Boots, Ammunition. Ammunition boots, whose original grain had to be boned and polished until one could see one's self to shave in them, and woe betide the soldier who managed to scratch the pristine surface of these beautiful pieces of footwear. Above this one wore anklets; web, which had to be blancoed, and the buckles, which were of brass, had to be polished until they shone like gold. Blancoeing was a daily performance whereby one brushed on a layer of thin clay-slip of the right colour — but more of that later.

One then put on the Greatcoat, a vast tent of a thing which certainly kept you warm but was virtually a two-man bivouac. There were either ten or twelve buttons which had to be polished on this as well, and so that one did not get the polish on the coat one used a button-stick. As all this clothing was woollen one can imagine how hot one was by the time all this lot was on, but don't think that was the end. This was just the basic clothing, the "essential military accoutrements" had yet to be added to make the "compleat soldier".

Dressed for Arctic warfare, one then put on

one's belt. Naturally enough this had to be blancoed and had brasses. Before putting on one placed on one side one's water bottle, and on the other side one's bayonet frog, complete with bayonet. The scabbard was polished and bayonet, which had been sandpapered and polished, would put many a spit in many a kitchen to shame. A couple of straps were attached from two buckles in one's belt in a St. Andrew's Cross on one's back and fastened in front to the ammunition pouches which were now attached to one's belt. The pouches had to be squared off and made to look 'tiddley'. You then attached a small pack to the belt, which was supposed to contain immediate requirements. The next highly essential piece of equipment was the big pack (about 18" x 12" x 6") which had to be absolutely square and this was done with bits of cardboard. Attached to this with cross straps was a helmet and wrapped across the top was a groundsheet. For added interest, and to give that extra touch of the elegant soldier, was added an entrenching tool, and as the icing one finished off the whole lot with a beret. Naturally enough, any strap, buckle, badge or whatever had a brass ending, which had to be highly, but highly, polished.

Having been pulled, shaken, brushed, combed and bits of blancoe tarted-up, one was now ready to proceed to the ORDERLY ROOM to get one's Movement Order and Rail Warrant. But wait, we haven't finished yet. What about the rest of one's belongings. How were these going to be moved? A batman, a truck, some sort of servant? Kid yourself not. Everything went into your kit-bag, which you hoisted on top of your large pack. Now you were well equipped to go and fight. The fact that you

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couldn't sit and if you lay down were unable to get up were minor considerations which the Army Council had seemingly forgotten. Having been examined by the Orderly Room and the Guard Commander, you were sent on your way. Arriving at the train you loosened your belt and the whole lot came off, hopefully in one complete unit. When you arrived at the interchange station you put the whole lot on again and tried to look as smart as when you started.

Staggering across the station looking for the right platform number for your train you can guarantee that as you were surveying the board two large, cool, smart Military Policemen would come up and ask to see your documents. Of course, being a good soldier your documents and AB 64 Part 1 were in your battledress blouse pocket which was under the webbing and greatcoat and all the rest of it. With much digging and delving eventually you produced them and grandly the Redcaps would let you go on your way. Needless to say by this time the train you thought you were catching had gone.

On arrival at the other end there was the problem of getting to Camp. With luck you might find a truck, but probably you would have to use your own money and take a bus. Settled down in camp you could guarantee that you had

moved from one Military District to another, or one Division to another, and the colour of the blancoe was different. There was to be an inspection the next morning and you had to scrub off all the old colour to the bare canvas and paint on another shade, which could be green, dun or any other colour the local commander might fancy. By the time you had scrubbed, blancoed and polished it was probably time to get up let alone go to bed, and sure as eggs is eggs you were going to be Guard Duty that night.

Don't imagine that all this palaver went on with everyone all the time. You might be lucky and be posted to a unit where one was supposed to look smart but not like a Christmas Tree, in which case things were easy. One shoved all one's FSMO in one kitbag, put on boots, belt and gaiters and shoved off — the rest of the bits and pieces could be cleaned and sorted out in due course as you didn't need them. In fact in my last T.A. unit the only time we wore any sort of uniform was for Pay Parade, if anybody remembered and if we were not too busy. So if anybody whispers to you the mystic letters F.S.M.O. — PREPARE TO MEET THY DOOM.

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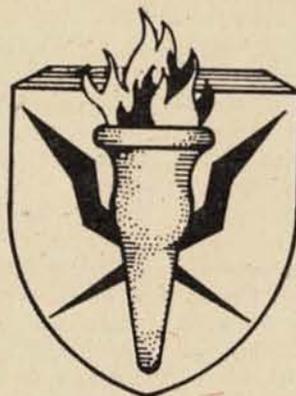


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Depot Diary

There will be no introductory verse and preamble to open our Assegai Notes this month as Padre Walter Beale who normally does the notes ran out of air whilst flying one recent evening and is at present recuperating nursing a broken ankle and a few cuts and bruises. Get well soon, Wally, so you can take over your notes again.

B COMPANY

The Seagull muttered Assegai Notes — I smirked and said that's the OC's baby, only to learn that he has slid off to lurk in Salisbury — exit smirk.

The Lurkers have regrouped — had last month's item been published readers will have followed with bated breath the exploits of the regular staff up at the Sharp End. Our boys on the border have now returned full of lurid tales of contacts they nearly had and even now to enter the company one has to carry out the second section battle drill.

Intake 152 continues to soldier on. After having carried out an excellent defence exercise they are well into their final phase of training looking forward to both their COIN Exercise and the eventual day when they can send a request to Sally Donaldson from the Sticky Sharp End — Bush, etc., etc.

Two more arrivals have joined us from Sh! — both have problems putting the Rhodesian puttee on. Which should indicate from whence they came. To both of them welcome and a long lurk with us.

This extract for Assegai will be the last that Mrs. Jill Rhodes types for the company. Even the offer of a stable of horses would not deter her from going to the North. Best wishes, Jill, have a happy stay in Salisbury.

Although we lose Jill, our replacement is equally charming in the shape of Mrs. Carol Raath. Now you've joined us, Carol, welcome — don't go North, stay and lurk!

C COMPANY

C Company has again become a "Hive of Activity" with the recent arrival of Intakes 153 and D4.

We have had so many trainees reporting sick since the beginning of training that we began to wonder if it was the sight of our CSM that turned so many sick in such a short time — but CSM Radford states this is not the case ???

Our staff numbers have recently been swelled by the arrival of Sgt Tom Bulivant, Sgt John Currie, Sgt Gus Henderson and Sgt John Morey. Overheard recently in the staff room "These ruddy ——— are taking over this Company". Sgt Norman Dickens has recently joined us from HQ Company and to you all we bid a very warm welcome and hope your stay with us will be long and happy.

When the dreaded CO's Inspection was due again the whole Company got into the swing of things and to our disgust the electricity went all wrong the night prior to the Inspection, and all the barrack rooms were in darkness all night —but I am glad to report that even this setback did not daunt the trainees' spirits and all went accordingly to plan and a very good Inspection took place the next day.

We understand that there is no truth whatsoever in the rumour that the whole of B Company Staff are "Singing" all the time these days, but this of course remains to be seen and is open to question.

Our Training Officer, Lt Barry Taylor, has left us for a short while to attend his Course, do come back real soon, Sir, as we all miss you and next time you decide to give an exclusive interview please try Assegai and not Look and Listen. The lady members of the staff are bemoaning the fact that now Lt Taylor is away, there is not a good looking man left in the Company.

Our congratulations to our CQMS Ian Ferreira and his wife Veronica on the birth of their daughter Kerry — who incidentally supposedly weighed 10 lbs. the day she was born, the next day she only weighed 7 lbs. 4 ozs., reckon Ian was a bit confused that day!

The Company now looks forward to entering Phase II of training and dispersal of Specialists. Also, shortly D4 Intake are due to disperse and we wish them all the best of luck in the future.

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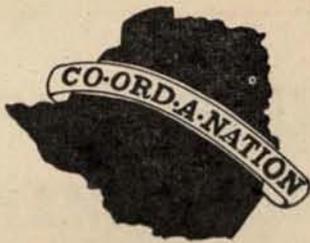
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Wright Rain



By JILL BAKER

There have been some big developments on the Co-ord-A-Nation scene since the last issue of Assegai and we have been quietly attempting to move mountains at all levels.

One example is the work which has been done regarding the floods of offers we have received from South Africans prepared to give up their annual four to six weeks holiday and come up here to work voluntarily and keep industry and commerce afloat so that the men can get on with the war.

This would have obvious advantages in that firms, would, with voluntary help keeping production figures up, be in a position to keep on making up pay, while men in the field would not feel that their jobs were threatened by a four to six week call-up. But there are problems! Temporary work permits if necessary, customs and immigration problems, etc., but we are trying to cut as much red tape as possible, feeling that an offer of help of this magnitude must not be ignored. To do so might result in a lot of bad feeling from across the border.

Not least of the problems is creating awareness among firms throughout the country, establishing where and when help might be needed, and of course, persuading the firms that temporary help could be the answer. Parallels have, of course, been drawn with the Israeli situation and research has been done to find out how they coped with the influx. We may well use the work force left behind, in the shape of your wives and mums, asking them to take a questionnaire round businesses of all kinds, to establish where this help could be used.

One of the most constant complaints has been the fact that there are families left alone while husbands are called up, with no telephones. Several approaches have been made to the P.T.C. but it is obvious that they are having tremendous problems and cannot move any faster. We approached a Mrs. Jocelyn Hulett in Natal to see whether she could send us some alarm bells which Chubb Lock and Safe were prepared to connect. That same day she rallied round and collected enough money to send us ten small sirens with a range of 1½ kilometres . . . we now have these sirens, and as soon as

they have been approved by the police, these will be installed by Rotary, in the homes of priority cases. Their obvious deterrent factor as well as the fact that they would alert the entire neighbourhood means that this will provide a great deal of additional security. Let us know if a relative of yours would like one.

The Institute of Estate Agents, Auctioneers and Valuers has made an appeal to their members to approach landlords requesting them to give consideration to the reduction of flat rentals while the flat is unoccupied because the occupant has been called up. This will apply in the main to bachelors on continuous service . . . if you fall into that category, get hold of us, with all relevant information, and we'll see what we can do.

We have now formed Area Contacts throughout Salisbury . . . these are normally T.F. wives who will form a committee, and then establish all those women in her suburb, or area, who are affected by call-up. The objectives are, of course, to provide additional security by then contacting Civil Defence and the Special Constabulary and asking them to keep an eye on the place, and to organise weapons training, self defence, and other ways to keep them happy while men are away.

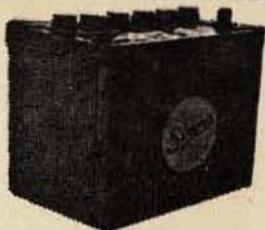
Co-ord-A-Nation will, by the next issue of Assegai, be extended country-wide we hope, and we will be sending out guidelines for each branch in every centre.

We have lists of accommodation offered by people of Salisbury for R & R and have already managed to place several servicemen with great success. Again, should you require accommodation during R & R get in touch.

We have managed to solve an amazing number of extremely diverse problems — everything from sick wives needing baby sitters, to the provision of transport to and from work or to visit wounded relatives, and the solving of make-up pay and other pressing financial problems. We have also managed to get help and advice for a soldier in the process of amalgamating his company when he was called up . . . for another who had crashed his car shortly before leaving on call-up and whose wife was being taken for a ride by the panel beaters . . . we have also arranged accommodation for farmers' wives while their husbands were away.

If you need help in any way . . . or even just a friendly chat in Salisbury . . . don't forget where we are . . .

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