

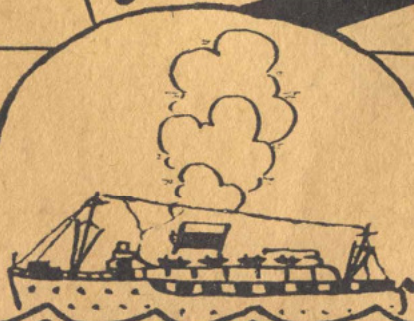
"TEKARO"

VICTORY
VOYAGER..

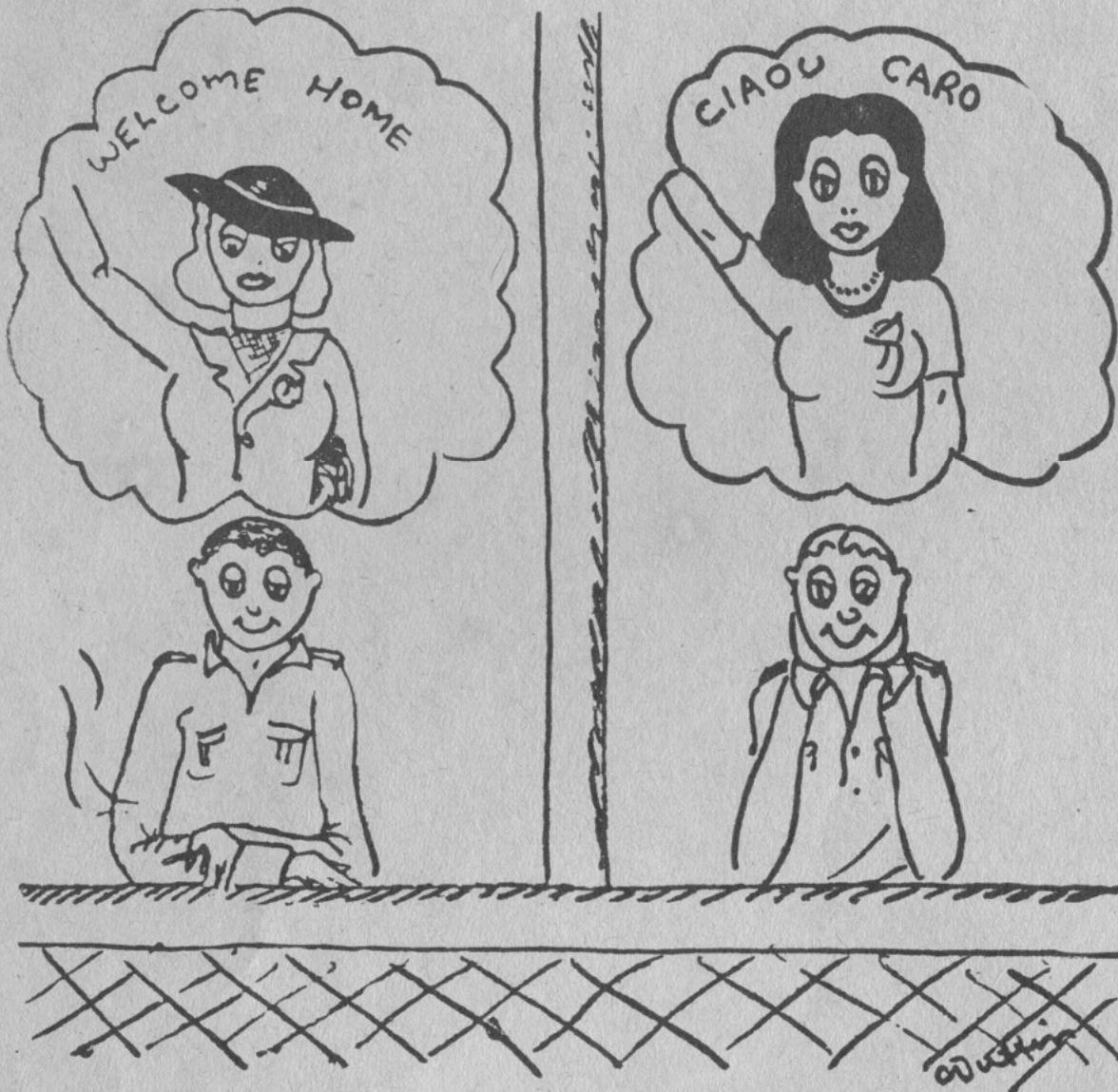


H.M.T.
"STRATHMORE"
SEPT. 1945.

- FRANKMILLER -



SHIPBOARD THOUGHTS



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Introduction

★

WELL, here it is; and emboldened by distance and civilian anonymity, the Editors, contributors and staff take this opportunity of saying at the outset, before the first Grim Dig can exercise his fast-fleeting military privilege of moaning; well—if you don't like it, jump in the lake.

We have tried in this modest (and virtuous) little magazine to give you something that may serve to remind you of your last trip on a trooper (till next time?). It may have been happy or unhappy, filled with regrets and harassed by countless petty annoyances, or spent in a coma storing up potential energy for grappling with Susan and other problems of civilian life. But we hope that, no matter what the trip is doing to you now, or looks like in retrospect, this brief chronicle will provide you with a few pegs on which to hang those public and private orations which are liable to begin: "I remember, 'way back in '45, when I was coming home from the war——!" This is just the plain material. You will have to supply the embroidery.

The Editors take this opportunity of rendering grateful acknowledgments to all those who have assisted in making this magazine the success it is (or we think it is).

The Editorial Committee.

At Sea, 29th September, 1945.



O.C. Troop's Message

★

By the time that most of you read these lines "Tekapo" and all that the name implies will be but a memory for some of a pleasant interlude at sea, to others of a grim period of trooping. However, as one of our artists so aptly depicts, it has been for all of us the "Home Run" and the means of uniting us with our loved ones.

Our special thanks are due to Captain A. Rodger, master of the fine ship that has brought us home, and to his staff and crew whose untiring efforts have ensured us a safe and swift passage.

For my own part I would like to pay credit to all ranks of my staff who have laboured so assiduously in remote corners of the ship for the common good, and to all those whose talents have provided us with excellent entertainment. Your forbearance of our shortcomings has made the task easier.

In conclusion, may I wish you all, service men and women, the happiest of homecomings and the success in the future that you have all so justly earned.

SHIP'S STAFF

O.C. Troops	..	..	Lieut.-Col. V. J. TANNER, D.S.O.
2 I/C.	..	..	Lieut.-Col. W. WAKLIN.
Adjutant	..	..	Major D. L. WOOD, M.C.
Asst. Adjutant	..	..	Capt. L. T. G. BOOTH, M.C.
S.M.O.	..	..	Lieut.-Col. A. G. CLARK, M.C.
Q.M.	..	..	Capt. J. B. MAY.
Asst. Q.M.	..	..	Capt. J. S. DUNLOP.
Mess Officers	..	..	Major E. S. TOOGOOD.
Paymaster	..	..	Capt. G. N. DALZILL.
Guard Comd.	..	..	Capt. W. R. J. GRAY.
			Lieut. P. N. RAY.
			Capt. J. T. SHEPHERD.

Your New Governor-General

BBC wireless news picked up and re-broadcast to the ship a few days after leaving Suez contained an item of great interest to all on board. This was the announcement of the appointment of the G.O.C. 2 N.Z.E.F. as next Governor-General of New Zealand. A message of congratulation was sent by the ship's wireless, and a reply received from the General shortly afterwards.

Lieut.-General Sir Bernard Cyril Freyberg, V.C., K.C.B., K.B.E., G.M.G., D.S.O., LL.D., succeeds Marshal of the R.A.F., Sir Cyril Newall, G.C.B., O.M., G.C.M.G., C.B.E., A.M., who has held the appointment since February, 1941.

Servicemen and women of the Dominion, with whom Sir Bernard and Lady Freyberg have been so long and closely associated, will wish them well in their new and important role.

A brief biography extracted from the ship's newspaper is reprinted:

"Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Freyberg was born at Richmond, Surrey, in 1890, and came to New Zealand with his parents in 1892. He was educated at Wellington College, qualified as a dentist and practised his profession in Wellington. A champion swimmer over many distances, he won the New Zealand swimming championship in 1905 and 1910. He was also prominent in football, rowing and boxing. His adventurous spirit took him to Mexico to serve under Pancho Villa. In 1914 he hastened to England, enlisted in the West Surrey Regiment and took part in the expedition to Antwerp. At Gallipoli, he swam ashore to reconnoitre on the night before the landing. He was awarded the D.S.O. and in 1916 gained the V.C. for gallantry at Ancre. At the age of 27 he was promoted Brigadier-General. During the first World War Sir Bernard was wounded nine times, mentioned in despatches six times, and awarded two bars to the D.S.O. At the conclusion of the war he was posted as a Lieut.-Colonel, Grenadier Guards. He was G.S.O. I at the War Office in 1934-5 and retired from the Army in 1937, but returned in 1939 to be G.O.C. Salisbury Plain. Shortly after the outbreak of war he was appointed General Officer Commanding the Second New Zealand Expeditionary Force. Sir Bernard was married in 1922 to Barbara, widow of the Hon. Francis McLaren, M.P., and daughter of Sir Herbert Jekyll. He attempted to swim the English Channel in 1925 and 1926."

SHIP'S STAFF

Chaplain	Rev. A. R. H. MORRIS, C.F.
Baggagemaster	Major J. R. GREENFIELD, M.C.
Asst. Baggagemaster	Capt. E. F. F. SMITH.
R.S.M.	W.O.1 J. R. J. KENNEDY.
R.Q.M.S.	W.O.2 T. L. JACKSON.
Gifts Officer	Major G. H. BELL.
Games Officer	Capt. R. H. THEVENARD.
	Major A. B. KERR.
Entertainment Officers	Rev. W. J. THOMPSON, C.F.
	2/Lieut. F. T. WEBB.
	Mr. R. M. SALMON, Y.M.C.A.
E.R.S.	Major D. W. SINCLAIR.

Trieste Interlude

...And Still I think of him as Cosmo Topper. Could his remarkable likeness to that screen personality permit me to do other? Thus, for the purpose of this narrative, though obviously it is not his real name, Cosmo Topper will suffice.

We met one evening by Trieste's beautiful waterfront, where, as was my custom, I was strolling contentedly along enjoying to the utmost the peace of the long twilight and the delicious flavour of my well-seasoned briar, when a smile, a cheery salutation and an obligation, small enough things in themselves, together provided all that was necessary to secure for me, in the person of Topper, as fine a friend as one could wish.

Perhaps, after all, there is "something about a soldier," and when that soldier is a disciple of Dale Carnegie, Lever Bros., and the manufacturers of McLean's toothpaste, there is little wonder that an invitation to the Topper mansion in Via Paduina was soon forthcoming.

Now, reader, all I ask is that you be fair. It is, I admit, common knowledge that the Kiwi soldier overseas is thick in the hide and that he rarely does things without some ulterior motive, yet...how was I to know that Topper had a niece whose beauty, charm and many talents were unexcelled in this fair city of Trieste?

Topper, until his retirement nine years ago, had been a director of the Commercial Bank of Italy, Turin. Now, in his fiftieth year, he was studying for his final as Doctor of Economics. No mean feat for one of his age.

Mrs. Topper, I soon found, was another Billy Burke. Like most women she had a heart of gold, but again like most women, she "nattered" too much.

Topper, the student, had further distractions. Besides Luciano, 17-year only son, whose adolescent legs protruded ridiculously out of his brief khaki shorts, there were his two sisters-in-law, a nephew Giorgio, his kid sister Lea—and the NIECE.

Following my arrival, events moved swiftly in the Via Paduina household.

In the first minute I was subjected to a double-barrelled kiss from each of the three matrons; in the second I was installed in the sitting room as a prize exhibit and complimented upon my command of the Italian language; and in the third I found that, in attempting to put on a good show, I was continually saying "Si" and "No" in all the wrong places; what else could those popping eyes and scandalised looks indicate?

In a desperate attempt to reinstate myself I delved into my trousers' pocket and produced my battle-worn Rosary beads. Surely in an Italian household they would work the oracle. They did. Ten minutes had ticked by and the battery of matrons having fired more rounds per minute than I could in as many hours, ran short of conversational ammunition. However, the family photograph album, always a good standby for such difficult situations, was trotted out. Yes, there was the Topper family at the Chateau in the Alps; there they were again in Venice; there was Luciano when he was nine months—wasn't he a little darling?—and here, Lorenzo, is the NIECE. Lorenzo at this juncture comes out of his trance, swallows hard, gazes goggle-eyed at the Venus de Milo, passively accepts further photographs of the Toppers, this time in Turin, and falls once more into a trance wondering how all the Toppers in creation could possibly produce such a lovely piece of woo.

From then on, in the words of the great prophet, "I'd had it." No longer could I feign interest in the meanderings of Oswald, Cosmo, Billie, Luciano, or the Aunts. I had only one thought—Where was the NIECE? Would she put in an appearance that evening and to what extent could I expect the principles of the great Carnegie to influence her?

Time passed by—half an hour, an hour, maybe two, but of the NIECE there was no sign. Somehow or other I managed to pull myself together. It was late, I was tired, and so also were the Toppers. My billets were a con-

siderable distance away and the curfew had already been in effect nearly an hour. I must go.

And still that thought persisted—
Where was the NIECE?

Cosmo, God bless him, guided me to the door. Young once himself, he had sensed where the trouble lay. Cherchez

la femme holds good even in Italia. "Lorenzo," I heard him say, "Tomorrow my niece returns from Padua and I should be delighted to present you to her should you return domani sera." "Mille grazia, amico, delighted," I carolled, and bidding him a joyous farewell, contented, floated home.

—Tpr. B. L. KELLY.

★

"RUMOURS"

As far back as April, before the war was won,
And Kiwis slyly told their pals where business could be done;
When sessions of the "roosters' blood" were the order of the night,
And Herman's neibbelwerfers oft gave us quite a fright;
Yes! as far back as April, or it may have been before,
When everyone was betting on the day we'd win the war.
Yes! we'll be home this Christmas! Snow got it from the Brig!
And Clueless Jones just heard it from his brother who's a Sig!

We filled the 40-litre up, to see the 7ths go.
Our Borsolino's wouldn't fit, our heads were aching so.
Boy! then the stories rattled in—'twas August, then September;
The different days and months I heard, I never did remember.
With bleeding hearts we left Trieste, with many an ardent "chow,"
To build anew a life and love. Those girls could kiss—and how.
With Maria of Perugia my life was one of bliss,
But now her luscious, latin charms, I find I do not miss.

The rumours always rattled in from origins unknown.
There always was an answer to "When are we going home?"
At last, with "Molte lire" we headed down to Base;
The stories that we heard there, all told with a wise face.
Then sailing from Taranto we were safe upon the seas,
To watch old Tommy Atkins making love to the A.T.'s,
In Egypt we all had "our" days to sail out in the blue;
Of course mine was the dinkum griff, believe me, I'm telling you.

At Tewfik I began to think I'd left these tales behind,
But after climbing on the "Strath," this is what I find.
"Oh! we're going to Colombo and Melbourne town as well."
"No! it's 20 days to N.Z.; you're story's all to hell."
Where do all these rumours start? Where do they go to breed?
I believe they have their origins where I do my worst fatigue.
In "civvie street" they'll carry on with rumours; this I fear.
Is there a town where people boast: WE DON'T TELL RUMOURS
HERE!

—Pte. A. U. D. CHALMERS.

"Hot Stuff"

"Hey, there!" yelled the Major addressing a pair of size 10 WD boots which projected from under the front end of his bug. There was a muffled response of "Yessir," and the boots gradually emerged, followed by the hot perspiring face of Clueless.

"Sorry to interfere with your farewell party and all that," said Major, "but I've got a job for you. Must go over to Udine for a day or two." Clueless groaned as he thought of the Purple Death and Roosters' Blood stocked in the truck for the evening's farewell party to the Tekapos. "But, sir," he stammered. "And get all that rot-gut out and throw it away," added the Major brusquely as he moved off.

Clueless licked his lips and muttered inarticulately, unconsciously gripping his spanner tightly in a moist palm. Ever since the embarkation list had come out there had been great activity in the camp, following a conference of the leading "plonk artists" in the little sack-walled "Ministry of Information" in the pine trees on the hillside. Furtive activity, because of the Major's well-known antipathy to plonk and all other beverages of a like nature, favoured by ORs.

In no time the O.C. was back, and energetically searching the truck for even a stray cork. When the benghasi tipped over a roll of lire notes fell out. "Here, what's this?" he barked. "Er—," shuffled Clueless, "we . . . er . . . collected from the boys for . . . er . . . some doings for tonight, sir." "Well, get in and get going," said the O.C. impatiently, and Clueless obeyed.

As they sped down the hillside to where Trieste sparkled in the hot sunshine, the Major held forth on the evils of plonk as the unit had heard him hold forth a hundred times before. As the sun mounted higher, shimmering on the tar-sealed road, Clueless licked his lips and groaned inwardly. "Bet I never see a drop after those rats have been in," he thought sadly.

After the fourth stop, the Major said acidly, "What's the matter with the truck? This hasn't happened before. Have you been neglecting your maintenance again?" Red and perspiring,

Clueless emerges from the vehicle, and they started off again. The sun was a scorching, fiery ball, and even the Major felt that a drop of, say, Chianti or some superior wine would not be out of place. Suddenly he sniffed suspiciously.

"Have you been drinking again, Clueless?" he barked. "Oh, no, sir," said Clueless, loosing his collar. "I've got halitosis or somefink awful bad." Partly satisfied, the Major subsided. But gradually Clueless's face grew redder, his breathing heavier, and undoubtedly his breath was scented with something stronger than eau de Cologne.

At the next enforced stop the Major, thoroughly roused, went through the vehicle with a fine toothed comb. Not a clue. He even sniffed in the spare petrol tank. Then, stooping to the roadway, he noticed a half-filled bottle of red liquid conveniently near the elbow of Clueless, who was again recumbent. He swept the bottle up and swigged a sample. The language that followed would not have been tolerated in any mess. Pure high octane. "Get her going, for Heaven's sake," he snarled; "we're an hour late."

An hour later they entered Udine. The Major, relenting a little, said, "it's damnably hot." "Yessir," said Clueless innocently. "Never known it so hot before." The Major sniffed again. Dammit, the odour was unmistakable. If Clueless were not so dumb. . . . Oh, well, perhaps he had taken a noggin before leaving, and perhaps if there was some real Chianti in the town he would have a small glass himself. As Clueless pulled the vehicle into a side street, the Major climbed out, mopping his dripping face. "Never known it so hot," he muttered as he walked off. A slow grin spread over Clueless's homely face. "By Crikey," he said to the distant retreating back, "You've got something there. But it's better than nothing." Saying which he again crawled under the bug, untied the knot in the tube attached to the radiator drain plug and drank long and contentedly of the dark purple liquid which flowed out.

Dvr. A. M. SMITH.

Tram Ride in Alexandria

The tramway company believes in class distinction. It offers first and second class accommodation at reasonable prices, and in some cases a compartment for the harem. They take no chances of their tickets being used again, and after being in this country for a few hours no one will call them over-cautious. Printed on all tickets are the following particulars: the months of the year, dates of the month, time in half-hours for the whole twenty-four hours of the day, fare stages, and other data the translation of which is a secret between the company and its conductor.

With a pencil which resembles a nearly consumed portion of Brighton rock and is either red or blue, the conductor loyally ticks on each ticket the correct month, day, half-hour, point of embarkation, limit of travel, and other various entries in the secret data. The passengers address him the whiles in many tongues: English, Greek, French, and Arabic in about equal proportions predominate. Those passengers speaking the latter tongue, from force of habit born of many generations of haggling, may decide to bargain over the fare. Hands flap and voices rise to a fortissimo crescendo. In this country the most effective way of silencing one's opponent is to hold his arms (but this is not cricket!).

The coins, too, are complicated: the fares, due to a percentage increase, are awkward amounts, and one's sympathies are at first sight with the polygot conductor. That worthy gentleman, however, recoups himself for the bad coins passed him by the local inhabitants and provides for his old age—or another wife—by short changing His Britannic Majesty's Forces; by vanishing miraculously without giving them any change at all, or just frankly declaring that he has no change. The latter course is now discouraged by a growing tendency on the part of H.B.M. Forces to look into the bag for themselves.

Having no illusions as to the innate honesty of its public and its conductors, the company employs inspectors

in the ratio of one inspector one tram. These ticket inspectors average one to the mile. They can unfold, tear and refold the flimsy tickets with one hand. Of course their over-inspectors are appointed to keep a fatherly eye on the inspectors, and judging by the number of rings on the sleeve these super men must rank at least equal with a Wing Commander.

The driver or "wattman" is a lonely man standing on the front of the car under a notice written in four languages, for it is forbidden to engage the wattman in conversation. This is a wise rule, as any little chat would occupy his hands continuously for its duration. His main grouse is the limited scope allowed for the running down of pedestrians, most of his track being fenced with fixed gaps where the public is admitted, as stopping points. He relieves these repressions by stamping continuously on his bell, crossing or no crossing.

The tram train is made up of three cars, each with its conductor, a double-decker usually having either the front or rear position. Every conductor is provided with a horn. He in the front car blows once, then the second pipes up twice, finally the third thrice. This procedure takes place only after intending and ex-passengers in their respective cars have fought to a standstill. The driver is expected to wait for the completion of the calls before stepping on the watts, and often does.

To say that the conductors blow more than one toot, two toots, or three toots as the case may be is hardly to do them justice. All conductors elaborate their calls with variations expressing their individuality and though the Eastern school persists, the present vogue of swing, hot, or jam music has been incorporated. The concerted efforts of two three-car trams standing together and starting from a halt resembles the "Post Horn Gallop" arranged by Benny Goodman, and played by six Louis Armstrongs. The whole composition is accompanied by neat footwork on the bells by the wattmen.

Gunner V. J. HENRY.

New Zealand

To New Zealand,
Insular by nature,
Sunny, egotistical,
Starched by church morality
And self-righteousness,
We return. . . .

You may claim:
"New Zealand's hills
Are greener far
Than the hills of any
Other country are." . . .

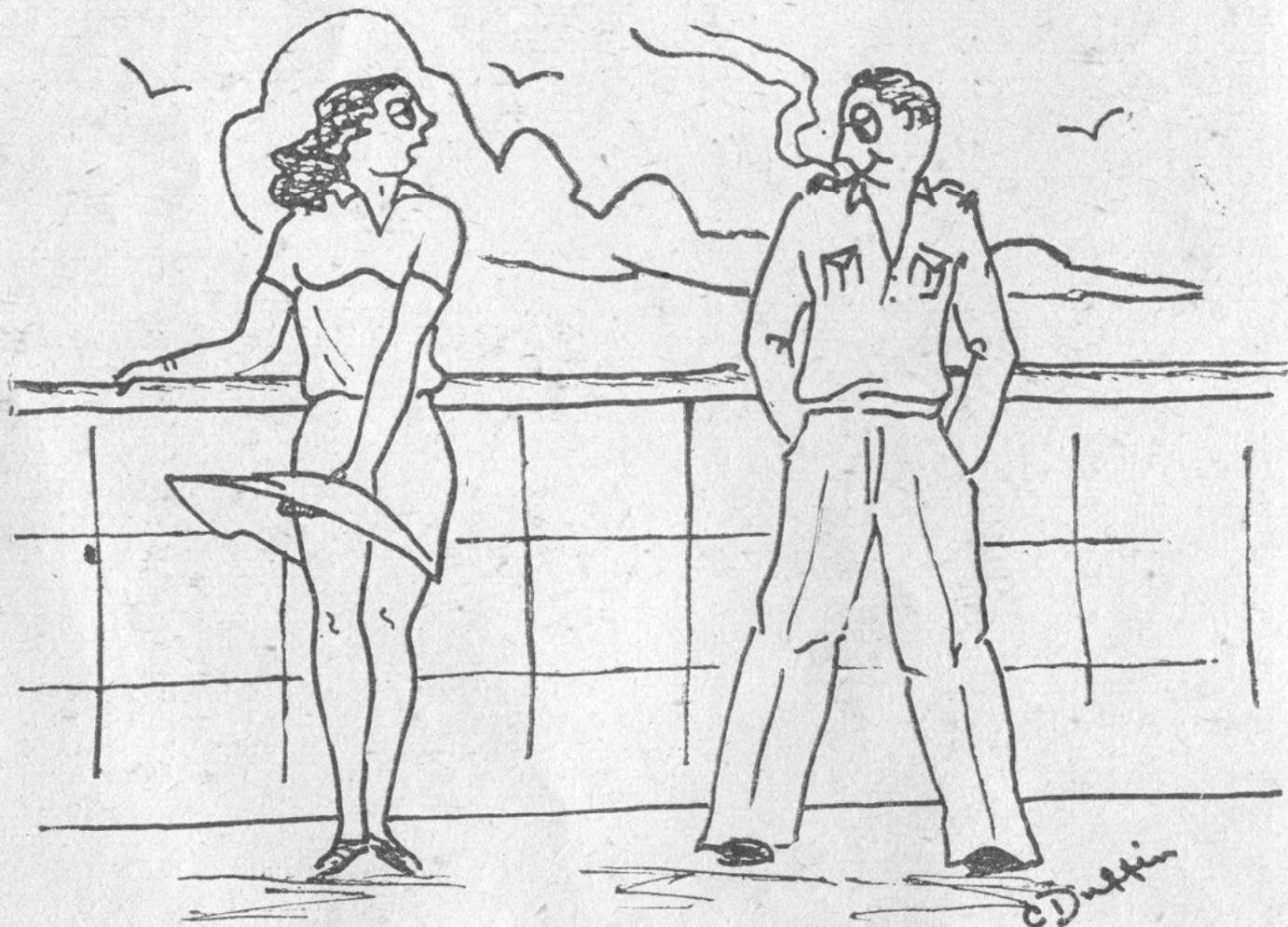
But green as green apples,
Gawky as a foal,
Freckled, pig-tailed,
Pimpily faced, adolescent,
Yet, growing!

—Sgt. G. D. S.

Happy Days

I was back in Hut 212 at Maadi staring at the wall and where all the bed bugs go in the daytime. Suddenly I remembered. This was the first day of my leave. I got out of bed. After dinner I would collect my leave pass, then off to Cairo; book in at the Club; perhaps even a few Stellas—my thoughts rambled on.

Early morning train to Alex, then pictures, beer, lazing and swimming, Stanley Bay and Sidi Bishr. But then, quite abruptly I was struck with a peculiar thought. "Would the tide be in?" I know it does not make any difference, but the thought seemed to obsess me. Then "George" appeared; he clutched me by the arm and tugged. I think he was trying to tell me that the tide was OK. I wake—to find I was still on the "Strathmore," an Indian deck-hand was shaking me: "Wakee, Wakee Johnnie, washee deck." From near at hand came the sound of rushing water—the tide was coming in fast.



SEA LEGS

Strathmore Blues . . .

Carrying bags for gentlemen but nothing from their bar,
Obeying men for ranks they wear and not for what they are.
Working for your pay and then saluting for it too,
Queueing up for breakfast and then queueing for the Q.
Girls that don't speak English, and mighty few at that,
Remembering your blood type and the number of your gat.
Holey sox and sweaty shirts, words that aren't so holy,
Cash that disappears too soon and leave that won't go slowly.
Eating munga thrown at you instead of choosing victuals,
Going weeks without a beer and very little skittles.
Getting up at 5 a.m. to tell the Doc. you're ill,
Compelled to volunteer for jobs quite against your will.
Stacking gear and blankets after someone else's taste,
Too much "Get a move on" instead of "Please make haste."
Ordered round like sheep and goats by stripes and pips and crowns,
Haunted by a circled cross that means you're out of bounds.
A man could go like this all day and growl and moan and beef,
But the Editor's instruction says that poems must be brief.
In any case the microphone is blaring from the wall:
"Attention, please. It's nine o'clock. Go up on deck.—That's all."

Sgt. R. G. HUTTON.

★

Deck Daze

I often lie upon the deck,
And sadly dream—but what the heck!

A mental sweep of "B" Deck square,
And—enter Gents and Damsels fair,
The night is cool, the music's not,
The Captain bellows, "Let's get hot,"
"Tonight's my birthday, let 'er go,
"The Strathmore's yours—from P. & O."
There's half the Delhi Simla set
(They're all in India's Debrett).
The Rajah Bong of Pandavive
And partner do the Hindu jive.
A lovely blonde from near Darjeeling
And I—interpret jazz with feeling.
Supper's served now in the lounge,
We just stroll in—no need to scrounge.
The munga's swell, it ought to be,
For guys who travel first like me,
"The best that P. & O. can offah,
"My dear Grimdygge, just try this
coffah."

I feel just like a million pounds . . .

HEY! WAKE UP, YOU, YOU'RE OUT
OF BOUNDS!

I often lie upon the deck,
But I can dream—so what the heck!

Sgt. W. J. GARDINER.

CONVERSATION PIECE

"C" Deck

"Wish I had me old Benghazi, Bill;
cuppa the old Mike Magee would be
just the gears."

"Struth, benghazi! What about fires
at sea?"

"Aw, I dunno, I reckon she'd be
jake on that steel hatch lid."

"Cripes, you'd be popular with the
Skipper with the flamin' smuts all
driftin' upta the bridge and gettin'
mixed up in that sex business they tell
the time with or somethin'."

"Garn, they tell the time with a
chronometer, not a sextant."

"But how do they know when to put
on 30 minutes, like today?"

"Aw, they have a lotta spooks' gear
up there, technical stuff, you know."

"Great business, navigation."

"Yeah! Cripes, but I could do a dish
of chi!"

PRIVATE KIWI—A.B.

It's amazing how quickly the ever-versatile Kiwi settles down to life aboard ship. His old ways and habits vanish, and for a few weeks he becomes quite nautical-minded. He does nothing by halves—once his mind is made up. His long, swinging, marching gait gives way to the easy rolling movement of body and limbs associated with all true sailors.

His vocabulary also changes. The "sharp end" becomes the "bow"; the "blunt end" the "stern." If a chap is hard up, he's on his "beam-ends." And so on. Only a week out from Suez, and yet one can hear rich nautical language on all sides. Commonplace to hear a trooper remark, "She's making a steady 17 knots," or a driver speaking of some object "off the starboard quarter" or maybe the "port bow."

However, quite the most startling transformation is from the common or garden bed to that unholy, ungainly

contraption of strings and ropes, the hammock. The first night out, it seemed to sneer at him; but it was soon dealt a shattering blow. It is now slung at any time, anywhere, at a speed which must be seen to be believed. Indeed, experienced members of the ship's crew have stated that never have they seen so many hammocks slung so quickly or so skilfully as by the boys from "Way Down Under." Moreover, that effortless, acrobatic way of "getting in" was learned in a minimum of sittings. Injuries received have been negligible.

In short, the Kiwi has become a seafaring man. However, remark the second transformation when he disembarks; remark how his natural habits and language return, how he re-assumes his long, swinging gait as he heads for the nearest pub, to demand, in fluent Italian, "a noggin of the best."

Dvr. A. M. SMITH.

BREAKFAST

Breakfast is entertaining on a troopship. It is also mysterious, for no one knows what it is before he gets it and few have the courage to suggest what it might be when they do.

But apart from deciding the vitamin content of a plateful of "mysterious," one seldom finds breakfast, whether eaten or not, without interest. At our table we have "Snow." You should hear how he made his tactical disposition in an attack on "objective" in Trieste. Yes, sir, a masterpiece of strategy. He took her to the—well, after all, we were talking of breakfasts. Oh yes. With breakfast we must always have an orderly officer. (No salt, please.)

My impressions of the O.O. will always be vivid. He comes along each morning, and because his moustache is very early Victorian, we all feel he would be much happier if we all hissed at him—preferably in unison—and seems quite disappointed when we don't. As if he may have cooked all the breakfast himself and expects ap-

proval, he enquires discreetly, "All right? All right?" expectantly. Of course we all hasten to assure him that it is "all right," partly because we couldn't stand his pathetic look of injured innocence and partly because it's no damn use complaining anyway.

For some reason there's always water on our table; not much, but just a fascinating little rivulet. You can take bets on its course and wonder how much more the ship will roll before "Snow's" B & B & Jam becomes an island.

We discussed the Battle of Jutland yesterday with the salt as the British Fleet. It was all so convincing, but at the crucial moment the tide went out, leaving half the British fleet stranded on the butter plate while the Admiral went sailing graciously out to sea on a fork.

And you wonder what made the fog lift—at the Battle of Jutland? Well, just try putting a plate of pepper under a blower.

"Gunner" 50207.

The Great Indian (Ocean) Rope Trick

At last the secret may be told to an astonished world. I heard it from the lips of Commander F. (for Freddy) Washedeck, R.N. (Retired), our "top deck" expert on Indian Peninsular and other Oriental mysteries. The Commander also enjoys the reputation of being the only Englishman to descend into the ill-famed caves of Strathmur—and come out alive. His latest incredible adventure was related to me in the lounge of the luxury liner "Mathstrove," that floating miracle of superlative—nay, 1st class—comfort. He was about to set out on a holiday cruise to the South Sea Islands.

The story began with his landing on the coast of Darkest Ceylon without arms, food or guide. He was, on his own admission, also without a leave pass. Penetrating the "Forbidden City" of Ceylon, mysterious Colombo, he learned from the High Banshee himself the Secret of the Rope, mystic symbol of division between the Upper and Lower Worlds. The whole thing, said Washedeck, was a marvel of simplicity providing you got the hang of it. He nearly did himself.

"At a sign from the Banshee," began the explorer, flicking his half-finished cigarette through a porthole, "two lascar slaves glided forward and fastened a rope across an open space, about the width, say, of the deck of this ship. I examined the rope, and then the knots. They could not have been tied more securely. On the rope itself was hung a Hindu prayer, the meaning of which, long forgotten by the people, is known only to the Banshee himself. It is still, however, an essential part of the trick." A second sign and a host of half-naked savages ran in and prostrated themselves on their backs on the aft—ha! ha! pardon me—the left side of the rope. They were Qeeouees, a remote island tribe brought to Ceylon in slave ships. "At a sign from the Banshee," went on Washedeck, pouring himself out a double whisky, "mysterious music was heard, interrupted by a voice. The music was discordant and shrill—I mentally compared it at the time with a badly-tuned wireless. The voice

seemed to utter nonsense syllables, as not even the Qeeouees paid any attention to it. The whole thing seemed just a background of noise."

The Commander set down his glass. "At the height of the din," he continued in a tense voice, "High Banshee sprang to his feet, and screamed something like 'Ah-Ten-Shun-PLIEEZ!!!' Immediately I felt the ground roll beneath me like the deck of a ship, a sensation like seasickness overwhelmed me in hot and cold waves. A mist swam before my eyes. . . ." The Commander lit a cigarette with trembling hands.

"The blackout lasted perhaps five seconds, and as it passed I found my eyes focussing on the rope. IT HAD MOVED! THE QEEUOEEES NOW LAY ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ROPE! Yet it was ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE for the Qeeouees to have untied the rope and moved it in that time!" He sank back exhausted by the memory of the incident. "How do you account for this amazing circumstance, my dear Washedeck?" I gasped.

"I have thought about it many, many times," he replied, flicking his cigarette away. "Of two things I am absolutely certain. First, the Lascars did not move the rope; and second, the Qeeouees had not moved across the rope. There were actually guards, called Empeez, to see that this very thing did not occur. And yet I wonder. For some unaccountable reason I had the impression that the Banshee was a bit mystified by the result himself!" We sat in silence. "There's really nothing to add," said Commander Washedeck finally, "except this curious fact. No one has ever succeeded in REVERSING THE TRICK—not with Qeeouees."

Sgt. J. W. GARDINER.



HOWLERS OF HAREBRAIN

(Clueless's Kid Brother)

"Magna Carta said the King was not to order taxis without the consent of Parliament."

Shadow . . .

He smiled, and then I saw
His brown hand beat
A silent tattoo on the bright red box
Upon the gate.
His gate—within was peace.
Outside the small boys played at war,
Stamped their young feet,
Made martial gestures, planted rocks
As minefields—
Minefields!—I saw his pipe
Droop in his lips,
His fingers beat a faster tattoo now.
He raised his arm—
Then came cool fingers in his crisp
black hair.
His wife; beneath his arm she slips,
And pointing proudly she shows him
how
Their son has grown—calm,
He smiled once more. D.W.S.

★

HOWLERS OF HAREBRAIN (Clueless's Kid Brother)

"In Egypt, farming is done mostly
by irritating the land."

Returned Soldier

Having for a long time, a long time,
balanced precariously on a knife's edge,
the mind at last revolts;
we want no bar-room audience, under-
and no brass band. [stand,

There was a job to do,
and it was done. Not many
will make a song about it.

The drama was sufficiently grandiose,
the decor magnificent, the hero
a continent tossing on a sick bed;
but we're tired of playing the physi-
cian,
The curtain down. Finis . . . at least
an intermission.

Remain a few remembered
interludes, nostalgic fragments . . .
do you recall, Luigi, my partisan
friend,
the osteria at San Casciano
where we drank and sang until
morning
crept up silently through the broken
town? Sgt. J. G. MALE.

★

TROOPSHIP TRAGEDY

Even as blankets are dragged aside
and bleary-eyed blink feebly in the
first light of day, a faint sense of ex-
citement fills the air—as small as a
man's hand. But as the hour of munga
approaches rumour is rife—runs from
front to back, gathering momentum
and variations on its way through the
ablutions. There is a babble of excited
speculation among the grim digs be-
low decks, and even among the officers
—cramped high in their lofty retreat
behind the ropes—it is circulated with
enthusiasm.

It is the day.

And so, glistening bodies emerge
from the bowels of the ship and, stag-
gering under the load, the cases are
borne aloft. Neckchiefed figures con-
verge from near and far, and clutch-
ing the spoils to their breasts, scurry
happily away.

Then of a sudden, a great rending
of cloth and tearing of paper is to be
heard throughout the ship, and such

cries of childish delight as have not
been heard since base kits were opened
and all the treasures of yesteryear
laid bare. But what is this? The
clamour of the crowd is united; surely
there must be some mistake—this
thing cannot be. Nervous hands pluck
at the varied selection, and Nestle's
Cream and Mr. Smith's razor blades,
Bluff oysters and khaki handkerchiefs
are scattered in desperate search. But
no—the truth is out—there is no foot-
powder.

For nigh on three years in all this
topsy turvy world but three things
have stood secure: the Landlord, the
Great Reaper, and Footpowder in our
Patriotic parcels—this unchanging
triumvirate; and now—this thing is
taken from us.

The faith of a simple soldier is
shattered. A dark page has been
turned in the history of our magnifi-
cent Division.

Sgt. H. R. SAUNDERS.

KIBITZERS

Doubtless you have all been victims of Kibitzers in your time; if not, you probably will be ere this boat berths at Timaru. Oh! you don't know what a Kibitzer is? Well, a Kibitzer is one of those kind-hearted souls who insist in dashing to your rescue shouting, "Don't play that one; play this one," just when you are going to make a winning finesse at bridge. They feel sure that you should not be deprived of the services of their brilliant brain, and in the face of such assurance you are cowed into accepting their advice and you go two light, but of course that is not their fault; if they could have played the hand sooner they would have made game or possibly a slam. Do you recognise him now? If you don't you are singularly fortunate, unless you are a heavy-weight boxing champion.

The Kibitzer in his turn may have a fibitzer Kibitzer, who aids and abets the Kibitzer. It is not necessary for the Fibitzer and Fibitzer Kibitzer to be friends; in fact it is not possible. Then we have the fibitzer kibitzer's Kibitzer, who gives the majority vote. Frequently this gentleman, on this boat especially, may find himself kibitzing two or even three games at once, a practice frowned on by the union of Kibitzers.

The Kibitzer sits at your right elbow, the fibitzer Kibitzer can only get comfortable with his scarps rubbing up and down the knobs of your spine, and the fibitzer kibitzer's Kibitzer tries to peer over their shoulders. They discuss your hand in a stage whisper, and it requires great forbearance on behalf of your opponents to refrain from using the information so gained. You get a pat hand dealt to you, and while you are considering how best to make a slam, they start an argument over your opening lead, the whole thirteen cards in your hand being fully discussed. Unfortunately they are unable to agree and they each try to play a card from your hand. The Kibitzer leans forward to grab his choice and his cigarette burns a hole in your elbow; the Fibitzer Kibitzer kicks his boots right into your kidneys

in his haste; and the Fibitzer Kibitzer's Kibitzer, who can only get at your hand over your head, slops the cup of chi he should have been drinking into your hair and you are quite happy; then you go three light and you are happier still. They have not noticed any of these things, so engrossed are they in the game, so you are forced to smile tolerantly and pass it with a gay little laugh. It is definitely no use thrusting the hand at the Kibitzer saying, "Here, play the b—— hand yourself;" sarcasm in all its finer forms has been wasted on these gentry ever since Culbertson first said "No bid." They would probably pass them back to you saying, "No, go ahead, you are playing it excellently, only I think Culbertson and I don't agree on your play."

Well, I have warned you, this menace is ever present, so beware! Ah, I see a bridge game going on over there, I must go and see if I can offer any advice. "SCOTTY."

★

Troopship Version of "Grace Before Meals"

O Lord, bless this food
For which we have queue'd,
And calm the tempestuous ocean;
There's no hope for meals
In a stomach that feels
In a state of perpetual motion.

Pte. J. C. RIST.

★

HOWLERS OF HAREBRAIN (Clueless's Kid Brother)

"Hereditry means that if your grandfather didn't have any children then your father probably wouldn't have had any, and neither would you, probably."

* * *
"Socrates died from an overdose of wedlock."
* * *

"A litre is a nest of young puppies."

Troopship (WITH APOLOGIES TO MASEFIELD)

Sluggish British troopship full of war-stained Kiwis,
Sailing to New Zealand through the far South Seas,
With cabins for officers, W.Os. and nurses,
Civilians, R.A.F. and folk like these.

Fine accommodation for the war-made gentry,
Dining on the luxury of first-class fare;
While the soldiers are sweating in the close packed mess-rooms,
Queueing up for munga with an oft-thought swear.

Swaying, swinging hammocks hung from broad-beamed rafters,
Packed above the tables in the light of day.
Kit bags, battledress, cutlery and chinaware.
Washing in a bathroom four feet two each way.

Happy British troopship with the home-bound Kiwis,
Sailing to New Zealand in the far South Seas;
With a complement of cheerful, laughing veterans,
Happy to be heading to a life of ease.

—E.A.B.



Is it a Record?

Sir,—Here are some personal statistics from the first four days of this voyage. What I want to know is: Is this a record? I have:

1. Walked 267 yards and climbed 267 steps carrying 267 lbs. in two kit bags.
2. Dripped four litres of perspiration—an estimate—I'm sure it's more. An uncle of mine who came out to New Zealand in 1929 says he lost 18 lbs. in the Red Sea. However, he weighed 20 stone.
3. Queued up, for various public and private reasons, 56 times.
4. Drunk 8 litres of tea, 6 litres of water, 3 of soft drinks, 2 litres 576 cc. of lime juice.
5. Read seven books, including "Cricket on the Hearth" and "Uncle Tom's Cabin."
6. Lost 30/- betting on (a) the temperature and (b) whether the ship had passed Aden.

Excuse my giving liquid measures in litres, but that's how we used to buy rosso. As Dante observed when enduring a similar experience:—

"O come bella la tua memoria,
Pero tristissima. . . ."

which has been well translated by Bob Hope,

"Thanks for the memory—
Of Chianti in the flask."

But emotion chokes me.—Yrs,

EXPECTANT FATHER.

La bella reposa

or Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep

"Oh, blessed sleep, whyfore hast thou deserted me?" asked one of Shakespeare's characters. Henry was his name if I remember right, though I've forgotten his serial number. He had quite a moan about it... "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown..." Well, I mean to say, why did the silly cow wear his crown to bed? A tin hat was uncomfortable enough. ("That crown business. A metaphor," says a passing wise guy, breathing heavily down my neck.) Well, never having dealt with any crowns but the ones on crown and anchor boards, beer bottles and majors, I wouldn't know.

Anyway, about this dormire business, I'm all in favour of it. Right after dinner I make a grab for my life jacket. Don't panic, digs, I have every confidence in this A plus L ship's buoyancy; I'm just going to use it as a pillow for my siesta. All the best people have after-dinner naps, you know, including Winston Churchill.

I find a good possie where the Trade winds DON'T blow, and get the head down. A procession of large feet stumbles over me. Group 13 is holding a muster parade aft. I andare via elsewhere, and am soon enjoying my favourite dream, which bears no resemblance whatever to the one that fellow Sinatra sings about. Suddenly—"Look out, dig," and a cloud of dust, cigarette butts and housie tickets, propelled by an enthusiast with a broom, is bearing down on my starb'd bow. It's time for chai, anyway.

About 2230 hours I sling my hammock, and with a neat little trapeze act, climb into it. I'm staring straight at the light, so I put a towel over my eyes. A low murmur from the card players, an occasional moan of mental

anguish from a pair of chess players, the swish and slap of the sea... peace.

Click, of a switch. "What the b—hell. Who the ———— put that b——— light out? Put 'er on again," comes the card player's chorus. Click of a switch again. "Put the ———— thing out. Why don't you sons-of-bachelors go to bed? How the hell can a man sleep with that glare?" Finding that their protests are ignored, and being too lazy to get up, the bed-lovers decide to make the best of it.

I set my towel in place again and go to sleep.

A school of particularly vigorous porpoises is bumping the keel. No, stana, it's the card players off to attend to nature's needs before retiring. A series of bumps on the other side tells me they're all back.

Someone is telling a story in a low voice... "and this Yank says to the sheila..." I can't quite hear it.

"Hey, c'mon, Mac," says someone, pulling at my leg. I stare, bleary-eyed, at my watch. Three-thirty in the morning. What the hell?

"Picquet, of course."

"Picquet be ————ed."

"Aren't you McGillicuddy? Aint this E3?"

"No, you ——— fool. ——— off."

A young earthquake, accompanied by a vigorous and tuneless whistling, tells me that Unk, who sleeps on the deck underneath, is up and about. It's 5.30.

Half an hour later I decide I too may as well rise for an early wash. Wherever I go I stumble over masses of huddled bodies, and bump into others suspended in hammocks. Damn nuisance the jokers who won't get up.

"Oh blessed sleep."

—"HAMMOCK HAPPY"

Nature Notes

Nature Notes—and letters to the Editor from “the man on E deck”—being a record of the strange things seen by that worthy in many hours of wave watching.

(To the Editor)

Sir,—

THE SUPER-FLYING FISH

There's a man on our deck (E3) who contends that flying fish, in keeping with the spirit of the times, are well up on modern aviation trends. Last night, he says, during a quiet vigil on B deck (starboard) he observed a number of curious red and green lights gliding steadily past the ship. As they drew in close he was astonished to perceive that they were four-motored jobs, cruising along in perfect “V” formation. The shock of his life, though, he says, came a few minutes later when with a roar and a streak of flame a jet-propelled model shot suddenly up from the depths and out of sight beyond A deck.

THE SMART SHARK

The man on E deck had a further strange experience this morning. Seeing a shark swimming alongside, he decided to find out if sharks bite at solid objects as well as flesh. He threw several objects without result. Then he threw an empty “Steradent” jar. The shark turned, its great mouth opened, and there, says the man, was the biggest set of false teeth he has ever seen, complete with two gold fillings.

*“I wonder
who taught her
Italian?”*



SEA HORSE SENSE

The man on E deck has had an alarming experience. He was just climbing into bed last night when a very superior-looking sea horse struggled painfully through the porthole and collapsed in a heap on the floor. Giving the men a scornful look the sea horse said, "Don't stand there staring, do something. I'm going to have a foal."

A BOOP TOO MANY.

The man on E deck, who claims to understand the fish language, says the following fragment of conversation floated in thru' the open porthole last night: "Boop-boop-diddum-doddum-woddum-choo"——"I'll boop-boop you in a minute if you don't forget that silly damn tune."

THE WAR-WEARY WHALE

The man on E deck says he has definite proof that sea-creatures are war-conscious. At his usual post last night, listening to the plaintive neighing of the sea horse, he observed a huge dark bulk slowly breaking surface. Thinking it was a submarine, he watched closely and was astounded to see a red cross and a broad white strip painted on its side. It was not until a spout of water shot up from its "deck," that he realized that it was a whale.

ANXIETY NEUROSIS

It's that man on E deck again. He says it makes him sick to hear people talking about the "playfulness" of the porpoise. "Do you think," he mutters angrily, "they spend all that energy just for fun? If you had to spend all your life dodging bad-tempered sharks, electric rays, etc., with mines, torpedoes and depth charges thrown in, wouldn't you have the jumps?" Porpoises, he says, are simply nervous wrecks.

—Pte. J. C. RIST.

★

Come and get it!

Total number of meals served since Suez embarkation, exclusive of hospital diets, etc.: 330,620 (not counting ship's company). Stores consumed during same period:—

101,240 lbs. meat.
45 tons potatoes.
93,500 lbs. bread.
8,000 lbs. jam and marmalade.
23,600 lbs. sugar.
4,480 lbs. bacon.
40,850 eggs.
1,340 galls. milk.

◆

"If David had one fault, it was a slight tendency to adultery."

★

Three Nostalgic Clerihews

In Napoli,
Unhnapoli,
The vias and corsos are relly
Frightfully smelly.

Venice is cleener
And altogether refeener;
But then you can't play tennis
In Venice.

I've an unæsthetic reasing
For having found it pleasing,
But my own nostalgia is addressed
To Trieste.

—Sgt. J. G. MALE.

work and play

A BRIEF RECORD OF SHIPBOARD ACTIVITIES

To travel between Tewfik and Wellington takes a considerable time, even in the fastest liner—a troopship actually takes no longer but methods of spending the time pleasantly and profitably become a problem in which suitable activities are decided by such factors as space and equipment. Though naturally much restricted for these reasons, good arrangements were made during the voyage on the “Strathmore.” Here are some of the functions which were enjoyed by all ranks, and in order that the credit due should be given to those responsible, names are recorded.

Pictures.—Always a popular form of entertainment, pictures can be relied upon to attract a crowd at any time. Of the 4,000 odd potential customers aboard, however, the recreation room would hold only 200 at each screening. By working long hours, with a very iffy machine incidentally, the projectionists ensured that the maximum possible number of houses were catered for daily. Before leaving Cairo the YMCA were able to obtain from ENSA eight full programmes. These included some new releases, and with the films already on the ship a really good selection was screened during the voyage.

Concert.—A first-rate concert party was organised early and gave twelve excellent performances throughout the trip to audiences whose reactions left no doubt as to the ability of the artists concerned. Considering the small amount of suitable materials available for props and the difficulties of staging, some of the acts undertaken so success-

fully were triumphs of ingenuity. The band, for instance, had not one sheet of music! yet the music was of a very high standard, and gave plenty of variety.

Boxing.—Boxing always drew a good crowd of spectators and some interesting bouts were seen on B deck. Exponents and would-be exponents were fortunate in having the expert coaching assistance of Sgt. R. Fulcher, and Ptes. Bill Purdie and Harold Bennett, who not only organised bouts but helped with expert advice and demonstrations. A competition was held and the results are given below. Medals were presented to the winners.

Libraries.—Reading material supplied by ERS and YMCA was plentiful and good. The novels, magazines and general literature were supplemented by a comprehensive reference and textbook library which was widely used by students and others. Study courses were issued during the voyage. Occupational data, trade publications, and rehabilitation information was in constant demand by those returning home, and this department ran a really worthwhile service.

General.—Tug-o'-war teams, community sings, brains trusts, quizzes, discussion groups, race meetings, chess tournaments and Housie schools all made welcome breaks in the monotony of shipboard life. The issue of the Ship's News—on group parades—lightened the long wait on deck during ship's inspections. Some of the more popular contributions have found a

place in this magazine, and as a medium of expression of shipboard opinion and as an outlet for talent in prose and verse, this duplicated sheet served a very useful purpose.

Nat. Pat.—A special paragraph is deserved for the excellent provision made by the N.Z. Nat. Pat. Fund Board for sports equipment, prizes, comforts, and extras of all kinds supplied to the draft. Scarcely a day passed without an issue of something being made to all ranks.

Here is a list of the names of those responsible for activities and the names of prizewinners in the various competitions held.

Entertainment Committee.—Major A. B. Kerr, Capt. R. Thevenard, Capt. R. Applegarth, Rev. W. J. Thompson C.F., Mr. Roy Salmon, Y.M.C.A.

Nat. Pat. Gift Staff.—Major G. H. Bell, W.O.2 W. J. McClellan, Sgt. J. V. Scott, Sgt. R. J. Ward, Sgt. S. J. Cunningham.

Cinema.—Sgt. J. McPherson and Sgmn. R. Carter.

Newspaper.—Cpl. N. Widdowson (Editor); Mr. J. Proudfoot and Sgt. J. G. Male (reporters); Sgt. J. Barnes (artist); Capt. A. Wilson, Sgts. A. Weaver, R. Bruce, Gnrs. R. Austin, T. Garrett, V. Henry, Ptes. B. Dickie, W. Bruce (printers); Sgt. S. Keogh, Cpl. W. Carter (typists).

Concert Party.—Compere: Len Bergman. Band: Ken Hicks, Andy Healy, Mick Cosgrove, Ted Brockett, Jim Bannin, Dave Maharry. Vocalists: Jack Churstain, Bob Johnston, Bill Forsman, Johnnie Woods. Magicians: Ross Robins, Harry Sankey. Humourists: Scotty Powell, Frank Scanlon, Alf Smith. Female Impersonators: Maurice Hood, George Clark, Cecil Lane, Earnie Edwards. Ballet: Tom Martin. Accompanist: Aussie Phillips. Stage Manager: Harry Purchase.

ERS.—Major D. W. Sinclair, Lieuts. R. C. Te Punga, N. H. Buchanan, J. D. Ball. S/Sgts. L. H. Stevens, R. G. Watson, J. H. Campbell. Sgts. E. B. Pyne, C. W. Moore, W. J. Gardner, N. R. Smith, D. I. Chapman, R. W. Morley.

Cpls. M. W. Hibbert, C. S. Hercus. Pte. R. Stevenson, Tpr. J. Hastie, Gnr. Abel.

BOXING

WINNERS

RUNNERS UP

Light-weight

A. L. King	McDavitt
R. I. Tanner	Ngarongo

Feather-weight

L. F. Blakemore	Apanui
A. Crawford	Treanor

Middle-weight

D. Patton	Tuatere
C. W. Beale	Dunstal
S. Paparoa	Grant

Light-Heavy-weight

B. Hulena	Greig
-----------	-------

Special

Purdie	Bennett
--------	---------

Most Scientific Boxer: C. W. Beale.

Most Improved Boxer: B. Hulena.

Most Promising Boxer: D. Patton.

Best Loser: J. T. Treanor.

Gamest Loser: B. T. McDavitt.

Keenest Boxer: J. T. Ngaronga.

TUG-O'-WAR

Officers' Team, Winners of Officers' and Grand Final: Lt.-Col. V. J. Tanner, Major A. B. Kerr, Capts. R. S. Lawrence, E. J. Batty, Lt. F. A. Avery, 2/Lts. A. G. Blair, W. T. Lowry, K. P. O'Sullivan.

No. 1 Group "A" Team, Winners of Other Ranks Final and Runners Up for the Grand Final: R. G. Spence, A. A. Hopley, T. F. France, J. P. Lang, P. D. Corks, W. D. Nolan, R. M. Mudgway, S. G. Gaudin.

Group 6. Sgts. Team, Winners of W.O.'s and Sgts. Final and Semi-finalists for Grand Final: W.O.1 Rigg, W.O.2 Williams, S/Sgts. Bishop, McGlashan, Sgts. Craw, Coppel, Larsen, Bourke.

CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

Winner, Pte. G. Schierney; second, Dvr. A. M. Smith. Most Brilliant Game, Sgt. Weaver.

CONTRIBUTORS' PRIZES

Prose: Sgt. J. J. Dooley. Verse: Pte. A. U. D. Chalmers. Black and White Sketch: Lt. R. Richardson.

Wayfarings...

Remember the maps on "E" Deck, and how there was always a crowd around them checking each day's run and looking up the ports and islands on the route? They were as mile-stones on our journey home. "Wayfarings" appeared as a daily feature in the ship's newspaper. Though the "Strathmore" called only at Colombo and Melbourne, many on board had visited other ports on their way to Egypt. The series, reprinted in a condensed form, may revive memories of strange lands briefly glimpsed.

Suez to Bab-El-Mandeb

A narrow strip of water extending from Suez to the Straits of Bab-El-Mandeb, and separating the coasts of Arabia from those of Egypt, Nubia, and Abyssinia—this is the Red Sea. The total length is about 1,200 miles and the width varies from 130 to 250 miles. In all the 3,000 miles of coastline there are only five important ports—Tewfik, the port of Suez; Jidda, the port at which pilgrims to Mecca disembark; Port Sudan, ship-head for the Sudanese capital of Khartoum; Massowa, chief port of Eritrea; and Mocha, capital and port of the Yemen province of Arabia, from whence came dates and figs. On the island of Kamaran, about 200 miles from the Straits, there is a quarantine station for the pilgrims travelling to Mecca from the East. Near Bab-El-Mandeb is the small island of Perim, which was a coaling station until 1936.

Aden

Wedged in between the Yemen and the Hadramant in the south-western corner of Arabia is Aden, an important calling place in Orient shipping trade and a great oil bunkering and coaling station. As a naval base it

gives control of the Red Sea entrance. The town of Aden, built some miles from the port in the crater of an extinct volcano, domiciles people from Europe, Africa, and Asia and peoples of many faiths—Brahmins and Buddhists, Negroes and Jews, Moslems, Parsees and Bumans. Water in Aden is a very precious thing. In 20 square miles of brown precipices and patches of sandy plain there are but few trees, no grass and only one important flower, the Aden lily, which is found in remote rock crevices. The Aden tanks, built about the sixth century, are a point of interest to all tourists. Built in a gorge of the crater, they form a chain of reservoirs. Here are stored the two or perhaps three showers which fall in Aden about every other year.

Some Indian Ocean Isles

When Cape Gaurdafni, the north-eastern extremity of the African continent, is passed, you are in the Indian Ocean. On the old trade routes, the next land sighted was Soqotra Island, 150 miles out. The island, 1,400 square miles in area, is the home of the Sultan of Qushn and Soqotra, who receives a subsidy from Britain and is pledged not to cede his land to any other power. The 12,000 inhabitants of the island are mostly Arab. Next point of interest is Mincey Island, a coconut-palm paradise with a population of about 3,000 people. One hundred miles to the north is the Lacadive group, comprising 14 islands, only nine of which are inhabited.

"Gem of the Indian Ocean"

If a more southerly route across the Indian Ocean is followed a call may be made at the Seychelles Islands. Mahe', the principal island, is known

as the "Gem of the Indian Ocean," and Victoria, the capital, has a sheltered harbour fringed with white sandy beaches. At least one N.Z. reinforcement called there for a few hours. Mahe' is famous for the gigantic land tortoises and the unique double coconut, Coco de Mer. Seychelles and its dependencies consist of 92 islands and islets. The total population is 32,000 and the principal exports are copra, guano, cinnamon and tortoise-shell.

"Some called it Eden"

Ceylon, pear-shaped island popularly associated with the tea trade, has an area of 25,000 square miles and a population of nearly eight millions. Where rainfall is heavy there is an extensive cultivation of rubber; on the hills to the north are the great tea gardens. Rice, coconut trees, fruits and spices cover most of the other cultivable lands. A tooth of Buddha is preserved in the Temple of the Tooth at Kandy. It is one of the most sacred places in the world to Buddhists. Once it was believed that Ceylon was originally Eden, and a narrow strip of land extending across Palk Strait almost to the mainland of India is still known as Adam's Bridge.

"Clapham Junction of Indian Ocean"

Colombo, chief port, administrative capital and greatest business centre of Ceylon, is situated in such a way that it is a natural meeting place in the midst of the ocean. As a port it ranks eleventh in the world and sixth in the British Empire. The population numbers a quarter of a million. Colombo has a large artificial harbour enclosed by breakwaters. The environs of the town situated near the mouth of the Kelani River are low-lying and in recent years protective works have been necessary to prevent vast inundations. Colombo has very few buildings of architectural interest or value. The Asiatic bazaar, the Pettah, shows many of the insanitary features characteristic of such localities observed by Kiwis throughout the Middle East.

The Old World, as it thrives in the Pettah, shows a typical disregard for modern developments.

Where the "Emden"

Met Her Fate

Fifteen hundred miles south-east of Colombo are the Cocos or Keeling Islands, where the H.M.A.S. "Sydney" came into action against the German cruiser "Emden" on November 9, 1914. The group, comprising about twenty small coral islands, were first discovered in 1608 by Captain William Keeling of the East India Company. The largest island has an area of one square mile and a population of 1,140. The principal cultivation consists of coconuts. In 1902 a station on the Cape-Australia cable route was established on Direction Island, in the north-eastern part of the group. The Cocos Islands suffered from Japanese air raids and the population lived in constant fear of invasion after the Japanese occupation of Christmas Island, 500 miles to the north-east, on April 10, 1942.

Perth

Set on both sides of a broad reach of the Swan River, twelve miles from its mouth and the port of Fremantle, is Perth, capital of the Commonwealth's biggest state, Western Australia, and city of unsurpassed hospitality to Kiwis. Perth has a charm of its own, with tall stone buildings, a fine esplanade bordering the waterfront and many play areas and gardens, outstanding among which is King's Park, a reserve on high land to the west of the city along the river bank. The city was founded in 1829, and where today are modern buildings and occasionally one of a later date, was then a sandy heavily wooded slope running down to the river, which at this point broadens into a lake known as Perth Water. Today the city has a population of about a quarter of a million.

The City of Melbourne

Situated at the head of Port Philip, Melbourne commands both ends of the Great Valley of Victoria as well as the country north of the Highlands. Greater Melbourne, which includes all the districts within a ten-mile radius of the heart of the city, has a population of 1,152,000 and covers an area of 125,926 acres. The city proper, the "Square Mile City," is impressively built and contains many fine streets. There are some 6,250 acres of parks and reserves, including lovely botanical gardens. The St. Kilda and Brighton beaches are extremely popular during the summer months. The wide, tree-lined motor-highway to St. Kilda is regarded as one of the finest roads in the world. The Flemington racecourse, with its famous Melbourne Cup in November, the Yarra with its gardens and drives, and more remote holiday resorts in the hills, are amenities of a city which possesses also

many notable public buildings. Melbourne has over 11 miles of wharfing. Williamstown is the main overseas cargo port; Port Melbourne, that for mail and passenger liners; while the Yarra has the largest wharf space for inter-state vessels.

Hobart

For many New Zealanders, the first view of a city outside their own country has been Hobart, capital of Tasmania. It occupies a site of great beauty, standing on a series of low hills at the foot of Mount Wellington, which is snow-clad most of the year. The city, square and well-planned, faces Sullivan's Cove, a bay opening into the estuary of the Derwent River. The harbour is easy of access, well sheltered and deep enough to accommodate the largest ships afloat. It is a port of call for several intercolonial lines from Sydney and Melbourne, and for lines from London to New Zealand.

★

melbourne . . .

Arrival—music on the wharf—
Papers from noisy nippers—
Pay—the gangway's down—we're off!
Four thousand Kiwi trippers.

Staring at windows piled with grub
Till sixty past eleven—
A beeline to the nearest pub;
It's drawn—It's down—It's Heaven!

A meal—a wander up the street,
Inspecting local Figures—
Did all you other jokers meet
Those thirsty last-war Diggers?

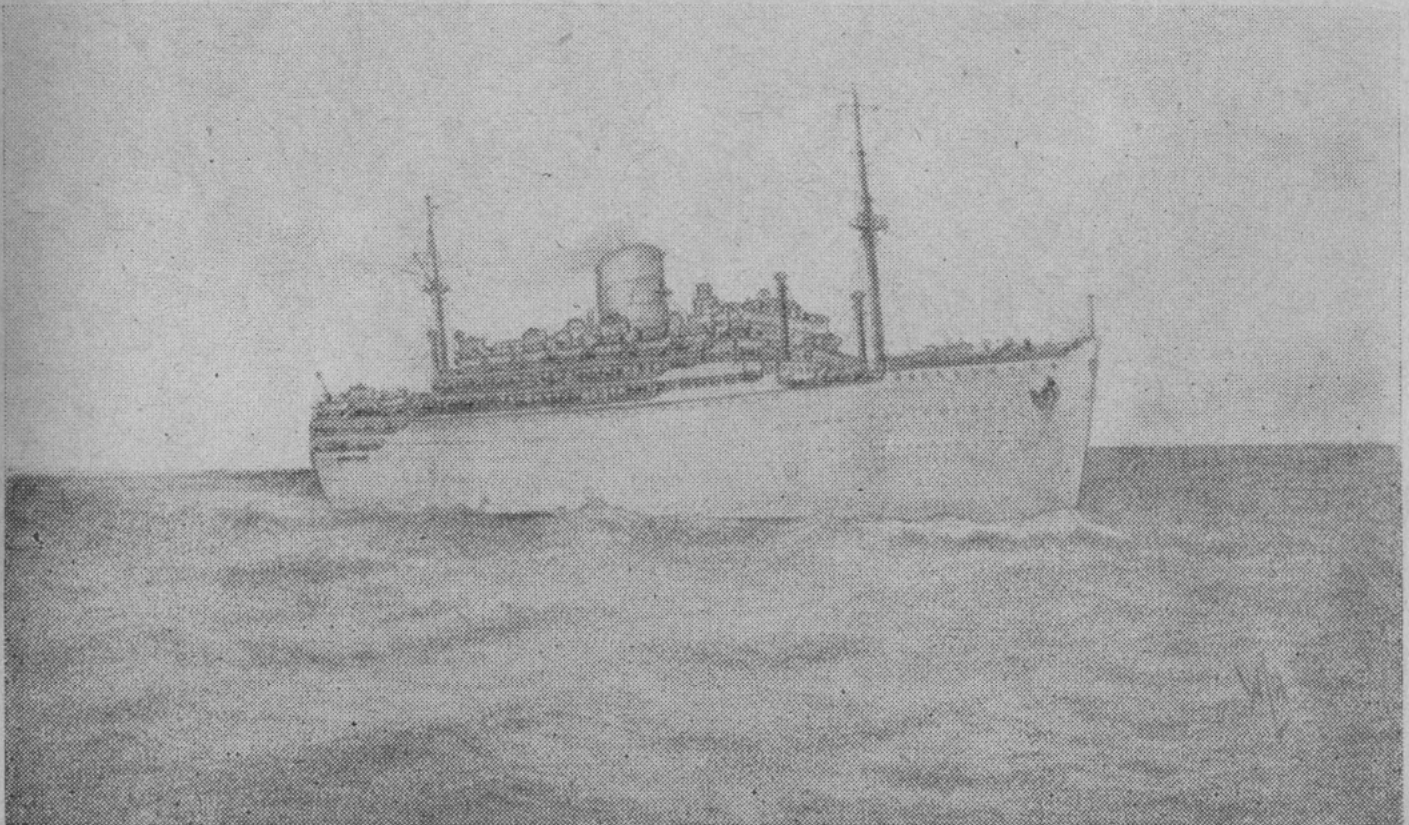
Some rain—more drinks—a dance—a girl—
A headache out of Hell bourne—
A train—the boat—the world awhirl—
And that was leave in Melbourne.

N.H.B.

The P. & O. "Strathmore"

s.s. "Strathmore" was built in 1935 for the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P. & O. Line) at the yards of Vickers Armstrong, and commissioned in the England-Australia mail run. Her details are: Gross tonnage, 23,428; length, 640.3 feet; breadth, 82.2 feet; speed, 21 knots. Normal peacetime complement, crew about 470; passengers about 1,080.

At the outbreak of the war the ship was en route to Casablanca; she was recalled immediately to Britain and became H.M.T. "Strathmore." Throughout her wartime career as a troopship the "Strathmore" has suffered no damage through enemy action. Complement on this voyage is: Ship's company, 447; passengers, 2 NZEF, 3,972 all ranks, plus a small number of naval, air force, civilian, and other military personnel.



H.M.T. "STRATHMORE."—A pencil sketch by Capt. W. L. Anderson.

SHIP'S COMPANY

Peace-time Crew: 342 hands, but war establishment is 261 hands, being:—

115 British.

146 Goanese (nearly all of whom are Portuguese from Goa, but few British Indians from Bombay).

Kitchen staff consists of:—

20 British.

32 Goanese.

52 Cooks, Butchers, Bakers and Pantry Staff under a Chef.

Total Ship's Company (including Capt. A. Rodger):

187 British.

124 British Indian.

136 Portuguese Indian.

447 Hands.

s.s. "Strathmore,"
30th September, 1945.

Captain's Message

From 3rd September to 30th September, from Suez to Wellington, via Colombo and Melbourne, over 9,666 sea miles, we carried you on your victory voyage safely back to your homeland.

From the heat of the Red Sea, through the Indian Ocean to the gales of the Tasman, we saw the great waters in all their moods and yourselves in but one—at all times serene and cheerful.

Those 28 days of September 1945 will be for always important ones in the history of the good ship "Strathmore," and will remain with us her crew a very happy memory.

We are proud of our association with the New Zealand Forces, and in particular with the "Tekapo" draft, and we wish you all a happy homecoming, and a bright and happy future.

A. RODGER, Commander.

THE P. & O. FLAG

The distinctive flag of the P. & O. Company has an interesting history:—

In the Portuguese Insurrection of 1832, Willcox and Anderson, London shipowners, rendered valuable services to Queen Maria, providing ships and ammunition, and helping to raise a loan in England, all at considerable financial and personal risk to the partners.

Similarly, in the Carlist Insurrection in Spain, the two gave active support to the cause of Isabella, the Queen Regent. Both by Portugal and Spain these services were rewarded with valuable trading facilities, and the flag of the partners—later the P. & O.—commemorates this early history, the blue and white being the national colours of Portugal, quartered with the red, and yellow of Spain.

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This booklet has been prepared by ERS, 2 NZEF, for the National Patriotic Fund Board, and issued free to all members of Service Drafts returned to New Zealand on H.M.T. "Strathmore," 30th September, 1945. Printed by The Commercial Printing and Publishing Company of N.Z. Ltd., Wellington.

log the home run

Depart Suez, 1930 hours, September 3rd.

16½	hours'	run up to noon,	September 4th	..	288	miles.
24	"	"	"	5th	..	413 "
23½	"	"	"	6th	..	414 "
24	"	"	"	7th	..	408 "
23½	"	"	"	8th	..	414 "
23½	"	"	"	9th	..	414 "
23½	"	"	"	10th	..	403 "
23½	"	"	"	11th	..	405 "
20½	"	"	to arr. Colombo	12th	..	319 "

Depart Colombo, 1130 hours, September 13th.

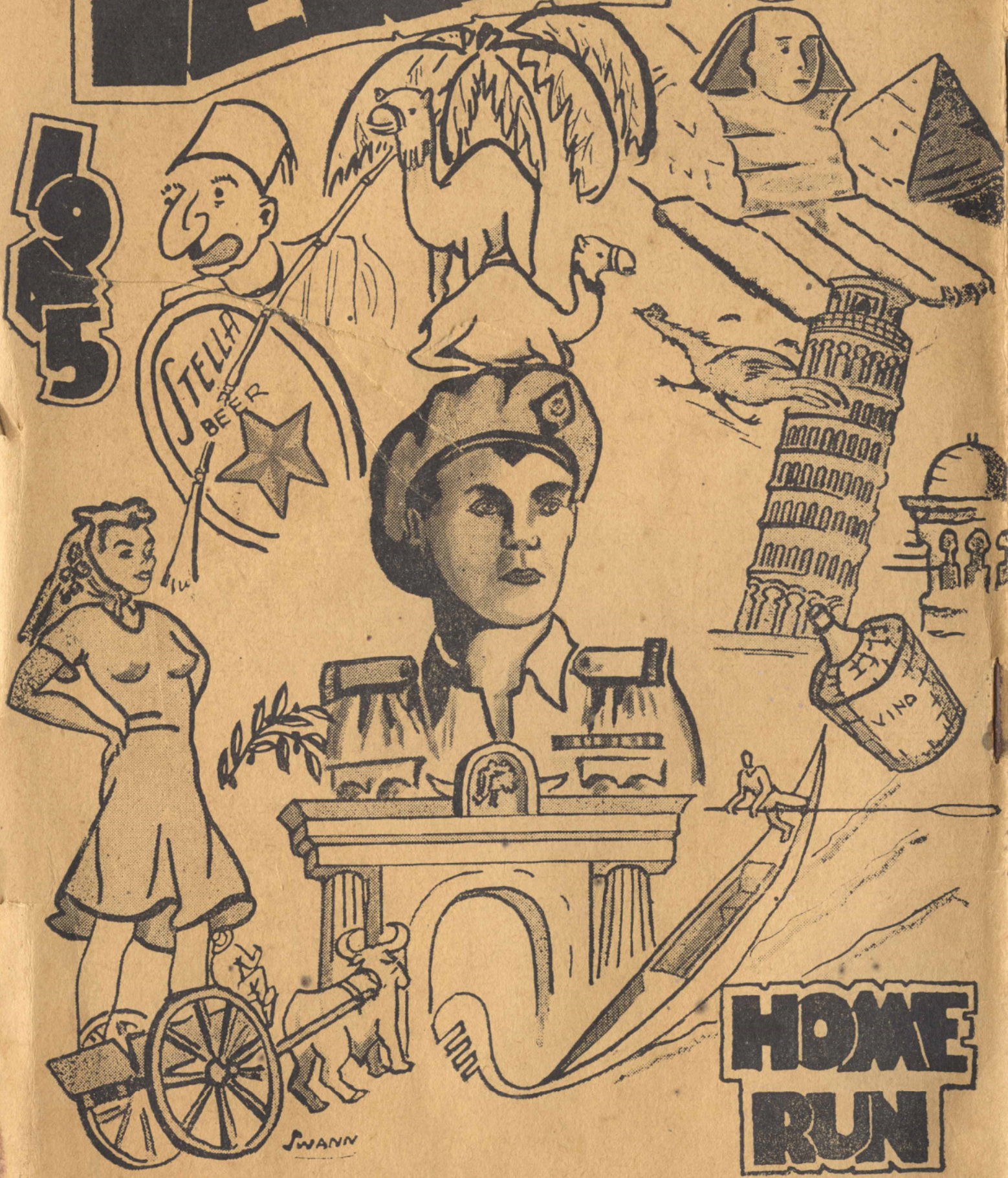
24½	hours'	run up to noon,	September 14th	..	402	miles.
24	"	"	"	15th	..	405 "
24	"	"	"	16th	..	397 "
24	"	"	"	17th	..	384 "
24	"	"	"	18th	..	400 "
23½	"	"	"	19th	..	392 "
23½	"	"	"	20th	..	407 "
23½	"	"	"	21st	..	417 "
23½	"	"	"	22nd	..	417 "
23½	"	"	"	23rd	..	392 "
24	"	"	"	24th	..	384 "
20	"	"	to arr. Melbourne	25th	..	290 "

Depart Melbourne, 1200 hours, September 26th.

23½	hours'	run up to noon,	September 27th	..	373	"
23½	"	"	"	28th	..	389 "
23½	"	"	"	29th	..	399 "
19	"	"	to arr. Wellington	30th	..	334 "

TEWAPPO

1955



HOME RUN