

YULE SMILE

The regimental wit looked down at the tiny carrot which have been included in his portion of boiled beef. "What's this?" he asked. "The thin edge of the veg., I presume."

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Your voice is decidedly raspy this morning," complained the colonel. "I know, sir," replied the lieutenant. "I've been out roughing it with a file of soldiers all morning."

* * * *

THE LAST SHOT

The machine-gunner had just come out of action somewhere in France. For hours he had been burning up ammunition and he was tired-out.

Eagerly he stepped forward as the mail was distributed. One post-card was handed to him.

Forwarded from the post office in his home town, it read: "Dear sir, this is to notify you that your gun license has expired."

* * * *

For weeks little Bill had waited patiently for a letter from home. Day after day he'd wistfully watched the other evacuees as they opened their mail.

At last a letter arrived for him. He opened it and took out a grimy postal order for sixpence.

"Blimey, mates," he declared joyfully. "My old man's sent me a cheque."

* * * *

"On the right . . . form platoon," roared the sergeant.

The raw recruits carried out some kind of manoeuvre which left the sergeant speechless.

He looked at them for a moment—two moments. Then his voice returned. . . .

No words can describe the tones of his voice. But he said: "All right. Now take your partners for the Lancers."

* * * *

The soldiers were billeted in an ancient railway carriage, converted into a bungalow.

Going on his rounds the orderly officer found Corporal Jones sitting outside his billet. Rain lashed down and Jones, soaked to the skin, unhappily puffed at his pipe.

"Are you crazy?" snapped the officer. "Why aren't you indoors?"

"No, I ain't crazy," came the angry reply. "What the 'ell was I to do? The — ruddy fools shoved me in a non-smoker!"

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Two Scots, partners in business, joined the Balloon Barrage. Sending the balloon up for the first time, one was entangled and carried into the air.

His partner saw him soaring away. "Sandy . . ." he shouted. "Sandy . . . scatter some of our business cards."

NAVAL FORCES

New Zealand's Part In Empire Defence

PERSONNEL SENT OVERSEAS

The contribution New Zealand is making to the naval defence of the Empire was again referred to by the Minister of Defence, Mr. Jones, in a further statement issued on the 15th. He said that in view of the misapprehension which still exists in some quarters in regard to the question of New Zealanders undertaking naval service, it was desirable to state clearly how this matter now stood.

Mr. Jones said that very shortly after the outbreak of war His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom informed the New Zealand Government that so far as the navy was concerned it would be glad if New Zealand could provide personnel of the following classes: (1) Trained naval reserves; (2) yachtsmen and ex-mercantile marine officers, for commissions in the R.N.V.R.; (3) certain technicians and others suitable for entry as artificers, artisans, signalmen and telegraphists.

Trained naval reserves referred, of course, to the members of the R.N.R. and R.N.V.R., and the numbers available, after satisfying the requirements of the New Zealand naval forces (25 officers and 219 ratings) had proceeded overseas after final training.

Selection of Yachtsmen.

So far as yachtsmen were concerned, the Admiralty stated that present requirements were limited to ten. The ten most suitable from the many hundreds of applications which had been received from time to time in the Navy Office had been selected and had also left New Zealand.

Large numbers of candidates for entry in the technical ratings had applied, and 56 candidates had been entered and trained in H.M.S. Philomele. They had also left for England. A further batch of three officers and 81 men on loan from the Royal Navy had been relieved by New Zealand reserve personnel and left for England to resume service in the Imperial Navy. The New Zealand R.N.V.R. had provided 65 ratings as guns' crews in no less than 25 defensively armed merchant ships.

N.Z. ARMY RUGBY

400 Footballs To Be Purchased

Recently steps have been taken by the National Patriotic Fund Board in co-operation with the New Zealand Rugby Union to provide footballs for use by the men of the Expeditionary Force overseas. At a meeting recently of the board approval was given to the purchase through the Rugby Union of 400 footballs for this purpose.

Another decision by the board in the interests of the New Zealand troops in Egypt was to purchase a public address system which will enable open-air concerts to be given and will obviate the necessity of the men having to congregate in one place. The suggestion in the first instance was made by the New Zealand Division of Signals, and the members of the board agreed that it was an excellent idea.

A grant of £525 was made for Air Force regimental funds in New Zealand. Lord Galway presided over the meeting. Others present were Sir Robert Anderson, Mr. Perry, M.L.C., Mr. Coates, M.P., Messrs. B. C. Ashwin, L. O. H. Tripp, J. Paul and Tai Mitchell. Colonel J. Esson and Mr. Fagan, M.L.C., were unable to be present through illness, and Mr. W. Mulholland was prevented from attending because of a Farmers' Union engagement.

TROOPS DEPART

Draft For Papakura

MARCH IN WELLINGTON

About 190 recruits for the third echelon marched through Wellington on the 15th, from the drill hall by way of the main streets to the railway station, to entrain for Papakura Camp, Auckland.

The draft formed up in the drill hall at about two o'clock. About half wore uniform, the rest mufti with a red and white armband marked with a crown, to distinguish them from civilians on the railway stations and elsewhere along their route. There were several Maoris, reinforcements for the Maori Battalion; the remainder were recruits for the anti-tank regiment and the field artillery.

A crowd had assembled in Buckle Street, and the draft was given a good reception as it followed the band down Paraki Street and Vivian Street. In Cuba Street the crowds along the way increased in numbers; shop girls and office workers streamed out to line the pavements as the military music heralded the approach of the marching men.

Those in uniform, feeling perhaps something of the inspiration of the service to which they now belong, marched smartly, but the men in mufti showed an inclination to straggle, and an occasional uncertainty in keeping step. However, the parade was an impressive one, and its significance was not lost to the spectators along the route, who gave the men a stirring send-off.

The crowds were densest at the junction of Lambton Quay and Willis Street, where the draft was given a rousing cheer.

The majority of friends and relatives of the recruits, as well as a large body of the general public, awaited their arrival at the railway station. The steps were crowded, and as the soldiers marched through a narrow lane between the onlookers into the crowded concourse, they exchanged greetings, handshakes, and even kisses, with friends who had come to say good-bye. Though the public were excluded from the troop-train platform, they lined the neighbouring one, and many of the soldiers, on falling out, climbed down on to the tracks to exchange final greetings.

After the train backed in to the platform, and another local train took up its position on the next set of tracks soldiers in the troop train were able to chat from their windows to friends who had swarmed aboard the suburban carriages, not due to depart till some time later.

There was a slight wait while the baggage of the draft was loaded, and then, with a final whistle, waving of hands and cheery shouts from platforms and windows, the men set out on the first stage of the adventure they have undertaken.

NEW ZEALAND TROOPS IN EGYPT

Swimming Baths Opened

(N.Z.E.F. Official War Service.)

Plunging from the diving tower into 10 feet of clear, cool water, the general officer commanding the New Zealand Division in Egypt, Major-General B. C. Freyberg, officially opened today new swimming baths constructed in record time close to the New Zealand camp.

A swimming carnival followed, General Freyberg assisted with judging, and prizes were presented by Mrs. Freyberg. Results were as follows:—

33 1-3 yards invitation: Crump, 1; Johnson, 2. Time, 16.

33 1-3 yards open: Waddington, 1; Harp and Lovett, equal, 2. Time, 18 1-5.

100 yards invitation: Crump, 1; Johnson, 2. Time, 60 1-5.

100 yards open: McGibbon, 1; Henderson, 2. Time, 75.

Diving: McHardy, 1; Williams, 2; Tremewan, 3.

100 yards breaststroke: Webster, 1; Gillett, 2. Time, 88.

Interunit relay: Brigade H.Q., 1; Machine-gun Battalion, 2. Time, 1.53.

The baths took five weeks to build, cost £700. They are to be floodlit for evening swimming.

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News item: "Sparks fly when Beecham conducts." His performances should be worth a guinea a box.