



part of the time, and one man sat a three-hour examination with the explosive blasts of some engineers' operations nearby tearing the air about every twenty minutes. He passed.

Interest in correspondence study courses, which had, of course, lapsed during the action and in the period immediately following, revived very quickly after this, and within fourteen days A.E.W.S. received some hundreds of applications for enrolment. By barge and jeep, Lieutenant A. A. Congalton, one of the 3rd Division's Brigade Education Officers, visited the various units round the island to find out their requirements. At one place an entire company turned out to inquire about the courses.

As the demand was so urgent and no stocks of the study course booklets had been taken to the forward area, Lieutenant Congalton flew to New Caledonia and collected everything available. The distribution of these, which kept the A.E.W.S. staff working day and night, increased the interest even more, and within a fortnight stocks were exhausted again. The additional supplies needed had this time to be obtained from New Zealand, and they arrived in Vella Lavella about a month later. Excluding University students, one man in every nine on the island was taking an A.E.W.S. study course.

The men's enthusiasm for these courses was shared by the officers, several of whom volunteered to take classes. In one area, when books were scarce, there was a class of thirty-four taking farm

book-keeping with three study course booklets among the lot. In all the larger units there were classes in book-keeping, the petrol-engine, wool-classing, biology, animal-production, and practical English. An officer conducting a petrol-engine class in one unit acquired a truck from the Americans and completely dismantled it; he used it for practical demonstration, thus overcoming the greatest difficulty facing the men taking correspondence courses.

To help satisfy the demand for information about the war, A.E.W.S. in Vella Lavella cut stencils of the war fronts and distributed copies to all units so that progress could be marked up. All the larger units had information rooms, and the war information displayed in these was kept up to date by close co-operation with the "I" sections. It was not unusual, for instance, to come across a display of all the maps of an "I" section outside a tent with an interested crowd of men inspecting them. There would also be a member of the "I" section standing by to rush the maps inside when the rain came! These displays were a valuable factor in keeping the men well informed and, therefore, in scotching rumours; and it was found that they did not prejudice security.

The work of informing the men was supplemented by the Current Affairs Bulletins. Although they were not used for organized discussion as often as would normally be desirable, they were popular as reading-material, and A.E.W.S. in Vella Lavella often received requests for additional supplies. The maps included in the bulletins seemed to be particularly appreciated, and it was not uncommon to find them torn out and pinned up in tents. Quite often, too, when it may have been difficult to establish an organized discussion, the B.E.O. walked in on a private discussion based on the bulletins; so where they were not serving their purpose directly they were doing so indirectly.

Welfare work among the troops on Vella Lavella was assisted by several