

The29thUNIT HISTORY

## A MESSAGE FROM THE C. O.

There are many aspects of our army life that will be talked about long after this war has ended. Will there not be endless yarns and arguments over the odd mug of beer or in our homes whenever two or more ex 29th Bn. men meet?

We have been asked to prepare for such eventualities and to facilitate the task of whoever finally undertakes the writing of the history of this Battalion. Official histories are of necessity somewhat uninteresting to all but the military student, but the unofficial and unexpurgated story of a battalion is usually the basis of an interesting book and often the only authoritative work on the doings of a battalion. Such a work is the diary of the Long Range Desert Group, of which the New Zealanders formed initially the larger part.

While I realise that the facilities at hand are meagre and many of the stories told are unprintable, we would be pleased if everyone who can would send in items of interest about our Battalion from its inception.

There must be many stories concerning officers, N.C.O.s and men worthy of being recorded for our own use in future years. As a newcomer I hear vague and unsatisfactory accounts of a Battalion mascot, of the unwitting slaughter of some prize cattle, of memorable football matches and route marches and so on. Yet few can put time and place to these stories or can remember all the details.

What will it be like in ten years' time when Fiji, New Caledonia and so on are but short memories in a long life. Things that seem mundane and uninteresting at the present will be pleasant or pleasant memories - the basis of tales yet to be told to old coppers, to families or to ourselves.

We have formed a committee to try and establish an unofficial record of all our doings - a record that will be available to every one of us whenever we wish to consult it. What we need now is the co-operation of all who can sketch or paint, give interesting snapshots or describe the more serious or amusing incidents in the life of the 29th Battalion.

Many New Zealand units have already compiled interesting and valuable scrap-books and records such as we now hope to start. Are we to remain out of it and trust to our fickle memories for our history? If we are proud of our unit, and we have good cause to be proud, we must see to it that such history as we have made or are yet to make is incorporated in the annals of New Zealand.

Such records as we manage to put together will be safely kept and made available to any member after our return to New Zealand. In addition the I.E.W.S. is asking for this material to be available for their use in painting a more correct and adequate picture of life in the New Zealand Army in this war of 1939 ---

In conclusion to those of you who have pictures, cuttings, stories to relate or any other material that would be of interest, will you please help the committee by making the material available as early as possible.

## AND THE COMMITTEE SAYS...

Do you want to win your smokes instead of paying for them? Well, here's a way to do it, and at the same time help along the Battalion unofficial history.

Send us an account, long or short, of some incident or phase of army life that occurred in the period before the initial departure from New Zealand - i.e. before May, 1941. Long time ago? I know, but you can remember. Rake out that diary; smoke a few of the cigarettes in advance and think it over.

It may be happy or sad, beerish or sober, critical or contented. Don't worry about the style or the spelling, but send something along.

Prizes of 400 and 200 cigarettes (U.S. pattern) will be awarded for the two best entries, and if you have something in a later period think it over. We'll be asking for it.

Part or whole of the winning entries will be published in "The 29th" in the next issue. Entries to be in to your company representative by Wednesday, July 14. And he'll accept anything else you have to offer.