

CAMP JOTTINGS

"Roses Round the Door"

The "wet" canteen at Burnham Military Camp is affectionately known as "the beer garden." And the name is appropriate, for there are "roses round the door" and spikes of foxgloves in bloom. An old house has been quickly remodelled and turned into a picturesque canteen, which, as in other camps, will serve soft drinks as well as beer. Possibly the roses and the foxgloves will be removed eventually, as they have little or no place in the military scheme of things, but last week they looked attractive.

Learning to Dance

Between 70 and 80 young men in khaki are learning to dance. It isn't part of their military training, but it is necessary for their hours of leave. This development of the social grace is the result of activities of the Wellington Soldiers' Club. The young men expressed a desire to learn, so every Friday evening, guided by an expert, they are initiated into the mysteries of the valse, the foxtrot, the Lambeth walk and the Chestnut Tree.

Preparing for Xmas

During the four weeks of its existence, the Wellington Soldiers' Club, which caters for the soldiers from Trentham and the other military camps round the city, has entertained 1,100 men, an average of 500 each week-end. At the moment the club is preparing for a big Christmas party which will be given at the Town Hall on December 16.

"Flying Onions"

Those "flying onions," to which reference has been made by pilots of the Royal Air Force flying over Germany, consist of tiny rolled steel canisters filled with high explosive and attached by wire to a small balloon. They are scattered through the air at various heights as soon as an air raid warning is received. If a plane hits a balloon or the wire, the canisters containing the explosive are swung by the impact against the machine, thus destroying it by the force of the explosion or forcing the machine to the ground. The "flying onion" is really a kind of air mine and is said to be the invention of a Major H. J. Muir. It is inexpensive and carries a self-destructing device which explodes the bomb after it has been in the air for a certain time.

Air Force Trainees

Sixty-eight trainees from the Air Force Instruction Camp at Weraroa were drafted out to the various Air Force stations last week-end. This is the first lot to leave the camp, and the Air Force Band from Wellington went up to aid in the farewell ceremony. The Minister of Defence, the Hon. F. Jones, paid an unofficial visit to Weraroa recently and expressed his pleasure in the construction of the new buildings and the general condition of the camp.

Housekeeping in Camp

Vast quantities of food are being handled by the Internal Marketing Board for the "housekeeping" depart-

ment in military camps. Only the best is being used; for instance only fresh prime ox beef and prime wether mutton are being considered. No frozen meat is used except for sea stocks on ships of the Royal New Zealand Naval Squadron. Inspectors of the Agricultural and Health Departments make regular inspections of the meat and milk to see that contractors comply strictly with the terms and conditions of the contract.

As an example of the immense amount of food required, here are the approximate figures each month for the three large military camps at Trentham, Burnham and Papakura:

Meat, 319,500 lbs.; bread, 213,000 lbs.; milk, 26,000 gallons; vegetables (other than potatoes and onions), 106,500 lbs.; potatoes, 60 tons; onions, 14 tons; fish, 14,000 lbs.; cheese, 7½ tons; flour, 8½ tons; sugar, 19 tons; butter, 18 tons; bacon, 5¼ tons; coffee, 1 ton; jam, 16 tons; oatmeal, 5 tons; dried fruits, 1½ tons; tea, 4 tons; rice, sago and tapioca, 3 tons.

WHERE ARMY COOKS ARE MADE

(By 23/762)

TOO many cooks don't spoil the broth at Trentham. By the time the instructors have finished with the pupils of the Army Cooking School some minor miracles have been performed in discovering latent talent. Men without previous training are preferred. A few months ago one of these pupils was a marine engineer; to-day, after a course at the school, he is the star pupil and a cook of the first order.

Army cooking to-day is a vastly different thing from what it was during the last war. Those endless and uninspired stews we all remember have disappeared; so has rice and raisins, which passed for a pudding over a number of years and was never known as anything else but "spotted dog."

The New Zealand soldier is the best fed in the world and his daily ration the largest, including as it does, his 1½ lbs. of fresh meat per man per day. That ration, in the hands of the army cooks, becomes three good and satisfying meals every day of the week.

No Waste

Nor is there any waste. The army food bill to-day is cheaper than it ever was and yet the men have greater variety and a larger ration. A glance at the menus served at Trentham shows that the changes are probably greater than those of an average home.

Pupils of the army cooking school undergo a thorough course and are taught to make the most and the best of the ingredients at their disposal. This is most essential, for the army cooks of the last campaign suffered a good deal of abuse, poor chaps, though for the most part they never deserved it. They were simply the traditional stew and boiled rice men, their only equipment the camp cooker or the dixie.

At the Trentham school I saw one group being instructed in the arts of making a custard, and very good it looked to me. All round the spacious camp kitchen were the products of their morning's labour — batches of nutty brown scones, pieces of pastry and currant squares, meat pasties and the like. Another group was being instructed in the mysteries of making a "Colonial goose," for that evening's dinner. Pupils are taught every branch of simple cookery such as roasting, boiling, braising and frying meats; making steamed and boiled puddings; stewing fruits; making salads, fricassees, soups, etc. This, of

course, is for established camps, with all the conveniences of the modern camp kitchen at their disposal. The men are also given a full course in field cookery, with the result that soldiers in the field are given a greater variety of food than they ever had in the past.

Field Cooking

This field cooking is another minor revolution. The old camp cooker and dixie will still find a place in army equipment, but new devices have been invented and put to excellent use. For instance there are the new field kitchens, rather like a large primus stove. These can be quickly transported and easily handled. Petrol supplies the fuel and a long flame going across the stove under the pots enables a considerable amount of cooking to be done at one time. Another innovation is a cork insulated container in which food can be kept hot over a long period. These containers are designed with a view to easy transport by hand, as, for example, the carriage of hot food to men in the trenches. They are box-shaped, the outside being an insulated chamber, containing space for a container holding the food. This inside compartment can be lifted out as desired. Partially cooked food can be placed in these containers and allowed to go on cooking in its own steam.

These new containers and field kitchens are being used at the army cooking school. When any of the units spend a night in the open on night operations, they are accompanied by a number of pupils from the school who do the cooking for them. In this way the men are trained for active service conditions. Already a number of men have passed out of the school and returned to various units of the Special Force to take up their duties as cooks.

Cleanliness

It seems scarcely necessary to add that cleanliness is a fetish of the school, as it is in the cookhouses generally in the military camps. Nor is a husband to be despised who can turn out a batch of scones, make a custard or a tasty Welsh rarebit when he comes home from work. Many of these young army cooks will be able to show their wives a thing or two about kitchencraft and economy when they return to civilian life, and what a treasure is a man who can "do the cooking!"

Personal

Wing Commander Keith Caldwell, M.C., D.F.C. and bar, one of New Zealand's air aces during the last war, has been appointed to command the Air Force School at Blenheim and will take over his new duties on December 7.

Squadron Leader T. R. Anderson, M.C., has been appointed officer in charge of administration at Wigram, the first appointment of its kind in New Zealand. He has seen service with the army in India.

Major J. Leggatt, formerly a master at the Hastings Boys' High School, is with the Rifle Battalion at Trentham Camp.

Major D. F. Leckie, a schoolmaster, of Invercargill, now with the 2nd New Zealand Division, was a member of the New Zealand Contingent which attended the Coronation of George VI.

Major E. Reeves, M.C., of Eric Reeves and Co., Wellington, has been appointed acting area staff officer of No. 5 Wellington Military District.

Flight-Lieut. J. Shanly, at present adjutant at Wigram, will become adjutant at Blenheim early in December.

Capt. A. C. Trousdale, who served with the Canadian Forces in the last war, is undergoing a course at the District School of Instruction, Narrow Neck.

Capt. Rob Roy McGregor, who was company commander of the Auckland Scottish Regiment, and his second in command, Lieut. H. R. Anderson, are undergoing a refresher course at Narrow Neck and will join the 2nd Echelon.

Capt. A. L. G. Campbell, who served with the Highland Light Infantry in India and later took up farming in the Nelson district, has joined the Canterbury-Otago Infantry Battalion at Burnham. He is a son of Colonel Campbell, formerly Auditor-General.

Lieut. Noel Gardner, son of Colonel Murray Gardner of Christchurch, is now with the 7th Field Co., New Zealand Engineers, at Narrow Neck.

Lieut. Thomas Thornton, of the Income Tax Department, is Quartermaster of the 22nd Wellington Rifle Battalion at Trentham Camp.

Lieut. R. L. Bond, formerly of the Otago Scottish and the Sydney Scottish Regiments, who came from Australia to take up an important post with Dunedin Breweries, has joined the 2nd New Zealand Division.

Neil Louissou, a director of Fairbairn Wright, Ltd., Auckland, is with the Advanced Training Battalion at Trentham.

Ian Ross, well known in Dunedin, has joined the Royal New Zealand Air Force and has gone into camp at Levin.

C. M. Bennett, son of Bishop Bennett, and H. K. Ngata, son of Sir Apirana Ngata, M.P., have gone into training with the advanced unit of the Maori Battalion. They are both announcers at 2YA.