

EUMATISM

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Family INIMENT

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## WITH THE PARTISANS

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Someone introduced a new one: "You commanded a battalion, didn't you? Did you just start at the bottom and work up?"

"Yes. I started as a machine-gunner." Silence. Dead end. Try again:

"Can you tell us some of the tricks they used to play in night manoeuvres?"

This earned a little chuckle, but still no little stories. Instead:

"Oh, most of our work was done hon-estly." Trains and tanks had been blown up with British explosives. Then suddenly the Sergeant began to explain guerrilla tactics, and went so fast that we were all left in the air. A dissertation on offensive tactics in hilly country

was over before we had time for notes. Someone asked, "Where did you sleep

at night?"

"Usually where the night finds you."
That exhausted that subject. Somehow we got on to the fact that raids
were made on towns where supplies were being accumulated for the enemy. An agent would be appointed by the Germans to assemble stocks of food from the neighbouring districts, and he would be visited in the night by Partisans.

Miss X showed a trace of feminine alarm: "Do you just—just kill him?"

Sergeant Denvir smiled once more: "No, he's handy. He's usually a Slav, and quite agreeable. He's glad to show you where all the stuff is."

## Women-at-Arms

Miss X took control for a few moments to ask about members of her own sex. What standing did women have? Did they attain to the higher ranks?

"Well, there were none higher than 2IC of a battalion. I remember one girl, she was 25, a nurse."

"And she held command just like a

"Oh, yes. First rate too. They don't

recognise any differences."

"No trouble between women?"

"No. Any foolishness is punishable by death. I never heard of a case. But it's the law of the gun for everything— there are no prisons. Steal a piece of food or a pair of boots and you're put up against the wall."

A girl doesn't join up for fun then?" "Well, no. But take one girl's case. Say her brother is with the Partisans. She knows she'll be deported to Germany when they check up on the names, so she joins up too. Some are wives fighting with their husbands. Not in the usual way, though!"

"Corporal Frank"

When we asked Sergeant Denvir how much the Partisans knew of New Zealanders, he gave the credit for their

high reputation to others.
"Some Partisans were in the last war and they knew about the Kiwis. Then the fighting in Greece this time gave them a good name."

But as I heard it from Sgt. H. W. Kimber, another New Zealander who passed through Yugoslavia, but was dexterously kept in ignorance of Sergeant Denvir's true identity, the story was a little different. "Corporal Frank," as Denvir was called, was a man much talked about, a brave man, and a good leader. Sergeant Kimber was a friend of Sergeant Denvir's, who was with him in camp in New Zealand, and was captured with him in Greece. He passed near to

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