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where Denvir was in hospital in Yugoslavia, but because hospitals are very secret (no one may approach or leave them if snow is on the ground) he was not allowed to meet the famous "Corporal Frank."

"Frank," it should be explained, was the name given to Sergeant Denvir when he joined the Partisans. All Partisans have to take assumed names, but records are kept of their true identity for casualty purposes. Sergeant Denvir was given the name Rabel Franz. Rabel was what we would call the surname, and Franz (the equivalent of Frank) comes after it, in the language of the Yugoslavs. Had Sergeant Denvir actually been killed, as he was reported for a while (though his wife in Christchurch refused to believe it) he would not have been lost to memory as some unidentified New Zealander. Official records were kept. Small points like this added up during our interview to reveal that the Partisans are certainly no rabble, but are a well-organised military force, though cosmopolitan. They were 100 strong when Sergeant Denvir joined. They are said to be about 260,000 now.

In his last action his unit took a town, but while they were in it a 500lb. bomb fell about 25 yards away and Sergeant Denvir's arm was broken. Men 50 yards away were killed. His explanation is: "I must have had my fingers crossed." But he will not go into further details. If you ask him how one joint of his fingers came to disappear, the subject is changed in a few seconds.

It was nearly time for him to go, but there was opportunity for one or two more questions. I decided to get back to the "doctors and lawyers" he had mentioned.

"When you weren't too busy to talk at all, what did you all talk about?"

"Actions," said Sergeant Denvir. "Our last actions and our next actions. And the Second Front of course. We were always wondering when that was going to begin."

"And the 'new world,' the 'post-war world,' did you ever hear them get on to that?"

Sergeant Denvir started forward and opened out once more:

"Yes, now there's one peculiar thing. People say the Partisans are in favour of Russia. They're not. They're in favour of no one. There's one thing they've made up their minds about for after the war, and that is, they're not going to have anyone in their country. They won't have the Russians; they won't have the English . . . And they are not getting any Russian supplies now either."

Someone looked at a watch, and Sergeant Denvir remembered his military obligations. He stood up and we reluctantly put him on his way.

\* \* \*

If this interview and all the other accounts seem to suggest that Sergeant Denvir has nothing to say after all his adventures, that is far from being the case. He has something very forthright to say, which he said to me very firmly, perhaps a little reproachfully, just before he left for Christchurch:

"But I don't think all this war should be written up round individuals. It should be written of the Division as a whole. You've got to remember: for every man that makes good, 20 others have got to die. If you write the story of one man, you're writing it over the bodies, so to speak, of 20 others. There's only one exception I'd make, and that's Kippenberger."

—A.A.



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