

The Marines Have Not Forgotten Us

Somewhere in the Pacific (Delayed)

WE'VE left New Zealand. But it will be a long time before we will forget it.

You can still hear around camp some expressions we picked up there: "Good-O!" "Cheers." "Fair Dinkum."

For months it was the most natural thing in the world to speak of "two and six," "five bob," "a couple of quid."

Speaking of money, it'll also be quite a while before we get used to conventional prices. In New Zealand (where a penny is worth slightly more than an American cent, a shilling worth 16 cents) a phone call cost a penny, a ride on the tram two pence, a steak (complete with French fries, tea and loads of bread and butter) never more than two and six.

Tea, for another thing, is something which most American males invariably dodge, yet almost unanimously the Marines in New Zealand became tea-drinkers. One good reason, perhaps, is that New Zealanders' coffee, by their own admission, only faintly resembled

the American product. We learned to drink tea with milk and sugar; New Zealanders never use lemon. And a tea bag is something most of them have never seen.

On the subject of food, we never did get together with the Kiwis on meals. We wouldn't be swayed from our conventional three a day, yet every New Zealander has a minimum of five, and usually six. Besides the three meals we eat, he has morning tea, afternoon tea, and usually supper at about 10.

At the Cecil Club

"If you're writing about New Zealand, don't forget the Cecil Club," a Marine just reminded me.

The Cecil Club was the Wellington headquarters of the American Red Cross. Located a block from the railroad station, it was usually the first place we went to when we arrived in town on liberty and the last place we visited before leaving.

Countless romances began at the dances which the Cecil Club sponsored nightly. It was also the only place in Wellington where you could buy a reasonable facsimile of real coffee. The

★ *It is some time now since the American Marines were here, and events happen so fast these days that to many of us it may seem even longer. That some of our visitors still remember us, however, is shown by this extract, sent to us by a reader, from a fairly recent copy of the "Marine Corps League Bulletin." The writer is Staff-Sergeant Richard J. Murphy, Jr.*

★ club had a free checking service where you could always dump laundry, overcoats or miscellaneous packages.

"And don't forget the chow!"

Hamburgers, cheeseburgers, grilled cheese sandwiches — the Cecil Club featured Stateside food. Its specialty was breakfast. They served American dry cereals, which were unobtainable elsewhere. And the cereal was topped with the thickest, yellowest cream in New Zealand. You had your choice of ordering mounds of buttered toast or a stack of hot cakes. Alongside, you could have countless bacon strips or some piping-hot pork sausage. Your check for all this would be about 25 cents in American money. (If your mouth is watering, remember that we're not getting this any more, either).

We learned to call a street-car a tram. Some other expressions we couldn't adopt so easily: saying "footpath" for sidewalk, "clerk" for clerk.

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