

## INTO THE UNKNOWN

### The Advance Guard Sets Out

(By O. A. GILLESPIE)

THE advance guard of the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force has reached its destination. Few people saw it leave the Dominion. It sailed from Wellington on December 11 by the Awatea, farewelled only by a few friends and relatives. While rain blotted out the city and flooded the countryside, officers, n.c.o.'s and men, commanded by Major A. W. Greville, came quietly in from Trentham and gathered in the shed on Queen's Wharf. No cheering crowds were there to greet them; no bands made solemn music. Only the rain beat a persistent tattoo on the roof of the shed. A howling southerly, one of the worst in the history of Wellington, lashed the wharves in fury and threw the rain in violent gusts against the sheds and ship. Those who ventured out were soaked to the skin in a few minutes. The streets were running like rivers. My umbrella was useless — before I reached the shed it had blown inside out. Water had penetrated my clothing and was running in a clammy stream down my back and legs.

Everything, everywhere, was grey and depressing. Everything except the men themselves. I found them in the shed, undismayed by the storm and the discomfort, joking in lively fashion among themselves, proud of the fact that they were the chosen advance guard of the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force. "We're ready for anything — even this storm," one of the men told me.

Arrangements had been made for the Minister of Defence, the Hon. F. Jones, and Major-General J. S. Duigan, C.B., D.S.O., to farewell the men officially in No. 5 Shed. Friends and relatives were there, too, by special arrangement, hiding their emotion with smiles, concealing their tears in a gaiety to which the howling southerly lent itself. The Minister's words were brief and sincere:

#### Minister's Farewell

"It is not my intention to make a long speech. No doubt many of you have relatives assembled here and you

will wish to spend as much time with them as possible before embarking.

"On behalf of the Government I wish to thank you for the readiness with which you have responded to the call for men for service overseas. This Dominion built up an enviable record in the last great conflict and those of your fellow countrymen who took part built up a reputation for bravery, heroism and fortitude it would be difficult to surpass. I feel sure that you can be relied upon to maintain those traditions.

"I congratulate you on being specially selected as the advance party for the Force that is to follow. Some of you will undergo special training as soon as you go abroad, and others will be engaged with the necessary arrangements for the men who are to follow you. We know that we can rely upon you to conduct yourselves as gentlemen. We know we can rely upon you to conduct yourselves as good soldiers, and to perform loyally and ungrudgingly the task that lies before you, even though it may be long and arduous. You carry with you the best wishes of the Government and of the people of this country for your personal safety and a victorious mission. We realise the great sacrifice you are making in the defence of the British Commonwealth of Nations. May good fortune crown your efforts.

"I take this opportunity of wishing you one and all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and it is my sincere hope that all of you will be spared to return as victors to those loved ones you are leaving behind."

General Duigan also paid his tribute to the men of the advance guard, expressing the pride of a soldier who has actively served in two campaigns and directed the vast organisation of a Division for a third.

#### Last Words of Relatives

Then came the final leave-taking with sisters and brothers, wives and sweethearts and intimate friends. Last minute gifts were pressed on the soldiers, pockets were filled with tiny packages to be opened later. The last words were said, words so difficult to express when the future leads to paths and ways unknown.

Once more back to the embarkation shed, across rain-soaked wharves. Girls clung to the arms of their soldiers, contemptuous of the storm, smiling as the deluge fell about them and whipped in their faces.

Soon after 5 o'clock the Awatea pulled out from the wharf. Cheers were deadened by the thunder of rain and the whining wind. A few wet handkerchiefs waved from the dim shelter of the shed, where pools of water gathered about the feet of those who waited until the last moment. Soon the ship was blotted out in sheets of driving rain, and the grey spume flung up from a wind-whipped sea. The first of our men had left for their unknown destination.



S. P. Andrew, photograph  
MAJOR L. W. ANDREW, V.C., officer commanding the 22nd Wellington Battalion of the 2nd Echelon at Trent-ham, who has been promoted to the rank of Lieut.-Colonel

#### Official Colours

Copies of Britain's diplomatic correspondence relating to the events which led up to the war are now on sale in New Zealand. Reference is frequently made in the cable news to "white and blue papers." Apparently the size of the paper governs its colour, as the smaller reports and documents have white covers and the larger ones are bound in blue. The idea of publishing official reports and documents by order of the British Parliament was instituted in 1681, but it was not until 1836 that they were offered for sale to the public. Each country seems to have a colour for the binding of its official documents. Britain has what are known as "Blue Books," although the covers are also white and drab. The United States binds its foreign diplomatic correspondence in red; France and China use yellow; Italy and Mexico use green; Spain uses red, a colour which the former Austria used; Germany and Portugal use white, and Japan grey.

#### When "Birth" is a Casualty

A birth in the family is usually the occasion for celebration, especially the first born. But in the army it is regarded as a "casualty." Recently the wife of a soldier in camp at Ngaruahia gave birth to a son and this "casualty" was duly recorded in routine orders, which must take official notice of all births, marriages and deaths.

#### Radio in Paris

Apparently even radio announcers are having trouble in this war, particularly in Paris. From the French capital go out news broadcasts in Arabic, English, Spanish, German, Portuguese and the language of Yugoslavia. There are five officials producing the British news, but only one announcer. This man with the beautiful Oxford accent soon caused trouble in the station. He became so popular that he was flooded with fan mail, demanding also to know his name. Because the Paris announcers are as jealous of each other as a group of ballet girls, the director decreed that they must all remain anonymous.

## Personal

Lieut.-Colonel J. M. Samson, who is training with the officers selected for the 3rd Echelon, has been officer commanding the Otago Regiment. He is an accountant and managing director of Modern Furniture, Ltd., Dunedin. He gained his commission in 1922, and by 1937 had reached the rank of Lieut.-Colonel in the Territorial Forces.

Lieut.-Colonel H. S. Kenrick and Major A. L. Noakes have been posted to the 5th Field Ambulance, New Zealand Medical Corps, for duty with the 3rd Echelon.

Lieut.-Colonel C. S. White, a Past President of the Auckland Officers' Club and O.C. North Auckland Regiment, has been appointed Commandant at Papakura. He was a Quartermaster during the last war.

Major D. F. Leckie has been appointed second in command of the 23rd Rifle Battalion at Burnham.

Major T. Milliken, a member of the Christchurch City Council, is training with the officers who will be posted to the 3rd Echelon.

Captain F. P. Furkert, son of Mr. F. W. Furkert, late Chief Engineer, Public Works, has been appointed to the 5th Field Ambulance, New Zealand Medical Corps.

Captain E. J. Brammall, of Blenheim, has been appointed staff officer, "A" duties, at Army Headquarters. He served with the Rifle Brigade in the last war.

Captain C. L. Mullany, of the Railway Department, has been appointed to mobilisation duties, Army Headquarters. He served with the Rifle Brigade during the last war and has been on the executive of the New Zealand Rugby Union.

Lieut. H. B. J. Sutton, formerly of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, is now with the 2nd Echelon. He lived in Saskatchewan for a time after the last war, but came to New Zealand a few years ago.

Lieutenant M. P. W. Blathwayt, who served with the Canterbury Yeomanry Cavalry during the last war, is attached to the "A" Branch, Army Headquarters.

#### First Meeting In 27 Years

One of the happiest recollections of the Minister of Defence, the Hon. F. Jones, during his recent brief visit to Australia, was a meeting with his brother, Mr. W. Jones. It was the first time they had seen each other for 27 years. Not until an hour before they met did Mr. W. Jones know that his brother was in Sydney, when the Minister sent him a telegram. Mr. W. Jones, who has lived in Australia for many years, served with distinction with the Australian Forces during the last war

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