

THE HUMOUR OF RUMOURS

Rumours are funny things—sometimes. But much funnier, are the people who start them. The people who pass them on are just pathetic. Yes, I too have been pathetic, and have always regretted it when the truth comes out. The chief causes of rumour-mongering appears to be impatience, high creative ability and love of sensation. That it is a nuisance and a danger to our national security is not countenanced by the rumour spreader. He lives for the moment when he sees his conversational partner drop a spanner on his corn with surprise, or in the case of the fair sex, swoon with exquisite ease at the mythical bombshell.

A woman rushed into a shop in Auckland and said she had heard over the radio that the Japs had landed on a beach up North. The shopkeeper asked a few more questions—and found this to be the true story. The woman was in the tram, and heard it from a passenger. She OVERHEARD it. Good. Later, the shopkeeper heard from his wife that in a radio serial given that day, part of the story concerned "Some CHAPS who, after drifting in a boat at sea, had landed on the SHORE." The Dame Rumour had heard part of this recounted amid the noise of the tramcar in motion. She had a son on coastal duty. Her nerves were probably bad. She thought the other passenger had said "Japs." And in order to justify herself in passing on the news she had said that SHE had heard it on the air. She also conjured up a mind picture of Japanese landing on the shore near the coastal defence where her son was stationed. But she said "beach" because that was New Zealand idiom. Simple?

Our Brigade, in common with other military units, look to causes and origins much simpler, psychologically, than those given above. The Tanker's thought descend much closer to Mother Earth, than the sublimation of Truth to emotions. The cartoon opposite suggests what the Tanker thinks in regard to the Origin of Rumour.

—Observer.

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A.R.P. INSTRUCTIONS

As soon as bombs begin to fall, run like hell. It doesn't matter where as long as you run. Wear sandshoes so that if people running ahead of you fall, or are too slow, you will not trouble passing them or jumping onto, or over them.

If an Incendiary Bomb is found in a building, pour gasoline over it. You can't remove the bomb anyhow, so you may as well remove the building.

Take advantage of any opportunity offered you when the air raid sounds, e.g., if in a bakery, grab a pie; if in a hotel, grab a beer, two if possible; If in a theatre, grab a blonde.

If an Air Raid Warden tries to tell you what to do, wrap a sandbag round his neck. These dills always will grab the best seats for themselves anyway.

If you should be the victim of a direct hit, don't go to pieces. Just lie down very still in a gutter and the sanitation squad will take care of you.

After reaching the shelter rush back into the street and take a good look round. Maybe one of the Air Force Bugs pushed the wrong button or maybe it was a couple of Gulls.

To test for Gas, whip off your Gas Mask and take two or three deep breaths. If you hear "all clear," it WASN'T Gas. If you hear Harp Music, it WAS.



IN THE FIRST PUSH

To have taken the first New Zealand troops into action in World War II. is the distinction enjoyed by Major G. H. Whyte, O.B.E., E.D. Major Whyte saw service in the last War, as on N.C.O., and being the son of an officer, kept up his interest on his return when he joined the territorials as a volunteer. He very soon obtained his commission.

Major Whyte was a volunteer very soon in the present struggle. He went away in the First Echelon in command of the Reserve Motor Transport. It was this unit that conveyed the British Infantry to within a hundred yards of the Italian lines to start Sir Richard O'Connor's sensational drive through Libya early in December, 1940. The New Zealand R.M.T. drivers were not going to be out of anything that was going and they hopped out of their vehicles to join the infantry storming party. Major Whyte was in the midst of it all the time.

In our Brigade there are two officers who were N.C.O.'s in the R.M.T. on that day. They are Lieutenant R. L. Dow and Lieutenant H. Peake. They were a sergeant and corporal respectively then, but both men gained their commissions after the Greek campaign. Major Whyte was awarded his O.B.E. for his services in charge of the R.M.T. in this first Libyan push.

