

enemy dispositions, extracts from captured diaries, and the morning's B.B.C. news.

Issue number four, however, saw the newsletter reach full-blown maturity. It was headed "*Desert Saws*," carried as house motto Shakespeare's " . . . slipped age, Full of wise saws and modern instances." The title, of course, was a pun on "desert sores"—the prevailing affliction among the troops. Another innovation that came to stay was a daily "latrinogram," the universal army term for any imaginative rumour. The origin of "latrinograms" was thus described, in verse, in one number:—

Actual evidence have I none,
But my officer's batman's friend's son
Heard a picquet on his beat
Say to a cook in a desert street,
That he had a brother who had a friend
Who knew when our duty was going to end.

A typical item ran as follows:—

The Story: That 2 N.Z. Div. is to be relieved to-day by an Indian Brigade.

The Proof: Indian transport was seen moving up in our rear.

Currency Grading: Two Gold Stars.

The Truth: An Indian unit composed almost entirely of untried recruits is now digging a defensive position in rear of 2 N.Z. Div.

Another new feature, designed to be practical in operations, took the form of lessons in German, and contained useful phrases such as "Hands up!", "Quickly!", "Shut up!" in the enemy's language. There were other items of general interest, and also a few "fill-up" jokes—of the "men only" flavour.

Household hints, such as methods of making fly-traps, also occasionally made their appearance, and during the second week a limerick competition was run, a sample of the entries being "*The Machine-gunner's Lay*":—

Our widely assorted establishment caters
For giving a bash to various Dictators,
And all the best pickers
Believe in the Vickers
The quickest and nastiest Jerry-rotators.

Next day the signallers chimed in with the following:—

The signallers, too, have a feud with old Herman,
Not only friend Hitler, but every damn German,
The Emperor "Hito,"
And bandy Benito,
Including the rest of their low crawly vermin.

Not of high literary merit perhaps but certainly of high morale value.

Another competition, sponsored by Brigadier Clifton, who offered a prize of six cans of beer, was for the best suggestion on how to annoy "Jerry." The line was static, but that was considered no reason at all for letting the enemy have a quiet life, and ideas were called for on night raids, camouflage and deception, booby-traps, and so on. The first idea to come in was a suggestion to line dummy trenches with sand-bags containing anti-tank mines, as the panzers had shown a predilection for running over our pits.

There were other suggestions, including the following whimsical thought:—

A Brain has suggested a means of surprise,
By crossing mosquitoes with these — flies!
And now the committee,
In doubt or in pity,
Propose to award him the *Desert Saws* prize.

All through Rommel's last attack at Alamein, from August 30 to September 6, *Desert Saws* maintained daily publication and kept the troops informed of all developments, both in their own theatre of war, and overseas.

An artist, in the person of the Brigade H.Q. draughtsman—a former Canterbury School of Art student—was occasionally employed to brighten up the paper with cartoons. His most popular and most appealing effort was for the last number, on September 10, the day before the division was finally relieved to move out for a month's rest and manœuvres. The tail piece to this number, a "Late Extra!" is reproduced here.

