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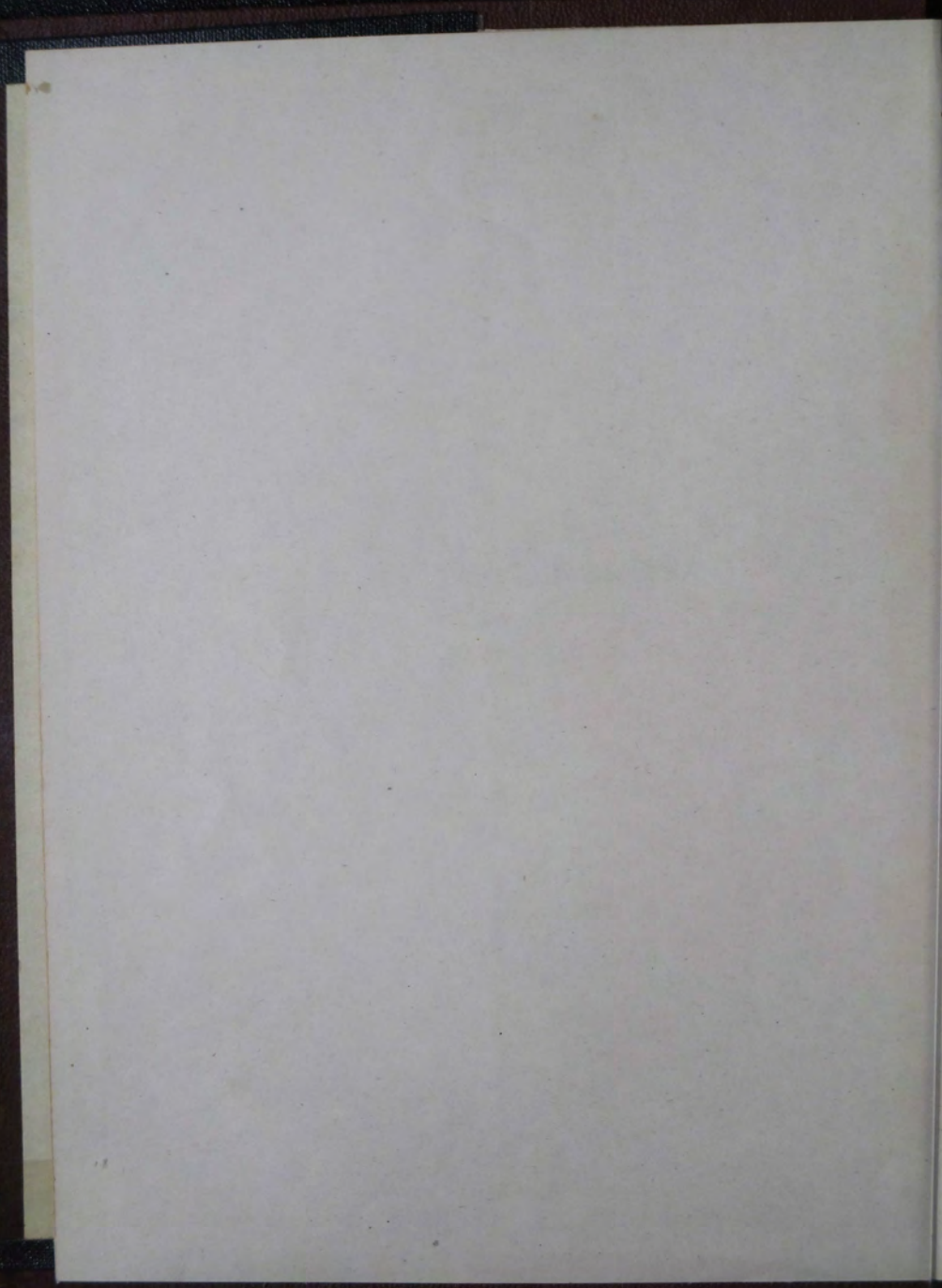
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NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

by

KENNETH R. HANCOCK

An unofficial account of the Dominion's war effort overseas and at home, embracing the Services in all theatres and the industrial and general domestic background during the period of hostilities, 1939-45.



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FOREWORD

This book is an informal, unofficial interim survey of New Zealand's war effort in the defeat of Germany and Japan. It is probable that on the services side, it will be a considerable time before the mass of accumulated official material is co-related into one great volume, or a series, perhaps one to each service and to the civilian effort. The Army Official War Correspondents, the Archivists with their informative and most readable surveys of various campaigns; the Public Relations Directorate, Air Department, and its official news service in respect of the Pacific war; the United Press Association general service which included reports by world-known correspondents; the U.P.A. special correspondent in his dispatches on the work of New Zealand airmen in the United Kingdom, supplemented in lesser degree by the official service; the U.P.A. in respect of Navy personnel; New Zealand *Truth's* bright dispatches from Keith Hooper and Eric Baume; the good, sound special articles of the Auckland *Weekly News*; the personal angles which were the specialty of the New Zealand *Free Lance* in its many reports based on the letters of officers and men alike, and personal interviews; the generous space given by *The Standard* to official news releases and those of its own correspondents; the entire Press for those thousands of articles based on letters and interviews of servicemen which helped to bring the war to the "home town"; photographic and news releases arranged by the Director of Publicity, Mr. J. T. Paul—all those assisted to keep the New Zealand public, within the limits of official security regulations, continually and fully acquainted with both the military and civil war effort. Full acknowledgment is made for material contained in this book to the interim surveys published under the hand of the Army Board but really the work of N.Z.E.F. archivists and the Archives Section, Army Headquarters, Wellington; the dispatches of Lieut.-General Sir Bernard Freyberg, V.C.; British Ministry of Information publications; newspaper articles (in respect of the Army); the Public Relations Directorate, Air Department, for the R.N.Z.A.F. in the Pacific, supplemented by material gathered personally, and Press articles from many sources covering New Zealand airmen in the European theatre; the Navy Department, Wellington, for some material concerning New Zealand's naval effort; the Minister of Finance, Hon. Walter Nash, for material on the financial side of the war; the Minister of Works, Hon. Robert Semple, for details of defence construction; certain statistics from statements issued by the Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones; the National Service Department annual reports as a basis for the section on the labour and E.P.S. efforts. Much of the material was gathered for newspaper publication but the size of wartime issues prevented full use. The section dealing with conscientious objectors was compiled by myself, from perusal of official statements and reports, supplemented by information which came to me in the normal course of my work. I would again emphasise that this is not an official publication but until such is

available in final form, it may serve a useful purpose. Where opinions are expressed herein, they are my own. It is a matter for regret that little, if any, useful material was available on the efforts of New Zealand airmen in India and Burma. No doubt that deficiency will be remedied in some official publication. My thanks are due to Mr. J. W. Matthews, former news editor, *The Dominion*, Wellington, who recommended my services to the publishers when they sought someone to undertake the work. I am also grateful to the management of *The Dominion* for the opportunities afforded me in the ordinary course of my work to gather information for this book.

It is appropriate to begin with a review of New Zealand's manpower contribution in three overseas wars—South Africa, World War I, and World War II.

This Dominion supplied 6,411 men (and 6,612 horses, which did not return) in ten contingents for the South African War. The male population of New Zealand, all ages, was then 414,000 and taking into account the scope of this war, compared with the two later world conflicts, the contribution was a fine one. The killed or died-of-wounds totalled 95, wounded 202, died of disease 79, captured 37, missing at end of war, six. The total British casualties in this war were 7,582 killed or died of wounds, and 13,139 died of disease.

In World War I, 124,211 men were mobilised, of whom 100,444 served overseas. Of the total mobilised, 32,000 were sent to camp after being called by ballot under the Military Service Act, 1916. The balance were volunteers. The number who served overseas included 550 nurses and just over 2,000 Maoris. In respect of the Maoris it was then felt that their declining population should be spared decimation. In the period between the two world wars, the Maori population almost doubled and their contribution in 1939-45 was a magnificent one, not alone in numbers but in performance and valour. The total given of New Zealanders who served overseas is exclusive of 3,370 other men who joined units of the British Imperial Forces or the Expeditionary Forces of other Dominions, and the 192 who served with the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Naval Air Service (later Royal Air Force), and 750 naval ranks and ratings. When the Armistic was declared (November 11, 1918), there were 52,000 New Zealand troops in the field and 9,924 either awaiting embarkation or in training. Troops provided for service represented nearly ten per cent. of the total 1914 population, or just under 45 per cent. of the males between 20 and 45 (exclusive of New Zealanders with other forces). In the 52 months of World War I, casualties to members of the New Zealand forces totalled 58,004, of whom 16,302 were killed and 356 taken prisoner. The honours won totalled between 4,000 and 5,000, including eleven Victoria Crosses and 117 Distinguished Service Order awards.

From 1939 to 1945, 205,000 served in the Forces, including 9,700 women. Of these, 146,000 were in the Army, 48,000 in the Air Force and 11,000 in the Navy. These figures make allowance for transfers from one service to another and for men who were recalled to camp after being placed on leave without pay or after discharge; none is counted twice. The total mobilised was 57 per cent. of males between 18 and 45. Service with the Navy and Air Force was voluntary, including the right of option when called up for general military service. In 1939-45, 135,000 men and women left New Zealand for service overseas with the three services. These were approximately made up of 98,000 Army, 6,000 Navy and 30,000 Air Force. A total of 5,300 Maoris were accepted for overseas service. The total number who served in the Maori Battalion, 2nd N.Z.E.F., was 3,000 whose casualties were

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612 dead (411 killed in action, 166 died of wounds, 20 accidentally killed, 15 died of sickness), 1,906 wounded, 18 missing, and 184 prisoners of war. The other Maoris who went overseas served in Pakeha units of the services.

The total registration of volunteers for the Army in the 1939-45 war prior to the introduction of the ballot system was 60,925, of whom 42,447 passed fit. Maori registrations—all Maori service was voluntary—totalled 15,744 for both overseas and home service. By May 31, 1945, 76,356 soldiers had embarked for the Middle East, 40,964 for the Pacific, and 784 for the United Kingdom. The Pacific totals included soldiers who had embarked for one destination in the Pacific, served there and returned to New Zealand, subsequently to embark again for another part of the Pacific. The totals who had returned by May 31, 1945, were 30,165 (Middle East), 40,003 (Pacific), 629 (United Kingdom). The grand Army totals were 118,014 embarked and 70,797 returned by May 31.

New Zealand Army casualties to May 31, 1945, totalled 33,013 and overseas air casualties to March 31 were 3,998, of whom 3,648 were R.N.Z.A.F. personnel and 350 New Zealanders serving in the R.A.F. at the outbreak of war. Aircraft accidents in New Zealand had then accounted for 265 deaths, most of these being of young men lost in training operations and who died for their country as surely as if lost in combat.

Details of Army casualties are: Killed in Action, 4,130 (including two in United Kingdom and 93 in Pacific). Died of Wounds, 1,833 (one United Kingdom and 41 Pacific). Deaths due to accident, 321 (10 United Kingdom and 43 Pacific). Died of Sickness, 282 (eight United Kingdom and 32 Pacific). Prisoners of War (subsequently released), 8,188 (seven, Pacific). Missing, 342 (two, Pacific). Wounded, 33,013 (three United Kingdom and 231 Pacific). Grand totals of casualties: Middle East, 32,538. United Kingdom, 24. Pacific, 451.

Air Force casualties to March 31 were: Killed or presumed dead, 2,875. Missing, believed killed, 138. Missing, 476. Prisoners of War or Interned (subsequently released), 509. Total 3,998.

At the surrender of Japan, 461 New Zealanders were held as prisoners of war or internees and 194 classified as missing following operations by or against the Japanese. Service personnel held by the Japanese totalled 92, and 163 were missing. In addition there were 30 men of the New Zealand Mercantile Marine held and 339 other civilians. Prisoners of war and civilians held were located in Japan (64), Malaya (132, including 53 civilians and 16 men of the R.N.Z.A.F. at Singapore), Shanghai (67), Thailand (44), Hong Kong (37), various other places (117).

The grand total of New Zealand killed in the 1939-45 war amounted to approximately five and a half out of every 1,000 persons, compared with Great Britain's six and a half, the latter having sustained heavy civilian and merchant marine losses.

In three wars (South African, Great War and World War II.) New Zealand sent approximately 235,000 men overseas. The dead totalled approximately 27,000 and wounded 75,000. Thousands more died prematurely as the result of their wounds or effects of active service in the South African War and in 1914-18. No doubt the same will apply to many who have served in 1939-45. Twice in thirty years New Zealand lost a generation of its best and finest.

Though 35,000 more men served in the New Zealand Forces overseas in 1939-45 than in 1914-18, the casualty rate for the former was much lower. Comparative figures are: 37,497 representing 28 per cent. in 1939-45 as

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against 55,155 or 58 per cent. in 1914-18. The only increase in 1939-45 was in the number of prisoners of war. Respective totals of casualties are: Killed, 1939-45, 10,072 or 7.5 per cent.; 1914-18, 16,781 or 16.7 per cent. Wounded, 1939-45, 19,339 or 14.3 per cent.; 1914-18, 41,315 or 41.2 per cent. Greatest number of prisoners of war, 1939-45, 8,036 or 6 per cent.; 1914-18, 379 or 0.37 per cent. Amputees in the 1939-45 war totalled approximately 450 compared with 1,050 New Zealanders who lost limbs in 1914-18. The totally blinded in 1939-45, according to rehabilitation registrations, were 21 and 12 partially blinded.

Official Commonwealth and Empire war casualties from September 3, 1939, to August 14, 1945, were:—

Killed, missing, wounded and prisoners of war: United Kingdom 755,257; India 179,935; Canada 101,538; Australia 95,561; New Zealand 39,929; South Africa 37,633; Colonies 36,172. Total 1,246,025.

Killed, including those who died of wounds and injuries: United Kingdom 244,723; Canada 23,476; India 24,338; Australia 23,365; New Zealand 10,033; Colonies 6877; South Africa 6840; total 353,652.

The following were then missing: United Kingdom 53,039; Colonies 14,208; India 11,754; Australia 6,030; New Zealand 2,129; Canada 1,843; South Africa 1,841; total 90,844.

Wounded: United Kingdom 277,090; India 64,354; Canada, 53,174; Australia 39,803; New Zealand 19,314; South Africa 14,363; Colonies 6,972; total 475,070.

The following were prisoners of war, including service internees: United Kingdom 180,405; India, 79,489; Australia 26,363; South Africa 14,589; Canada 9,045; New Zealand 8,453; Colonies 8,115; total 326,459.

Merchant seamen casualties, including men of all nationalities who served in British registered and chartered ships and fishing boats: Deaths (including deaths in internment, or presumed deaths in missing ships) were 30,189; missing 5,264; wounded 4,402; internees 5,556; total 45,411.

Total civilian casualties, killed, missing, or injured, due to enemy action in the United Kingdom, were 146,760. Civilians killed or missing, believed killed, numbered 60,558, of which 26,920 were men, 25,392 women, 7,736 children, and 537 unidentified. There were 86,175 injured and detained in hospital, 40,736 being men, 38,716 women, and 6,723 children (to May 31, 1945).

Five Members of the New Zealand Parliament (or one-sixteenth of the total strength of the House) died on active service in the 1939-45 war. They were: Captain W. J. Lyon (Labour, Waitemata); Lieutenant A. G. Hultquist (Labour, Bay of Plenty); Lieutenant-Colonel J. M. Allen (National, Hau-raki); Major A. N. Grigg (National, Mid-Canterbury); Brigadier James Hargest (National, Awarua). Other Members of Parliament who served overseas were Mr. R. M. Macfarlane (Labour, Christchurch South); Lieutenant Commander P. G. Connolly (Labour, Dunedin West); Mr. A. F. Mon-cur, R.N.Z.A.F. (Labour, Rotorua); Major T. L. Macdonald (National, Mafaua); Major C. F. Skinner (Labour, Motueka—Minister of Rehabilitation). Mr. Connolly was elected after returning from the war and Mr. Mon-cur lost his seat in 1943. A number also served in the Home Defence forces. The proportion of New Zealand Members lost on active service, in proportion of those of the eighty who would have been eligible to serve overseas, is remarkably high.

Three Members who had served overseas in the 1914-18 war also "died in harness" during the 1939-45 war: The Right Hon. J. G. Coates (National,

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Kaipara), a former Prime Minister and at the time of his death, a member of the War Cabinet; Mr. H. T. Ratana (Labour, Western Maori); Mr. Frank Findlay (National, Hamilton).

Figures available to March 31, 1946, show that New Zealanders gained 6,560 awards and decorations in the 1939-45 war, of which 417 were Navy, 3,881 Army, and 2,262 Air Force. The total includes eight V.C.'s and one Bar to the V.C.; D.S.O., 195; Bar to D.S.O., 24; M.C., 262; Bar to M.C., 13; D.S.C., 93; Bar to D.S.C., 8; second Bar to D.S.C., 1; D.F.C., 1,025; Bar to D.F.C., 79; second Bar to D.F.C., 4; M.M., 612; Bar to M.M., 4; D.C.M., 109; Bar to D.C.M., 1; D.F.M., 179; Bar to D.F.M., 1; C.G.M., 6; D.S.M., 32; George Medal, 7; Mentioned in Despatches, 3,008. Details are given in service sections.

Twenty-five New Zealanders have won the Victoria Cross and in addition, Captain C. H. Upham, was awarded a Bar to the V.C., being the first combatant to receive this distinction, the two who previously achieved it having been serving with the medical corps. The first New Zealand V.C. was awarded to Major Charles Heaphy, Colonial Militia, in the New Zealand (Maori) War, 1860-66. (Fourteen other awards of the V.C. were made in this war to members of the Imperial Forces, a majority for carrying wounded men out of danger under fire. Few awards of this type have since been made.) The second New Zealand award was to Farrier-Sergeant W. J. Hardham, in the South African War. Fifteen V.C.'s were won by New Zealanders in 1914-18 and eight in 1939-45, plus Captain Upham's Bar. Dates of the 1914-18 and 1939-45 awards are:—

1914-1918 War.—October 15: Corporal (later Lieutenant-Colonel) Cyril Bassett, Div. Sig. Co., Gallipoli. October 15, 1915: Captain A. J. Shout (serving with the A.I.F.), Gallipoli. June 14, 1917: Sergeant D. F. Brown, Otago Regiment, France (posthumous award). June 22, 1917: Lieutenant-Commander W. E. Sanders, R.N.R., "Mystery ship" action at sea. August 2, 1917: Lance-Corporal (later Captain) S. Frickleton, New Zealand Rifle Brigade, France. December 16, 1917: Lieutenant-Colonel (later Lieutenant-General) Bernard Freyberg (Royal Naval Division), France. January 11, 1918: Private H. J. Nicholas, Canterbury Regiment, France. June 7, 1918: Lieutenant P. V. Störkey (serving with the A.I.F.), France. September 6, 1918: Sergeant (later Colonel) L. W. Andrew, Wellington Regiment, France. September 27, 1918: Sergeant R. C. Travis, Otago Regiment, France (posthumous award). October 22, 1918: Sergeant S. Forsyth, New Zealand Engineers, France (posthumous award). October 30, 1918: Sergeant (later Major) R. S. Judson, D.C.M., M.M., Auckland Regiment, France. November 15, 1918: Pte. (later Lieutenant) H. J. Laurent, Rifle Brigade, France. November 15, 1918: Private J. Crichton, Auckland Regiment, France. November 27, 1918: Sergeant (later Lieutenant) John G. Grant, Wellington Regiment, France.

Lieutenant-Colonel Basset was New Zealand's first V.C. of the 1914-18 War, the deed with which he won the award having been performed two days prior to that of Captain Shout.

1939-1945 War.—April 28, 1941: Sergeant J. D. Hinton, Southern Battalion, Greece. May 20, 1941: Sergeant A. C. Hulme, Wellington Battalion, Crete. May 22, 1941: Second Lieutenant (later Captain) C. H. Upham, Southern Battalion, Crete. July 7, 1941: Sergeant-Pilot J. A. Ward, R.N.Z.A.F., Munster, Germany (later lost on operations). July 14-15, 1942: Captain C. H. Upham, Southern Battalion, El Ruweisat Ridge, Western Desert. (Bar to the V.C.) July 15, 1942: Sergeant (later Lieutenant) Keith

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Elliott, Ruweisat, Western Desert. March 26, 1943: Second Lieutenant K. Ngarimu, Maori Battalion. Jebel Tabaga, Western Desert (posthumous award; first Maori to win V.C.). August, 1943: Flying Officer L. A. Trigg, R.N.Z.A.F., North Atlantic (posthumous award); Squadron Leader Leonard H. Trent, Amsterdam, March 3, 1943.

The first man to receive a Bar to the V.C. was Surgeon-Lieutenant Arthur Martin-Leake, of the South African Constabulary. He won the V.C. in the South African War on February 8, 1902, for gallant conduct at Vlaktefontein, and was again recommended for the decoration in the Great War for rescuing a large number of wounded near Zonnebeke in Belgium in November, 1914, while exposed to constant fire. The other British officer to receive this honour was Captain N. G. Chavasse, Royal Army Medical Corps. The V.C. was awarded to him for his courage and self-sacrifice at Guillemont, in October, 1916. He was wounded in the side by a shell splinter while carrying wounded men to safety over 500 yards of shell-swept ground. After dark he took up a party of 20 volunteers, rescued three wounded men from a shell-hole only twenty-five yards from the enemy's trench, buried the bodies of two officers, and collected many identity discs. The Bar to the V.C. was awarded for similar courageous conduct in September, 1917. He never lived to receive the Bar, however, dying from the severe wounds he received.

AIR DEEDS AND MEN

"Now that the armed might of Nazi Germany has been laid low, the Air Council send you their warm congratulations on the illustrious part which New Zealand airmen have played in this resounding triumph. Many New Zealanders were serving in the Royal Air Force even before the war. The comradeship thus begun grew rapidly and before long large numbers of New Zealand air-crew were serving with distinction in Royal Air Force squadrons. They have brought honour to their country and to the Royal Air Force by their gallant service in all theatres of war. With great foresight you developed your training organisation, you became a ready partner in the Empire Air Training Plan which was to lay the foundations of our air supremacy; in all this you held nothing back, but gave to the limit of your power."

—The message of the Air Council to New Zealand on VE Day.

New Zealanders have inscribed for themselves, and their country, an honoured name that cannot but loom great and enduring even in the illimitable spaces of the sky. They were there for the Battle of France, Dunkirk, Narvik, the Battle for London, the Battle of Britain, Malaya, the Western Desert, Tunisia, Sicily, Italy, Normandy, France, Holland, Belgium, India, Burma, the Pacific, to smash in and from the air all who menaced that way of life which, in common with the rest of the Empire, was their heritage. In preserving what was their own, they fought, and died, that others too might enjoy it. Many of the 507 New Zealanders in the R.A.F. when war began played their part in the Battle of Britain. One, Squadron Leader M. J. Herrick, D.F.C. and Bar, shot down five German planes and later went to the Pacific, to account for three Japanese before returning to Britain. He was reported missing towards the end of 1944. Another, Flight Lieutenant L. H. Edwards, was in one of the first air combats of the war, off the coast of Heligoland, three days after the outbreak. Flight Lieutenant Litchfield (New Plymouth) was in the first air raid over Heligoland seven hours after war was declared. When the battle for Crete began, a Hastings man was captain of the first British bomber which arrived to aid the New Zealanders. These are but a few. Edwards was the first British officer to be taken prisoner; the first British prisoner of war was Warrant Officer George Booth, of Leeds, whose plane was shot down on the night of September 4, 1939, during an attack on the *Emden* at Wilhelmshaven. He was repatriated in April, 1945, after 2,057 days captivity.

The bones of many New Zealand airmen hallow the ground of foreign fields in every clime. But many more have returned to their homeland unsettled by the ordeal of continual life or death experiences encountered in those years of their lives when, had there been no war and they had stayed at home, they might

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have been thought immature for the responsibility of much part in the conduct of everyday affairs. But when the call came—and so many "beat the gun"—they were old enough, or perhaps too young, to die that others of many colours, creeds and nations might live. Wherever they were—from the Battle of Britain to the heat of the Pacific—the spirit was the same. May these things be always remembered. Not only of the fliers, but the men who worked on the ground to keep them aloft and who were so often back-grounded in the handout of popular acclamation. New Zealander servicing everywhere was up to the standard set aloft; in Britain and elsewhere that British craftsmen operated, they were all men ingrained with the same tradition. In the Pacific and in New Zealand, the work of the ground crews was a revelation to Allied forces.

As stated there were 507 New Zealanders already in the R.A.F. when war broke out and in August, 1945, it was reported that 350 of these were casualties. A minor exodus started from New Zealand from the early 'thirties. Some worked their own passages Home and took a chance of acceptance in an Air Force that set the world's standard for fitness and other qualifications. Many more followed under a visioned plan of short-service commissions. They were there for the Battle of Britain and all that followed. And those who lived rose high on their merits. New Zealand was looking well forward in the air from 1936, but as part of a Commonwealth that did not prepare for war till all hope of peace on earth was past, equipment was not rapid. That factor played a part in a grand gesture. When war began the New Zealand Government had thirty Wellington bombers on order in England and so near to delivery point that the crews to fly them out were ready to take over the first flights. These aircraft, and the men, were placed at the disposal of the United Kingdom Government to form the famous No. 75 Bomber Squadron whose story will be told later.

Up to the end of the European War 10,613 New Zealand airmen had served in the United Kingdom; 1,000 in India and the Far East; 1,000 in the Middle East, and in July, 1944, there were 6,390 in the Pacific, including some who had done one or more tours of duty. When Japan surrendered there were between 6,000 and 7,000 in the Pacific.

Awards and decorations gained by the Royal New Zealand Air Force, announced up to March 31, 1946, were:—

Operational:	United Kingdom, Middle East and other Theatres.			Total.
	In R.A.F.	Pacific.		
Victoria Cross	—	—	3	3
D.S.O.	28	3	39	70
Bar to D.S.O.	1	—	3	4
M.C.	—	1	1	2
M.M.	—	2	1	3
C.G.M.	1	—	4	5
D.F.C.	147	86	791	1,024
Bar to D.F.C.	24	1	54	79
Second Bar to D.F.C.	—	—	4	4
D.F.M.	5	9	165	179
Bar to D.F.M.	—	—	1	1
Mentioned in Despatches	—	274	291	565
Commendations	—	—	27	27

AIR DEEDS AND MEN

Non-Operational:

C.B.	1	—	—	1
C.B.E.	—	1	7	8
K.C.B.E.	—	1	—	1
O.B.E.	—	6	21	27
M.B.E.	—	7	47	54
B.E.M.	—	33	16	49
George Medal	—	2	4	6
A.F.C.	25	13	54	92
Bar to A.F.C.	2	—	—	2
Air Force Medal	—	—	5	5

Totals	234	439	1,538	2,211
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Foreign Awards:

American Legion of Merit (Degree Legionnaire)	—	1	—	1
American Legion of Merit (Degree of Officer)	—	2	—	2
American Legion of Merit (Degree of Commander)	—	2	—	2
American D.F.C.	3	5	8	16
United States Air Medal	—	16	—	16
French Croix de Guerre	1	—	4	5
Belgian Croix de Guerre	—	—	1	1
Polish Virtute Militari	1	—	1	2
Order of Crown of Yugo-Slavia	—	—	2	2
White Eagle of Yugo-Slavia	—	—	1	1
Norwegian War Cross	1	—	—	1
Czech War Cross	1	—	—	1
Soviet Order of Lenin	1	—	—	1
Totals	8	26	17	51

Grand Totals of Operational, Non-Operational, Foreign	242	465	1,555	2,262
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New Zealanders who were in Britain for the start helped to build the squadron which helped to make the name of New Zealand world known—the New Zealand Spitfire Squadron—first flying aircraft bought by public subscription raised in New Zealand, and then the Second New Zealand Fighter Squadron, later to be equipped with Typhoons and then Tempests.

It was stated by Mr. L. W. Brockington, K.C., adviser on Commonwealth Affairs, British Ministry of Information, that "if all the airmen of New Zealand were assembled together, they could launch one of the R.A.F.'s famous 1,000-bomber raids—fighter protection, ground service and all."

The strength of the R.N.Z.A.F. in New Zealand in July, 1944, was 28,196 (24,876 men and 3,410 women). The Pacific strength was 6,390, approximately double the previous year. The strength elsewhere overseas was: United Kingdom, 3,939; Middle East, 519; Canada, 2,195; India, 308. The total overseas was 13,351, an increase over 1943 of approximately 7,800. This was a tremendous achievement. All commitments under the Empire Training Scheme had been met, a great increase made in the Pacific, and strengths in New Zealand and overseas increased. There was criticism of the strength in New Zealand but the men

required overseas had to come from here, and around the time of the attacks on New Zealand strength, future policy was in the melting pot and the subject of deliberations between the New Zealand Government and its Allies.

Up till the year ended March 31, 1944, there had been sent overseas, excluding the Pacific, these totals. For 1941: 832 aircrew and 196 non-flying personnel (1,028); 1942: 5,083 and 959 respectively (6,042); 1943: 7,524 and 1,000 (8,524); 1944: 9,366 and 1,080 (11,416). The number sent to the Pacific for the year ended March, 1944, was nearly eighteen times the by-no-means-negligible total of 1942.

In all, 21,648 airmen had then gone overseas since the war began which, with the 307 already serving with the R.A.F., made 22,155. Of these 6,145 had returned to New Zealand, and casualties, excluding sick and wounded not returned, were 3,062.

The total overseas at March 31, 1944, was 4,465 more than for the previous Year. Actually 9,819 went overseas in this year but 4,293 personnel returned, and there were 1,061 casualties, making a net 4,465 increase. Altogether casualties from the outbreak of the war until March 31, 1944, were 2,210 killed or presumed dead; 93 missing, believed killed; 314 missing; 445 prisoners of war, or interned. Of these, 2,716 casualties were R.N.Z.A.F., and 346 of those New Zealanders serving with the R.A.F. when war began. Progressively the casualties for 1941, 1942, 1943 and 1944 were: Killed or presumed dead, 156, 529, 1,206, 2,210; missing, believed killed, 20, 51, 75, 93; missing, 59, 135, 307, 314; prisoners of war, or interned, 50, 132, 287, 445; missing, believed prisoners of war, —, 6, 26, —. These figures tell their own story of New Zealand's contribution.

New Zealand's contribution to the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, the pending termination of which was announced in October, 1944, was 7,511 men who had passed through Canada for air crew training. Of these 6,026 had graduated by August 25, 1944. By May, 1944, 4,845 had been posted to the R.A.F.; 204 were with the Royal Canadian Air Force, 452 returned to New Zealand for duty, and others awaited posting. In all, 114,253 air crew had graduated to August 25, 60,503 being members of the Royal Canadian Air Force, 39,657 of the R.A.F., and 8,067 of the R.A.A.F. Australia and New Zealand made a cash contribution of 207,000,000 dollars towards the total cost of 2,304,000,000 dollars. Both Australia and New Zealand had by then discontinued sending men to Canada.

Since the outbreak, the R.N.Z.A.F. had actually trained 11,529 for flying duties, of whom 3,652 received all their training in New Zealand, 2,910 were pilots who were part-trained before going to Canada, 4,601 were wireless operator-air gunners who trained first in New Zealand and then in Canada, and 366 were navigators and air gunners trained here to meet local and Pacific requirements. The Empire Air Training Plan was to have continued till March, 1945, but as invasion casualties were lower than expected and there was a good reserve of manpower in hand, it was possible to discontinue training in Canada some months earlier. As the Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones, put it: "The Plan, a great co-ordinated network extending from such flying training stations as Ashburton to the very heart of the Empire, and thence to every storm centre of the war in the air, has put our ascendancy over the enemy in the air beyond challenge and has been primarily responsible for our successes in the war. It will be remembered for all time as one of the foundation stones of victory." Since the Plan began more than 100,000 Empire airmen were trained in Canada.

There is not yet available an official list of aircraft shot down by New Zealanders in the European theatre. The list below of those who shot down

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five or more enemy planes is unofficial but compiled as carefully as possible. It contains fifty-four men who between them had shot down 527 planes. In addition fighter pilots in the Pacific accounted for ninety-nine Japanese aircraft, and bomber or bomber-reconnaissance planes shot down several more. The New Zealand bomber squadrons based on the United Kingdom and Europe accounted for many enemy aircraft, and fighter pilots who did not reach an individual tally of five apiece also contributed a substantial aggregate. In all, it is fair to claim that New Zealanders shot down at least 1,000 enemy aircraft in the European-Middle East theatre and more than 100 in the Pacific. These are the lists:—

EUROPE-MIDDLE EAST NEW ZEALAND ACES.

	<i>Planes.</i>
Wing Commander C. F. Gray, D.S.O., D.F.C. and two Bars, R.A.F.	27½
Flying Officer E. J. Kain, D.F.C., R.A.F. (killed in aircraft accident) ..	25
Wing Commander A. C. Deere, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, U.S. D.F.C., Croix de Guerre, R.A.F.	21½
Wing Commander W. V. C. Compton, D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C. and Bar, Croix de Guerre, U.S. Silver Star, Czech Silver Flying Badge, R.A.F.	21½
Flight Lieutenant R. B. Hesselyn, D.F.C., D.F.M. and Bar, R.N.Z.A.F.	19½
Squadron Leader J. A. Gibson, D.S.O., D.F.C., R.A.F.	16½
Squadron Leader E. D. Mackie, D.F.C. and Bar, R.N.Z.A.F.	16
Flying Officer R. E. Le Long, D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	13
Squadron Leader W. G. Clouston, D.F.C., R.A.F.	12
Flight Lieutenant B. J. G. Carbury, D.F.C. and Bar, R.A.F.	12
Wing Commander J. M. Checketts, D.S.O., D.F.C. (U.S.), D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	11½
Wing Commander E. P. Wells, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, R.N.Z.A.F.	11
Flight Lieutenant G. E. Jameson, D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	12
Flight Lieutenant G. Stenborg, D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	11
Flying Officer G. B. Fiskien, D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	11
Flying Officer J. D. Rae, D.F.C. and Bar, R.N.Z.A.F.	11
Squadron Leader D. F. Westenra, D.F.C., R.A.F.	11
Squadron Leader M. J. Herrick, D.F.C. and Bar, R.A.F.	10½
Group Captain P. G. Jameson, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, Norwegian Cross, R.A.F.	10
Group Captain E. W. Whitley, D.S.O., D.F.C., R.A.F.	10
Wing Commander M. V. Blake, D.S.O., D.F.C., R.A.F.	10
Pilot Officer H. W. Hodgson, D.F.C., R.A.F.	10
Squadron Leader G. K. Gilroy, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, R.A.F.	9
Squadron Leader J. N. Mackenzie, D.F.C., R.A.F.	9
Squadron Leader J. C. F. Hayter, D.F.C., R.A.F.	9
Squadron Leader K. G. Hart	9
Squadron Leader E. L. Joyce, D.F.M., R.N.Z.A.F.	9
Squadron Leader M. R. B. Ingram, D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	9
Group Captain D. J. Scott, D.S.O., O.B.E., D.F.C. and Bar, Croix de Guerre, R.N.Z.A.F.	8
Wing Commander R. J. C. Grant, D.F.C. and Bar, D.F.M., R.N.Z.A.F. (killed in action)	8
Wing Commander R. M. Trousdale, D.F.C. and Bar, R.A.F.	8
Wing Commander D. H. Hammond, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar	8

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	<i>Planes.</i>
Flight Lieutenant R. L. Spurdle, D.F.C., R.A.F.	8
Flight Lieutenant P. F. L. Hall, D.F.C. and Bar, R.N.Z.A.F.	8
Wing Commander R. O. Yule, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, R.A.F.	7
Flight Lieutenant B. G. Collyns, D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	7
Air Commodore H. D. McGregor, D.S.O., U.S. Legion of Merit, R.A.F.	6
Wing Commander I. S. Smith, D.F.C. and Bar, R.A.F.	6
Squadron Leader D. H. Ward, D.F.C. and Bar, R.A.F.	6
Squadron Leader P. W. Rabone, D.F.C., R.A.F.	6
Flight Lieutenant K. W. Tait, D.F.C., R.A.F.	6
Flight Lieutenant O. V. Tracey, D.F.C., R.A.F.	6
Flight Lieutenant G. E. Jensen, D.F.C.	6
Flight Lieutenant A. E. Browne, R.N.Z.A.F.	6
Flying Officer H. W. Chambers, D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	6
Squadron Leader P. G. H. Newton, D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	5
Flight Lieutenant H. L. North, D.F.C., R.A.F.	5
Flight Lieutenant A. M. Peart, D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	5
Flight Lieutenant D. F. Livingstone, D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	5
Flying Officer S. F. Browne, D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	5
Flying Officer J. Houlton, D.F.C., R.N.Z.A.F.	5
Squadron Leader, J. R. C. Kilian, Croix de Guerre	5
Wing Commander C. Malfroy, D.F.C. and Bar	5
	<i>Flying Bombs.</i>
Squadron Leader A. E. Umbers, D.F.C. and Bar	28
Warrant Officer O. D. Eagleson	21

Note: A "half" is credited where two men share in the destruction of the one plane.

PACIFIC

The alphabetical list of pilots and gunners who shot down aircraft in the Pacific is:—

Adams, Flight Lieutenant, F. J.	24/12/43	1 prob. Zeke
Arkwright, Squadron Leader, J. H.	10/8/43	1 Zeke
	24/12/43	1 Zeke
Balfour, Flight Lieutenant, R. H.	1/11/43	2 Zekes
	22/11/43	1½ Zekes
	13/2/44	1 Zeke
Bradley, Pilot Officer, L. E.	7/1/44	1 Zeke
Bremner, Pilot Officer, R. W.	22/11/43	1 Zeke
Buchanan, Flight Lieutenant, A. W.	11/10/43	1 Zeke
	24/12/43	1 prob. Hamp
Brown, Flight Lieutenant, E. H.	12/6/43	2 Zeros
	2/7/43	1 Zero
Boucher, Flying Officer, H. E.	28/1/44	1 Zeke
Clarke, Flying Officer, R. M.	17/6/43	2 Zeros
	2/7/43	1 Hamp
Cliffe, Sergeant, A. W.	27/10/43	1 Zeke
	22/1/44	1 Zeke
Day, Flight Lieutenant, J.	15/8/43	1 Zeke
Davis, Flying Officer, A. M.	1/10/43	2 Vals
	27/10/43	1 Zeke
Duncan, Flight Lieutenant, S. R.	7/6/43	1 Zeke
Duncan, Flying Officer, S. L.	15/8/43	2 Vals

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Edwards, Flight Sergeant, J.	20/1/44	$\frac{1}{2}$ Zeke
Freeman, Wing Commander, T. O.	17/12/43	1 Zero
Fisken, Flying Officer, G. B.	12/6/43	2 Zeros
	4/7/43	1 Betty
	4/7/43	2 Zeros
St. George, Flight Lieutenant, D.	23/9/43	$\frac{1}{2}$ Zeke
	23/9/43	1 prob. Zeke
George, Flying Officer, A. G.	24/12/43	1 Zeke
	9/1/44	1 Zeke
Gibson, Squadron Leader, J. A.	23/1/44	1 Zeke
Gifford, Flying Officer, P. D.	2/7/43	1 prob. Zeke
Greig, Flight Lieutenant, D. A.	7/6/43	1 Zero
Grimsdale, Flight Lieutenant, J. H.	1/10/43	2 Vals
	27/10/43	$\frac{1}{2}$ Zeke
Guild, Flying Officer, C. J.	17/6/43	1 Zero
Grubb, Sergeant, C. B.	14/1/44	1 Zeke
Hannah, Flight Sergeant, G. E.	24/12/43	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ Zekes
Herrick, Squadron Leader, M. J.	6/5/43	1 Zero Obs. F/P
	7/6/43	1 Zero
	1/10/43	$\frac{1}{2}$ Val
	27/10/43	$\frac{1}{2}$ Zeke
Highet, Flying Officer, C. D. A.	1/11/43	1 Zeke
	1/11/43	1 prob. Zeke
	22/11/43	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Zekes
Highet, Flying Officer, G. R. B.	23/9/43	$\frac{1}{2}$ Zeke
	24/12/43	2 Zekes
	24/12/43	1 prob. Zeke
	7/1/44	1 Zeke
Hutton, Flying Officer, L. D.	1/11/43	1 Zeke
Jones, Pilot Officer, D. L.	24/12/43	2 Zekes
Jones, Flight Lieutenant, M. E. P.	24/12/43	1 prob. Tony
Kuhn, Warrant Officer E. E.	Jan., 1942	3 Zeros
Laurie, Sergeant, E. C.	17/12/43	1 Zero
McCormick, Flying Officer, M.	2/4/43	1 Zero Obs. F/P
Martin, Sergeant, R. A.	7/6/43	1 Zero
Meharry, Flying Officer, H. J.	17/12/43	1 Zero
Mills, Sergeant, A. S.	17/12/43	1 Zeke
Mills, Flight Lieutenant, J. H.	24/12/43	1 Zeke
Mitchell, Flying Officer, A. G.	24/12/43	1 Zeke
Nagel, Sergeant, M. A.	1/11/43	1 Zeke
Nairn, Pilot Officer, R. C. C.	2/7/43	1 Hap
	2/7/43	1 prob. Hap
	4/7/43	1 Zero
Newton, Squadron Leader, P. G. H.	11/10/43	1 Zeke
	24/12/43	2 Zekes
	24/12/43	1 prob. Zeke
	9/1/44	2 Zekes
Oldfield, Squadron Leader, J. A.	12/6/43	1 Zero
	16/6/43	2 Zeros
	13/2/44	1 Zeke
Parlane, Flying Officer, A. L.	1/10/43	$\frac{1}{2}$ Val
	14/1/44	1 Zeke
Pierrard, Flying Officer, A. G.	1/10/43	1 Val

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Pirie, Flight Sergeant, N. A.	26/8/43	1 Zero
	26/8/43	1 prob. Zero
Quill, Squadron Leader, S. G.	4/7/43	1 prob. Zero
Rayner, Flying Officer, L. A.	27/10/43	1 Zeke
	1/11/43	2 Zekes
	17/11/43	1 Val
Renolds, Flying Officer, L. R.	2/7/43	1 Hap
Robertson, Flying Officer, G. M.	27/1/44	1 Zeke
Rabone, Sergeant, T. R.	20/1/44	$\frac{1}{2}$ Zeke
Speedy, Flight Sergeant, I. P.	24/12/43	1 Zeke
Spurdle, Flight Lieutenant, R. L.	13/8/43	1 Hap
	26/8/43	1 Zeke
Stanley, Pilot Officer, A. G.	12/6/43	1 Zero
	2/7/43	1 Zero
	2/7/43	1 prob. Zero.
Shorthouse, Sergeant, L. P.	14/1/44	1 Zeke
Stephenson, Sergeant, R. A.	28/1/44	1 Zeke
Tilyard, Flight Sergeant, P. A.	24/12/43	1 Zeke
	24/12/43	1 prob. Zeke
Vanderpump, Flight Lieutenant, M. T.	17/12/43	1 Zero
	17/12/43	1 unidentified
Voss, Warrant Officer, J. C.	15/8/43	1 Val
Weber, Pilot Officer, R. A.	2/7/43	2 Zeros
Williams, Pilot Officer, B. W.	22/11/43	1 Hamp
Williams, Flight Sergeant, D. A.	19/12/43	1 Zero
	24/12/43	1 prob. Zeke
Williams, Warrant Officer, W. N.	24/12/43	$\frac{1}{2}$ Zeke
De Willimoff, Flight Lieutenant, J. J.	1/10/43	1 Val
	22/1/44	1 Zeke
Walker, Flying Officer, A. R.	29/1/44	1 Zeke

Late in 1944 no aces on either side had approached the best individual scores of those in the Great War which ended with the Canadian, Captain W. A. "Billy" Bishop (now Air Vice Marshal), the leading British ace, with 72 enemy planes destroyed. The German ace, Baron Manfred von Richtofen, was credited with 80, but some account must be taken of the fact that for two years of the Great War British airmen were handicapped with low-performance aircraft. Captain Albert Ball, V.C., D.S.O., and two Bars, M.C., was the first British ace, with 43 planes to his credit in two years, when he perished at Annoellin on May 7, 1917. Bishop's victories were scored in approximately 20 months, dating from within three weeks of his arrival on the Western Front on March 7, 1917. He is still the greatest British ace. At one period he destroyed 25 enemy planes in twelve days; on one occasion, the day on which he went home on leave, five. Of the late Major Edward Mannock, V.C., D.S.O., with two Bars, M.C., and Bar, the last air V.C. of the Great War, it is recorded in an authoritative book, *The Air V.C.'s*, by Captain W. E. Johns (largely compiled from official sources, with its list checked by the Official War Historian) "that he could have shot down more enemy planes than he did, although he finished with a total of 73, is certain, but he preferred to give credit, wherever it was possible, to junior members of his squadron (No. 74 and then No. 85). It is also equally certain that he shot down more hostile aeroplanes than he claimed, or for which he received acknowledgment." He was brought down by a bullet fired from the ground, on July 26, 1918, and was buried in a shell-torn battlefield with nothing to mark the place.

With Bishop still the highest-scoring fighter ace, it is interesting to recall that during 1914-18 no fewer than 16,000 Canadians served in the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service, which were amalgamated from April 1, 1918, to form a separate air arm known as the Royal Air Force. Of these, four alone were responsible for the destruction of 245 German aeroplanes—Bishop, 85 Squadron, 72; Collishaw, 203 Squadron, 60 (probably more); Barker, 201 Squadron, 59; McLaren, 46 Squadron, 54; McElroy, 40 Squadron, 46; Claxton, 41 Squadron, 39; McCall, 41 Squadron, 37; Quigley, 7 Squadron, 34; Carter, 19 Squadron, 31; McKeever, 11 Squadron, 30 (in a two-seater), and so on.

Up till mid-1944 Group Captain A. G. (Sailor) Malan, R.A.F. (South Africa), and the late Wing Commander Paddy Finucane, R.A.F., had their scores of 32 apiece recognised as the best. Then in July, 1944, news came of a Russian ace, Colonel Alexander Pokryshkin, aged 31, commanding one of Russia's most famous air units, and credited with 59 German planes shot down, Hero of the Soviet Union and D.S.C. (American). Starting in Rumania in 1941, he is reported to have more than 500 air battles to his credit and to have been shot down three times. Several men under his command had also chalked up impressive records—Richkalov, 46; Glinka, 38; Lugansky, 32; Alelyukhin, 29. The fighter planes being used by Pokryshkin were American Airacobras, flying one of which he shot down 48 of his 59.

The leading Russian ace at the close of the war with Germany was Major Ivan Kozhehd, credited with sixty-two German planes. He went to the Manchurian front on Russia declaring war against Japan. A score of 114 was claimed for the German, von Muller, who was shot down by Colin Gray, west of Beja, Tunisia, on March 25, 1942. Von Muller baled out and was taken prisoner.

When the Germans made their first great advance across Russia in 1941, Hitler picked out during the fighting round Smolensk, Lieutenant-Colonel Werner Molders as "ace of aces" (July, 1941). In Hitler's wars he had then a score of 115 enemy aircraft destroyed in combat, thirty-five more than Richtofen in World War I, and in one day shot down five Russians.

The leading surviving Japanese air ace was a naval sub-lieutenant, Saburo Sakai, who claimed in a Tokio interview on December 16, 1945, to have shot down sixty-three United States, Australian and Netherlands planes, mostly in the south-west Pacific early in the war. He said then he was one of the few surviving aces as it was not the Japanese custom to allow their aces to return home for instructional duties; instead they were left to die in combat. He was wounded over Guadalcanal and partly paralysed as a result. When interviewed he was working as a clerk in an office and said, "I apologise to the relatives of the men I have killed."

The New Zealanders, Gray, with twenty-seven, and Deere and Compton with twenty-one and a half each, were high on the list of Empire aces and, at one stage Gray was second ranking ace in the R.A.F. after Malan and the late Finucane, till Wing Commander Johnny Johnson, D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C. and Bar, D.F.C. (American), a member of the R.A.F. Volunteer Reserve, and early in 1944 leading a Canadian Spitfire wing in the Second Tactical Air Force, reached 35. Two years before he was a flight lieutenant with two. Promoted wing commander, he shot down 33. On September 28, 1944, Johnson shot down a ME, 109, to make his score 38, during one of the great air battles along the Rhine east of the Holland salient. His wing had then got 23 in a day and a half.

At the age of thirty-three, Adolph Gysbert Malan, D.S.O., and Bar, D.F.C., and Bar, Belgian Croix de Guerre, was recalled to South Africa early

in 1945 to train future pilots. He was the first to congratulate Wing Commander "Johnny" Johnson when the young Englishman passed his score of thirty-two—a record that stood for more than two years.

Volunteers in the Eagle Squadron excepted, Americans were last on the scene. Most of their leading fighter pilots first made their tallies in the Pacific and then a good number steadily approached the Great War United States record of Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, with 26. Major Richard Bong, D.F.C. (British), Wisconsin (P38 Lightning), had shot down 40 Japs by February, 1945, and General MacArthur proclaimed him United States ace. Captain D. S. Gentile, from England, claimed 30, seven of which, however, had been destroyed on the ground. In the Pacific, Major Joseph Voss, flying a Grumann Wildcat, and Major Gregory Boyington, in a Vought Corsair, both equalled Rickenbacker's record before Bong broke it. Major Thomas B. McGuire, New Jersey, had 30 by April, 1945, while the leading U.S. naval ace was Commander David McCampbell, Los Angeles, with 34 in the South Pacific. Bong was killed in an accident in the United States in August, 1945, while flying a jet-propelled plane.

The leading Australian ace was Wing Commander Clive Caldwell, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, Polish Cross of Valour, with 27½ enemy aircraft destroyed in aerial combat. Promoted Group Captain in December, 1944, he was the first graduate of the Empire Air Training Plan to rise to this rank.

Flight Lieut. George (Screwball) Beurling, the Canadian ace, and hero of Malta, shot down 32 German planes. He then retired (1944) at his own request after a period of instructional flying.

There was a mysterious German ace, Mantoni, whose countrymen claim he has shot down 100, but when Johnny Johnson, after shooting down his thirty-fifth, challenged Mantoni over his radio telephone, nothing eventuated.

There are various reasons why the scores of aces—and those of Empire aces are most reliable as no claims are allowed without verification—are lower today than in the last war. Today, speed in the air is greater than would have been conceived 20 years ago; more than 400 miles an hour, compared with the 144 of the fastest last war fighter. A pilot, 25 to 30 years ago, almost had "time to aim." The tremendous increase in the scale of air warfare and the uses of the air arm are also factors.

An official account issued by the historical section of R.N.Z.A.F. headquarters, London, on the close of the European war, stated that "10,363 New Zealanders served in this theatre. They suffered 3,410 casualties, including prisoners, and won 1,021 honours and awards. Seven New Zealand squadrons operated in the European theatre. The personnel on their nominal rolls represented a little over eight per cent. of the total R.N.Z.A.F. personnel in the theatre. The first to be formed was the famous 75 Squadron, which began operating with Wellington bombers and then transferred to Stirlings and finally Lancasters. Its first operational flight was made on December 14, 1939. It is still flying—but it is now bringing liberated prisoners back to England. The 75 Squadron took part in the first 1,000-plane raid and in many subsequent important operations. It operated at dawn on D Day, assisted in bombing the Falaise gap, and gained a reputation for flying the largest number of sorties and dropping the greatest weight of bombs in its group during several phases of the Bomber Command's operations. From May, 1940, to December, 1944, its aircraft flew 34,500 hours on 6,923 sorties, dropping 18,076 tons of bombs and firing 652,578 rounds of small ammunition. The number of night fighters the squadron shot down is not given, but it is

estimated at more than sixty. The personnel of the squadron, which included men from all parts of the Empire in addition to New Zealanders, have won the following decorations: Victoria Cross, 1; D.S.O., 6; M.B.E., 2; Bar to D.F.C., 2; D.F.C., 114; Conspicuous Gallantry Medal, 3; D.F.M., 58; B.E.M., 5.

"The New Zealand Spitfire Squadron (485) was formed in March, 1941, and funds totalling £126,000 were raised by public subscription in New Zealand. Between April, 1941, and December, 1944, the squadron flew for 13,811 hours on 10,195 sorties. It fired 234,999 rounds of ammunition and dropped 147 tons of bombs. Its pilots carried out many offensive sweeps, escorted bombers on numerous operations, and did much bombing on their own account. It was the first New Zealand squadron to operate in France after the invasion of Normandy. Its score is sixty-three enemy planes destroyed, twenty-five probably destroyed and thirty-two damaged. Its pilots have won one D.S.O., four bars to D.F.C., fifteen D.F.C.'s, one D.F.M., and one Croix de Guerre.

"The 486 Squadron, which was formed in 1942, first operated with Hurricanes as a night-fighter squadron and later operated with Typhoons and then Tempests. Up to December, 1944, it flew 11,010 hours on 9,581 sorties. It fired 194,895 rounds of ammunition and dropped sixty-six tons of bombs. Its pilots destroyed seventeen enemy aircraft, probably destroyed seven and damaged eighteen. They also shot down 231 flying bombs. They destroyed several E-boats and R-boats in the English Channel. The pilots won one D.S.O., one Bar to the D.F.C. and fifteen D.F.C.'s.

"The 487 Squadron was formed in August, 1942, and first operated with Venturas and then with Mosquitoes. Flying Venturas, the squadron bombed the great rail centres in Belgium, France and Holland in the pre-invasion period, and in Mosquitoes they took part in many special operations, including an attack on the Amiens prison and on the Gestapo headquarters at Aarhus and Copenhagen. They also flew as night intruders. From December, 1942, to December, 1944, the squadron flew for 2,337 hours on 558 sorties. It fired 307,244 rounds of ammunition and dropped 1,249 tons of bombs. Its pilots have won one D.S.O., one Bar to the D.F.C., fifteen D.F.C.'s, and three D.F.M.'s.

"The 488 Squadron reformed in Britain in June, 1942, after Singapore. It was a night-fighter squadron and at first operated with Beaufighters from an airfield in Scotland. It also destroyed many trains in northern France till early in 1944, when it was re-equipped with Mosquitoes. By June, 1944, it had shot down twenty enemy aircraft, and during the battle of Normandy it accounted for twenty-seven more. By the time it disbanded recently its score had risen to sixty-seven with four probably destroyed and ten damaged. To December, 1944, the hours flown on 2,261 sorties totalled 5,345. Its pilots won one D.S.O., one M.B.E., seven Bars to the D.F.C., eight D.F.C.'s, one A.F.C., one D.F.M., and one Dutch Flying Cross.

"The 489 was a torpedo-bomber squadron. Formed early in 1941, it first flew Hampdens and later was re-equipped with Beaufighters. Flying through bad weather it destroyed much shipping off Norway and Holland and in the Skaggeirak. The squadron sunk eleven ships of 38,676 tons and damaged another eleven, totalling 36,898 tons, as well as two escort vessels. As part of a strike wing, the squadron also shared in the sinking of nineteen ships of 67,079 tons, and twelve escort vessels, and damaged eighteen ships of 41,291 tons, and forty-nine escort vessels. Up to December, 1944, its pilots flew 8,285 hours on 2,040 sorties, firing 86,441 rounds of ammunition and 185 torpedoes and dropping fifty-four tons of bombs. It won two

D.S.O.'s, two bars to the D.F.C., twenty-one D.F.C.'s, one C.G.M., and one D.F.M.

"The 490 Squadron, formed in April, 1943, was in the Coastal Command. It flew Sunderland aircraft and operated from a West African station, patrolling Atlantic convoys, seeking U-boats and carrying out air-sea rescue work. From September, 1943, to December, 1944, it flew 4,028 hours on 357 sorties and won one D.F.C. and one B.E.M.

"Of the 10,363 members of the R.N.Z.A.F. who operated in the European theatre 3,410 became casualties—919 killed, 77 missing believed killed, 385 missing, 1,504 presumed dead, 89 injured and 427 taken prisoner. Nine were listed as miscellaneous."

New Zealand squadrons in the United Kingdom flew 39,080 sorties, covering nearly 19,000,000 miles, in 98,300 operational hours. These squadrons destroyed 209 enemy aircraft, probably destroyed twenty-five, and damaged ninety-seven. During the attacks on London New Zealand squadrons destroyed 224 flying bombs.

Squadrons of the Royal New Zealand Air Force, operating from the United Kingdom and in the South Pacific, flew more than 40,000,000 miles during the wars in those theatres. They were airborne for 257,100 operational hours on 93,750 sorties, and in combat with the enemy destroyed 312 enemy aircraft, probably destroyed forty, and damaged 113.

These figures do not take into account the work of New Zealanders who served in the Royal Air Force in widely scattered theatres from Europe to the Far East.

The operational figures of New Zealand squadrons in Britain represent only a small part of the work done by R.N.Z.A.F. personnel in the United Kingdom as most of them served in R.A.F. units.

Maoris played a worthy part in the air war as they did in the other branches of the service. While it is hard to individualise, there are several who can be mentioned from available records. Sergeant B. S. Wipiti, D.F.M. (New Plymouth), shared the honour of bringing down the first Japanese bomber over Singapore Island and later flew with the New Zealand Spitfire Squadron till he was shot down, then a flying officer. Sergeant Pilot P. R. J. Pohe, later Flying Officer, was the first Maori pilot to reach the Homeland in 1941, with a number of Empire pilots who completed their training in Canada. Pohe was murdered on March 22, 1944, during the virtual massacre of 47 Allied airmen who endeavoured to escape from Luft. III. Pohe was a bomber pilot over Germany and also dropped parachutists in the Bruneval raid. Group Captain Pickard, killed on a special mission, declared Pohe to be one of the best pilots in his squadron. The other New Zealander shot at the same time as Pohe was Flight Lieut. A. G. Christensen. Another first-class Maori pilot was Flying Officer J. Wetere who flew Hurricanes and then Typhoons. He was fearless and pressed home his attacks with the greatest determination.

Flying Officer M. A. Milich (Kaitiaki) operating rocket-projecting Typhoons in September, 1944, was described as one of the best pilots in his squadron and an example of the fine airmen the Maoris made. Milich took his part in the Battle of Normandy, frequently leading his section. In his squadron (in the wing controlled by Group Captain D. J. Scott, D.S.O., Hokitika) were Englishmen, Canadians, South Africans, New Zealanders and Belgians, and all declared Milich to be a first-class pilot and one of the most popular men among them. Flight Sergeant E. M. Karatau (Turakina) was with "Cobber" Kain's old squadron, No. 73, in Italy and was the first Maori Spitfire pilot. He flew dozens of sorties over landing beaches during the invasion of Italy and once had to bale

out over Yugo-Slavia when he was assisted back to Italy by men of Marshal Tito's forces in support of which 73 Squadron had been co-operating by bombing German supply trains and dive-bombing German positions. It was only five days before Karatau was back with his squadron, but on one of those days he had to carry a sackfull of corn cobs six miles. The same squadron also had Pilot Officer Ted Bennett (brother of Lieut-Colonel C. Bennett, former Maori Battalion commander), and the first Maori fighter pilot to join the Desert Air Force. Karatau, rose to the rank of flying officer.

On February 20, 1944, the High Commissioner for New Zealand in the United Kingdom, Mr. W. J. Jordan, who has done a great job among all New Zealand servicemen there, told a Guildhall audience that there were seven R.A.F. squadrons in Britain designated New Zealand squadrons. They were principally manned by New Zealanders, but most members of the R.N.Z.A.F. were spread throughout the R.A.F., serving in about 500 squadrons. (In addition, fourteen squadrons were then actively engaged fighting in the Pacific.)

What Mr. Jordan said about the New Zealanders being spread among 500 R.A.F. squadrons (in addition to the seven known as New Zealand squadrons) gives some appreciation of the difficulty of telling their full story, if indeed this will be possible. On the New Zealand squadrons themselves all that existed up to at least late 1944, was press clippings, the work of the United Press Association and the representatives of the weekly newspapers, particularly *New Zealand Truth*, the *Free Lance* and *Weekly News*. The disinclination to have a proper, official publicity set-up to fully inform the New Zealand public of the grand work of their airmen in the United Kingdom and elsewhere (bar the Pacific) was hard to understand. The Army, on the other hand, had its war correspondents, drawn from newspaper men who had been in the combatant ranks, and also a proper system of archives, with a staff having the requisite background, and producing periodically publications on the campaigns in which the 2nd N.Z.E.F. fought. A Press Association message from London, dated April 20, 1943, stated that New Zealand enjoyed the doubtful distinction of having the only air force which had not compiled official records of its pilots and air crews in Britain. Although the R.A.F., the R.A.A.F., and the R.C.A.F., all had large public relations staffs which collected news and compiled records, R.N.Z.A.F. headquarters had not one public relations officer. The message continued: "Indeed, the attitude of the Air Department in Wellington is somewhat difficult to understand in London. Apparently it objects to the names of New Zealand airmen being published in connection with their experiences, whereas the R.A.F. and other Dominions give the fullest publicity to names and incidents. There is no doubt that, if it had not been for the necessarily limited service of the New Zealand Press Association [and, it is only fair to add the bright personal articles of *New Zealand Truth's* special representatives in London, and those of other weekly newspapers like the *Weekly News* and *Free Lance*: author's note], the Dominion would have known comparatively little of the very fine record of its airmen in Britain. The Air Department is still apparently disinclined to make any move to appoint a public relations officer and still maintains a somewhat aggrieved air at the mention of New Zealander's names." In reply to this the Air Department, Wellington, stated that the compiling of an official record had been under consideration by the Government recently. There had been some objection in the past to the publication of names of air personnel in certain cases, but, as was well known, the names of individuals frequently appeared in the press. The question of the appointment of a public relations officer in London, together with New Zealand publicity in London, was then being investigated by the Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones.

An archivist was appointed in London in August, 1944. Squadron

Leader F. A. Andrews, D.F.C., of No. 75 Bomber Squadron. About the same time, Flying Officer K. Melvin, widely known in commercial radio broadcasting as "Tusitala, Teller of Tales," was appointed archivist for the Pacific, and Flight Lieut. "Wally" Ingram, the well-known athletics writer and commercial radio sporting broadcaster, archivist at Air Headquarters, Wellington. There is no doubt that the London and Wellington appointments were deplorably overdue, but in the Pacific such capable journalists as Flying Officer A. W. Baragwanath (*New Zealand Herald*), Pilot Officer C. Cave (*Taranaki Daily News*) and Pilot Officer A. N. Rutledge (*Christchurch Star-Sun*) had the story of our airmen's doings there well-taped. The pictorial side was well handled by Leo White, New Zealand's best-known aerial photographer and Sergeant C. T. "Snow" Stewart, White is now editor and proprietor of the popular *White's Aviation*.

A London message of August 16, 1944, relative to Squadron Leader Andrews' appointment, described it as "the first official attempt during the war to report the work of New Zealand airmen who are based in many R.A.F. stations in Britain." Around this time a New Zealand official news source began sending brief, occasional accounts of New Zealand airmen's efforts.

In preparing this record the Directorate of Public Relations, Air Headquarters, Wellington, gave ready access to a considerable mass of newspaper accounts of New Zealand airmen overseas. This was by the courtesy of Squadron Leaders "Bean" Shiel and H. A. C. Davy, Flight Lieut. "Wally" Ingram and Flying Officer Clem Cave. Much-appreciated help was given by A. C. M. W. Standish. With the Pacific the formal part of the task was simple, thanks to summaries of Sergeant T. W. Ewart. The material was gathered for newspaper publication, and a great deal of it, too, as the only way to give the necessarily short press account, was to see, as far as possible with the available material, the full picture. The unexpected offer of the publishers of this book, however, resulted in this collection of material not being wasted and, what is more important, was welcome as an outlet for an early tribute and resume of incidents in the war-winning efforts of New Zealand airmen. Practically no information was available concerning New Zealanders in the R.A.F. in India who, at least in the publicity sense, have been the forgotten New Zealand airmen of this war.

It was announced in September, 1945, that an historical section had been established at R.N.Z.A.F. headquarters in London, with a staff of six. It was to compile a history in narrative form of the part taken in the war by all the New Zealanders who were attached to the R.A.F., not only in the European theatre, but also in the Middle East, India, and the South-east Asia Command. It was estimated that two years would be required to complete the narrative, which would then be forwarded to the historian in New Zealand who would write an official history. Squadron Leader Frank Andrews, D.F.C., was in charge. Working with him were Flight Lieutenants W. F. Crist and J. A. Whelan (Auckland), and H. L. Thompson, Flying Officers G. Lewis (Auckland), and D. G. Clare (Mania). They were to secure their material from official records made available by the R.A.F.

The names of so many thousand New Zealand airmen have in the larger perspective been submerged into the history of their R.A.F. squadrons. But in these squadrons the name of New Zealand has been kept high.

I will now tell the story, as I know it, with the material now available. The full story, when told and written, will endure as long as speech and the printed word. It is only fitting that this account should start with the No. 75 (New Zealand) Bomber Squadron.

No. 75 (NEW ZEALAND) BOMBER SQUADRON, BOMBER COMMAND, R.A.F.

In a war which has produced great squadrons, the No. 75 (New Zealand) Bomber Squadron of the R.A.F., can claim to be called famous. Its origin was an expression of the desire of New Zealand to help the Motherland, even at her own cost, for the 30 Wellingtons which formed the squadron, had been bought by the New Zealand Government and the first flight of six was to have left for the Dominion on October 1, 1939. War came and the Government placed all its personnel, and aircraft on order in England, at the disposal of the United Kingdom. These Wellingtons would have formed an integral part of a general plan for Pacific defence, for they would have linked New Zealand with Singapore in 48 hours—two hops. The officers to command the first four flights to New Zealand had already been selected: Squadron Leader W. M. Buckley, O.B.E., Flight Lieut. C. E. Kay (second in command and navigating officer), first flight; Flight Lieutenant R. J. Cohen (second flight); Squadron Leader S. Wallingford, later O.C., Northern Group, R.N.Z.A.F. (third flight); Wing Commander J. L. Findlay (fourth flight). A New Zealand flight under Squadron Leader Buckley had already been formed at Marham, Norfolk, on June 1, 1939, and several aircraftmen were selected to go from New Zealand to train: G. O. Perrott (Wellington), F. M. B. George (Auckland), T. G. Smith, N. Murray, G. H. French and T. J. Goodhue (all Wigram). July, 1939, saw officers and men in training and in addition to the commanding officer and his second, other New Zealand officers selected were: Flight Lieutenant C. J. Hunter, Flying Officer A. B. Greenaway, A. A. N. Breckon, J. N. Collins, Pilot Officers J. Adams (later squadron leader and officer commanding No. 40 Transport Squadron, R.N.Z.A.F.), W. H. Coleman, W. McWilliams, T. O. Freeman (who died in the first R.N.Z.A.F. fighter sweep over Rabaul), F. J. ("Popeye") Lucas, and N. Williams. These were the ranks they held at the time, and this practice is followed throughout in describing the career of the squadron, but a perusal of this narrative will show the distinction they later achieved. The autumn of 1939 and winter of 1939-40 saw them in training for war, and on April 24, 1940, the squadron became officially known as the No. 75 (New Zealand Bomber Squadron). Its first reconnaissance and leaflet operation was on March 27, 1940, with Squadron Leader Kay, Flying Officer Adams and Flying Officer Collins commanding the aircraft. They covered an area extending over Brunswick, Ulzen and Luneburg, dropping their leaflets at 14,000 to 7,000 feet.

On April 12, 1940, a non-stop reconnaissance flight, which was then the longest of the war, was made from Scotland to Narvik and back, more than 2,000 miles, in 14½ hours. The plane was a "middle-aged" Wellington Mark I of 75 Squadron, commanded by Flying Officer A. A. N. Breckon (Auckland), Pilot Officer A. Harkness, second pilot, Sergeant H. F. Hughes, navigator, L.A.C. E. P. Williams, wireless operator, Aircraftman Mumby, gunner, Lieut. Commander F. O. Howie was also on board to act as naval observer. The mission was to ascertain whether there was enemy shipping in the fiord, the Germans having attacked Norway three days before and occupied the important iron ore port of Narvik. They passed ships of the Royal Navy 500 miles out which, next day, destroyed nine German destroyers in Narvik Fiord. One thousand miles of sea had to be covered to reach Narvik. Conditions were of the worst; rain, snow and wind. On the return no land was sighted for more than six hours. It was nearing nightfall, the petrol

gauges disclosed a dangerous position, and lifebelts were inflated. A magnetic bearing was obtained, and so good was the navigation that the Wellington found itself right over its base aerodrome. There were 37 gallons of petrol left. The Wellington touched down at 10.30 p.m. after having been airborne since 8 a.m., and the crew was able to report the fiord clear of enemy shipping to within ten miles of the town of Narvik. Next day the second battle of Narvik was fought. Ten days later, Flight Lieut. Breckon and his crew made a second long reconnaissance, this time to photograph and observe Trondheim, the frozen lake adjoining, and Vaernes aerodrome, occupied by the enemy. They left at 2.30 a.m., did a perfect job, including the observation of twenty-two enemy aircraft on the frozen lake, concerning which a code message was flashed back. Later that day Fleet Air Arm aircraft bombed the lake to good effect. Breckon and his crew reached their base at 11 a.m., after covering 1,180 miles in eight hours and a half. The pilot's windscreen was shattered by anti-aircraft fire over Trondheim. Breckon received the D.F.C. for these flights.

Within a few months the 75th had made history as the first fighting unit in Great Britain during this war to consist almost entirely of New Zealanders. It had played its important part in the Narvik action resulting in the destruction of the German destroyers, supplied valuable information which resulted in the devastating bombing of Trondheim, and dropped bombs on all the then-important targets in Germany, including Kiel, Berlin, Hamburg, Hamm, Soest and Gelsenkirchen. When the Germans had put all but ten of the Dutch 248 service aircraft out of action and captured the four main Dutch airfields, Flying Officer N. Williams, Flying Officer Collins and Pilot Officer W. M. C. Williams, took their Wellingtons to the main airfield, Waalhaven (Rotterdam), the same night (May 10), and all dropped their bombs successfully on the field or its buildings. They were on the most arduous jobs as the Germans blitzkrieged France, including the Ruhr. It was not till May 21 that they suffered their first casualty when the British Army launched a gallant but unsuccessful attack towards Arras to stem the Germans, who were now well over the Meuse, to Chemin des Dames in the south, and the line of the Scheldt in the north. Bomber Command was putting everything it had into efforts to back up the army in parrying the German thrust and went for the bottle-neck of Dinant where large concentrations of troops and transport of the fast-advancing enemy had piled up. The target was bombed, but Flying Officer Collins and his crew did not return. On June 7-8, Kay, then squadron leader, got his D.F.C. for a determined attack on concentrations of motorised troops then sheltering in a forest south of Boulsters and Baileaux. He scored heavily and, seeing his success, went in again, low, to turn his machine guns on the Germans. Italy was expected to attack and, in pursuance of a plan to strike her at once from the air when she declared war, six aircraft of the squadron, placed at the disposal of the French Government, went to Salon aerodrome, near Marseilles, arriving at 3 p.m. on June 11, the day after Italy came in. They prepared, on orders, to bomb Milan that night. Full loads of bombs were in the racks when the French authorities said such an attack would be against the wishes of their Government. According to Air Marshal A. S. Barratt, they were prevented from taking off by a French threat.

The war was a year old; the squadron, in the operational sense, but a matter of months, but five had been awarded the D.F.C., eight the D.F.M., and four out of one crew of six had been decorated. Pilots decorated at this stage were Squadron Leader Kay (Auckland, later group captain, com-

manding at Ohakea), Squadron Leader A. A. N. Breckon (Auckland), Pilot Officers N. Williams (New Plymouth), F. H. Denton (West Coast), and D. H. McArthur (Christchurch). The D.F.M. had been awarded Flight Sergeant E. P. Williams (Auckland) and Sergeant C. B. G. Knight (Christchurch).

With the British and Imperial armies either back in Britain refitting or on the defence in the Middle East, Bomber Command was virtually the only part of the armed forces which, from the end of June, 1940, was engaged in sustained attacks on the enemy. The Navy was keeping the trade routes safe and open. Bomber Command, to which the 75th belonged, concentrated on attacking the military economy of the enemy. From the day after the Franco-German armistice was signed (June 19, 1940) till early in December, the concentration was on armament factories, communications and the like, and the damage to aircraft and aluminium factories had its effect in weakening the Luftwaffe. The Mittelland Canal locks, near Rheine, Grevenbroich aluminium works, Dusseldorf, Dortmund, Hamm marshalling yards, Swerte, another key railway point, Osnabruck, Cologne and Freiburg explosive factories, were all June targets. In July, the Emden, Wilhelmshaven and Bremen docks, Soltan marshalling yards. The last-mentioned was an alternative target located by Flight Lieut. Jack Adams, now Wing Commander, after the Rotenberg air depot target was obscured by cloud. For this and subsequent attacks, he received the D.F.C., and his navigator, Sergeant Allinson, the D.F.M. The Ruhr was also a July target when the first serious encounter was had with German night fighters. The bomber of Flying Officer N. Williams was attacked by three, of which one was shot down and another dived out of control, Williams being awarded the D.F.C., and the rear gunner, Sergeant White, the D.F.M. On September 12, Flying Officer F. H. Denton won the D.F.C. when, in very bad weather, he bombed as an alternative target, the docks and shipping in Flushing harbour. He went down through devastating flak and machine-gun fire, releasing his bombs so low that the explosions sent the bomber several hundreds of feet up. It was badly damaged, with gaping wing holes, but Denton got home safely. Berlin was first attacked by the 75th on September 23, 1940, when Denton distinguished himself on the return by chasing a Me. 110 which was cruising in wait for a returning bomber. Caught by one of its own force's searchlights over Holland on October 10, a night fighter was shot down by Sergeant Mylod. The squadron was soon back at Berlin but, unfortunately, lost an aircraft there on October 10. Large fires were started in the Munich marshalling yards on November 8.

By October, 1940, some of the 75 pilots had already made more than 30 flights over enemy territory—Flight Lieut. Lucas, 37. One pilot with 40 raids over enemy territory had used the same Wellington for 21 of them. December, 1940, saw Bomber Command strength growing. The squadron found itself in large forces attacking targets in such places as Mannheim, Hanover, Hamburg and Bremen, in all of which the 75th did their bit in inflicting the well-known and considerable damage. It was among the best squadrons of the Command. It was hard to distinguish among them in the performance of their duty. Some incidents, like these, were outstanding. Pilot Officer Matheson, captain, Pilot Officer Fowler, observer, and crew, were over Berlin on the night of April 9-10, 1941, with instructions not only to bomb but to photograph the target. This was a hefty double-barreled order. The first photograph was taken just as the bomber was caught in a tremendous barrage of searchlights and anti-aircraft fire. This forced them

down to 2,000 feet over the most hotly defended Axis centre before the beams were eluded. Large hunks had been torn from the wing fabric and the fuselage was riddled. The bombs had not been released, but Matheson regained height, made his run and started large fires. Both Fowler and he received the D.F.C. Ten Wellingtons started large fires on a Hamm target on July 12, 1941. A few nights before, Flying Officer Prichard and his crew were attacked thirty-five miles off Cologne by an enemy fighter which got in a burst at fifty yards. The Wellington's bomb doors were blown open, the rear turret put out of action, and the front turret damaged. A cannon shell damaged the starboard engine and almost severed an airscrew blade. But Prichard carried on to the target area, dropped his load accurately, got back to the base and crash-landed without injury to himself or crew. Pilot Officer Rees, about to attack Duisberg on the night of July 15-16, had his bomber badly damaged by anti-aircraft fire. He carried on the bombing and began the return. In its damaged condition the aircraft could not avoid the main belt of searchlights covering the Ruhr. An enemy fighter attacked. Rees took the aircraft down to 5,000 feet; by then he was the only one in the aircraft capable of carrying on. The second pilot had died of wounds by his side, the front gunner was seriously wounded and subsequently died in hospital, the rear gunner was wounded and temporarily blinded, the wireless operator was deafened by the explosion of a shell in the cabin; another shell had blown open the mid-hatch in the fuselage. Proceeding aft to assist the rear gunner, the observer stepped into space (a hole blown in the aircraft), but he had his parachute on and the enemy subsequently claimed him a prisoner. Despite all this, Rees brought the Wellington home safely.

The 75th contributed its quota to the enormous number of bombs which were dropped on the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* which, in March, 1941, after six weeks in the Atlantic, during which they sank at least twenty Allied and British merchant ships, took refuge in Brest, to be joined in June by the *Prinz Eugen*. Aircraft of Bomber Command succeeded in confining those ships to port for a period of nearly eleven months, which had at least an important effect. Had they been able to continue at large, the Atlantic situation would have been more serious. No. 75 Squadron visited Brest twelve times, each time in the face of great opposition. With the exception of Berlin, it was then probably the most heavily defended place in Europe. Though the targets were some 700 feet long, this is miniature from 12,000 feet or more at night in a heavy barrage. The most successful attack by the squadron was in the big daylight raid on July 24, 1941, on the *Gneisenau* and *Prinz Eugen*, the *Scharnhorst* being attacked at La Pallice the same day by Halifaxes. The last attack the squadron made on the three was on February 12, 1942, when they were running up the Channel back to their home port. It was a day of low cloud with conditions, therefore, as bad as they could be.

Less than a year after the Squadron began operations, eight of the first flight forming it had been awarded the D.F.C., with 30 or more raids to their credit, and the commanding officer had been Mentioned in Dispatches. Two had by now been killed on operations, and two had returned to New Zealand to hand on what they had learned to others so eager to follow.

Wing Commander Buckley—the man responsible for the creation of 75th, and now Group Captain—went off-deck for an operation, to be succeeded by Wing Commander Kay who, incidentally, made a pre-war England to New Zealand flight with Flight Lieut. H. L. Piper. Awards of the D.F.C. now included Squadron Leader Freeman, Flight Lieut. F. J. Lucas, Flight



NEW ZEALAND V.C.'s, 1939-45

Top: CAPTAIN C. H. UPHAM, V.C. and Bar; SERGEANT J. D. HINTON, V.C.
Centre: SECOND LIEUTENANT M. NGARIMU, V.C.; FLYING OFFICER L. A. TRIGG, V.C.;
 LIEUTENANT K. ELLIOTT, V.C.
Bottom: SERGEANT A. C. HULME, V.C.; SERGEANT PILOT J. A. WARD, V.C.; SQUADRON
 LEADER L. H. TRENT, V.C.

The awards to Flying Officer Trigg and to Lieutenant Ngarimu were posthumous.
 Sergeant Ward was lost on operations shortly after receiving his award.



*Left to right, top: FLYING OFFICER S. L. DUNCAN; SQUADRON LEADER J. H. ARKWRIGHT.
Middle: FLIGHT LIEUTENANT R. L. SPURDLE, R.A.F.; FLIGHT LIEUTENANT A. G. S. GEORGE.
Bottom: SQUADRON LEADER M. VANDERPUMP; WING COMMANDER A. A. N. BRECKON.*

Lieut. Jack Adams, Flying Officers W. M. C. Williams (Wanganui), W. H. Coleman (Devonport) and J. N. Collins (Christchurch), the last-named two being killed on operations. Flight Lieutenants A. B. Greenaway (Waikanae) and C. C. Hunter (Auckland) had been posted to New Zealand. Group Captain Buckley later took over the command of the station and was succeeded in August, 1941, by Group Captain J. A. Powell, D.S.O., O.B.E., Wing Commander R. Sawrey-Cookson, D.S.O., D.F.C., became the new squadron commander.

Squadron Leader Breckon was posted to another squadron station early in 1941, at which there were fifty New Zealanders, an instructor there being Flight Lieutenant Litchfield (New Plymouth), a former pupil of Flying Officer Ian Keith (Wanganui), Litchfield having taken part in a raid on Heligoland seven hours after war was declared. New Zealanders on this particular station then included Pilot Officers J. A. Graham (Hastings), L. S. Dunley (Wellington), R. M. Morrow (Christchurch), Sergeants L. J. Beale (Stratford), M. B. Crooks, G. H. Dow, G. Rose (Wellington), J. N. Grace, F. L. Fowler, G. Hardy, O. F. Clifford, G. Clark, W. M. Galloway, R. Gascoigne (Auckland), W. H. Swain (Masterton), C. W. Belcher (Christchurch), D. B. Annesley (Shannon), C. E. Donohue (Temuka), L. B. Malpas (Tauranga), T. W. Dalmette, E. D. B. Amos (Ashburton), F. P. Gannaway, R. R. Passmore (Napier), A. A. McCall (Coromandel), R. P. Coppersmith (Westport), F. R. Haworth (Cambridge). Breckon later commanded a bomber-reconnaissance squadron in the Pacific.

The night of July 7-8, 1941, saw Sergeant J. A. Ward (Wanganui) win the Victoria Cross; the first New Zealand V.C. of this war. He was flying as second pilot with Squadron Leader Widdowson and this crew: Sergeant Lawton (observer), Sergeants J. R. Mason and R. A. Evans (wireless operators and air gunners), Sergeant Box (rear gunner). Returning over the Zuider Zee after a raid on Munster, an enemy fighter attacked and was shot down at point blank range by the rear gunner, but not before its burst of cannon shell and incendiaries caused a fire between the starboard engine and cockpit. Petrol from a fractured pipe fed the flames. Efforts at extinction failed. Then Ward said he would smother the fire with an engine covering. A half-inch manila rope was tied under his armpits and the end of it was held by Lawton, who wrapped his legs round the main spar and held grimly on. Ward climbed through the astro-hatch while the pilot throttled back the bomber almost to stalling point. The full blast of the slipstream met Ward outside and he was pressed against the fuselage, hampered by the parachute which the crew had insisted he take with him. Clinging on, he kicked holes in the fabric and then made other holes with his hands. Gradually he got face downwards on the wing, a yard off the flames. He fought his way forward, inch by inch, till his body partly covered the flaming patch. First, with the engine cover, which the wind soon tore from his hands, and then with his hands, he beat out the flames. Meantime, Lawton, on the other end of the rope, was "playing" him. Ward said: "I should never have got back but for him." The Wellington returned safely but Ward was reported missing over Hamburg on August 15, 1941.

The 75th, as part of the Bomber Command, was largely engaged from June 22, 1941, when Germany attacked Russia, in giving all possible aid to the U.S.S.R. by attacking German communications and factories, and in playing an important part in the Battle of the Atlantic by bombing German and German-occupied ports and bases. In July, 1941, it attacked Munster three times in four days, Duisberg and, by daylight, the Greisenau at Brest.

It made thirteen attacks in August, Hanover (three), Mannheim (two), Hamburg, Duisberg, Cologne, Ostend, Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne and Le Havre. September targets ranged from Hamburg in the north to Stettin in the east and Genoa, far to the south beyond the Alps. In the attack on Stettin, Flight Lieut. Bray, D.F.C., made six runs over the target. Two nights earlier he bombed the submarine base at Spezia and others bombed Genoa, including Group Captain Powell who had recently taken over the station from Group Captain Buckley. During October and November, in difficult weather, the squadron attacked Mannheim in electrical storms which flashed lightning about the propeller tips, Emden, Berlin and Hamburg, and in December, Dusseldorf.

At the start of 1942 the 75th was re-equipped with faster and more powerful Wellingtons — Mark III's — with large Hercules air-cooled radial engines and more powerful armament. The attacks on Germany were resumed on March 8, on Essen; Kiel, on March 12; twice again on Essen and then Lubeck on March 28. Cologne, Essen, Hamburg and Dortmund were among the April targets, but on April 5 Wing Commander Sawrey-Cookson, who had commanded the squadron for seven months, was killed in the attack on Cologne. His energy and courage had been an inspiration. Wing Commander E. G. Olson (New Plymouth) succeeded him.

It could almost be said of the squadron that while there was a man still left breathing in an aircraft, it always got back to base. For instance, on the night of April 22, 1942, while attacking Cologne, night fighters got busy on two of the planes. One, flown by Pilot Officer E. W. McLachlan, D.F.M., had the second pilot, Pilot Officer Fountain, killed, Sergeant Tutty, rear gunner, wounded, both turrets and all instruments put out of action, and the trimming tab hit (which made the aircraft almost uncontrollable). McLachlan hung on to the stick and, with the help of the rear gunner, flew back the aircraft by sheer physical effort. On landing, it skidded seventy yards on its belly; no further injury was caused the crew. The 75th was in two of the four heavy and most successful attacks on the aircraft industrial centre of Rostock on the nights of April 23 and 25. The night of May 30-31 saw 1,031 aircraft of Bomber Command attack Cologne; the 75th took off twenty-five strong and nineteen from its sister squadron, No. 57, making them the largest number which had operated so far from a single station at night. Here is an example of the ground staff work which worthily upheld the efforts of the men in the air. The greatest effort, some ground staff working eighteen hours a day for five days, was made to ensure every aircraft leaving in perfect condition. The Air Officer Commanding in Chief, Bomber Command, sent this message, which the 75th interpreted to the full: "If you individually succeed, the most shattering and devastating blow will have been delivered against the very vitals of the enemy. Let him have it — right on the chin." The night after this big raid only one aircraft of Bomber Command operated and that was from the 75th, piloted by Squadron Leader Newton. It went to Cologne, was hit by flak, but returned safely. Stuttgart, Essen and Mannheim were also visited this month. The squadron was in the second 1,000-bomber raid on the Ruhr in June, 1942, which literally lit up Essen, and in July, it was in the third similar raid on Bremen. The aircraft were flown in low over Saarbrücken — some carrying 4,000-pounders — on the night of July 29-30. Sergeant Hockaway said of these "cookies" that "when one goes off, it is as if a huge oil tank had burst. A cone that looks like molten fire forms with a mushroom of black smoke on top of it. It then dissolves into a glowing ball of flame with clearly defined black edges,

Then you see the effect of the blast on houses. They heel over like sailing boats struck by a heavy squall."

By July, 1942, it had bombed more than 100 separate targets in Germany since May 1, 1940. It had been nine times each over Berlin, Düsseldorf and Hanover, 22 over Cologne, 20 over Hamburg, ten over Kiel, and seven over Hamm. Its personnel had won 95 decorations and Mentions in Dispatches, including the V.C., two awards of the D.S.O., 34 of the D.F.C., and 34 of the D.F.M. Twenty-five of these awards, including the V.C. and both of the D.S.O., were to New Zealanders. In the words of Air Vice Marshal Baldwin, C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E.: "The New Zealand Bomber Squadron has maintained an operational record unsurpassed by any other group in Bomber Command." A report, of June, 1942, gives an inkling of their work. In this, the Commanding Officer, Wing Commander Olson, when the squadron was about to take off for Essen for the third time running, is quoted as saying: "Well, boys, it's Essen again, but you have been there so often recently that briefing is almost a waste of time." They were in raids for five successive nights, including both the 1,000-plane raids on Essen and Cologne, with the loss of only one crew. Among those who took part in the big Cologne and Essen raids were Squadron Leaders P. B. Robertson (Auckland), and K. Thiele, Flying Officers B. Openshaw (Marton), V. E. Sutherland (Wellington), Pilot Officers J. C. Murray (Dunedin), M. Lee (Wellington), Sergeants H. Alcock (Napier), R. Powell (Auckland), R. E. Stone (Te Aroha), K. McGregor (Masterton), A. Arnold (Tapanui), N. Bryson (Christchurch). New arrivals about this period were Pilot Officers E. Grant (Gisborne), A. S. Brown, J. C. Monk (Auckland), T. Smith (Wairapa), R. J. Smith (Wellington), P. Gunning (Shannon), G. Horne (Masterton), Sergeants L. E. Ford and C. Smith (Auckland), G. Caitcheon (Morrisville), E. Hayden, W. R. Ramsay (West Coast), A. Campbell (Hawera), L. Chambers (Westport).

For a time the squadron was down to a proportion of about fifty-fifty New Zealanders, but, coinciding with the appointment of Wing Commander Olson, New Zealand flying crew personnel increased to seventy per cent., and was soon to be nearly 100 per cent. In April, 1942, the squadron had carried out ten raids since Olson's appointment without losing a plane. Olson had then two excellent flight commanders in Squadron Leader R. J. Newton (Christchurch), and Flight Lieut. F. H. Denton (Christchurch). Before he had taken the command Olson had made four raids on Lubeck, Cologne, Poissy and Essen, accompanied on his first raid (Lubeck) by Wing Commander T. O. Freeman. His crew included then Flight Lieut. C. Ball (Hamilton), Pilot Officer W. Bridges (Christchurch), Pilot Officer R. L. Clarke (Napier). Squadron Leader Newton distinguished himself on his first tour in the bombing of Kiel during the visit of Matsuoaka, the Japanese Ambassador. Pilot Officer W. G. Fenton (Gisborne) was then Newton's rear gunner. Others attached to the squadron around this time included Flight Lieut. A. W. Doel (Auckland), Flying Officer N. E. Hodson, who had then done twenty raids, Pilot Officers G. E. Murdoch and T. McRae Nicol (Wellington), A. Fraser (Christchurch), C. W. P. Carter (Timaru), C. Fountain (Palmerston North), P. Wilson (Dannevirke), J. K. Climie (Lower Hutt), Flight Sergeants W. Fraser (Invercargill), R. H. Tye (Waikato). Olson was subsequently promoted Air Commodore and Air Officer Commanding, R.N.Z.A.F. headquarters, London. He was repatriated to New Zealand early in 1945 because of ill-health and died at New Plymouth on May 15, aged thirty-nine. He had had a long and distinguished career in aviation

since 1925 when he went to England at his own expense and joined the R.A.F., being promoted flying officer in 1927. He returned to New Zealand in 1929, was enrolled in the Air Force Territorial Reserve; appointed flying instructor at Wigram and a member of the then New Zealand Permanent Air Force from August 1, 1930; instructor, Otago Aero Club; R.N.Z.A.F., 1935; officer commanding at Wigram and then Hobsonville, 1938, as squadron leader; appointed Air Member for Personnel, 1939; returned to England, 1941; commanded No. 75 Squadron; promoted Group-Captain, June, 1942, and took part in that month's 1,000-bomber raids on Cologne; awarded D.S.O., April, 1943.

"My personal congratulations to the 75th for producing by far the largest effort of any squadron in the Group." This was part of the special message received by the officer commanding the 75th from the Commander-in-Chief, Bomber Command, following the big raid on Swinemunde in 1942, just after the squadron was re-equipped with Stirlings. They were also over Turin, with special attention to the Fiat works. Comments were on the scenery, however, as witness Squadron Leader R. Broadbent (Auckland): "We had a perfect view of Mont Blanc, and the moon glistening on the mountain sides. We could see in the distance Swiss chalets lit up and lights from cottages in seemingly inaccessible mountain localities." A newcomer was Flying Officer James Lovelock, brother of the New Zealand Olympic runner, whose second raid was that on Turin. All parts of New Zealand were represented in the crews. This one, for example: Flight Sergeants M. E. Parker, V. Jamieson, C. L. Parker (Auckland), W. Whitehead (Papakura), P. Dobson (Blenheim), and, in a mine-laying venture about the same time, Flying Officers N. C. B. Wilson (Auckland), T. Lodge (Rotorua), and Pilot Officer T. Dance (Wellington), the Marist fullback. The 75th was in the big 1942 raid on Peenemunde—at that time the largest night air battle of the war—when bombers fought German night fighters high over the Baltic coastline in a sky glittering with moonlight so bright it was like day.

The High Commissioner, Mr. W. J. Jordan, visited the squadron in October, 1942, to meet, among others, Pilot Officers D. Newall (Timaru), G. Patrick (Dunedin), F. Colwyn Jones, L. Drummond (Auckland), H. S. Gilberd (Wellington), Flight Sergeants F. H. Howell (Wellington), K. Smith (Auckland), Sergeants P. A. Radomski (Wellington), L. K. Warren, I. Connelly (Auckland), K. G. McKenzie (Invercargill), H. C. Whitwell (Te Papa), M. Torrance (Christchurch), W. L. Harvey (Central Otago), Scott Crow (Banks Peninsula), Flight Sergeant R. C. Reynolds (Lower Hutt) and Sergeant Bruce Phillip (Amberley) had each then shot down a Junkers 88, and Torrance probably shot down a Me. 109 near Wilhelmshaven. Reynolds was in an all-New Zealand crew, others being Flight Sergeants J. L. Wright (Wellington), C. W. B. Kelly (Christchurch), M. A. Carter (Hastings), A. L. Neal. Phillip's crew included Sergeants W. Gordon (Kaipoi) and A. Drew (Auckland). They had just finished operations, as had Sergeants H. V. Allen (Christchurch), Flight Sergeant K. Sutherland (Invercargill), Pilot Officers F. A. Letchford (Picton) and L. Chambers, (Westport). The "oldest inhabitant" then was Pilot Officer W. G. Horne (Masterton) who had nearly completed operations. Newcomers were Pilot Officer G. H. Jacobson (Akaroa), with nine raids, including safe returns after being shot up over Duisberg and over the Dutch coast. Among others then with the squadron were Flying Officer F. J. Chunn (Te Awamutu), Pilot Officers E. F. Downes (Dunedin), E. L. Haydon (Palmerston North), C. F. Ormerod (Gisborne), Sergeants C. R. Davey (Dargaville), E. G. Firth,

Worsdale, H. R. Welch, A. Scott, M. T. Parata, J. S. Voice, V. A. O. Imcock, H. Yeoman, E. A. Garty, I. C. H. Sullivan, H. J. Hugill, E. W. Harvey (Wellington), R. H. J. Brady, B. A. Franklin, R. L. A. McFarland, E. Clearwater, E. L. D. Ashwin (Auckland), J. G. Barnes, J. A. McConnell, J. J. Barclay (Dunedin), L. J. Shalfoon, L. H. Parkinson (Opotoki), V. Patters (Whangarei), R. J. Carter (Taumarunui), F. W. Marshall (Tauranga), W. J. H. Berriman (New Plymouth), W. A. N. Hardy (Wanganui), R. Hamerton (Patea).

Three New Zealanders in the squadron, Flight Sergeant G. K. Samson (Wellington), Sergeants J. Richards (Methven) and W. Hardy (Wanganui), and three Canadians, were picked up out of the English Channel in March, 1943, by a Walrus amphibian, following a crash landing. Stirlings of the 75th were in the Berlin raids of the last Saturday and Monday in March, 1943, and did not lose an aircraft. Those who were in on these raids included Squadron Leader G. M. Allcock, D.F.C. (Auckland), Flying Officers R. R. Dayner (Wanganui), C. F. Ormerod (Gisborne), Pilot Officers R. O. French (Feilding), J. M. Bailey (Hunterville), C. Carswell (Auckland), Flight Sergeants K. H. Debenham (Oxford), C. Samson (Wellington), Sergeants H. Moss (Feilding), A. Davidson (Auckland), W. G. Berryman (New Plymouth), C. Middleton (Hamilton), I. Furness (Nelson), B. J. Hosie (Maniaia), J. Bodley (Auckland), J. Welch (Hamilton), H. J. Drawbridge (Wellington), G. W. Fielding (Christchurch), R. Stone (Tauranga). It was on record in April, 1943, that the squadron had taken part in all the major recent raids, including Duisburg, Essen, Munich, Nuremberg, Kiel, Lorient and St. Nazaire. Youth was well to the fore. Witness Pilot Officer Peter Buck (Wanganui), then 19, making his 26th operation—on Duisburg—when the star gunner was mortally wounded, tracers hit the plane, the incendiaries caught afire and were jettisoned, the tail-rudder controls were gone, the starboard outer motor packed up and the aircraft kept turning to starboard. Buck got home safely and made a perfect crash landing.

The Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones, visited the 75th in May, 1943, after the big raid on Dortmund. Those who took part included Flying Officer A. A. Macfarlane (Rotherham), Pilot Officer R. F. Perks (Wellington), Sergeants K. A. Toon (Wellington), A. M. Pullan (Christchurch), R. R. Strang (Winton), W. E. Elder (Gore). On the Dortmund raid Flight Sergeant W. D. Whitehead (Papakura) had one propeller shot away after his port motor caught afire over the target. He flew five hundred miles home in three hours on three motors, with T. Darton (Gisborne) as second pilot. Five members of one crew were then recently decorated after completing twenty-nine raids—Flight Lieutenants L. Trott (Otorohanga), W. Collyer (Khandallah, Wellington, an old friend from the 1st Battalion, Wellington Regiment, whom I well remember chafing under the inactivity of orderly room duty), D. Popplewell (Gore), Pilot Officer H. Hamerton (Patea), all D.F.C., and Sergeant M. Manawaiti, D.F.M., and promoted to pilot officer, those who had completed their tour of operations about this time were Flying Officer Ormerod (Gisborne), Pilot Officers I. M. Bailey (Hunterville), P. Buck, D.F.C. (Wanganui), and Sergeant B. Hosie (Maniaia). Newcomers were Flying Officers B. Vernazoni (Christchurch), C. Riddle (Invercargill), Pilot Officer H. Tong (Invercargill).

Early in 1943, Flight Lieut. J. F. Barron (Palmerston) had completed fifty-six raids (eighty by June) and was the first New Zealand airman to be entitled to wear the ribbons of D.S.O., D.F.C., and D.F.M. He subsequently became wing commander, to which rank he rose from flight sergeant in twenty-three months,

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and was awarded a Bar to his D.S.O. He was reported missing in June, 1943. On all his operations Barron wore a tiki given him by his sister, Patsy, before he left New Zealand. Once he raided Essen three times in 48 hours and also flew the Stirling afterwards exhibited outside St. Paul's during Wings for Victory Week. When the New Zealand Parliamentarians, Messrs L. G. Lowry (Otaki) and W. P. Endean (Auckland), visited the squadron in May, 1943, it had three Auckland flight commanders, Squadron Leaders R. Broadbent, W. H. Laud and F. A. Andrews (now archivist in London). Many new men had just joined, among them Flight Sergeant M. Brady (Wellington), Sergeants G. V. Helm (Invercargill), D. M. Stewart (Taranaki), J. G. A. Fish (Wanganui), J. H. R. Carey (Westport), J. L. Roberts (Gisborne), P. G. Knight, N. A. McLeod (Wairarapa), R. Hill, A. C. McPhail, O. A. Innes (Christchurch), E. E. McGregor (Waverley), F. A. Hayes (Whangarei), S. R. Bissett (Waihi), E. S. Wilkinson (Nelson), G. N. Simes (Wellington), N. G. R. Treacher (Hastings), J. N. Mee (Central Otago), D. P. Bain (Auckland), D. N. Luxton (Hamilton), S. R. Thornley (Southland), A. McWilliam (Otago).

At twenty-two, Squadron Leader Keith Thiele, D.S.O., D.F.C., with Bar, had won triple decoration by June, 1943, two years after leaving New Zealand. He was formerly on the staff of the Christchurch *Star-Sun*. Joining a Canadian squadron on his first tour he rose from pilot officer to squadron leader in five weeks. He did twenty-one raids in Wellingtons, and eleven in Halifaxes, and took part in three of the famous 1,000-bomber raids. He surrendered his rank of squadron leader after his first tour so he could return to operations, instead of going on to instructional work. He was soon promoted again to flight commander of an Australian squadron, carried out the scheduled twenty raids of his second tour and applied for an extension to be allowed to carry out four more raids before he was "ordered off." He received an immediate award of a Bar to the D.F.C. only two days after it was announced that he had been awarded the D.S.O. He twice flew a Wellington back from Germany on one engine and twice had two engines of his Lancaster put out of action, but returned safely. He was over Berlin five times, including the occasion when thirty-seven bombers were lost through various causes. On a trip to Nuremberg, one engine caught fire over the sea. Thiele feathered the screw, got out the fire, jettisoned the incendiaries and carried on with the "cookie"—4,000-pound bomb. He bombed his target and returned over Germany and France at 1,000 feet, flying seven hours on three engines. The gunner shot up searchlights, trains and flashing beacons on this return trip. Over Duisberg, Thiele's bomber was caught in blinding searchlights and, two minutes off the target, the windscreen was blown off. Thiele felt a terrific clout on his right ear, which he later found to be like a cauliflower. In the ear pad of his old-type helmet, which he had refused to exchange when a new and lighter type was issued, a flak splinter was embedded. This was on his fifty-seventh operation. Flak blew away half the starboard outer engine and set afire to the inboard engine. Thiele extinguished this fire but the plane was gradually losing height. He kept the Lancaster at 500 feet and put it down safely at his English base. He gained an immediate award of a Bar to the D.F.C. A week before, returning from Stuttgart, a chance shot cut the pipe of the starboard outer engine and put out of action part of the hydraulic landing gear, with the result that only one wheel would come down. Thiele returned and landed safely on one wheel without the flaps. In 1945, he was with a Tempest squadron.

Squadron Leader Thiele narrowly escaped death at the hands of German civilians when shot down near Dortmund on March 10, 1945. He landed 100 yards from a railway station and soldiers surrounded him. Passing the station platform the civilians there got hostile and it was only by the efforts of the guards and himself that he escaped being pushed under an oncoming goods train. He got a different reception at the flak battery. There the sergeant who shot him down was full of enthusiasm, saying he would get ten days' leave for his success. When he refused to answer German interrogators at Frankfurt he was shown a map on which his Group and every unit of it was indicated plus the names of the squadron commanders. After the American advance Thiele escaped and made his own way to safety, the route including a pontoon bridge across the famous Remagen. Thiele was the first R.N.Z.A.F. officer to get back safely after the Allied advance into Germany began. His decorations are D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar which he won as a bomber pilot, twice reverting to flight lieutenant so he could return to operations. Later he commanded a Tempest squadron based on Holland.

Flight Sergeant B. C. Dreaver, son of the former Labour M.P., Mrs. Mary Dreaver (Auckland), was in one of the big raids on Bremen and had taken part in fifty altogether before becoming an instructor in England early in 1943.

The 75th was reported, in July, 1943, as having taken part in the recent heaviest air raids of the war, including Hamburg twice and Essen once in four nights, and having sent more aircraft than any other squadron in the Group for each raid. It was then "right on top of itself." It had seen many phases of the war; the squadron spirit had had its high and low peaks, as happens in all squadrons. The peak was when it was commanded by Air Commodore Buckley and Group Captain Kay and then, with Group Captain Olson. Subsequently it had a rather trying time converting to new aircraft and changing stations, and at this time it had just changed again. Now it was commanded by Wing Commander M. Wyatt (an Englishman who succeeded Wing Commander G. F. Lane, D.F.C.), and also due to the influence of another Englishman, the station commander, Group Captain K. M. W. Wasse, D.F.C. (who had been nine times to New Zealand with New Zealand Shipping Company liners), the spirit and morale was as high as ever. Wyatt was due at this time for transfer on promotion.

His successor was Wing Commander R. D. Max, D.S.O., D.F.C. (Nelson), now in the R.A.F., who fought in the Battle of France, flying Fairey Battles, and carrying out six day and fifteen night raids. He was shot down near Amiens after bombing tanks. After leaving France, he flew Wellingtons in ten raids, did three ferry trips over the Atlantic in Hudsons, and returned for four more raids, including a daylight on Brest to bomb the *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst*. The squadron had just then accounted for three more German night fighters (two of the sergeants getting immediate awards of the D.F.M.). Flight Sergeant I. G. Kaye (Marton), returning from Hamburg the night it got 2,300 tons of bombs, shot down a Junker 88. A crew captained by Flight Sergeant E. J. Roberts (Timaru), with the gunners, Flight Sergeants K. Jackson (Hamilton) and D. L. C. Haub (Whangarei), was attacked by three fighters within five minutes while returning from the second Hamburg raid and claimed at least one fighter destroyed. The Stirling was badly shot up but got home. The third fighter was claimed as the result of a collision with a Me. 109, when a Canadian, Flying Officer G. Turner (Winnipeg) was captain and Flying Officer A. D. Howlett (New Ply-

mouth), observer. The fighter was doing 300 m.p.h., and the Stirling at least 200. The Stirling dropped 200 feet and lost part of the wing; the fighter went down for good. The dual controls of the Stirling had to be held hard over to one side during the two hours return trip. An immediate D.F.M. was awarded at this time to a Canadian engineer in a Stirling captained by Squadron Leader J. Joll (New Plymouth). On a raid on Le Creusot, a shell-burst severed all cables in one wing. The Canadian hacked his way into the wing with an axe, crawled through, and sorted out all twenty-eight cables with the aid of torchlight. While Joll made three runs over the target he repaired the cables and stayed in the wing to attend an oil leak. The other award of the D.F.M. was to a Cockney in Wing Commander Wyatt's crew. This man's left groin was ruptured in the take-off but, though in severe pain, he did not mention it, as this would have meant turning back, till the plane landed on the return. He was then rushed to hospital. Joll was doing his second tour with the 75th at this time, and of him Wyatt said: "He is outstanding; in a class by himself. He is an example of the perfect operational captain. Nothing worries him."

Flying Officer J. L. Blair (Christchurch) and Pilot Officer C. K. McLean (Auckland), navigator, are mentioned round this time as having completed a tour in Stirlings, Blair's last twenty-one raids being on the Ruhr—at one period, seven operations in twelve nights. In a raid on Mulheim, flak cut sixty holes in Blair's aircraft. He raided Berlin twice in three nights and, on his third trip as captain of his crew, a Junkers 88 was shot down. Flight Lieut. Lloyd Butler (Dunedin) and Flying Officer H. Shield (Wellington) were captain and navigator respectively in another Stirling in the same squadron.

In an avoiding action over Dusseldorf a Stirling, piloted by Flight Sergeant G. V. Helm (Invercargill), with Flight Sergeants D. M. Stewart (Tirau) and J. G. A. Fisk (Wanganui) in the crew, weaved so violently that all four engines stopped temporarily and the plane dropped 1,000 feet. Around this time three New Zealanders were calling themselves "flying farmers" in a Stirling named *Te Kooti*, from which was dropped on Berlin the Wings for Victory Week victory bomb plastered with savings stamps stuck on by crowds in Trafalgar Square. These men were Pilot Officer I. W. Renner (Gisborne), Sergeants Norman Southern (Riverlea) and Ian McColl (Taihape). Renner was later awarded the D.F.C. All three had then completed their first tour, as had also Flight Sergeant W. Irwin, D.F.C. (Dannevirke), and Sergeant P. Devine, the latter an air gunner who shot down a German night fighter over Frankfurt. Sergeant Jim Dalzell flew a Stirling three and a half hours back to base when, as the result of a collision with a Lancaster after a raid on Rostock, it was impossible to steer except by use of the engines. Other New Zealanders who took part in one of the big raids on Dusseldorf included Squadron Leaders Broadbent and Joll, Flight Sergeant H. C. Williams (Woodville), Sergeants J. N. Mee (Central Otago), D. P. Bain (Auckland), D. N. Luxton (Hamilton), E. S. Wilkinson (Nelson), Warrant Officer F. M. Lukey (Nelson), bomb aimer in a Stirling captained by Flight Lieut. L. H. Butler (Dunedin), gave this graphic description: "I could pick out streams as black lines amongst the flames." The fourth anniversary of the German invasion of Poland saw the 75th over Berlin for the second time in eight nights, the previous occasion being August 23, when Flight Sergeant O. H. White (Christchurch), after the rear gunner was killed and three of the crew baled out over enemy territory on his orders, landed the aircraft safely. It was his thirteenth raid! The squadron had now carried out more

than 400 raids, its New Zealand personnel had won one V.C., three D.S.O., 47 D.F.C., 45 D.F.M., two B.E.M., one M.B.E., and 30 Mentions in Dispatches. By October, 1943, flight commanders Squadron Leaders F. A. Andrews, D.F.C., R. Broadbent, D.F.C. (Auckland), and J. Joll, D.F.M. (New Plymouth) had all completed their second tour. En route to Modane in the Alps to bomb marshalling yards, the engine of a Stirling, captained by Pilot Officer H. C. Williams (Woodville), caught fire and the height of 14,000 feet could not be maintained with the bomb load. So, the rest of the forward trip was flown under mountain peaks and down valleys, with mountain sides occasionally only 20 feet off. They bombed at 1,100 feet with a 12,000-foot mountain just ahead, making a steep turn and then home safely after five hours on three engines in eight hours' flying. Others in Williams' crew included Flight Sergeants T. D. Dill (Kaipara), A. L. Carson (Chatham Islands), and I. Kaye (Marton). The 75th reported new flight commanders on November 22, 1943, including Squadron Leaders J. K. Climie, D.F.C. (Lower Hutt), and D. S. Gibb, D.F.C. (North Canterbury).

Pilot Officer Wilfred Elder, D.F.M. (Gore), one of a large force which bombed Hamburg in December, 1943, came home on three engines. The navigator-bomb aimer, wireless operator and second pilot had baled out on orders near the aerodrome, leaving Elder, the engineer (Sergeant Berry) who volunteered to help land the aircraft, and the wounded rear gunner. The aircraft jumped a ditch at the end of the field, went through a fence, tore out the port engines on some tree stumps and came to rest on fire. All got out safely. Those who parachuted were also safe.

Former flight commanders in the 75th, Squadron Leader R. Broadbent and Flight Lieut. F. A. Andrews (both Auckland) received the D.F.C. from the King in April, 1944. At the same investiture Group Captain G. J. Grindel, A.F.C. (Timaru), former commanding officer of a New Zealand Ventura squadron, Squadron Leader G. L. Mandeno (Auckland) and Flight Lieut. C. L. G. Holmes (Frankton) also received the D.F.C.

Wing Commander R. A. J. Leslie, A.F.C. (Inglewood), succeeded Wing Commander R. D. Max, D.F.C. (Nelson) as C.O. of the 75th in May, 1944. Max had completed his second tour of duty. Leslie operated Fairey Battles early in the war, and then, for two years, commanded a unit reinforcing Middle East forces with crews and aircraft.

Two decorations were won in a single flight by members of the crew of a 75th Lancaster for their part in bringing back the aircraft after it was damaged in a raid on the railway centre at Nantes. This was announced in August, 1944. The Conspicuous Gallantry Medal went to Warrant Officer A. H. R. Zillwood (Auckland). When Pilot Officer C. W. McCordle (Wairarapa) was wounded in the neck, leg and side, Hurt, a bomb-aimer who had never flown solo before, brought the bomber back to England and landed safely. Zillwood was navigator.

There was another of those typical 75th instances of getting the aircraft home against odds in May, 1944. This time a Me. 109 attacked a Lancaster piloted by Flight Sergeant A. Gibson (Wellington). The enemy fire damaged the control services, the petrol supply system, starboard main plane tanks, magneto and engine structure, and put out of action the mid-upper turret. Gibson put the big bomber into a dive and the Me. attacked again, but the Lancaster's fire got it and it burst into flames. Gibson took the limping bomber home on three engines—it was called "K for King"—and, just as he sighted the lights of an English field, the fuel supply ran out. With all the engines dead he came in as smooth as a glider. Here it is of

interest to point out that it is not the job of a bomber's air gunners to shoot down night fighters. Their job is to protect the aircraft and its crew from attack. They do not fire unless compelled to, and then with the captain's permission, for the flash of their tracer bullets will give away the position of the aircraft.

Five attacks were made in seven days in May, 1944—Cologne, Karlsruhe, Dusseldorf, Essen and Friedrichshafen—and only one aircraft lost. The longest trip was to Friedrichshafen; they took off at dusk and flew 1,500 miles before returning in seven and a half hours with the break of dawn. The squadron was led by Wing Commander Max, though, technically speaking, a commanding officer does not lead a bomber squadron on a raid; they fly individually. Others in the raid included Squadron Leader Climie (Lower Hutt), Flight Lieutenants E. W. Sachtler (Dunedin), E. F. Whiting (Invercargill), Flying Officers W. E. Anderson (Christchurch), G. O. Marshall (Hawke's Bay), Pilot Officers C. W. McCardle (Martinborough), A. H. R. Zillwood, G. E. Reade (Auckland), T. J. Nation (Wellington), A. R. Young (Christchurch), C. E. Armstrong (Napier), H. Burton; Warrant Officer R. C. Axten (New Plymouth), Flight Sergeants J. W. Collins (Canterbury), F. G. Stewart (Wellington), D. B. Mayne (Invercargill), E. Marshall (Hastings), C. A. Megson (Auckland); A. W. Fagg, T. E. Rowe. Max was on his twenty-first operation and Climie on his fiftieth. Several of those mentioned took part in the raid against Essen the previous night, and others were Flying Officer J. Hannah (Lyttelton), Pilot Officers C. A. G. Mackenzie (Gore), D. E. Livingstone (Auckland), G. G. Ward (Lumsden), I. Te M. Te Aika (Tuahiwi), Warrant Officer J. Jones (Auckland), Flight Sergeants O. J. Hall (Christchurch), T. E. Fletcher (Palmerston North), L. Ryburn (Hamilton). Te aika's crew had an eventful first operation when it bombed Hanover. Coned by searchlights and trying to stall the engine in order to drop straight out of the lights, the aircraft, with too much speed on, went on to its back, falling 10,000 feet in seconds. When the bomber was righted it was attacked by a Ju. 88 which Te Aika, who was rear-gunner, shot down. A group which had then completed a tour of thirty operations included Flight Lieut. J. D. Grubb (Wellington), Flying Officers L. B. Stichbury (Wellington), J. A. Martin (a son of a former Minister of the Crown, Hon. W. Lee Martin), Pilot Officer A. G. Chatfield (Wellington), Flight Sergeant K. Hazlett (Invercargill). Squadron Leader D. S. Gibb (Canterbury), for a time a flight commander, had transferred to a glider-towing squadron and took part in the landing of paratroops in Europe. His successor was Squadron Leader L. J. Drummond (Auckland), on his second tour. The squadron's navigational officer was Flight Lieut. G. A. Patrick, D.F.C. (Dunedin), who had then carried out seventy-two operations on two tours, including forty-one on Mosquitoes, and the control officer, Flying Officer L. Dickson (Dunedin), the well-known athlete.

The squadron, at June 12, 1944, had operated on six out of eight nights since D Day. On D Day it took off in full strength, led by Wing Commander R. J. Leslie, A.F.C. (New Plymouth), to bomb gun emplacements on the invasion coast. At 10.30 that night it was out again to bomb the Lisseux bottle-neck through which the Germans were pushing up reinforcements. On June 13 it had its first real "stand down" since D Day when it entertained Group Captain Wasse who had commanded the station for fifteen months.

This squadron made records. In recent months, it headed the list with a larger percentage of successful sorties than any other squadron in the

AIR DEEDS AND MEN

Group. The squadron personnel was then 50 per cent. New Zealanders, with New Zealanders captaining a majority of the crews, and about 80 per cent. New Zealand observers.

His eyes injured by perspex glass splinters, Flying Officer R. D. Mayhill (Kemuera), despite great pain, insisted that the bombing run on a flying bomb depot in France in a raid during the last week of August, 1944, be completed so he could get his bombs away. The electrical release system had been broken and he had to get them away by manual operation. The Lancaster's undercarriage, fins and rudders had been extensively damaged, but Flying Officer J. K. Aitken (Gisborne) made a safe landing. In an attack on Stettin, a Lancaster, piloted by Flying Officer J. H. Scott (Wai-kouaiti), downed a Junkers 88.

The squadron took part in a 4,000-ton bombing attack on the German Army in the neck of the gap closing around it in Normandy in August, 1944. The squadron was led by Squadron Leader L. J. Drummond, D.F.C. (Auckland), on his forty-ninth operation. The deputy-leader was Flying Officer W. R. White (Napier) who, with Flight Sergeant M. C. Scott (Tauranga), was on his thirtieth and final operation of his first tour. Other New Zealanders on the raid in this operation were Flying Officers L. Martyn (Christchurch), one of the first to arrive over the target, J. A. Fleming (Opotiki), C. Glossop (Ashburton), J. Scott (Dunedin), F. Timms (Christchurch), V. J. Andrews (Auckland), F. C. Wood (Auckland), J. A. Dale (Wellington), E. J. Osborne (Wellington), Flight Sergeants G. Moore (Temuka), R. S. Barker (Auckland), A. J. Smith (Waipawa), C. W. Estcourt (Hamilton), J. Christie (Cambridge), W. G. Norton (Christchurch), R. Firth (Morrinsville), J. R. Layton (Christchurch).

Two Maoris were in the raid with the squadron. They were Flight Sergeants I. W. Maaka (Takapau) and T. T. Nicholas (Hastings).

The German garrison at Le Havre surrendered at 11.30 a.m. on September 12, 1944. For three days prior to September 9, New Zealand Lancasters were associated in pounding enemy positions, helping to drop hundreds of tons of bombs on troop positions, fortifications and supply dumps within two miles of the Allied line. The job called for great precision because of the nearness of the Allied lines to the enemy. The squadron had an average error of only 200 yards.

Lancasters of No. 75 were in two waves of heavy bombers which bombed the Westpakkelle dyke in October, 1944, to flood Walcheren Island, the purpose being to engulf the German garrison, whose occupation of the island prevented the Allied use of the port of Antwerp, and swamp the long-established defences. Great accuracy in bombing was essential for a target 200 feet by 300 feet. Flying Officer M. Smith (Christchurch) made four circuits before his bomb-aimer could obtain an uninterrupted visual check. Flying Officer M. Dare (Auckland), in the second wave, said he had to go down to 5,000 feet to get below cloud and there seemed to be thousands of aircraft milling round preparing to bomb from low heights. The attack was a great success.

Flight Lieutenant Owen Chapman, D.F.C. (Timaru), an "in at the death" reconnaissance pilot, photographed the two Bomber Command assaults which flooded Walcheren Island. Flight Lieutenant I. J. McNeill (East Coast) was among Spitfire pilots in R.A.F. Fighter Command who acted as "eyes" for the naval bombardment of German gunposts on Walcheren.

Three New Zealanders, on their seventh operation together, in a Lancaster crew of six, made a forced landing in Sweden after they had bombed

the German battleship *Tirpitz* in the attack which sunk her on November 12, 1944. They were Flying Officer D. A. Coster (Limehills), pilot, Flight Sergeant J. H. Boag (Christchurch), bomb-aimer, and Flight Sergeant C. W. Black (Mokau), navigator. After two days at a Swedish military hospital camp they had nine days in Stockholm before returning to England.

The Minister of Supply, Mr. Sullivan, and the High Commissioner, Mr. Jordan, in January, 1945, watched the New Zealand Lancaster Bomber Squadron when it took off on a raid on Rundstedt's communications. They learned that the squadron had carried out many raids of this nature recently, bombing Trier, Cologne, Dusseldorf, Selingen, Dortmund, and Ludwigshaven. They also met Flight Lieutenant J. Plummer, D.F.C. (Wellington) and his crew, who flew a noseless Lancaster back to base from Duisberg.

Then days before his twenty-second birthday, Wing Commander Cyril Baigent, D.F.C., and Bar (Nelson), was appointed to command the New Zealand Lancaster Squadron (75) which then had the distinction of being led by the youngest squadron commander in Bomber Command. Baigent was educated at Nelson College and Victoria University College. He volunteered for the R.N.Z.A.F. when seventeen and was accepted for an air crew soon after his eighteenth birthday. He gained his wings, and was commissioned before leaving for England in November, 1941. Before assuming the squadron command Baigent had completed two tours of operations and had been eight times over Berlin. He succeeded Wing Commander R. Newton, D.F.C. (Christchurch).

A British film company made a picture for general release of a normal operation of a crew flying the Lancaster "O for Orange." The stars were members of the R.N.Z.A.F. with excellent operational records—Flight Lieut. E. F. Whiting (Invercargill), Flying Officer W. Anderson (Christchurch), Pilot Officer G. O. Marshall (Wairoa) and Flight Lieut. J. Collins (Waikouaiti). Almost all the film was made on the station from which the squadron operated. Members of the New Zealand ground crew were shown, including Sergeant R. Burkitt (New Plymouth) who had been responsible for the maintenance of "O for Orange" ever since Whiting and his crew had begun operating it.

New Zealanders did exceptionally well throughout Bomber Command. Not all their performances are available but as an instance Flying Officer N. Gardiner, D.F.C. (Rakaia) carried out forty-three raids without the loss of a man or plane. His brother, Flight Sergeant P. Gardiner (Rakaia and Christchurch) was an engineer on Catalinas in the Pacific. He was on four ferry trips to San Diego, California, and on the subject of American hospitality remembers four days in Hollywood which cost him only one dollar.

From May, 1940, to December, 1944, No. 75 Squadron had flown 34,500 hours on 6,923 sorties, dropped 18,076 tons of bombs, fired 652,578 rounds of ammunition, probably shot down sixty night-fighters, and been awarded 191 decorations, including a Victoria Cross.

In the three weeks ending April 6, 1945, men of No. 75 had flown their Lancasters in more than 400 sorties and dropped 2,000 tons of bombs on enemy towns and supply sources. Since the crossing of the Rhine 600 N.Z. airmen had taken bombers in support of the Allied advance. Dresden, always a "sticky" target, got a plastering. In support of the 21st Army Group's capture of Wesel, the British Army was only two miles from the target, and a high degree of accuracy was necessary. From some of the missions in this period aircraft had returned with two engines out of action or the fuselage pitted with shell splinters. Formation was not broken and no personnel

lost. Mentioned at this time was Flight Lieut. R. A. Banks (Auckland); Flight Lieut. L. W. Hannan (New Plymouth).

Squadron Leader John Mathers Bailey, D.F.C. and Bar, was the pilot of "M-Mike," the first aircraft of No. 75 squadron to reach the century of operations. Bailey was formerly a farmer at Ohingaiti. A former member of the New Plymouth Aero Club, Flight Lieutenant Martin Adam Kilpatrick, Inglewood, D.F.C., took part in an attack on an oil refinery at Osterfed in April, 1945, and, during his run-in, he was caught in a fierce barrage. His aircraft was hit in several places, the port outer engine being put of action. The starboard inner engine also began to give trouble. In spite of these handicaps Kilpatrick maintained a straight run and made a good attack, which was proved by photographs obtained of the refinery. Soon after leaving the target the defective starboard engine stopped. With only two engines working and losing height, he flew back from Germany and made a safe landing. He had made thirty-five operations against the enemy as captain of a crew in which the only other New Zealander was the navigator, Flying Officer R. S. Tait, Hamilton.

At the conclusion of the European war, Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Harris, Commander-in-Chief, Bomber Command, referred to the courageous work of New Zealand bomber crews in a message to the Air Officer Commanding R.N.Z.A.F., London. He stated: "Please convey to all the New Zealand personnel who have served or are serving in Bomber Command my great appreciation of their loyal co-operation and gallant and determined contribution to the defeat of Germany and the freedom of mankind. To all New Zealand air-crews, and to all ground staff personnel, their British cousins give heartfelt thanks. We in Bomber Command are proud indeed of the great record of service of the New Zealand crews, who were second to none in courage and efficiency."

Lancaster bombers of No. 75 (New Zealand) Squadron were then carrying many hundreds of prisoners of war from dispatch centres in Germany to the busiest "bus stop" in Britain, Westcott Aylesbury. Called off dropping food supplies to the Dutch in northern Holland, the squadron assisted with the conveyance of prisoners from all parts of the Continent and nearly all the aircraft utilised had been flying up to three trips a day. A red-letter day was when No. 75 aircrews landed in England New Zealand prisoners. Thus No. 75 squadron provided the climax to an eventful career by returning safely its own countrymen. The dropping of food supplies was a new role. The Lancasters were equipped with special slings filled with sacks of meat, flour, cheese, margarine and other foods. The pilots, who flew at 500 feet, said the joyous Dutch waved at them frantically, even while German soldiers stood by with machine-guns pointed at the crowds and at the aircraft. "It was a bit uncanny going over at such a low height," said Flight Sergeant A. G. Turner, Fellding. "The German anti-aircraft guns were there, but they did not fire." Navigator Flying Officer J. G. Allan, D.F.C., Dunedin, said most of the supplies were dropped on the airfields at The Hague and Lieden, and in open fields round Rotterdam. The Lancasters made constant trips over Holland to drop food. By April 30, 1,250 tons had been delivered.

An early member of No. 75, Warrant Officer R. G. Holford, lost his life in an aircraft accident in New Zealand in May, 1945. He was one who helped to cover the retreat from Dunkirk and was five years overseas, being due to transfer to the Pacific when he met his death. His operations included the first 1,000-bomber raids over Cologne and Essen, first bomber raid from

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

Malta to Naples, dropping supplies to New Zealand guerillas on Crete, and strafing Rommel's retreat in North Africa.

This No. 75 section closes with a tribute to Pilot Officers K. H. Blincoe and J. McCullough, awarded belated D.F.C.'s. In October, 1942, when the squadron was changed from Wellingtons to Stirlings it struck a bad patch; heavy losses and servicing troubles. It was on the verge of a decline but these two, with Squadron Leader J. M. Bailey and Flight Lieutenant L. Trott, held it together. They, as captains of the four senior crews, bridged the gap till other crews came on. Blincoe and McCullough went missing on the last operation of a tour. They were real "75-ers."

THE NEW ZEALAND SPITFIRE AND NEW ZEALAND FIGHTER (TYPHOON AND TEMPEST) SQUADRONS

The first New Zealand Fighter (Spitfire) Squadron, No. 485, has been equipped with Spitfires throughout. The second New Zealand Fighter Squadron (No. 486) was formed in 1942 on Hurricanes, later re-equipped with Typhoons and then Tempests.

The New Zealand public subscribed £126,000 sterling (£156,800 £N.Z.) for the Spitfires. The planes were named after the provinces and districts which subscribed the funds: Auckland, Wellington, Southland, Canterbury, Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, Marlborough, West Coast and Nelson, Otago, Northland, Waikato, and the W.D.F.U. (this last bought with £5,000 raised by the Women's Division of the Farmers' Union). The letters N.Z. were inscribed on each fighter. The New Zealand Meat Producers' Board subscribed £30,000 to the fund; the New Zealand Co-operative Dairy Company Limited, £5,000; European and Native residents of Niue, £158.

Of the twenty pilots from all parts of New Zealand first selected to form the New Zealand Fighter Squadron, ten had taken part in air battles against the Germans, some fought over Dunkirk, others in the Battle of Britain. They already had seven enemy aircraft to their credit, and two had been shot down themselves. The Squadron was formed early in March, 1941. It took over Spitfires bought by public subscription taken up in New Zealand.

The first twenty, with ranks as at that time, were: Squadron Leader M. W. B. Knight (Dannevirke), Commanding Officer; Flight Lieutenant F. N. Brinsden (Takapuna) and Flight Lieutenant J. C. Martin (Timaru), Flight Commanders; Pilot Officers E. P. Wells (Cambridge), G. H. Francis and P. S. McBride (Takapuna), Charles Stewart (Wellington), W. A. Middleton (Newmarket), A. G. McIntyre (Palmerston North), R. Barrett (Wellington), Sergeant Pilots W. Crawford Compton and H. L. Thomas (Mission Bay), R. J. Bullen (New Plymouth), H. N. Sweetman (Auckland), J. Maney (Herne Bay), A. B. Smith (Tauranga), J. K. Porteous (Grey Lynn), L. P. Griffith (Wairoa), K. D. Cox (Hamilton), D. S. McGregor (Dunedin). A number of the Squadron's first ground staff were New Zealanders. Four were wireless operators who came to England to return with the first flight of Wellingtons [to have been flown to New Zealand but which, on the outbreak of war, with the twenty-four others ordered, were placed at the disposal of the United Kingdom Government to form the first New Zealand Bomber Squadron, 75]. These men who serviced the Spitfires' wireless and electrical equipment were Sergeant F. M. B. George (Auckland), Corporals N. Murray (Wanganui), G. H. French (Rotorua), and T. G. Smith (New Plymouth). Five of

the armourers were also New Zealanders: Leading Aircraftsmen E. S. Bongard (Auckland), T. H. Macgibbon (Southland), G. E. Erridge (Dunedin) and Aircraftsmen A. W. Martin (Wellington) and J. B. Neville (Christchurch). Crawford Compton returned to New Zealand in May, 1945, after six and a half years overseas. He had left New Zealand in the ketch *Land's End* which, after seven months' cruising, struck a reef on the New Guinea coast. After a few weeks Compton got a job as a ship's carpenter in the motor vessel *Myrtle Bark* at one shilling a month. He arrived in England on the eve of the outbreak of war and twenty-four hours later was an A.C.2 in the R.A.F. His first jobs were to wash dishes, erect aerodrome defences, and clean the buttons of the sergeants' best "blues"! While training to be a fighter pilot the evacuation of Dunkirk took place and Compton and his fellows were issued with last-war bayonets tied to broomsticks with which to defend their aerodrome.

Wells was trained at Weraoia, Blenheim and New Plymouth. He got his first Me. in October, 1940, over the Kent coast; the second when he attacked four Me. 109's north of Dungeness (it crashed near Dymchurch) and the third over Chatham. In other dogfights he had already damaged two more Me. 109's, a Henschel 126, and an Italian C.R.42. McIntyre, trained to fly first at Rongotai by Squadron Leader J. Rawnsley, arrived in Britain in April, 1940, was on Fairey Battles, Spitfires and then Hurricanes. He shot down his first when his squadron intercepted twenty-four Dornier 215's and he sent one down on to an aerodrome it had just been bombing. He was shot down himself when with a section of nine Hurricanes which intercepted 150 Dorniers and protecting Messerschmitts over Portsmouth. Pilot Officer Francis, taught at New Plymouth by Pilot Officer G. Rogers, reached England in September, 1940, and was posted straight to Spitfires. He shot down his first—a Heinkel 111—soon after, and shared another Heinkel with two other pilots.

Pilot Officer R. J. Bullen (New Plymouth) was the "oldest inhabitant" of the squadron in March, 1941. He was thirty, the average was twenty-two.

A famous Welsh fighter ace, who had shot down forty-four Germans and flew with Group Captain K. L. Caldwell (Blenheim) and "Micky" Mannoek in the last war, was Group Captain at an Operational Training Unit to which recently arrived (June, 1941) men had been posted to learn to fly Spitfires. One instructor was a New Zealander, Flight Lieutenant R. D. Yule (Invercargill), who had then shot down five Germans and was himself shot down, spending four months in hospital before becoming an instructor. The Welsh ace said of the New Zealanders: "When they leave this station they are itching to bring down a Hun. Several have brought down Huns on their first patrol; one even bagged two on his first 'op'."

Included in recent arrivals, who had then learned to fly Spitfires, were Pilot Officers T. W. M. Leckie (Wellington), R. W. Baker (Dunedin), Sergeants C. B. Barton, M. R. B. Ingram (Dunedin, later to become Squadron Leader with a score of at least nine), D. R. White (Maxwell), A. J. Black, F. N. Hood (Christchurch), G. F. Breckon, I. H. Irvine, E. E. Carpenter, G. H. Fish, J. D. Rae, C. H. Howard, W. H. D. Dean (Auckland), L. A. Verrall, W. G. Mart, F. T. Morgan, R. I. Phillips (Wellington), A. I. Paget, W. M. Krebs, W. F. Leicester (Hawke's Bay), L. L. Ford (Nelson), J. V. McIvor (Hastings), and D. J. Spence (Hokitika).

Early records of the New Zealand Fighter Squadron show an interesting group—Pilot Officer B. A. McAlister (Invercargill), Pilot Officer J. G.

Clouston (Wellington), his brother, Squadron Leader W. G. Clouston, D.F.C. (with ten German planes to his credit by June, 1940), Pilot Officer G. M. Marshall (Marton), Pilot Officer H. A. Dobbyn (Auckland) and Sergeant Pilot C. White (Wanganui)—engaged in "Drake-before-Armada" fashion, playing quoits while waiting for orders to be up and at 'em. J. G. Clouston, then Flight Lieutenant, died while a prisoner of war in 1944.

First blood came to the squadron in July, 1941, when protecting a large convoy of merchant ships moving slowly along the coast. The weather was dull and heavy and there was a thick cloud bank at 1,500 feet. German bombers were using this as cover in a six-hour—3 p.m. till 9 p.m.—deadly game of hide-and-seek with the New Zealanders.

The honour and distinction of shooting down the first German, a Junkers 88, came, fittingly enough, to the C.O., Squadron Leader Knight. The first encounter fell to Flying Officer F. N. Brinsden (Takapuna), accompanied on his patrol by Pilot Officer R. Barrett (Wellington). The Nazi made off; Brinsden returned to base with bullets in the glycol tank and the air intake. Another German made off when attacked by the next patrol. Pilot Officer W. V. Crawford Compton (Mission Bay) and Sergeant L. M. Ralph (Auckland), Flight Lieutenant J. C. Martin (Timaru) and Sergeant W. H. Russell arrived next; the former put a burst into a Junkers, which dived into the clouds, probably damaged. Pilot Officer G. A. Francis (Takapuna) and Sergeant H. L. Thomas (Auckland) took over and both put bursts into an enemy from whose plane pieces fell before it disappeared. When Squadron Leader Knight and Pilot Officer McIntyre appeared, making their first sweep above the convoy in a fading light, a Junkers appeared right ahead. Knight got in a long burst and closed in to kill. The Junkers' port engine caught afire; it crashed and a destroyer picked up the survivors.

Flight Lieutenant Wells got the second victory, and probably a third, over France, and Pilot Officer Stewart made it a definite third over the Channel. Wells was a former clay pigeon shooting champion of New Zealand; known as "Hawkeye" in the Squadron. Stewart tackled three Me. 109's to get his. Other New Zealanders who had then joined the squadron were Sergeants W. N. Hendry (who was reported missing), K. C. M. Miller (Te Awamutu), W. H. Russell and L. J. Frecklington. Pilot Officer R. W. Baker (Dunedin), Sergeants J. D. Rae and G. S. V. Goodwin (Auckland) and I. J. McNeil (Tikiti). Hendry was last seen flying over the Channel near France and did not reach the station.

A series of photographs, published in New Zealand in November, 1941, throws more light on the men of the New Zealand Spitfire Squadron in Britain. Up to September 25, 1941, the Squadron had accounted for seventeen German planes and damaged others. Flight Lieutenant E. P. Wells, D.F.C. (Cambridge), then topped the score board with six confirmed victories, one probable and two damaged. Before joining the Squadron he was already credited with three certain, one probable, and six damaged. Sergeant A. Kronfeld was shown in the cockpit of the Western Samoa plane; Pilot Officer R. H. Strang, as pilot of the Southland plane; Sergeant W. M. Krebs, pilot of Otago No. 1; Sergeant L. P. Griffith, the W.D.F.U. plane. The two youngest members were Sergeants Sweetman and Griffith, each nineteen.

When the Prime Minister, Right Hon. Peter Fraser, visited them in August, 1941, Squadron Leader Knight and Pilot Officer Stewart (Wellington) had each bagged a German plane. Mr. Fraser told them their experience would be invaluable if they returned to New Zealand. Would they like to go? Squadron Leader Knight replied: "Yes, but I should like to see this

season out." While Mr. Fraser was inspecting the Spitfires, Squadron Leader Alan Deere, D.F.C. (Wanganui), landed. He had already shot down seventeen German planes.

Flight Lieutenant J. F. Knight (Auckland), shot down while flying with the squadron over France on September 21, 1941, was repatriated after nearly three and a half years in six different German prison camps.

"COBBER" KAIN'S SCORE

By September 22, 1942, New Zealand fighter pilots with a score of five or more had shot down 241 enemy planes (six of them 104 between them) and this did not include "Cobber" Kain's total, which was uncertain at the time. Some said "Over forty"; others "Over twenty," while an English Pilot Officer contemporary to Kain, and then a Wing Commander, with D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, said that Cobber's score was 12 confirmed.

The names of Colin Gray and Al. Deere were then famous. They were in the same squadron at the outbreak of war and with them was the South African ace, Group Captain A. G. Malan, D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C. and Bar. Malan and Deere received the D.F.C. from the King together; later, the Bar to the D.F.C. together.

An interesting fact about Malan is that he did not climb into a cockpit until he was twenty-five; for twelve years he was at sea. This is what he said after the Battle of Britain: "After the first combat or two I realised that the Hun also belonged to a team that had been well skilled in the art of war. Yet, when he was really tested, he lacked our spirit. He was a good bully and his tactics were good, but he lacked guts and initiative as a pilot. This, plus the high morale of our pilots and the unquestioned quality of Fighter Command aircraft, were the real reasons for our winning the Battle of Britain."

Colin Gray made his first attempt to join the R.A.F. in 1939 but failed in the medical examination. His twin brother, Kenneth, then a schoolmaster at St. George's, Wanganui, passed. Colin Gray was handicapped that day through the effects of influenza so he paid for a second examination with no better result. That did not put him off. Determined to make the medical grade he went on to the farm of an uncle at Pongaroa, Hawke's Bay, but the day he was to be medically examined again, sprained an ankle. So he stayed eight more months farming with Kenneth McKenzie, Palliser Bay, an ex-R.A.F. man of the last war, and then passed the medical test. That was 1938. He arrived in England in January, 1939, where Kenneth Gray was now a pilot officer in a bomber squadron [awarded the D.F.C. and Czech War Cross and killed in an aircraft accident; another brother lost his life with the Army], and was posted to No. 54 Squadron. Colin Gray shot down his first German on July 13, 1940 (two on August 12 and on August 15), eight between August 23 and September 3. He now had a score of sixteen and a half, and had been awarded the D.F.C. The squadron had a spell until February, 1941. He was appointed a squadron commander, was posted to Group Headquarters, still flew on sweeps and for a time was a supernumerary squadron leader with the New Zealand Spitfire Squadron. He commanded the first Squadron in Britain to have Spitfire IX's and then went to Tunisia to command a squadron. He shot down the German ace, von Muller, on March 25, 1942, four more over Tunisia, three from Malta and two in Sicily. Soon after he returned to England for instructional duties and received the D.S.O. from the King in November, 1943. He rose to the rank of Group Captain (acting) and returned to New Zealand in August, 1945.

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

Squadron Leader Deere was a member of the first R.A.F. squadron of Spitfires which took off from an East Coast aerodrome to cover the great evacuation of Dunkirk. He remembers one day when 4 a.m. saw them over the French coast, and 11 p.m. over Boulogne. In twenty-four days it had destroyed thirty-seven enemy aircraft and many more probables and damaged. In one day he had five engagements for three kills and flew eight and a half hours. In September, 1944, Deere, now Wing Commander, was one of the officers in charge of plants at the control centre of the R.A.F. group supporting the Canadian Army, and Wing Commander R. D. Yule (Invercargill) held a similar post at the control centre of the group supporting the British Army.

At September 16, 1940, Gray had shot down sixteen and a half and had the D.F.C., and the Bar in August, 1941. A year later both Deere and Gray were Squadron Leaders, Deere with eighteen and a half, and Gray was seventeen and a half. Then Gray went to Tunisia and Deere to command the Biggin Hill Fighter station, after passing a Staff College course. In 1943, both were Wing Commanders with triple decorations. Those two men were New Zealand's outstanding fighter pilots and none, even Kain, had shown the same fighting ability and balanced outlook. Ray Hesselyn's reputation was first made in hard-pressed Malta where he shot down twelve and a half. Wing Commander W. V. Crawford Compton, D.F.C. and Bar, Silver Star, declared Hesselyn to be the "quickest thing in the air" he had seen. Compton was a great example to the New Zealand pilots in Fighter Command. He was the first New Zealand fighter pilot in England to be awarded the U.S. Army Air Force Silver Star, the equivalent of the British D.S.O.

Flight Lieutenant Gibson fought in the Battle of Britain and his reputation, specially with men like Deere, stood high. He was regarded during that period as being one of the front-rank fighter pilots.

Squadron Leader Clouston was also among the first-rankers during the Battle of Britain. "Hawkeye" Wells's rise in the New Zealand Spitfire Squadron from Pilot Officer to Wing Commander was meteoric. Probably more than any other New Zealand pilot, he won a reputation for ruthless efficiency in the air.

No. 485 Squadron first distinguished itself when the *Prinz Eugen* and *Scharnhorst* made their dash up the Channel. The squadron topped all others by shooting down six German planes and sinking two E-boats.

Of nine German aircraft shot down throughout Britain in the week preceding Christmas, 1942, seven were got by the Second New Zealand Fighter Squadron. Flight Sergeant F. Murphy (Wellington) and Sergeant K. Taylor-Cannon (Alexandra) got two Me. 109's on December 17; Pilot Officer G. G. Thomas (Auckland), a Dornier 217 next day; Flight Lieutenant H. N. Sweetman, D.F.C. (Auckland), and Sergeant A. H. Sames, a "damaged" and a kill respectively on December 19; Flying Officer A. E. Umbers (Dunedin) and Sergeant C. N. Gall (Rangiriri), another Dornier 217 on December 22; Pilot Officer Thomas and Flight Sergeant Murphy, one Me. 109 each on Christmas Eve. Sweetman was later promoted Squadron Leader at twenty-two and then to command a Tempest Squadron. He had been flying with the New Zealand Tempest Squadron. At one stage he was the youngest pilot in the Spitfire Squadron. Murphy rose to squadron leader and was the first member of No. 486 Squadron to win the D.F.C. Subsequently he became a test pilot with Hawker Aircraft Limited.

The Second Fighter Squadron score board then showed: Thomas, 2½;

Murphy and Taylor-Cannon, 2 each; Sames, 1½; Sweetman, Umbers and Gall, each ½.

In January, 1943, the Spitfire Squadron returned to the front line after six months in reserve. Their station commander was Group Captain H. D. McGregor, D.S.O. (Napier).

In February, 1943, Wing Commander P. G. Jameson, D.F.C. and Bar (Lower Hutt), while flying alone in a Spitfire 9, was attacked by eight Focke Wulf 109's over Gravelines. Hundreds of rounds of cannon shell were fired at him but he reached his base without a scratch. His own cannon jammed after a two-second burst. Jameson was a survivor from the aircraft carrier *Glorious*. He was one of seven survivors on a raft on which twenty-two died during three nights. Early in 1943 he was leading a wing comprised of two Norwegians and another Squadron. In February, 1943, Pilot Officer Murphy (Wellington), patrolling with Sergeant R. Fitzgibbon (Culverden), got his third German (Junkers 88) for the Second New Zealand Fighter Squadron and brought the Squadron's total to ten and a half.

In connection with the sinking of the aircraft-carrier *Glorious*, Jameson was one of seven of twenty-nine men on Carley float who survived, and two of the seven died in hospital. The carrier was attacked shortly after 5 p.m. and by next morning only ten men were alive of the twenty-nine on the float. They were three nights adrift before being rescued by a 300-ton Norwegian ship. Of the five who finally survived one was Squadron Leader K. B. Cross, an Englishman, who subsequently became an Air Commodore, while Jameson reached the rank of Group Captain with the decorations D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, and Norwegian Cross, having commanded a Norwegian wing of two squadrons which destroyed sixty German aircraft. Jameson himself got two in a single flight when escorting Liberators to bomb Dunkirk (the Norwegians' score on that operation was seven destroyed). His total in the list of New Zealand aces is nine. In May, 1943, he became wing commander in charge of training, No. 11 Group Headquarters; in November, Group Captain in charge of plans and shortly after the invasion of Normandy, he commanded a mobile wing in the Second Tactical Air Force. Educated at the Hutt Valley High School, he had left New Zealand in 1936, when twenty-four, to join the R.A.F. and in 1938 was a fighter pilot in a Gauntlett squadron. He flew on an operation on the first day of the war, September 3, 1939, in search of a reported raider.

When Wing Commander Jameson was awarded the D.S.O. in February, 1943, it was stated that he had led his wing on twenty-one sorties, in which thirteen enemy aircraft were destroyed, since December, 1942. Early in February, over France, sixty enemy fighters attacked the wing. Jameson was attacked by eight of them. He fought clear and led his wing back without loss.

Squadron Leader R. J. C. Grant, D.F.C., D.F.M. (Auckland), when commanding the Spitfire Squadron, and leading it on its one hundredth-and-fifth operation, saw his young brother, Pilot Officer Ian Grant, being attacked by a Focke Wulf 109 during a fierce dogfight. He attacked it head-on and sent it crashing. There were twelve Spitfires against forty Focke Wulfs. Pilot Officer M. R. D. Hume (Wellington) sent one down, Pilot Officer D. G. E. Brown (Auckland) saw his shells hitting a Focke Wulf near the cockpit and engine. Others in the scrap were Flight Lieutenant Lindsay Black (Levin), Sergeant G. H. Meagher (Gore), Sergeant T. W. Denholm (Napier), Flight Lieutenant R. W. Baker, D.F.C. (Dunedin),

Warrant Officer D. S. M. McGregor, and Sergeant L. S. M. White (Gore). This fight was reported in February, 1943.

THE FIRST TWO YEARS

The New Zealand Spitfire Squadron celebrated its second anniversary in March, 1943, with a dance for all ranks and the Second New Zealand Fighter Squadron. The Spitfire Squadron then had more than forty planes to its credit. The personnel then included Squadron Leader R. J. C. Grant, D.F.C., D.F.M., Flight Lieutenants R. W. Baker, D.F.C., J. G. Pattison, L. S. Black, M. G. Barnett; Flying Officers M. R. D. Hume, S. J. Moorehead, M. G. Sutherland, B. E. Gibbs, D. G. E. Brown, P. H. Gaskin, L. J. McNeil, I. P. Maskill; Pilot Officers M. Metcalfe, J. A. Ainge; Warrant Officer D. S. McGregor; Sergeants L. S. White, J. A. Houlton, F. D. Clark, T. W. Denholm, G. H. Meagher, H. S. Tucker, G. M. Buchanan, H. J. Oxley, G. R. Wilson, W. T. Strahan, H. K. Salt, F. Transom; ground staff, Sergeants T. L. Blomfield, N. A. Rippon, Corporal E. S. Bongard. The Second Squadron's score was then twelve and a half, Sergeant R. Fitzgibbon (Culverden) bringing it to this when he shot down a Focke Wulf 190 over the sea and just managed to reach England when he ran out of fuel and crash-landed.

Soon after, Squadron Leader Grant handed over the command of the Spitfire Squadron to Squadron Leader R. W. Baker, D.F.C. (Dunedin). Grant had joined the squadron as a Flight Sergeant in October, 1941, when he had already shot down three, probably destroyed four, and damaged five. He took over from Wells in June, 1942. In seventeen months with the squadron he shot down five, probably destroyed two, and damaged one. He shot down one Focke Wulf 190 when the *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* made their Channel dash, and he flew in four patrols during the Dieppe raid. His successor, Baker, took part in three sweeps during Dieppe, and in the Channel engagement.

Late in March, 1943, twenty-four-year-old Squadron Leader Desmond J. Scott, D.F.C. and Bar (Hokitika), was appointed to command the Second New Zealand Fighter Squadron, after rising from Sergeant to Squadron Leader in nine months. He succeeded Squadron Leader C. L. C. Roberts, an Englishman, who had then led the Squadron since its formation. Within a week Scott shared the destruction of a Focke Wulf with Sergeant Fitzgibbon and damaged another enemy plane. A fortnight from his taking command, the Squadron had destroyed two German fighters, one probably destroyed, one damaged, two minesweepers seriously damaged and left afire, four ships damaged, one oil tank shot up and left blazing. Scott, Flight Lieutenants H. N. Sweetman and A. E. Umbers, Flying Officers J. H. McCaw and V. C. Fittall, Pilot Officers C. N. Gall and F. Murphy, Flight Sergeants N. E. Preston and A. N. Sames, attacked oil tanks in one of the strongest defended coastal areas after escorting fighter-bombers attacking an aerodrome in Northern France. By November, 1944, Scott was the youngest R.N.Z.A.F. officer to have reached the rank of Group Captain, rising from flight sergeant within two years. He was then D.S.O., O.B.E., D.F.C. and Bar. At his wedding at Ipswich on December 7, 1944, the best man was Wing Commander R. Aitken, O.B.E., A.F.C. (Dunedin), who was Scott's commanding officer when he was a flight sergeant.

The Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones, was in England then to congratulate the squadron on its score of fourteen and a half, and to welcome two newcomers, Flying Officer Lloyd J. Appleton (son of the Mayor and

Mayoress of Wellington, Mr. and Mrs. Will Appleton) and Sergeant W. Swinton (Raukokore), the latter the Squadron's only Maori.

Those who subscribed to the Spitfire Fund got full value for their money. The planes were used by the Spitfire Squadron for nine months and shot down at least twenty-five German aircraft in that time. About May, 1942, losses and wastage resulted in the Squadron being re-equipped with a later type of Spitfire.

Sergeant G. H. Meagher (Greymouth) shot down the forty-first German for the Spitfire Squadron in April, 1943; it was his first.

TYPHOONS FOR SECOND

In May, 1943, came the news that the Second New Zealand Fighter Squadron was to be re-equipped with Typhoons, one of the fastest and heaviest-armed single-engined fighters in the world. The score was now sixteen and a half, the last two by Pilot Officers F. Murphy (Wellington) and A. H. Smith (Auckland), putting Murphy in first place for the Squadron with four.

About this time Section Officer Margaret Sims (Christchurch) had the distinction of being the only New Zealand W.A.A.F. on the station. New-comers to the Squadron were Flying Officer A. J. Woodgate (Oamaru), Flight Sergeants B. C. Thompson (Dannevirke), H. C. Saywell (Hamilton), all of whom were at Sierra Leone for nine months flying Hurricanes. The Squadron had already won praise from Air Vice Marshal H. W. L. Saunders, Commander of No. 11 Group. Escorting bombers to Abbeville in June, 1943, Squadron Leader Scott and Flight Lieutenant Umbers each destroyed Focke Wulf 190's, bringing their respective scores to seven and a half and one and a half.

In bringing his personal score to twenty-one, Wing Commander Deere did not fire a shot. Returning on a Spitfire escort of Boston bombers from an attack on Mealte, he saw an enemy fighter at 12,000 feet and made a pass at it without pressing the firing button. Taking evasive action the German went down in an uncontrollable spin and hurtled straight to the ground. "I have never got a Hun before without having to fire at him," said Deere. This made him ninth highest scoring pilot in the R.A.F.; Squadron Leader Gray, with twenty-two and a half, was eighth. This was in June, 1943.

Deere gave a graphic description of the first American daylight raid on the Ruhr on June 22, 1943. He led a wing of the R.A.F. escort for the Flying Fortresses. This is what he said: "Our wing was part of a formation of hundreds of Spitfires escorting Flying Fortresses which flew in a formation twenty miles long. They took fifteen minutes to cross one point."

In June, 1943, the Spitfire Squadron was in a Wing commanded by Wing Commander Deere, with Squadron Leader Checketts as its C.O. When Deere took over the Wing its score was 987; it was now 1,040, with the New Zealanders' part, 41. Checketts succeeded Squadron Leader Baker. In the past few weeks he had shot down three Focke Wulf 190's. Baker had been nearly two years continuous with the Squadron and had earned a rest. It was Checketts' second spell with the Squadron.

Checketts had an interesting experience of the desire of the French to help Allied airmen. In September, 1943, he was shot down by several Focke Wulfs near Lille. A French boy watched him land and cycled towards the place, ignoring about 500 German soldiers who were also searching for the airman. Checketts' hands and face were badly burnt, but the boy helped

him on to the bicycle and took him to his father's house, and he eventually escaped. A year later, with Wing Commander Deere, he went to a village near Lille to meet the folk who had helped him escape. He got a great welcome and learned what occurred after he escaped. A married couple had nursed him to recovery, but the husband's mother, treated to champagne by the Germans, talked too much and the Gestapo found Checketts' uniform in the garden. The man and woman were taken away and had not been heard of since. The Gestapo told the villagers that if the Allied army broke through, they would burn down the village as a reprisal for their helping Checketts. They actually started fires, but the manner of their leaving was so hurried that they could not make a good job of destruction. The proudest woman in the village when Checketts made his return trip was one who still had the wings and D.F.C. ribbon taken from the jacket he was wearing when shot down. Checketts closed his operational career on the night of September 25, 1944, when he led his Spitfire wing into fierce action with German fighters over Arnhem. He shared the destruction of a Me. 109 with one of his flight commanders.

The New Zealand Typhoon Squadron continued on its winning way in 1943 under Scott. An English Group Captain said then: "It is probably the best of its kind in Fighter Command today." By the end of June they had carried out more than thirty offensive operations over enemy-occupied territory in three months, and attacked Caen, Abbeville, Triqueville, Bernay, Poix, Maupertus, Boulogne, Cherbourg and Le Havre.

Flight Lieutenant Sweetman had left for a rest period and Flight Lieutenant I. D. Waddy (Seddon) succeeded him as a flight commander. The strength then included, besides others mentioned, round this period: Pilot Officers N. E. Preston (Wellington), N. W. Faircloth (Dunedin), Warrant Officers J. G. Froggatt (Dunedin), J. G. Wilson (Fairlie), Flight Sergeants M. O. Jorgensen (Auckland), H. C. Seward (Pukekohe), D. G. Fail (Dunedin), K. McCarthy, R. J. Danzey (Auckland), J. R. Powell (Christchurch), L. Walker (New Plymouth), and J. Sheddan.

At this time it was recorded that one section of Spitfire pilots was comprised entirely of New Zealand farmers—Flight Lieutenant J. G. Pattison, D.F.C. (Waipawa), Squadron Leader Grant, Flight Lieutenant Baker, with 146, 95 and 38 sweeps respectively to their credit. Subsequently, as Squadron Leader, Pattison was appointed in September, 1944, to command the New Zealand Spitfire Squadron, in succession to Squadron Leader J. Niven, D.F.C. (Scotland). Pattison, one of "the few" who fought and won the Battle of Britain, was shot down during the September, 1940, battles and spent nine months in hospital. He rejoined the Squadron in February, 1942, after a period instructing, and in the following April was again shot down, this time spending an hour and three-quarters in a dinghy in the Channel till rescued. When the Americans first arrived in England, Pattison did six weeks instructing them in Spitfires till he returned to the Squadron in July, 1943. He was engaged in the invasion of Normandy, shooting down two during the period of beach-head occupation. Pattison made the Squadron's seventh commanding officer, when he had 130 operations on Spitfires and 300 operational hours to his credit. Within forty-eight hours of taking command he led the New Zealanders in a dive-bombing attack on a German gun emplacement at Calais when eleven out of twelve bombs hit the target. The Squadron was then concentrating on this type of work in co-operation with the Canadian Army, and had made an equally accurate attack at Dunkirk.

On May 7, 1944, Wing Commander J. R. D. Braham, D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C. and two Bars, twenty-nine-year-old Mosquito pilot of the Second Tactical Air Force, became the top-scoring fighter pilot then still flying on operations, when he shot down a Focke Wulf 190 over Denmark, to make his score twenty-nine, or one and a half more than New Zealand's best to then, Group Captain Colin Gray.

In June, 1943, the County of Nottingham Auxiliary Squadron—one of the famous squadrons which fought in the Battle of France—was being led by Squadron Leader J. Kilian (Christchurch), an old Christ's College boy, and former member of the New Zealand Spitfire Squadron. I saw Killian early in 1944 handing on what he had learnt to advanced training unit fighter pilots at Woodbourne. Later he commanded a fighter squadron in the Southwest Pacific.

There were two other New Zealanders in this county squadron—Pilot Officer P. J. Doyle (Featherston) and Flight Sergeant W. J. Warwick (Hawarden). Kilian had at this time destroyed two and a half German planes and carried out 140 sweeps. On the same station in other squadrons were Flight Lieutenant P. W. D. Stewart (Wanganui) and Pilot Officer G. R. Dickson (Invercargill). The Medical Officer was Flying Officer O. S. Maunsell, born in Masterton, but who had been living in England for many years.

In July, 1943, the Typhoon Squadron was reported at twenty-one and a half German aircraft destroyed, with Squadron Leader Scott's total at eight.

The former New Zealand Spitfire Squadron pilot, Squadron Leader E. D. Mackie (Waihi), who fought in Tunisia, had now gone to Malta where he shot down two more, to make his score nine.

It was announced from London in July, 1943, that Squadron Leader W. V. Crawford Compton, D.F.C. and Bar (Auckland) had been appointed to command a Spitfire Wing in Britain. His personal score was then twelve and a half. Compton was leading a wing in 1943 (October) which included the New Zealand Spitfire Squadron and the British-Argentine Squadron. By June, 1944, Crawford Compton, then twenty-two, had 339 missions over Axis territory to his credit, the most of any Allied flier to that time. By February, 1945, Crawford Compton (now Wing Commander) was New Zealand's most decorated fighter pilot (D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C. and Bar, American Silver Star, Croix de Guerre, Czechoslovakian Clasp). He had flown Spitfires on 483 sweeps, involving 800 operational hours, all but three minutes, a record for fighter pilots in the R.A.F., and had shot down twenty-one and a half German planes, ranking second equal with Wing Commander Alan Deere to New Zealand's top-scoring pilot, Wing Commander Colin Gray. The citations to the decorations conferred on him referred to his masterly leadership, exceptional skill, and outstanding gallantry.

Deere raised his own wing's score to 995 when he shot down a Focke Wulf while accompanying Flying Fortresses on the first daylight raid on Antwerp.

Flight Sergeant N. E. Frehner (Gisborne) and E. Transom (Taihape) had narrow escapes about October, 1943, both baling out. Frehner spent an hour in a dinghy fifteen miles south of the Kent coast, and Transome landed in a ploughed field after his engine caught afire.

Newcomers to the squadron round this time were Flight Lieutenant K. C. Lee (Auckland), Flying Officers A. W. Burge (Hastings), H. G. Copland (Gore), H. A. Manners (Auckland), D. A. Roberts (New Plymouth), J. F. P. Yeatman (Wellington), T. R. D. Kebbell, M. C. Mayston: Warrant Officer

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

E. N. Leech (Gisborne); Flight Sergeants R. C. Harden, D. F. Clarke (Auckland), H. Meesdale (Ohura), H. W. Patterson (Wairoa), J. J. Robinson (Christchurch), D. C. Robbins (Wanganui).

ONE THOUSAND FOR BIGGIN HILL

The famous Biggin Hill Fighter Station got its one thousandth enemy plane, in August, 1943; the honours were shared by a young Canadian, Squadron Leader Jack Charles, D.F.C., and a French pilot and commanding officer, "Rene." The station score was then 1,000 shot down; 306 probables; 537 damaged. Deere and Checketts were in Charles's section for this victory. The other section was a Fighting French. That same month Pilot Officer J. G. Houlton (Christchurch) shot down the fifty-sixth for the New Zealand Squadron. In the same action, but in another wing, Hesselyn also got a Focke Wulf.

SIX A MINUTE

One of the greatest single successes was reported early in August, 1943, when four New Zealand Spitfire Squadron pilots shot down six Messerschmitt 109's in one minute. The section was led by Checketts, and the others were Flying Officer J. D. Rae, D.F.C. (Auckland), Flying Officer B. E. Gibbs (Taihape), and Pilot Officer H. S. Tucker (Palmerston North). Checketts blew one to bits at 200 yards, another at 250 to 300 yards, and still another; Rae got one, Gibbs and Tucker two more. Checketts saw his shells strike a seventh and pieces of fuselage fly off. The sky was cleared. The action was fought at 400 miles an hour in the Lille-Merville area. The cannons fired for little more than ten seconds.

Between May 30 and August 9, 1943, Squadron Leader Checketts had made nine kills.

In September, 1943, Group Captain A. G. Malan (South Africa) was top living Allied fighter ace of this war with 35, the late Wing Commander Paddy Finucane, 32, Flight Lieutenant P. Beurling (Canada), 29, Wing Commander Colin Gray (New Zealand) and Wing Commander Clive Caldwell (Australia), each 27.

The New Zealand Typhoon Squadron, attacking ships at Le Havre, in November, 1943, was described by the leader, Wing Commander J. D. Scott, as having "shot them up from mast height. Some pilots saw the Germans jumping over the side." The Typhoon Squadron had then won the reputation for being one of the best Typhoon squadrons in Britain and its duties had been enlarged to "all purposes"—fighter escort, bombing on shipping and military land targets.

So few German fighters were seen over northern France early in 1944 that the New Zealand Typhoon Squadron temporarily forsook its role as a fighter squadron and became an almost full-time fighter-bomber squadron, attacking twice a day sometimes, and getting several mentions in Air Ministry bulletins. This marked a new phase of its career. The new C.O. was English, Squadron Leader J. H. Iremonger, who had served five years in India, and the only two originals left were Flight Lieutenant F. Murphy, D.F.C. (Wellington), and Flying Officer K. Taylor-Cannon (Auckland). Flight Lieutenant A. H. Smith (Auckland) had left the squadron on a rest. It was still one of the outstanding fighter squadrons in Britain. Personnel included Flight Lieutenant M. Lees (Auckland), a doctor; Flying Officers M. Mason (Waipawa), S. S. Williams (Hamilton), A. T. Ross (Cambridge), — Millar (Invercargill), V. Cooke (Wanganui), E. Tanner (Tauranga), J.

Cullen (Waihi), Lloyd Appleton (Wellington), J. McCaw (Kuwai), Pilot Officers J. G. Wilson (Fairlie), Flight Sergeants J. Steedman (Whangarei), W. Kalka, K. McCarthy, O. D. Eagleson, R. Danzey, S. Short (Auckland), J. R. Powell (Christchurch), B. Lawless (Lower Hutt), J. Stafford (Rotorua), W. Trott (Dunedin), R. D. Bremner (Taihape), J. Sheddan (Waimate), B. M. B. Hall (Palmerston North), Wright (Matamata), E. J. O'Connor (Nelson), and W. Swinton. Ground staff included Sergeants J. L. Brash (Auckland), J. Robertson (Dunedin), Corporals D. Ramsay (Invercargill), N. S. Parkes (Auckland), D. F. Purton (Dunedin), E. R. Bartlett (Marion), E. J. Burgess (Wellington), L. G. Merrin (Christchurch), L.A.C. G. D. Benny (Invercargill).

Wing Commander Wells marked his return to operational flying in March, 1944, by destroying an enemy aircraft at Dreux, twenty miles from Paris.

Captain R. J. Johnson, a United States Thunderbolt fighter pilot, was credited with his twenty-seventh success on May 8, 1944.

The New Zealand Typhoon Squadron in June, 1944, operating with the latest type of fighter aircraft from an airfield commanded by Wing Commander R. Aitken (Dunedin), took an important part in the pre-invasion shooting up of enemy railway communications. They destroyed so many trains, all without loss, that he was congratulated by the air officer commanding the group. Since D Day they had been patrolling over shipping going to the beach-heads.

FIRST OVER INVASION FLEET

The New Zealand Spitfire Squadron had the honour of being in the first fighter wing patrol over the invasion fleet. On its third patrol of the day (June 6), it shot down two Junkers 88's, and, with a Belgian squadron, was the first to shoot down any aircraft that day. In the first patrol were Flight Lieutenants F. D. O'Halloran, K. C. Lee and K. Macdonald (Auckland), Flight Lieutenant L. Black (Levin); Flying Officer J. F. Yeatman (Wellington), D. Roberts (New Plymouth); Pilot Officers F. Transom (Taihape), T. Kearns (Wairarapa), H. Patterson (Gisborne); Warrant Officer M. Esdaile (National Park); Flight Sergeant W. Strahan (Christchurch)—(an old boy of St. Bede's College). On the second patrol (both were led by the Scot, Squadron Leader John Niven, D.F.C.) were Flight Lieutenants Black, Lee and O. L. Hardy, D.F.C. (Auckland); Flying Officers D. J. Taylor (Canterbury), L. S. White (Gore), A. B. Stead (Dunedin); Flight Sergeants M. H. Eyre (Waikato) and R. Clark (Taupiri). On the third patrol, between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m., the squadron had its first engagement of the day, patrolling just north of an American bridgehead. A section led by Flying Officer J. Houlton (Christchurch) with Flight Lieutenant Macdonald, Flying Officer M. C. Mayston (Nelson) and Flight Sergeant E. G. Atkins (Auckland), sighted two Junkers, and downed them. Six days later the squadron landed in France, and over the battle area Houlton and Flight Lieutenant W. Newnham each got an Me. 109, to make the squadron total nine since D Day.

Soon after D Day, four German aircraft were shot down over the beach-head in Normandy by Flying Officers F. Transome (Taihape), J. Houlton (Christchurch), A. B. Slade (Dunedin) and H. Patterson (Wairoa). Squadron Leader Niven and Warrant Officer H. M. Esdaile each damaged one. That made seven for the squadron since D Day, and a grand total of seventy-three. Flying with a Belgian Squadron on loan, Warrant Officer D. F.

Clarke (Moumoukai) shared one, while earlier, Flying Officer J. F. Yeatman (Wellington) shot down a rocket-firing Focke Wulf. Within a week of D Day the squadron increased its total to 75.

New Zealand Spitfire Squadron pilots said, a week after D Day, that they were having a dull time, but Flying Officer F. Scott (Inglewood) collapsed a bridge over the Loire, Squadron Leader F. J. Lucas (Balclutha), on his seventy-second operation, shot up railway yards at Mezidon, and Wing Commander I. S. Smith (Auckland) shot up a military camp tower. It had been over the invasion area every night but one since D Day, with 100 per cent. of its aircraft in service.

Leading a Fighting French Spitfires wing over the Normandy bridgehead on June 7, 1944, Wing Commander W. V. Crawford Compton shot down a Junkers 88, to make his score seventeen. Wing Commander Scott (Typhoons) and Wing Commander R. D. Yule (Invercargill), were New Zealand Airfield Commanders in advanced areas and Wing Commanders Wells and Checketts were leading Spitfire Wings patrolling over the bridgehead at this date. Wing Commander Deere and Wing Commander Yule were reported in September, 1944, to be wing commanders in charge of plans at the control centres of the R.A.F. Groups supporting the Canadian Army and British Army respectively, with the responsibility of deciding what type of fighter aircraft should attack various targets. Deere had two amazing escapes in Normandy. First, with the Canadians in the front line beyond Caen, when an eighty-eight-millimetre shell landed nearby, killing several men, and a large splinter whizzing past Deere's legs. Next, when driving along a road, he drew on to one side to avoid a Frenchman standing in the middle of the road with a bicycle. As he did so, one of his back wheels exploded a land mine which blew the Frenchman to pieces and stove in the back of the car.

ACE HUNTER

A former flight commander in the Typhoon Squadron, Flight Lieutenant A. E. Umbers (Dunedin), was described as "ace hunter" in the London *"Daily Express"* of June 20, wherein he was reported to have shot down four flying bombs, while flying the latest and fastest British fighter, the Tempest. He held the record for his squadron. One bomb created such a force of explosion as to turn Umbers' aircraft on its back, and he flew upside down through the debris. The King decorated Umbers with the D.F.C. shortly after at the Second Tactical Air Force station. February, 1945, brought the bad news that Squadron Leader Umbers, D.F.C., and Bar, was missing, believed killed on operations.

The commanding officer of the New Zealand Tempest Squadron, he was one of the original members of this squadron when it was formed in March, 1942. Later the squadron was converted into Typhoons, and it was during this period that Squadron Leader Umbers came into prominence. He was awarded the D.F.C. in September, 1943, and was a flight commander when he completed his first tour. Before his rest period he became a test pilot and returned to fly Tempests during the battle of flying bombs, in which he shot down twenty-eight. He received the bar to his D.F.C. from the King in the field. Later he was flight commander in a squadron flying in the same wing as the New Zealand Tempest Squadron, and in December, 1944, was appointed commanding officer of the New Zealanders. He celebrated his promotion by shooting down two Germans on New Year's Day. Later he destroyed a further aircraft, bringing his total to six and a half.

July, 1944, saw Wing Commander Alan ("Lucky") Deere as administrative chief of a fighter station, but planning to take part in the Battle of Germany as a pilot.

By the same month, Wing Commanders Gray, Deere, Compton (a Me. 109 on July 12, to make Compton's score twenty and a half), Wells and Scott had shot down ninety German aircraft between them. Compton returned to New Zealand in May, 1945, his decorations then being D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, U.S. Silver Star, Croix de Guerre (French), Czecho-Slovakian Clasp.

Scott, who was D.S.O., O.B.E., D.F.C., and Bar, in 1944, had the distinction, in September, 1944, of being the first member of the R.N.Z.A.F. in the European theatre, to be promoted group captain. He was just twenty-six. He commanded a wing composed of four squadrons equipped with rocket projectiles and cannon-shell in the R.A.F. Group supporting the Canadian Army. New Zealanders in the wing included Flight Lieutenant J. Cullen (Waihi), formerly of the New Zealand Tempest Squadron; Flying Officers M. A. Milich (Kaitaia, the first Maori to land in Normandy), B. C. Lumsden (Wellington), O. H. Oden (Tauranga); Warrant Officers T. F. Annear (Ashhurst), R. D. Harkness (Palmerston North), E. P. Scott (Auckland), and Flight Sergeant A. D. Scott (Inglewood), whose brother was formerly with the New Zealand Mosquito Intruder Squadron.

Two hundred and thirty-nine flying bombs destroyed were credited to the New Zealand Fighter Squadron by September, 1944, after it had switched almost overnight from patrolling over Normandy to the defence of Britain. All the bombs were destroyed in daylight, and Warrant Officer O. D. Eagleson (Auckland) was top-scorer with twenty-one. Every pilot in the squadron, which was then flying Tempests, had accounted for several. Flying Flight Lieutenant G. L. Bonham (Christchurch), who won the D.F.C. in Malaya, got four in one night, tipping over three with his wing when he ran out of ammunition. He belonged to another squadron. A week later Flight Lieutenant E. A. Umbers (Dunedin) had a score of twenty-eight, while Flight Lieutenant J. H. McCaw (Central Otago) got four in two hours.

The New Zealand Spitfire Squadron co-operated with the army in direct forward support for the first time in its career when, on September 13, 1944, with two other squadrons, it strafed with cannon-shell strong German gun emplacements three miles south of Boulogne and one mile in front of the British troops. The attack was a complete success. The Germans had formed a strong-point with pill-boxes and mortars, and were hiding in shell holes which the army had found it difficult to quieten. Thirty-six Spitfires soon altered the situation.

The New Zealanders were led by Squadron Leader J. Niven, D.F.C., of Scotland.

This Spitfire squadron was the first of the New Zealand squadrons to operate in France. The squadron arrived in France towards the end of August and was at first based on an airfield near Caen. Later they moved into northern France, whence they attacked transport barges in Holland, also blowing up a railway train with an impressive explosion. The squadron then moved up a further one hundred miles. Two of the pilots, who were shot down over France in the summer of 1943 but escaped and returned to England, had flown over the building where they hid and were aided. One dropped a note by parachute saying that he would make a personal call. After leading the squadron since just before D-Day, Niven was succeeded shortly after this by Squadron Leader J. G. Pattison, D.F.C. (Waipawa). Wing Commander Harries, an Englishman then leading the wing to which

the New Zealanders were attached, said of the squadron: "The boys are doing very well indeed. It is a grand squadron, with terrific spirit."

When Spitfires and Mustangs of the Air Defence of Great Britain made one of their deepest penetrations into enemy territory on October 6, 1944, providing cover for bombers attacking synthetic oil plants in the Ruhr, they were led by Wing Commanders Colin Gray (Gisborne) and E. P. Wells (Cambridge). Between 200 and 250 fighters accompanied the bombers all the way to their targets at Schelvenbuer and Sterkrade.

The New Zealand Spitfire Squadron took part in the attack breaking up German preparations for a local counter-attack on the border of Belgium and Holland on October 7. A French wing, commanded by Wing Commander W. V. Crawford Compton, dropped leaflets on the German garrison at Dunkirk. A squadron of bombing Typhoons, led by Squadron Leader A. H. Smith (Auckland) took part in surprise attacks in Germany disrupting enemy transport and attacking roads, railways, and bridges.

"The forward troops are repelling the enemy attack. Great damage was done. British batteries were very active in the area afterwards. Thank you." This was the text of a bouquet from Allied Army headquarters after an attack in October, 1944, by the New Zealand Spitfire Squadron which broke up German preparations for a local counter-attack against British and Canadian troops at Gorp, on the border of Belgium and Holland. The target was a wood about five miles south of Tilburg where enemy infantry were seen assembling. It was described as a very ticklish job, because of the proximity of Allied troops. Wing Commander R. Harries, D.S.O., D.F.C. who led the attack, said: "When the New Zealanders went in first they dived from 4,000 feet right down to the deck in face of strong flak defences. They swept over the wood with their cannon and machine-guns blazing, and then they returned and did it again. The wood was full of enemy troops, and in one corner of the target area there were several fortified buildings. Before the New Zealand squadron had finished one of these buildings was burning, with flames reaching 1,500 feet." The New Zealand squadron was led by Flight Lieutenant O. L. Hardy, of Auckland.

Operating from an airfield in north-west Europe in November-December, 1944, the Spitfire Squadron was bombing railways and marshalling yards in Germany with 500-pound bombs. The only Maori in the squadron was Flying Officer E. T. Bennett, son of the Bishop of Aotearoa, who had operated in the Mediterranean all the way from El Alamein to Naples. The Spitfire Squadron in December, 1944, celebrated its first year as a bomb-carrying fighter force, for each plane carried a 1,000-pound bomb load. The squadron helped to knock out the Schelde defences barring the way to the port of Antwerp and maintained an air offensive on the Dunkirk garrison. It worked in close support of troops who gave the squadron the title of "honorary members of the Bomber Command." The squadron ended the year, 1944, without losing a single aircraft to the enemy. Squadron Leader Pattison said: "Our squadron's record of twelve months without a loss is all the more remarkable when one considers the nature and extent of the year's operations. Since D Day alone we destroyed nine enemy aircraft besides successfully attacking hundreds of motor-vehicles, blowing up ammunition dumps, smashing railway junctions and pranging gun posts, locomotives, barges and every other conceivable target." Before D Day there were cross-Channel sweeps and bombers' escort missions, and since the invasion began the squadron had been in the thick of things at Falaise, Caen,

Breskens and onward. Their principal work now was bombing and strafing, often at "zero feet," in close support of the army.

By a clever bluff three New Zealand Tempest pilots of the Second Tactical Air Force led by Flight Lieutenant K. G. Taylor-Cannon (Central Otago) shot up two German jet planes (Me. 262). They flew over a Rhine airfield and away again, to create the impression they had given up their task but returned to catch on the runway two jet-planes about to take off in pursuit of them. The other two New Zealanders were Pilot Officers O. D. Eagleson (Grey Lynn) and J. Steedman (Whangarei). The New Zealand Squadron, based in Holland, was patrolling over the British Army late in 1944 and carrying out offensive sweeps deep into German territory. It now had a score of 241 V-1 flying bombs, twenty-four enemy aircraft, two probables, two damaged; plus motor transport and trains.

Command of one Tempest squadron operating in Holland was relinquished late in 1944 by Squadron Leader R. L. (Peter) Spurdle, D.F.C. (Wanganui and Wellington). The squadron was in the wing commanded by Group Captain P. G. Jameson, D.S.O., D.F.C. (Lower Hutt) and another Tempest squadron based on the same airfield was also commanded by a New Zealander, Squadron Leader H. N. Sweetman, D.F.C. Spurdle had completed four tours of operations, in which he fought in the Battle of Britain, at Guadalcanal, in the invasion of Normandy, at Arnhem and over Rundstedt's salient.

Spurdle began his career as a fighter pilot during the Battle of Britain, when he joined a squadron led by the famous South African, Group Captain A. G. Malan, whose second he was for a period. He shot down four enemy aircraft during the latter stages of the battle. He next flew with a "spotter" squadron, which reported the positions of Luftwaffe formations during the period when the Germans had air superiority. He then transferred to a merchant ship fighter unit, in May, 1941. He returned to fly Spitfires again, in February, 1942, shooting down two enemy aircraft while on shipping reconnaissance off the coast. Returning to New Zealand early in 1943, he did his third tour of operations, at Guadalcanal, where he shot down two Zeros, making his total score eight. When he returned to England, in April, 1944, Spurdle was given command of a Spitfire Squadron, which he later converted to a Tempest squadron. Spurdle was trained in New Zealand in 1939; one of the last batch under the R.A.F. arrangement. He shared with three others the distinction of shooting down the nine hundredth enemy plane; each shot down one at approximately the same time, so shared the honour. The Fighter Command station in Kent, where he was attached, was the first to reach such a total. When he came to New Zealand early in 1943, with special equipment for instructional work, he conducted at Ohakea (with the assistance of Pilot Officer David Clouston), courses for instructors from all over New Zealand. He then went to the Pacific at his own request. As a Tempest squadron leader back in England in 1944, he was prominent in shooting down flying bombs and an English paper stated that his squadron was the first Tempest squadron to strafe the enemy in Holland.

By January, 1945, the Tempest squadron, in addition to raising its score of enemy aircraft destroyed to thirty-four and a half was also taking toll of enemy railway transport inside Germany. On New Year's Day, when the Luftwaffe made its surprise attack on Allied airfields in Belgium and Holland, seven New Zealanders in their Tempests, the fastest fighters in the world, had been flying for five minutes on an armed reconnaissance into Germany. Tempests of other squadrons in Group Captain Jameson's wing were also

in the air. Information was received that thirty German aircraft were approaching the airfield to strafe it. Ten of those Germans were shot down, one was probably destroyed and four were damaged, the New Zealand squadron accounting for five destroyed, one probable, and two damaged. The wing had no losses, and no damage was done to the airfield. One Focke-Wulf 190 was shot down right over the airfield by Flying Officer W. A. L. Trott (Dunedin) in full view of the ground crews. Squadron Leader A. E. Umbers, the squadron's commanding officer, shot down two Focke-Wulfs. Pilot Officer G. J. Hooper (Wellington) fired at point-blank range at another and watched it burst into pieces on the ground, and he sent another flying toward Germany with smoke streaming from it.

The Tempest Squadron operating from Holland had an outstanding day in the last week in January, 1945, in attacks on transport, trains and airfields in the vicinity of Munster, Hanover and north of the Ruhr. Nearly thirty New Zealand pilots participated and for the day destroyed fifty-six German trains and twenty-two aircraft (three on the ground). Often seven or eight Tempests were engaged with thirty to forty German machines. No Tempests were lost.

Advice was received in February, 1945, that the Spitfire squadron was now commanded by Squadron Leader K. J. Macdonald (Auckland) who succeeded Squadron Leader Pattison (Waipawa). The latter was resting after operations. Squadron Leader Macdonald enlisted in the Air Force in April, 1940, and after gaining his wings was an instructor in New Zealand for some time. He commenced a tour of duty in the Pacific in March, 1943, and in the following October left for Britain. Squadron Leader McDonald first joined the New Zealand squadron in February, 1944, and flew with it before D Day, when it bombed German railway communications and operated with it over the invasion beaches on D Day. Later he was appointed to command a flight in another squadron which was flying in the same wing as the New Zealanders.

In the last week of March, 1945, while giving constant relays of air support to the 21st Army Group's drive into Germany the New Zealand Tempest Squadron operating from a forward fighter field in Holland, attained a new level of success, which included on the morning of March 26, a score of thirty-eight miscellaneous transports destroyed. Mentioned in accounts of these attacks were the commanding officer, Squadron Leader K. G. Taylor-Cannon, Flying Officers J. Steedman and Smith (Whangarei), A. R. Evans (Coromandel), C. J. McDonald (Christchurch), Pilot Officer J. E. Woods (Christchurch), W. J. Shaw (Ponsonby) and Flight Sergeant R. A. Mellies (Feilding).

An immediate award of the D.F.C. was made to Flying Officer William Trott (Dunedin) in March, 1945, after he had flown his Tempest back to base with a piece of shrapnel in his stomach, and made a perfect landing. Flying Officer Trott was flying with Squadron Leader Taylor-Cannon, D.F.C. and Bar, of Alexandra, who said: "Trott must have been in intense pain the whole time, but he remained cool and made a perfectly normal wheels-down landing and taxied off the runway before he collapsed from exhaustion. It was one of the finest exhibitions of grit and determination I have ever come across." He distinguished himself in a combat with Luftwaffe aircraft that raided R.A.F. forward bases on New Year's Day. After damaging an M.E. 109 he was himself attacked by three other enemy aircraft and was forced to disengage. Returning to base (to quote his squadron commander's words) "coolly and with great deliberation, he pounced upon a lone F.W. 109 that had

been strafing the airfield, and shot it down with a very short burst of cannon fire." A group captain who saw the whole thing said: "It was one of the finest examples of skilful flying and good shooting I have ever seen." Flying Officer Trott shot down seven flying bombs during the opening months of the flying bomb blitz on Britain, and took part in the attacks on V2 sites in Holland.

Between April, 1941, and December, 1944, No. 485 Squadron had destroyed sixty-three enemy planes, probably destroyed twenty-five, damaged thirty-two, received twenty-two decorations, flown 13,811 hours on 10,195 sorties. Up to December, 1944, No. 486 Squadron had destroyed seventeen enemy aircraft, probably destroyed seven, damaged eighteen, shot down 231 flying bombs, destroyed several E-boats and R-boats, and flown 11,010 hours on 9,581 sorties.

THE FIGHTER-BOMBERS

New Zealand two fighter-bomber squadrons, No. 487, which was formed in August, 1942, started on Lockheed Ventura light bombers and was later equipped with Mosquitoes, and No. 488, which was re-formed in the United Kingdom in June, 1942, after the fall of Singapore, flying Beaufighters and later Mosquitoes as night-fighters. No. 488 Squadron had fifty-eight German aircraft to its credit by September, 1944. With two New Zealand squadrons and other New Zealanders in the R.A.F. flying the same types of aircraft, it has been difficult to sort out a connected story of the two squadrons designated New Zealand. Therefore, the following account is chronological, dealing with the two squadrons and New Zealanders flying similar aircraft in other squadrons.

First mention of the Lockheed Ventura bomber-fighter squadron—the sixth New Zealand squadron to be formed in Great Britain—was in August, 1942, when its formation was announced with the command to Wing Commander F. C. Seavill (Hamilton). The station commander was Group Captain R. L. Kippenberger (Waimate), a brother of Brigadier H. K. Kippenberger. Seavill had been in the R.A.F. since 1930. Pilot Officers R. A. Ferri and T. Whyte (Auckland), and G. F. Whitwell (Tirau) were among the first personnel, with ground crew, including Corporal C. E. Bush (Auckland) and Aircraftsman H. H. Armstrong (Whakatane). Pilots and aircrews of the squadron on December 5, 1942, flew for more than two hours at a height not exceeding 100 feet when they took part in their first raid; that on the Phillips radio works, Eindhoven. Several brushed tree-tops, while others hit birds which shattered their windows, filling the cockpits with a shower of blood and feathers. Squadron Leader L. H. Trent, D.F.C. (Nelson), saw a plane blow up ten yards to starboard over the target; Flight Sergeants A. E. Coutts (Whakatane) and W. D. L. Goodfellow (Takapuna) had their craft hit by an explosive cannon-shell; Pilot Officer S. B. Perryman (Christchurch) hit the top of a poplar; Flight Sergeant F. F. Edmonds (Auckland) had his tin hat blown off by flak; Flight Sergeant T. I. Baynton (Auckland) damaged the perspex in the nose of his aircraft when he brushed a tree, and the wings of the respective planes of Flying Officer S. Coshall (Auckland) and Flight Sergeant G. J. J. Baker (New Plymouth) touched with a tearing sound, but without damage. Others who took part were Wing Commander Seavill, Squadron Leader Brian Wheeler, D.F.C. (Marton), Flying Officers G. A.

Park (Otago), G. W. Brewer, D.F.L. (Papatoetoe), Flight Sergeants T. L. B. Taylor (Wellington), G. W. Lee (Kaikoura), R. W. Secore (Christchurch), H. D. Parker, T. Whyte (Auckland). Seavill and Brewer led the two formations.

The Venturas took a full share in the daylight raids of the round-the-clock offensive on Germany. The squadron bombed Rotterdam on two successive days, with Wing Commander G. B. Grindell, A.F.C. (Timaru), leading the first day, and Squadron Leader Trent, the second. The sole all-New Zealand crew at the time—Sergeants F. S. Stevenson and A. Sheehan (Auckland), M. L. S. Darrall (Morrinsville) and J. R. Lloyd (Wellington)—went to Rotterdam on both raids. More New Zealanders were being posted to the squadron, including Flying Officers O. E. Foster (North Canterbury), S. McGowan (Hastings), T. A. Penn (Christchurch), Sergeants R. Beazer (Feilding), D. R. Fowler (Arrowtown), H. Baird (Hamilton), C. R. Smith (Miller's Flat), T. W. J. Warner (Motueka), I. F. Ulrich (Hawera), R. Street (New Plymouth).

On March 3, 1943, eleven Venturas of No. 487 Squadron took off in the sunshine late in the afternoon to bomb power stations in Amsterdam. Only one of those aircraft returned and every one of its crew was awarded an immediate decoration. Although the story of these men who returned was passed by the British censor, the account was censored in New Zealand. An eye-witness description by Warrant Officer Ulrich (Hawera), an air-gunner in one of the Venturas, and given on his release from a prisoner of war camp, was later published. He said: "We took off in two flights; Squadron Leader Trent, D.F.C. (Nelson) led one 'box' of five aircraft, while Flight Lieutenant A. V. Duffell (Yorkshire) led the other 'box' of six. We could see the fighter escort above us, but once we had crossed the coast and started to climb we lost sight of them. Suddenly, through the inter-com, I heard, 'Fighters coming in to meet us from below.' In a moment about fifty German fighters were all around our formation. Five singled us out and began to follow us. Three came behind in line astern, the first about 600 yards away. They did not attack immediately, but when Flying Officer McGowan began to take evasive action the first one came in. He got in a burst on the port side between my turret and the pilot, but did little damage. The second one was a better shot. He broke a lot of perspex and wounded me in the right leg. The third chap really fixed us. He came in very close, raked us from end to end and hit me in the left foot. I managed to get a burst into him, and down he went with his engine on fire, but I do not know what became of him. The inter-com, went dead and we had a few peaceful moments until we were attacked from the front. I didn't see this one come in. He really smashed up the turret. I got nicked in the left side, and one of the guns was hit by a cannon shell and knocked off its mounting. The nose of our aircraft was now on fire, and Flying Officer McGowan and the Canadian navigator came back and began to drag me from the turret. We were practically over Amsterdam now, and only Squadron Leader Trent's aircraft was with us. A burst of flak blew its tail away and it went down in a spin. Mac put on my chute and pushed me out of the door. That was the last I ever saw of him. Later a German intelligence officer told me that our aircraft—S for Sugar—had crashed, and he showed me the shoulder flashes of the crew. I do not remember much after leaving the door; I must have blacked out. When I came to, my parachute was open and I could see three more below me. I learned afterwards that they were Squadron Leader Trent, his English navigator, and one of our own fighter pilots. I



Left to right, top: Wing Commander COLIN F. GRAY, R.A.F., D.S.O., D.F.C. and two Bars, Wing Commander A. C. DEERE, R.A.F., D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, D.F.C. (U.S.), Croix de Guerre, Wing Commander W. V. CRAWFORD COMPTON, R.A.F., D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C. and Bar, Croix de Guerre, U.S. Silver Star, Czech Silver Flying Badge.

Middle: Wing Commander J. S. DINSDALE, D.S.O., D.F.C., Squadron Leader J. L. WRIGHT, D.S.O., D.F.C., Wing Commander R. D. MAX, R.A.F., D.S.O., D.F.C.

Bottom: The late Wing Commander J. FRASER BARRON, D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C., D.F.M., Wing Commander M. A. ENSOR, D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C. and Bar, Wing Commander J. D. SISE, D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C. and Bar.



Upper: Wing Commander J. A. Oldfield, D.F.C., Wing Commander A. Ashworth, R.A.F., D.S.O., D.F.C., Wing Commander J. R. Blonam, R.A.F., O.B.E., D.F.C.
Lower: The late Squadron Leader A. E. Umbers, D.F.C. and Bar, the late Flying Officer E. J. ("Cobber") Kain, D.F.C., Wing Commander E. W. Tacon, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, A.F.C.



NEW ZEALAND AIRMEN IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Left to right: D. M. ROLPH-SMITH (Auckland), J. A. H. SMITH (Dannevirke),
 S. J. MADILL (Auckland), R. W. L. CARGILL (Wanganui).

landed on my one foot just in case the other was badly injured, but the chute opened again, dragging me along and across a couple of dykes." Ulrich then told of being taken prisoner. Trent was in the next cell. When the Germans interrogated them at Frankfurt the amount of information they already had from their own intelligence amazed him. They had all the names of everyone in the squadron, including his own. They also showed him the flight magazine, only two days old. It probably came from agents in neutral Eire.

Ulrich spent a month in hospital at Barth, then went to a camp at Heydekrug, in East Prussia, until July, 1944, when he was moved to Thorn, in Poland, and, when the Russians advanced, to Fallingbomberg.

This operation against Amsterdam ranks among the gallant feats of the air war, for although the New Zealand squadron was outnumbered and its fighter escort apparently swamped, it carried on with its mission, led by the resolute courage of Squadron Leader Trent. One of the aircraft that did not return had an all-English crew, and Flight Lieutenant Duffell, who was the pilot, would have crash-landed in Holland if he had not learned that two of his crew were seriously wounded. Equipped with Mosquitoes, the squadron took part in the famous attack on the Amiens prison.

Squadron Leader Trent was awarded the V.C. (Citation on page 157.)

Pilot Officer G. F. Reed (Auckland) held the Beaufighter Squadron's record in June, 1943, when he had shot up thirteen trains—twice, three locomotives in one night. Others were Squadron Leader F. Davidson (Timaru), ten; Pilot Officer E. C. Watt (Invercargill), six; Flight Sergeant D. N. Robinson (Gisborne), three.

In September, 1943, the New Zealand Beaufighter Squadron was operating from a station commanded by an outstanding New Zealander, who was the youngest station commander in Fighter Command—Wing Commander R. F. Aitken, D.F.C. (Dunedin). He joined the R.A.F. in 1936, served in the Fleet Air Arm (on loan) in the *Courageous*, *Furious* and *Ark Royal*, and was then appointed an instructor in catapult aircraft to the Royal Navy. Aitken was responsible for starting the air-sea rescue organisation, and, during the Battle of Britain, his flight picked up between sixty and seventy pilots—dead and alive, British and German—from the Channel. He was the first man to shoot down a German bomber at night with a four-cannon Hurricane; a Junker 88, during the heavy raid on London on May 10, 1941. He completed nearly 1,000 hours on Hurricanes, half on operations. When at Timaru High School, Aitken represented South Canterbury against a visiting Australian athletic champion.

The first German shot down by the New Zealand Beaufighter (night-fighter) Squadron fell to Flight Lieutenant E. C. Watt (Invercargill) off the south-east coast of Dover.

Early in 1944 New Zealand airmen were playing an increasingly important role in the squadrons of the Tactical Air Force; old-timers of twenty-five or so, with three to four years' war flying, and young fry not yet twenty-one. There were many New Zealanders who had done second and third tours. For example, Squadron Leader Garry Kain, R.A.F. (Winchester); Squadron Leader "Popeye" Lucas (Auckland), one of the 75th Squadron originals; Flight Lieutenant W. Gasquoigne (Nelson); all resuming operations on Mosquitoes. Led by Wing Commander Ian Smith, D.F.C. (Auckland), were twenty or so on one particular T.A.F. field of his fellow-countrymen, helping to make the name of Mosquito as enduring as Hurricane, Spitfire and Lancaster. One was Flying Officer S. Askew (Christchurch), who had even been on anti-submarine patrols over Alaska; Flight

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

Lieutenants W. J. Runciman (Auckland), B. L. Watkin (Epsom), J. C. Paterson (Opaheke), Flying Officers F. Scott (Inglewood), R. Beazer (Feilding), S. W. Hamilton (Frankton), F. G. Judson (Matapu), Pilot Officers M. N. Sparks (Auckland), M. L. S. Darrall (Tataniui), L. L. Thompson (Auckland), D. R. Fowler (Arrowtown), F. S. Stevenson (Auckland), A. J. Redman (Taihape), Warrant Officers R. Ward (Napier), J. T. Ayrtton (Hikurangi), Flight Sergeants C. R. Pocock (Wanganui), Dick Gilbertson (Wanganui), Allan Watkins (Rangiora).

Bombing from only fifty feet, to ensure hitting the small targets, the New Zealand Mosquito Fighter-Bomber Squadron took its part in successfully destroying flying bomb installations in France in January, February and March, 1944. Flying over Britain one Friday night in January, 1944, Warrant Officer H. K. Kemp (Mt. Eden) was told there were German bombers about. He promptly shot down one of the Luftwaffe's latest, a Ju. 188, before it had a chance to pick a target for its load. In May, he shot down his first enemy machine at night over England. Flight Sergeant Dave de Renzy (Matamata) and his navigator, Flight Sergeant Rex Cottrell (Rotorua) were flying Mosquitoes in February, 1944.

Group Captain P. C. Pickard, D.S.O. and two Bars, D.F.C., the pilot of "F for Freddy" in the film "Target for Tonight," was commanding the wing in which the New Zealand Mosquito Fighter-Bomber Squadron (Wing Commander I. S. Smith, D.F.C., Auckland) was operating in February, 1944. They were then engaged in making hard, tiring, low-level raids, just topping hedges and houses. They were disliking birds almost as much as flak, as the birds had no chance of escaping from these fastest aircraft in the service. The birds often caused much damage to the aircraft and sometimes injured the crews (pilot and navigator). Sixty per cent. of the personnel was then New Zealand, with the squadron crest, a tiki clasping a bomb. They included then Flight Lieutenant J. C. Paterson (Papakura), Flying Officer J. D. McMillan (Auckland), Pilot Officers M. J. Sparks, F. S. Stevenson, L. L. Thompson (Auckland), M. L. Darrall (Morrinsville), M. E. F. Barriball (Waiuku), Warrant Officer T. Ayton (Whangarei), Flight Sergeant L. F. Robison (Morrinsville).

New Zealanders who took part in one of the most dramatic episodes of the war—the bombing of a prison at Amiens in February, 1944, which freed more than one hundred Allied sympathisers from the Germans—included Flight Lieut. E. W. Gabites, D.F.C. (Hawke's Bay), Flying Officers M. N. Sparks (Herne Bay), F. S. Stevenson (Devonport), and M. Darrell (Morrinsville). They were on Mosquitoes late in 1943 after Venturas. The operation was strictly secret and no news of it was released for eight months. The New Zealand section of six in this squadron led the operation, followed by an Australian section and then a United Kingdom section. The leader was Group Captain P. C. Pickard, D.S.O. and two Bars, D.F.C., who was killed. The operation was over in ninety seconds and last crews saw some of the prisoners running to safety across fields where friends awaited them. Sparks was pilot of the second plane in the first attacking box whose job it was to breach one wall of the prison, while Stevenson was navigator in the leading plane of the second box which attacked an outer wall successfully.

One of the many New Zealanders participating in the latest big raid on Germany in March, 1944, was Flight Lieutenant V. S. Moore, D.S.O., D.F.M. (Taumarunui), who was on his seventy-fifth operation when he bombed Berlin on March 8, 1944. He was in a Mosquito night bomber squadron, which included Squadron Leader S. D. Watts, D.F.C. (Morrinsville) and

AIR DEEDS AND MEN

Flying Officer A. A. Matheson, D.F.M. (Carterton). Moore was then on his third tour, having previously operated in Lancasters. He did twenty-two operations in Whitleys from August, 1941, to March, 1942, and had already carried out twenty-six raids in Mosquitoes, twelve times to Berlin; the last on his twenty-eighth birthday. Watts had raided Berlin, Stuttgart, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Mannheim. Flying Officer D. H. Tudhope (Hamilton) had then just completed forty operations in Mosquito bombers.

When the Minister of Finance, Hon. Walter Nash, visited the New Zealand Mosquito Night-Fighter Squadron on April 1, 1944, it had destroyed seventeen enemy aircraft; five in one night. The personnel, and the score, was fairly even between New Zealanders and Englishmen. One of the leading New Zealanders was Flight Lieutenant P. Hall (Gisborne). Among the New Zealanders the Minister met that night were Flight Lieutenants W. R. Cook (New Plymouth), G. Jameson, D.F.C.; Flying Officers J. H. Scott (Invercargill), W. Longley (Papakura), R. C. Jeffs (Wanganui), R. C. Skudder, P. G. Prescott (Auckland), B. C. Grant (Ohakea), C. C. Duncan (Blenheim), A. A. Somerville and Ryan (Rotorua); Pilot Officer O. J. McCabe (Whangarei); Warrant Officer R. F. D. Bourke (Pahiatua), Flight Sergeants G. F. P. Hughes (Reefton), J. H. Moore, R. W. Mitchell (Auckland), J. W. Marshall (Kawakawa), T. A. McLean (Winton), W. W. Green (Akaite), W. Muldrew (Mabeno), G. S. Patrick (Petone), H. G. Scott (Gisborne), A. C. Earl (Christchurch), A. J. Church (Frankton Junction). In another Mosquito squadron on the same station the Minister met Flying Officer R. Lelong (Auckland), the well-known footballer, and Flying Officer R. Walton (Tauranga). These two squadrons had created a record in Night Fighter Command by shooting down twenty-one enemy aircraft during March.

Names on the New Zealand Squadron score board then were: Flight Lieutenants J. A. N. Gunn, P. F. L. Hall (Gisborne), Flying Officers G. F. Reed (Auckland), D. N. Robinson (Gisborne), R. D. Bergman (Whangarei), Pilot Officer N. M. Knox (Dunedin), Pilot Officer (observer) T. F. Ryan (Auckland). Hall shot down one Junkers 188, and probably another, in one night.

The Germans lost thirteen aircraft in an engagement near England on April 18, 1944, of which the New Zealand Mosquito Night Fighter Squadron claimed two; one to Warrant Officer R. F. D. Bourke (Pahiatua), with Flying Officer R. C. Skudder (Auckland) as navigator.

Squadron Leader F. J. Lucas (Balchutha) was appointed a flight commander of a New Zealand Mosquito Bomber Squadron in May, 1944, and had to fly back from a raid on Charleroi railway yards on one engine. He had bombed at fifty feet and climbed to 10,000 on one motor, diving over the Channel at 350 miles an hour in case enemy fighters were looking out for lame ducks. The dirtiest weather was struck by pilots of the New Zealand Mosquito Squadron on the night of June 27, when they attacked German troop concentrations south of Caen. Flight Lieutenant W. J. Runciman (Mount Roskill), said his plane rose from 2,000 to 5,000 feet in thirty seconds, while Squadron Leader F. J. Lucas, on his seventy-fourth sortie, was about to bomb, when he flew into an updraft. He put the nose down and tried to hold height but the plane climbed at 1,000 feet a minute. Wing Commander S. D. Watts, New Zealand, got an immediate award of the D.S.O. for his part in an operation where he led Mosquitoes which dropped mines to block the Kiel Canal a month before D Day. It took ten days to clear the canal.

Three successful attacks on E-boats within half an hour were made by Wing Commander E. H. McHardy, D.F.C. (Waipawa), when enemy craft attempted to menace the invasion beach-head. McHardy said: "Everything in the world came up towards us. Flak from ships, shore batteries and other craft in the area. One ship burst into flames, another was covered in smoke and flashes. There were flashes from a third, and I believe a fourth was hit. I finally broke away in a cloud of flak and tracers from all sides." McHardy was promoted wing commander at twenty-two. He directed Beaufighters from the deck of a warship in the Vaagso raid and took part in the attack against the *Prinz Eugen* in June, 1942.

Squadron Leader E. W. Tacon, D.F.C., A.F.C. (Hastings), led rocket-firing Beaufighters on attacks on forces of E-boats in the North Sea and Channel areas in the second week of the invasion, scoring direct hits himself. The Air Ministry News Service of December, 1941, referred to an R.A.F. bombing squadron which had the names of "The Demons." They were mostly Canadians but, said the Service: "Ask any man in the squadron for the name of its best flier and you will get the same answer, a New Zealand pilot officer, Ernest William Tacon, of Hastings." A man who had flown many hours with Tacon said: "He handles a Lockheed Hudson almost as though it were a fighter." When bombing Hamburg, Tacon flew his plane under telegraph wires and also under high-tension cables across the Elbe. The greatest pride in Tacon's achievements was taken by his old college, St. Patrick's, Silverstream. An article in the college magazine, *Blue and White*, for 1944, referred to a statement in the 1940 issue that "as yet we have had no Old Boy airman in the present war to rival the accomplishments of Captain Hammond." (An Old Boy of the mother college, St. Patrick's, Wellington, and referred to elsewhere.) The article continued: "The statement no longer holds good. In Wing Commander Ernest William Tacon, D.S.O., D.F.C., and Bar, A.F.C., Four-Year Star, R.A.F., veteran of the Battle of Britain and the first bombing raids over Germany and Norway, Atlantic ferry pilot, instructor in England, Canada and Nova Scotia, commander of the Conversion Flight, commander of a Pacific squadron in the bombing of Tarawa, then fighter-pilot in England during the first four months of the Second Front, the college has an Old Boy pilot 'second to none.'" This tribute by Group Captain F. J. St. G. Braithwaite, commanding the R.A.F. station, North Coats, Grimsby, Lincs., was then quoted: "I am proud to have known Bill. In the long period I have been connected with operations, either as a squadron or station commander, I have never known a more gallant pilot or a more popular and inspiring leader. He belonged to a small coterie of commanding officers who are literally worshipped by those under their command. While under my command he received a bar to his D.F.C. and the D.S.O. No decorations have been better earned. His enthusiasm for operations was unbounded. All his operations were characterised by a dash and contempt for personal risk, but without any element of foolhardiness, that set an example which was hard to follow but which everyone tried to emulate. His fine qualities were reflected in the high morale of the squadron of which he was first a flight commander and later C.O. For this, his own example and powers of leadership were largely responsible." Tacon had a fine college record. He was junior champion shot (1933), member of the shooting team which was first in New Zealand and third in the Empire (1934), senior champion shot and captain of the team that won the Earl Roberts Imperial cadet competition, 1936 (first place in the Empire), vice-

captain of the first XV., and opening bat for the first XI. He had other sports distinctions in boxing.

Tacon was due to cease operational flying at the end of September, 1944, but when leading an attack by Beaufighters, including members of the New Zealand Beaufighter squadron, on enemy shipping in Den Helder harbour on September 16, his plane was seen afire in one engine. It lost height and hit a beach. Berlin radio later reported him a prisoner. He was New Zealand's ace torpedo-bomber pilot. He was released on victory.

New Zealand Mosquito Night-Fighter Squadron had a score of at least thirty-five by July 31, 1944, three more having just been added by Flight Lieutenant G. E. Jameson, D.F.C. (North Canterbury), Flight Lieutenant P. F. L. Hall, D.F.C. and Bar (Gisborne), two, and Flying Officer D. N. Robinson. The squadron had been operating each night over Normandy since D Day. Hall got another, a Junkers 88, when it was dropping flares over an American position in Normandy on August 2. Hall now had a score of seven, two in one night. A week later his score was eight, and he was claiming two more.

By August 9, the squadron score was forty-six, of which twenty-seven were shot down since D Day. In the last nine nights it had accounted for twenty. Jameson was the squadron ace, with twelve, a record for any New Zealand night-fighter pilot in Britain, and he equalled the night-fighter record by shooting down four in one night. He shot down three before joining the squadron, making his share of its tally, nine. Flight Lieutenant A. E. Browne (Devonport) made a brisk start in his career with the squadron, shooting down a Dornier 217 over Avranches within a few days, and then three more in the battle area over Normandy on the night of August 6. Warrant Officer T. G. C. Mackie (Takaka) shot down a Junker 88 about to bomb Allied positions south of Avranches, having Flight Sergeant A. A. Thompson (Tauranga) as navigator. Others who had scored were Flying Officer A. L. Shaw (Gisborne), two; Warrant Officer G. S. Patrick (Wellington), Flight Sergeant T. A. McLean (Winton) one each. These were excellent performances for the New Zealand Squadron, which was equipped with Mosquitoes only late in 1943.

The score of enemy aircraft destroyed by New Zealand squadrons based on Britain was (August 8, 1944): Spitfire Squadron, 75; Mosquito Night-Fighter, 47; Typhoon, 20½ and a large number of flying bombs. The No. 75 (Lancaster) Squadron had also destroyed a number of enemy night-fighters, including nineteen in 1943, and an average of sixteen a year since it began. Thus, these four New Zealand squadrons had accounted for about 200.

The New Zealand Mosquito Squadron chalked up its fifty-first German—a Junkers 88, shot down by Pilot Officer O. J. McCabe (Whangarei) over Normandy—by August 22, 1944. A day later, Flying Officer D. N. Robinson (Gisborne) got another, a claim was allowed Flight Lieutenant E. Brown (Auckland) and the score became fifty-three. Robinson and Brown then had four each. The latest Junkers 188 shot down by Robinson exploded with its bomb load on enemy positions east of Caen.

Brown destroyed three aircraft in one night, but only fired at one—a Junkers 88, which he put down over the battle area. He located a second, which took such violent evasive action that it crashed, and the same thing happened again with another. He was credited when the wreckage was found.

Flying Officer R. E. Lelong (Auckland) shot down one of the first enemy aircraft to perish on D-night—a Junkers 188. Lelong was in a Mos-

quito night intruder squadron. Over the Baltic late in September, 1944, Lelong saw thirteen Dornier 24 three-engined flying boats at anchor in a bay. He made six attacks to leave five blazing furiously and two others damaged and smoking. Proceeding home he attacked a Blohm and Voss 138 flying boat, which was at a low altitude, and left it damaged and smoking. One of the Mosquito's engines was damaged by flak while homeward-bound over Germany but Lelong brought the plane safely back on the remaining engine. Flying Officer J. Gardiner destroyed one of the four Ju. 87 dive-bomber shot down over the Nijmegen on the night of October 2. Lelong was awarded the D.F.C. in December, 1944. He shot down two Focke Wulf 190's when patrolling over an airfield in northern Germany in February, 1945, to make his score thirteen. He caught both these aircraft coming in to land. On a previous trip Lelong successfully attacked two Focke Wulfs and a Junkers 88 pick-a-back aircraft on an airfield in Denmark.

The New Zealand night-fighter squadron tally was raised to sixty late in February, 1945, when a Mosquito flown by Flight Lieutenant K. W. Stewart (Dunedin) and Flying Officer M. E. Brumby (Auckland) intercepted and shot down a Junkers 88 after a ten-minute battle. The Junkers blew up with an explosion so violent as to light up the Mosquito. The squadron was then operating from an airfield in France. By the time it was disbanded the score had risen to sixty-seven enemy planes destroyed, four probables, ten damaged, and flown 5,345 hours on 2,261 sorties. From December, 1942, to December, 1944, No. 487 Squadron had fired 307,244 rounds of ammunition and dropped 1,249 tons of bombs. Twenty decorations had been awarded.

THE TORPEDO-BOMBER SQUADRON

The work of the New Zealand Torpedo-Bomber Squadron (No. 489) can be measured, in part, by the tonnage of enemy shipping which it sent to the bottom. This squadron started off on Hampdens and later was re-equipped with Torpedo Beauforts (a utility Beaufighter). In two years, up till July, 1944, it had sunk 65,000 tons of enemy shipping, damaged 35,000 tons, severely damaged or sunk 32 armed trawlers and minesweepers and, after D Day, took heavy toll of 34 enemy E and R-boats. It would be no exaggeration to put its score, at October, 1944, at no less than 100,000 tons of enemy shipping at the bottom, and half of that tonnage again severely damaged. On one occasion a pilot flew under the stern of a ship after launching his torpedo. The New Zealand Hampden torpedo bomber squadron was completing its training in April, 1942. It was officially established on August 12, 1941, under the Empire Training Scheme. There were sixty-eight New Zealanders in it and they were to operate in twenty Hampdens. First combat was in June, 1942, when an aircraft piloted by Flight Lieut. R. G. Hartshorn (Auckland), who I saw away as squadron leader of the first torpedo bombers to the Pacific in January, 1944, was attacked by two Focke Wulf 190's, then Germany's latest fighter. The wireless air gunner was Flight Sergeant J. McGill Brown (Auckland). After a half hour's combat one German left hurriedly for France with smoke pouring from the engine and the other broke off the combat. Air Chief Marshal Sir Phillip Joubert sent a message of congratulation to the commanding officer, Wing Commander James Brown. A later arrival in the squadron was Pilot Officer J. A. Fraser (Auckland), a special radio officer. August, 1942, saw the squadron credited

with torpedoing a 3,000-ton merchantman off the Norwegian coast and probably shooting down a Nazi fighter; their first victories. The flight included Flying Officer J. J. Richardson (Auckland) and Pilot Officers J. H. Reason, T. O. G. Murray and S. Latta (Auckland).

The squadron completed the year 1942 with a good record, sinking eight German ships off the coast of Norway. Scorers were Flying Officer J. J. Richardson (Auckland), one, and one shared; Flying Officer C. J. Freshney (Auckland), one; Warrant Officer R. C. Dunn (Kaiapoi), one; a Scots pilot, two, with Pilot Officer F. N. Shallcrass (Greymouth) and Sergeant H. R. F. Smith (Taihape) in his crew; two English pilots, two more, with Sergeants E. A. Hurley (New Plymouth) and K. Moore (Christchurch) in their crews.

Flying Officer K. I. Street, D.F.M. (New Plymouth) an air gunner, did thirty-five flights over Germany in Hampdens and was decorated for his part in a low-level attack on the *Scharnhorst* at Brest on March 4, 1941. He then did 10 daylight operations on the old Flying Fortresses, and later was chosen to be one of three R.A.F. crews to go to the United States to give opinions of Flying Fortresses and Liberators as compared with British machines and their armament. The leader of the party was Squadron Leader J. Purcival, D.F.C. (New Plymouth), later killed on operations. After 18 months training Liberator crews for the Near East and Far East, Street returned to Bomber Command and finished his second tour of fifty-five flights over enemy territory in May, 1943.

In the ten months ended May, 1943, the squadron had attacked at least 85,000 tons of enemy shipping off the coast of Norway and destroyed 10,000 tons (seen to sink), probably destroyed 12,000 and damaged 28,500 tons. This was a fine record for a squadron flying in some of the worst weather that any operating from Britain had to meet. There was an icy wind almost daily and thick expanses of mist and low cloud were frequent round the aerodrome. Then they had to fly 400 to 500 miles over seas to Norway and do the job in the face of opposition from flak escorts, Focke Wulfs and Heinkels, Junkers 88's, Blohm and Voss three-engined flying boats. Convoys hugging the coast also had protection from shore-based batteries.

The squadron was due to be two years old in August, 1943, and by June four D.F.C.'s had been awarded to members, one to Flying Officer J. J. Richardson (Oamaru) for consistent and outstanding work. Pilot Officer R. C. Dunn (Kaiapoi) was then one of the "oldest inhabitants," whose leadership in one attack earned praise from the naval commander-in-chief and the Air Officer Commanding Coastal Command. The Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones, told them about this time: "You are doing a great job."

Personnel then included Flying Officers T. H. Davidson (Auckland), F. K. Moynihan (Nelson), Flight Sergeants J. F. Roach (Auckland), P. Scott (Auckland), P. E. Booth (Wellington), G. A. Ward (Wellington), J. P. Boyle (Waikato), J. A. Browne (Napier), A. E. Collett (Waipawa), F. D. Graham (Lower Hutt), S. W. Hall (Westfield), E. A. Hurley (New Plymouth), L. R. Lander (New Plymouth), N. E. Junge (Otago), A. H. Knewstubb (Dunedin), I. B. Lapwood (Tuakau), F. Macpherson (Rotorua), K. F. Moore (Christchurch), D. E. Nelson (Masterton), F. J. Paul (Reefton), H. A. Sherley (Morrisville), H. R. F. Smith (Taihape), D. L. White (Gisborne), Sergeants I. D. Dawson (Invercargill), M. C. Steele (Gore), W. H. Thompson (Wellington), I. C. Riddell and, as ground staff, Corporals

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T. A. Allen (Hawke's Bay), W. Dawson (Hawke's Bay), J. G. Anderson (Lumsden), K. M. Brown (Westport).

Twenty-five thousand tons of enemy shipping were attacked by the Torpedo Beauforts off the coast of Norway in the third week in February, 1944. Two ships were definitely sunk. Squadron Leader Kellow, English flight commander, hit a 5,000-tonner, and Flight Lieut. F. K. Moynihan (Nelson), a 4,000-tonner, from which a pall of black smoke came. Flight Sergeants J. A. Wright (Dunedin) and J. M. Oliver (Napier) made attacks three days before, and Flying Officer R. H. Tonks (Wellington) saw a 4,000-tonner explode when his torpedo connected. A recent newcomer then was Flight Lieut. D. H. Hammond (Christchurch) who won the D.F.C. flying Beaufighters in the Mediterranean, and others then in the squadron included Flight Lieut. T. H. Davidson (Rotorua), Flying Officers W. R. Baillie (Timaru), W. A. Fraser, D.F.M., and A. C. Lynch (Auckland), A. R. Osment and H. R. McKegg (Christchurch), J. G. Gow (Levin), Pilot Officers J. J. O'Connor (Christchurch), A. H. Knewstubb (Dunedin), Warrant Officer E. F. G. Burrowes (New Plymouth), Flight Sergeants W. R. Tuck (Auckland), D. M. Tunncliffe (Invercargill), F. E. Hall (Gisborne), R. J. H. Hey and M. L. Langley (Dunedin).

In March, 1944, the High Commissioner, Mr. W. J. Jordan, visiting the squadron, met these personnel: Flying Officers F. K. Moynihan (Nelson), S. Latta and C. J. Freshney (Auckland), E. L. Blyth (North Auckland), Flight Sergeants F. McPherson (Rotorua), S. W. Hall, R. T. Henderson (Auckland), F. W. Bacon (Taumarunui), P. E. Booth (Wellington), W. P. Lanigan (Gisborne), A. T. P. Boyle (Tirau), E. A. Hurley (New Plymouth), W. J. Douglas (Ohinemutu), H. A. Sherley (Te Awamutu), Sergeants H. E. Junge (Middlemarch), I. Griffiths (Christchurch), L. R. Lander, L. B. Lapwood (Auckland), W. J. MacErlich (Hastings), D. L. White (Gisborne), W. H. Thompson (Wellington), Warrant Officer R. C. Dunn (Kaiapoi), and other personnel in Corporals F. W. Easson and D. W. Edwards (Auckland), R. P. Ewart, A. H. Cardwell (Christchurch), W. Dawson (Napier), J. G. Anderson (Lumsden), Leading Aircraftman L. A. Cadness (Auckland).

The heavily escorted 14,000-ton German liner, *Monte Rosa*, was attacked off the coast of Norway late in March, 1944, when Pilot Officer J. K. O'Connor (Christchurch) made a run in, released a torpedo, but was unable to observe results owing to intense flak. Pilot Officer C. J. Toon (Auckland) was with Canadian Beaufighters which attacked the same ship earlier the same night and had no doubt that hits were scored. When the New Zealanders came up on the *Monte Rosa* and her escorts, their speed was much reduced.

Fifteen ships stood to the credit (at the sea bottom) of the squadron in April, 1943, the latest when a Hampden, with an English skipper and Flight Sergeants P. Booth (Wellington), D. Nelson (Masterton) and L. Lander (New Plymouth), hit a merchantman off the Norwegian coast.

The squadron had shifted from Scotland to the east coast of England by May, 1944, and twenty ships were attacked near Borkum, Flying Officer J. Gow (Levin) and Warrant Officer Jas. Wright (Dunedin) scoring hits with torpedoes. A convoy of four merchantmen and sixteen escorts was also attacked with Flight Lieut. T. H. Davidson (Rotorua) leading the squadron. Gow and he both scored hits.

In 1944, Flight Lieut. D. H. Hammond, D.F.C. (Christchurch) was gunnery officer to the famous New Zealand Beaufort torpedo-bomber squadron. He served a long period in the Mediterranean. The squadron

was then commanded by Wing Commander J. Dinsdale, D.F.C. (Te Kuiti); seventy per cent. of the pilots were New Zealanders. Around this time (February) Flight Lieut. F. K. Moynihan (Nelson), Flight Sergeant J. A. Wright (Dunedin), Flight Sergeant J. M. Oliver (Napier), Flying Officer I. A. Pettit (Dunedin), and Flying Officer R. H. Tonks (Wellington) were mentioned in heavy attacks on enemy shipping, the last-named seeing a 4,000-tonner blow up when his torpedo hit.

A successful raid was reported in May, 1944, in which Flying Officer J. Gow (Levin), and Warrant Officer Jas. Wright (Dunedin) secured torpedo hits and Flying Officer A. R. Osment (Christchurch) and Warrant Officer R. J. Hey (Dunedin) were in the attack. Gow flew under the stern of a ship after dropping a torpedo.

Between January and May, 1944, the Beaufighters attacked 120,000 tons of enemy shipping off Norway and Holland, of which it sank or damaged 35,000 tons. In May both the New Zealand and Australian squadrons were commanded by Group Captain A. E. Clouston, D.F.C. (Nelson), who was promoted and appointed to his job after commanding a Liberator squadron. Flight Lieut. T. H. Davidson (Rotorua) led the New Zealanders in an attack on four merchantmen and sixteen escorts off Terschelling.

By July, 1944, the squadron had sunk 65,500 tons of enemy shipping and damaged 35,000 tons; in addition, it had attacked and severely damaged or sunk thirty-two armed trawlers and minesweepers and, since D Day, had bombed at least thirty-four E and R-boats — armed motor-launches escorting supply ships. The C.O., Wing Commander John Dinsdale, had recently been awarded the D.S.O. With British, Canadian and Australian squadrons they carried out one of the most successful strikes of the war on June 15 when they sunk an E-boat depot ship, a merchantman, and set afire twelve minesweepers, only two of which reached port and then still afire. Flying Officers R. H. Tonks (Wellington), A. R. Osment and H. R. McKegg (Christchurch), J. J. O'Connor, Warrant Officers E. Burrows (New Plymouth), W. R. Tuck (Auckland), R. Shand (Christchurch), and Flight Sergeant C. V. Brittain (Auckland) took part in this attack. The next big strike was on July 6, when forty Beauforts attacked eight merchantmen and eleven other ships off the Frisian Islands; three merchantmen were hit by torpedoes, one blowing up, one minesweeper was left ablaze, three more were on fire as well as three trawlers. Flying Officer C. J. Toon (Auckland), Pilot Officer F. E. Hall (Gisborne), Flight Sergeants Brittain and F. N. Hitchcock (Auckland) were in this attack. The squadron was visited on the station, commanded by Group Captain Clouston, by the Prime Minister, Right Hon. Peter Fraser, and Mrs. Fraser. Beaufighters of Coastal Command, including R.N.Z.A.F. squadron, off the coast of Norway in July, 1944, blew up a medium-sized merchantman, left two others blazing fiercely, sank an escort ship, and left the remaining five ships of the convoy on fire or damaged. Flight Lieut. H. Davidson (Rotorua) said: "When I left, every ship was either afire or crippled."

The Beaufighters were in on one of the largest convoys attacked in the war — forty ships off Heligoland in July, 1944. Four merchantmen were sunk; five escort ships left on fire. Practically all ships were raked by cannonfire. Flight Lieut. Davidson was in this attack. One pilot returned with fifty yards of steel cable from a parachute rocket wrapped round his wing.

The New Zealand Beaus were prominent in an attack on nineteen enemy ships in the North Sea in August, 1944, when two merchantmen were

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hit by torpedoes, one being blown up, two more were left burning; also four minesweepers and two armed trawlers. Flying officer W. A. Fraser, D.F.M. (Auckland), Flying Officer C. J. Toon (Auckland) and Flying Officer E. P. Taylor, of Wellington, who flew with the anti-flak escort, were in on this. Taylor saw the German gunners jump to cover. After the 1944 summer lull, Flying Officer Moynihan, with Flight Sergeant D. L. White (Gisborne) as wireless operator, torpedoed a merchantman off the Norwegian coast in September, 1944.

A formation of seventy-five Beaufighters, led by Squadron Leader D. H. Hammond, D.F.C. (Christchurch), and comprising the New Zealand and Australian squadrons and three English squadrons, attacked Den Helder harbour docks in October, 1944, under particularly difficult conditions. Flying at twenty feet between Vlieland and Terschelling Islands, Hammond led the seventy-five aircraft straight for the Den Helder docks. Flak was fired at them from both sides at a range of 800 yards as they passed between the two islands. Then for two minutes the harbour was an inferno as the Beaufighters struck at minesweepers, trawlers and other shipping. The rocket-bombing and cannon-firing aircraft dived down from 1,500 feet to attack while the torpedo-carriers continued at low-level and released their "fish." A shell splinter struck the aircraft of Flight Lieutenant A. C. Lynch (Auckland), and knocked away the rudder trim, but did not affect the operational efficiency. Warrant Officer D. M. Tunncliffe (Invercargill) had his plane hit by cannon-shell which exploded inside the cockpit, damaging the pitch control and throttles, and peppering Tunncliffe's legs with splinters. He made the return flight in twenty-five minutes, Hammond flying behind to shepherd him home. The New Zealanders were led by Wing Commander L. A. Robertson (Auckland) who had succeeded Wing Commander J. Dinsdale, D.S.O., D.F.C. (Te Kuiti) as commanding officer. Others on this attack included Flying Officers W. A. Fraser, D.F.C., D.F.M. (Auckland), J. Gow, D.F.C. (Levin) and H. R. McKegg (Christchurch). This was the second attack on Den Helder in which the New Zealanders had taken part. Soon after an immediate award of the D.S.O. was made to Squadron Leader Hammond. He had won his D.F.C. in the Mediterranean theatre in April, 1942, when he rescued two airmen from enemy territory. The Bar was added in September, 1943, in recognition of his services with the squadron.

Sergeant E. H. Smith, wireless operator-air gunner (Pahiatua), serving with a Canadian Hampden squadron, distinguished himself in April, 1943, during a daylight attack on heavily escorted merchantmen in the Bay of Biscay. Flak struck the petrol tank, resulting in flames pouring out as though from a blow lamp. Smith fought the flames for forty-five minutes, but even after he put out the fire, petrol seeped through the hole. Smith thereupon sat on it.

Relinquishing his appointment as Commander-in-Chief, Coastal Command, to become Commander-in-Chief of the British Air Forces in Germany, Air Marshal Sir Sholto Douglas sent this message to No. 489 Squadron: "As your squadron will shortly be leaving Coastal Command I would like to thank you all for your splendid contribution to the defeat of the enemy in the war at sea. Your operations against the Dutch and Norwegian coasts at all times have been of the highest order."

WITH THE FLYING BOATS

Little information is obtainable about the New Zealand Catalina Squadron (No. 490) which began operations in West Africa in April, 1943. Their

job was not as spectacular as that of the fighter or bomber squadrons, but what accounts are available, which also include New Zealanders in other flying boat squadrons, point to the highest standards. When it started off the names of provinces were painted on either side of the aircraft hulls — O for Otago, T. for Taranaki, A. for Auckland, C. for Canterbury, H. for Hawke's Bay, and W. for Wellington. Wing Commander Baird, A.F.C., the C.O., stated then (August, 1943) that the members of each aircraft came from the various provinces, but not necessarily the captains, most of whom were from Wellington and Otago. It set off well by locating the survivors of an armed merchant cruiser and attacking a submarine. The sub. stayed on the surface firing at the Catalina whose crew was: Pilot Officer N. A. Ward (New Plymouth), captain, Wing Commander D. W. Baird, D.F.C., Sergeants N. Boyd (North Auckland), and C. C. Osborne (Ashburton). A twenty-minute gun duel followed, the Catalina's main plane and starboard propeller were hit, but the sub. submerged. Previously the Catalina, on which Flying Officers R. M. Grant (Wellington) and T. E. Neave were captain and second pilot respectively, after five hours' flying, located the survivors of a merchant cruiser which had signalled a submarine attack. There were two lifeboats and three rafts with thirty-nine Norwegian survivors. Air-sea rescue equipment, food and medical stores were dropped and a corvette signalled to locate the lifeboats. The next day Ward located these and directed the corvette, then twenty-five miles off, to the survivors. Next day, a Catalina, captained by Flying Officer J. C. J. Pettit (Wellington), with Pilot Officer T. F. Henderson (Invercargill) and Flight Sergeant A. G. Sutherland in the crew, escorted the ship into harbour.

In June, 1943, when the squadron was visited by the Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones, the present C.O., Wing Commander D. W. Baird, D.F.C., was due to be succeeded by Wing Commander Barry Nichol (Masterton). It had then many distinguished New Zealanders. One with an outstanding record in Coastal Command was Flight Lieut. A. Frame, D.F.C. (Oamaru), who had flown 1,600 hours in Sunderlands. He flew 200 men from Greece to Crete and a similar number to Alexandria when Crete fell. On one flight he took 50 passengers in addition to the 12 crew. Frame piloted the Sunderland mentioned in the picture, "Coastal Command," which picked up a survivor at Blairlogie, 300 miles from land, the boat flying straight to the spot. Among many important passengers he flew were Field Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell to Greece, Lord Gort and Admiral Sir James Somerville from Gibraltar to England, and Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore to Crete, twice.

Others in the squadron at the time were Flight Lieut. H. A. Outram (Dunedin), who had done a bombing tour in Witleys and Halifaxes, Flight Lieut. A. M. Foster (Christchurch) who operated in Sunderlands from Iceland and was for a time attached to the Fleet Air Arm with a unit commanded by Lieut. Commander E. Esmond, V.C.; Pilot Officer D. W. Parkhouse (Wellington), formerly attached to an Australian squadron, who was in an operation laying mines off Norway when the *Prinz Eugen* was "out," and was later in Russia for two months; Flying Officer W. J. Woods (Oamaru), 600 hours in Sunderlands, mostly over the Western Approaches; Flying Officer P. C. K. Morrison (Rotorua), who went to Russia with a Canadian squadron with whom he flew 150 hours; Flying Officers W. H. August, F. R. Comrie, J. C. L. Pettit, H. K. Patience, R. M. Grant (Wellington), J. G. Dunn, J. S. Shepherd, J. A. Irvine (Dunedin), R. E. Stevenson (Invercargill), T. F. Henderson, T. E. Neave; Pilot Officers N. A. Ward

(New Plymouth), F. A. Brittain (Wellington), Warrant Officer M. E. McGreal (Auckland), Flight Sergeants A. G. Sutherland (Invercargill), C. R. Peters (Christchurch), I. A. Jensen (Auckland), W. D. B. Bunting (Dunedin), Sergeants F. Simpson (Geraldine), J. S. Macdonald, C. J. Berry, J. D. Garrett, A. Holdsworth, M. Stevens (Christchurch), C. C. Osborne (Ashburton), J. C. Williams (Lyttelton), N. Boyd (North Auckland), R. E. Skeen, E. W. Buchanan (Auckland), N. E. Dawson (Hamilton), J. W. Gillgren (Gisborne), E. C. N. Miller (Masterton).

The New Zealand Catalina Squadron had an all-Canterbury crew late in 1943—led by Squadron Leader P. R. Godby (formerly on the staff of *The Press*, Christchurch). Godby carried out a tour on Ansons when Air Commodore J. L. Findlay, now in New Zealand, was his C.O. Godby took part in the second commando raid of the war when he flew over commandos landing on Guernsey. At one period he flew 350 hours on patrols in three months. Later he became an instructor in Canada.

By July, 1943, Squadron Leader T. O. Marshall, D.F.C. (Stratford) had completed 2,000 operational hours in Sunderlands and Catalinas, the longest flight being 27 hours in pursuit of the *Bismarck*. Marshall was in a squadron which moved from Singapore to the Mediterranean the day war was declared and took part in the evacuation of Greece and Crete. Once over Tobruk six Caproni 42's attacked his Sunderland and three were shot down before the flying boat made its base. Marshall said there were then so many holes in the craft that the plasticine gave out and they had to be plugged with chewing gum. Marshall went far north from the Mediterranean and flew Catalinas on the Russian convoy patrols. They brought a Russian delegation to England and a British one to Archangel. A noted passenger on one flight was Mr. Harry Hopkins. After that Marshall moved to the Bay of Biscay where he sank a sub. In the same squadron then was Squadron Leader, J. R. Bloxam, O.B.E., D.F.C. (Nelson) who carried out high-altitude raids over Italian ports from Malta.

Serving in the same Sunderland squadron in July, 1943, as Flight Sergeant N. T. Aldridge (Christchurch), a Sunderland, in which Flight Sergeant R. C. Armstrong (Pio Pio) was gunner, gave the final punch to the kill of a U-boat. Armstrong had previously served in Bomber Command and had many raids over Germany to his credit while Aldridge, as navigator, had recently guided a Sunderland to a lifeboat, all the survivors of which were subsequently saved.

A former civil pilot in New Zealand, Britain and India, Wing Commander G. G. Stead, D.F.C. (Hastings), was awarded the D.F.C. in May, 1942, when it was stated that he had completed 6,000 flying hours, 800 on operations. He served in Sunderland flying boats operating from the Shetland Islands, Iceland and West Africa and was near *H.M.S. Hood* when it was sunk. A Sunderland flying boat piloted by Warrant Officer Jack McDonald (Christchurch) sunk a German sub. on his first operational flight as captain of the aircraft in 1944.

By February, 1944, Flight Sergeant Cecil Osborne (Ashburton) was off Catalinas and on to Sunderlands after 400 operational hours. Flight Sergeant Joe (Bluey) Williams (Christchurch) and Osborne had then had some grim toe-to-toe slugging matches with U-boats in the Bay of Biscay, Williams paying a tribute to those U-boats personnel who stayed on the surface and shot it out.

Forced down in the Atlantic 140 miles from the coast of West Africa, a Sunderland, captained by Flying Officer McGreal on his thirteenth patrol

in West Africa, and on the thirteenth day of September, 1944, broke its back and filled with water in five seconds. Warrant Officer S. Wrigley (Taranaki) and Sergeant D. Jones (Swansea, Wales) were washed through a hole in the side of the hull. Pilot Officer H. W. N. Budd (Wellington) was trapped inside and half drowned, when part of the fuselage where he was imprisoned broke, and he "bobbed up like a chicken from an eggshell." The wireless operator, a New Zealander, gave his life for the crew. He was sending out SOS calls when she struck and was knocked out and drowned. Budd and Jones were left standing on the tail and were fifty yards from the dinghy when the tail sank. Budd was dazed and cut, one wrist was broken, and Jones could only just keep him up till the second pilot, an Auckland man whose name was not given, swam with McGreal to hold Budd. They drifted all night in the dinghy and with dawn, beat off a shark with the dinghy mast and an oxygen bottle. Twenty hours adrift without food or water, and a pitiless sun now scorching them, they sighted a plane eight miles off. They had one distress signal and a smoke float. The air was hazy and the odds against the signal being seen. They had to choose between the off-chance and saving the signal and float for a better chance. They took the risk. Two hours later another plane appeared well in the distance, even by air standards, but the sky was clear, the signals were seen and they were saved.

From September, 1943, to December, 1944, No. 490 Squadron flew 4,028 hours on 327 sorties.

MIDDLE EAST, MALTA, AFRICA, ITALY, THE MEDITERRANEAN, SOUTHERN EUROPE

Though the Dominion did not have squadrons designated as "New Zealand" in the Middle East, North African, Mediterranean, Italian, Adriatic and Southern European zones, she was well represented, and wherever the 2nd N.Z.E.F. fought, airmen from their own country were among those in the air above them. The first British bomber which the New Zealanders saw over Crete after the battle for the island began, was captained by an airman from Hastings. New Zealand was ably represented in the Battle of Malta by such men as Flight Lieut. R. B. Hesselyn, Pilot Officer J. D. Rae and the New Zealand ace, Group Captain Colin Gray, who had got fifteen enemy planes in the Battle of Britain. In these various theatres New Zealanders flew all types of aircraft, and a Dunedin-born man, Air Vice-Marshal Sir Keith Park, was Air Officer Commanding in the Mediterranean, and later Air Chief, South East Asia Command, on Sir Trafford Leigh Mallory's loss. Many of the New Zealanders in these theatres had already done good jobs when based in the United Kingdom, they carried their full share of the burden in these foreign climes, and were back again to take their part in the momentous days of the invasion of Europe and all that followed. As there were no New Zealand squadrons, the account of their doings, which follows, covers men widely spread among R.A.F. units of all types, and cannot be connected except in time sequence. Park's career with the fighting forces will stand comparison with any. Once a junior in the Union Steam Ship Company's Dunedin office, he became a purser, served with the N.Z.E.F. on Gallipoli and was commissioned for services in the field, took part in the Battle of the Somme and was wounded. His condition precluding further active army service he was appointed an artillery instructor at Woolwich, but this life was no good to him. He joined the R.F.C., and by the end of the last war his decorations were the M.C., and Bar, D.F.C., and Croix de Guerre (with Palm). Granted a permanent commission in the R.A.F. he was

two years Chief Instructor of the Oxford University Air Squadron (and was given the honorary degree of Master of Arts of that University), commanded Northolt and Hornchurch fighter stations, served as Air Attache at Buenos Aires and, in 1936, was appointed Air Aide de Camp to the King. The present war saw him Air Officer Commanding No. 11 Group, Fighter Command. He was personally over the beaches at Dunkirk to observe the position of the evacuating British troops right till the last had been got away. He took command at Malta in the critical period of July, 1942, and initiated an offensive campaign at a time when petrol was so short that operations had to be confined to a daily fuel quota basis. Attacks were made on Sicily, Benghazi, Brindisi, Taranto, Sfax, Tunis, Bizerta, Tripoli, on Rommel's desert lines, and Sardinia. The success of these operations, the brain and drive which directed them, and the courage and unstinting physical effort of the men who did the job, were telling factors in booting the Germans out of those theatres and smashing the Italians. He was promoted from Vice-Marshal to Marshal. A brother, Squadron Leader Frank L. Park, served in the last war, served in the Middle East in this war, was engineer officer at Rongotai, and commanded No. 1 Islands Works Squadron in the Pacific, a job in which he never spared himself. The vitality and sober enthusiasm he put into his work was an example to younger men. Few men could have exceeded his air travel mileage in the period he was commanding the Works Squadron. In June, 1945, he returned to his civil post with the Public Works Department.

In 1941 New Zealanders were scattered through R.A.F. formations in the Middle East on every air front. Some were veterans of the Battle of Britain and long-range attacks on Europe. By the middle of 1941 they had, in the few months in the Middle East, operated over Sicily, Greece, Crete, Libya, Irak and the Dodecanese. They were looking on frequent, effective raids on Benghazi as routine.

Writing from Malta, Flying Officer R. B. Hesselyn, describing the position in May, 1942, said there were no aircraft left and they had to sit and take the bombing and gunning without doing anything about it. They were then expecting sixty of the latest Spitfires; next day, sixty-four arrived and, within ten minutes, half of them were in the air. From May 9 to May 14, they were battling all day and won. During twenty-four hours they destroyed 112 enemy aircraft and kept at it till the enemy gave in. The first four Spitfires which went up shot down six enemy machines. Hesselyn was the first New Zealander to take a Spitfire off, and land on, an aircraft carrier. Flying Officer M. Breed (Wanganui), navigator, was instructing in England in June, 1941, after forty-five raids in the Middle East, including twenty-four on the Tobruk "mail run" when it was held by Rommel. With his pilot, Sergeant Alan Robinson (Mercury Bay), one engine of their Wellington blew up between Cyrene and Derna and a forced landing was made in the desert. Four Italian torpedo-bombers were destroyed in five minutes off the North African coast in 1942, by four R.A.F. pilots, two of whom were New Zealanders, Sergeant D. Jackson (Cheviot) and Sergeant R. J. Cammock (Christchurch). Around the same time, Flying Officer Jack Torrance (Auckland) was one of four R.A.F. pilots who destroyed four enemy aircraft and damaged two others while protecting an Allied convoy in the Mediterranean.

"You must not get well too quickly," whispered a wounded Frenchman to Flying Officer Jack Fowler (Feilding) when they were both in the seriously wounded ward of a German hospital at Tunis in mid-1942. Fowler

noticed that the recovered wounded were taken out of the ward and sent to Italy. He feigned delirium and seventeen days later, British troops arrived. Fowler had been with a flight of six Spitfires escorting Mitchells on shipping raids off Bizerta when they ran into eight Ju 52's, two fighter escorts, soon joined by twenty-five Me. 109's and Macchis. Fowler put a Me. into the drink but was downed himself, apparently by a Macchi hitting the armour plate behind his head, knocking him out and causing his plane to crash. Germans picked him up on a beach and operated immediately. In the same squadron as Fowler was Flying Officer D. Hogan (Auckland) who, in his period of North African service, did sixty operational hours in seventeen days. Flight Sergeant I. Herbert (Morrinsville), shot down over Cape Bon, held up twelve Germans with his revolver, forced them into a lorry and returned to base. The lorry was one the Germans had captured at Kasserine, so he could not claim it for the Air Force.

Fourteen hundred miles out from Gibraltar on a flight to Bathurst, West Africa, in July, 1942, Flight Sergeant E. G. Rhodes (Pukeatua), with a Sydney navigator and two English wireless operator-air gunners, made a forced landing in Senegal, to be surrounded by blacks waving hatchets. They were friendly, however, and, as it later transpired, they were offered 1,000 francs for each member of the crew, if held till the French arrived. They did arrive and treated the Britishers politely and took them to Kaolack, on the River Sal, in Senegal, where they remained a fortnight till a forty-two-hour train journey brought them to Koulikoro, on the River Niger. There they had an uncomfortable six months. Rhodes heard that two other New Zealanders were interned at Bamako, also on the Niger, and he wrote to them. They were Flying Officers Rex Mellraith (Lower Hutt) and Cecil Todd (Palmerston North) who had been attacked by French bomber fighters when flying a Wellington bomber forty miles out to sea from Dakar. They made a forced landing ashore. Rhodes eventually met them in Gambia after the British-American landings in North Africa.

Flying Officer S. R. Browne (Wellington), former New Zealand Spitfire pilot, was two months in a concentration camp in France after being shot down there. He escaped, went to Tunisia, shot down two Me. 109's and, in July, 1942, was operating over Sicily from Malta. He shot down a Ju. 88 over Sicily, shared in the destruction of another next day, was hit, and parachuted to Allied territory. He hitch-hiked back to the coast, embarked for Malta, and was flying again next day to share in the kill of a Me. 109.

New Zealanders played a big part in smashing a fleet of transport planes, in the Gulf of Milazo, carrying Axis reinforcements to Sicily in mid-1942. Of twenty-one Ju. 52's, nine Me. 109's, and one Macchi shot down, New Zealanders and Australians accounted for ten. Wing Commander Colin Gray led the flight, bagging two Junkers to make his score twenty-seven and a half. Gray got fifteen enemy planes in the Battle of Britain, one at Dunkirk, six in North Africa, two in Malta, two in Sicily and others in sweeps. Flight Sergeant Eric Doherty (Gisborne) got the highest score in the Gulf of Milazo action with three Junkers transports.

New Zealand pilots were engaged in fighter defence work in Syria in July, 1942. In charge of these operations was Group Captain E. W. Whitley (Auckland), with a D.F.C. from Dunkirk, and the D.S.O. for outstanding work in the desert campaign. Wing Commander D. Kain (Winchester) was posted to the Middle East early in 1942, after five years in the famous squadron (No. 73) in which "Cobber" Kain (no relation) served. The squadron remained in France till that country capitulated and then, after

instructing, Kain went to Malta for several months while the blitz there was at its height.

Two other Wellington pilots then in the same Middle East squadron together were Flying Officers J. E. Jenkins and L. G. Mason, engaged in aircraft delivery during the desert campaign as far west as Mareth.

Stationed at Cyprus about the same time were Flying Officer J. S. Hepburn (Ashburton), Sergeant Pilot G. T. Collins (Hawera). Hepburn was a time in Palestine and then in the desert.

Flying Officer R. W. Fraser, D.F.M. (Auckland), in a Wellington torpedo-bomber squadron, sank two ships of 8,000 and 10,000 tons while stationed at Malta during the Tunisian campaign. He used to fly so low he almost left a wake in the sea. Another New Zealander in North Africa for the invasion was Pilot Officer C. P. Ashworth (Alexandra), a brother of Squadron Leader A. Ashworth, D.S.O., D.F.C., shot down a Junkers 88 at Phillipville and a Me. 109 over Bone.

A descendant of James Busby, the first British Resident, Pilot Officer W. Busby (Kaitia), carried out eighty-two sorties in night fighters during the Battle of London, and from El Alamein onwards. He shot down a Heinkel 111 in November, 1943, over Kos. He went to Egypt in February, 1942, following the Eighth Army from El Alamein to Tripoli.

Wounded in both arms, a leg and a thigh, with his hands bandaged and suffering from shock, Flight Sergeant D. J. Cummings (Christchurch) mended a damaged wireless set in a Wellington torpedo-bomber while returning to Alexandria after a raid on Tobruk in September, 1942. His action meant the difference between crashing or returning safely. He got an immediate D.F.M., and for his work during the same flight Pilot Officer A. G. Metcalf (Hawera), on his forty-sixth raid, also got the D.F.M. Flight Sergeant Ron Kirk (Christchurch) was also in the aircraft which attacked a 6,000-ton merchantman escorted by eight destroyers. Metcalf got down to within ten feet of the sea to avoid the destroyers' guns and struck the merchantman midship with two torpedoes from forty feet.

Squadron Leader R. Webb (Levin), D.S.O., D.F.C., was commanding an R.A.F. Spitfire squadron attached, in December, 1942, to the North West African Air Force, which was making things hot for the enemy occupying Albania. Webb spent four months testing fighters in Iraq before handing them over to the Russians. Webb shot down four enemy planes and lost his right eye on May 15, 1944, when strafing a supply dump and schooner in Podgorski Channel, north of Zara, Dalmatia. He was accidentally hit by another plane but flew the 230 miles back to Foggia. Webb said of this flight: "The wound did not worry me but it is a thing you never want to do from choice." Webb was once a staff pilot at Wigram and went to Egypt with Flight Lieutenant M. J. Rowland (Wellington) after three months with a New Zealand squadron. Rowland was posted missing on the first day of the invasion after being shot down from behind while engaged in a dogfight. Webb was later promoted Wing Commander. He originally came from the New Zealand Spitfire Squadron.

Pilot Officer Norman Harrison (Rakaia) was one of the Mediterranean ace fighters by December, 1943, with two and a half destroyed, one probable and four damaged. Once, within thirty minutes, he shot down two and damaged another.

Another veteran of the Battle of Malta, Pilot Officer J. D. Rae (Auckland), was on leave in London in September, 1942, after four months in Malta, in which time he shot down four and a half enemy planes, was

credited with three and a half probables, and five damaged. A former New Zealand Spitfire Squadron pilot, he was shot down on his second fight at Malta and subsequently met the Sudeten Czech who shot him down. He landed at Malta in April, 1941. His most remembered day there, was when ninety Spitfires took off while thirty-eight Junkers 88's attacked. Only eight Junkers returned to their bases. While Rae was in London, Pilot Officer Gray Stenborg (Parnell) was still there with eight Germans to his credit.

Two Macchi 200's were shot down into the sea over the Tripolitanian coast by Flying Officer Cedric R. Hesketh (Auckland) in January, 1943. His squadron leader had been shot down after an Allied fighter formation had accounted for five enemy planes and, as Hesketh was circling over him, the Macchis approached. A younger brother, Pilot Officer Greville L. Hesketh, was killed in action in the defence of Singapore, after scoring several successes against the Japanese.

Air Vice Marshal Sir Keith Park (Dunedin), Air Officer Commanding in the Mediterranean, was in a dogfight in February, 1943, which ended in the Beaufighter flying back 140 miles over sea with one engine. Park was flying to Cairo as second pilot when five four-engined Focke Wulfs attacked. He ordered the pilot to attack but the Germans set fire to the port engine just as they were turning away.

Eighty-one hours was spent in the dinghy of a Wellington bomber, which made a forced landing off the Tunisian coast after a night attack on Gabes, by Flying Officer A. B. Smith (Wellington), captain. Eleven hours were spent drifting and seventy rowing. When the crew finally reached the coast after sleepless nights, drenched to the skin, they walked ashore so fatigued that, in Smith's words, "they staggered like drunks."

Gray brought his total to nineteen and a half when he shot down two within three days in Tunisia in March, 1943, one a Macchi, which went down into Lake Bizerta like a ball of fire. About the same time, Flying Officer J. M. Torrance (Epsom) shot down an Italian Savoia which was attacking an Allied convoy off Tunisia. Gray made it twenty-two and a half on May 1, 1943, when he shot down a Me., to bring the total score of his fighter wing to 200 in North Africa. Three of his pilots who got two Me.'s in the same dogfight brought their squadron's bag to 45, the highest of any Allied fighter squadron in Tunisia; Gray's total in this particular campaign was then five.

One of three Gladiators called Faith, Hope and Charity was flown by Flight Lieut. R. J. Hyde (Christchurch) in Malta in the early days before the Hurricanes and Spitfires arrived. They took off frequently against hopeless odds, with more chances of being shot down than making a kill. Hyde was Mentioned in Despatches. He was in the R.A.F. for the first day of the war and flew a Spitfire over Dunkirk. In March, 1943, he was flying Typhoons with a score of two destroyed and three damaged.

Left for dead in no man's land after being shot down by enemy planes early in 1943, Flight Sergeant T. H. Morrison (Point Chevalier) was rescued by South African infantry within a short distance of enemy troops who did not come out to take Morrison, apparently thinking him dead. Morrison was one of four New Zealand pilots selected to fly with the famous American Shark Squadron operating Kittyhawks in the Middle East.

Three enemy aircraft fell in three days to Flying Officer E. D. Mackie (Waihi) in an R.A.F. Spitfire squadron in Tunisia in April, 1943, to bring the squadron total to ten in four days without loss.

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

Just before the break-through at El Alamein, Pilot Officer J. B. Paton (Lower Hutt), in a Hurricane tank-buster squadron, made a forced landing and found himself in the New Zealand lines; during the Tebaga Gap battle this happened again. In the same squadron were Flying Officer P. N. McGregor (Waihi) and Sergeant K. Crompton (Karori). The adjutant was Flight Lieut. K. V. F. Hudson (Auckland), R.A.F. This squadron had played a notable part in helping to clear the way for the army. They attacked at 240 miles an hour, facing great hazards from ground fire as they went down to as low as 10 feet to attack tanks.

Dunedin Spitfire pilot, Sergeant R. F. Keller (Dunedin) shared in the destruction of four Junkers 52 transports, part of a total of nine aircraft shot down by R.A.F. fighters over the Tunisian battlefield on Monday April 14.

Flying Officer G. Fallows (Kaponga) was in the first of two R.A.F. Warhawk sorties over the German lines in Tripolitania when eight Me. 109's were destroyed.

Anzac Day, 1943, saw New Zealand pilots in Spitfire squadrons of Air Vice-Marshal Coningham's tactical air force shoot down two Germans. The successful pilots were Pilot Officer Stanley Browne (Wellington) and Flight Sergeant Allen Peart (Raglan), then aged 20. Over Mejez-el-Bab, Peart also got one of four Me. interceptors, and Squadron Leader Donald Carlson damaged two. Coningham is an old Wellingtonian.

Pilot Officer A. C. Bray, D.F.C. (Ashburton) got an immediate award in October, 1942, when he dived a Wellington from 10,000 to 5,000 feet to drop a 4,000lb. bomb on Aachen, and then took a photograph by the bomb's terrific flash. He did twenty-two raids over Germany before going to Algeria where he did a further fifteen. He began raids over Tunisia, Sardinia and Sicily on New Year's Eve, 1942, doing fifteen before the end of January, 1943. He came back to London in April, 1943, others who were in the Middle East when he left being Flight Lieut. P. H. Stewart (Auckland), Flying Officer T. Allen (North Auckland), a well-known skier, and Sergeant F. Addis (Christchurch).

Flight Lieut. Jim Porteous (Auckland) was flying Spitfires in northern Tunisia in May, 1943, when he shot down his first German and two probables within half an hour. Flight Lieut. Evan Mackie (Waihi), was a flight commander in Porteous's squadron, and had four and a half confirmed, the half from the days when he was in the New Zealand Spitfire Squadron in England. Sergeant D. Towgood (Wanganui) was a newcomer, while in another Spitfire squadron nearby were Sergeants E. Doherty (Gisborne), who left school to join the R.N.Z.A.F., R. Campbell (Dunedin), A. Heywood (Feilding) and Flight Sergeant K. Fraser (Riverton).

August, 1943, saw New Zealanders playing their full part in the Allied air offensive in the Mediterranean; they were flying almost every type of aircraft, doing all the jobs required by the North African air forces. They were bombing, day and night, road junctions, railway yards and airfields in Sicily, Sardinia and Italy. Flight Sergeant F. M. Spedding (Rotorua) was in a Marauder squadron after operations in the Middle East on Tomahawks and Warhaws. Warrant Officer D. S. McGregor (Dunedin) and Flight Sergeant Neville Freeman (Kilbirnie) were in the same squadron, Freeman shooting down a 109 and crippling a Regione 2000 when these two and another 109 jumped him out of the sun. McGregor was formerly in the Spitfire squadron, and had been responsible for the sinking of three enemy tankers sighted on shipping reconnaissance; Beaufighters came out and did

the sinking. Flying Officer W. J. Hoy (Wanganui), Flight Sergeants S. H. J. Bowsber (Grey Lynn), W. C. Jorgensen (Takapuna) and L. A. Russell (Ponsonby), all with a Baltimore squadron, were doing similar work to the others just mentioned. Flying Officer C. W. Price (Christchurch) was then the only New Zealander with an Australian Wellington torpedo-carrying squadron, working by night over the same area. He had then done 130 operational hours. New Zealanders were also then in the Wellington bombing squadrons, many having gone through Tunisia, and others from El Alamein. One Wellington squadron was then commanded by Wing Commander D. R. Bagnall (Auckland) who succeeded another New Zealander, Wing Commander Morton. Also in Wellingtons were Warrant Officer F. Judd (Masterton), twenty-four war flights; Sergeant B. C. Peffares (Stratford), 23; and Warrant Officer H. S. Shephard (Onehunga), on his second tour. With forty-six operations then to his credit, Sergeant P. G. F. Smith (Sandringham), former amateur golf champion of New Zealand, was regarded as one of the crack Wellington pilots in North Africa. Others in Wellingtons included Pilot Officer Clive Masters (Waipawa), Flight Sergeants R. Stowers (Hamilton), G. H. B. Wilkie (Marton), E. Hedges (Wellington), Sergeants S. Rutherford (Kaitangata), and J. F. Bailes (Ngaruawahia). Also in North Africa then were Flying Officers K. B. Rogers (Sandringham), W. D. Barney (Timaru), C. J. Blackie (Dunedin), W. G. Smith (Matakohe), and I. M. Godby (Christchurch).

One convoy forty miles long, which took ten minutes flying to cover from end to end, was among those met in the patrolling jobs of nine New Zealanders, stationed at the Mediterranean island, with four-cannon Hurricanes, shortly before the Sicilian campaign. They were Flight Lieut. D. F. Watson (Thames), Flight Sergeants W. Type (Wanganui), D. Jackson (Cheviot), J. S. Prentice, R. C. Shorthouse, R. Hayward, W. H. Carter (Auckland), C. McDonald, R. Cammock (Christchurch). Previously the squadron was stationed at Phillipville, in Algeria, patrolling over convoys as far as Bone and Algiers. Jackson and Cammock were among five pilots who attacked and shot down all four Italian torpedo-bombers preparing to attack a convoy. With the same squadron for a time was Flight Sergeant C. Ashworth (Alexandra), who shot down three enemy planes, while Shorthouse shared in the destruction of two.

Flying a Mosquito night fighter on forty operations over Sicily and Italy, Squadron Leader Paul Rabone (Palmerston North) before his return to England in October, 1943, had shot down three German aircraft, probably destroyed two, damaged three on a lake, sunk a minesweeper and blown up an ammunition and petrol train. Rabone went to France the day before war broke out with a Fairey Battles squadron. He shot down four Germans towards the end of the Battle of Britain and flew his Mosquito from Britain to Malta in eight hours. Before going to the Mediterranean he was flight commander of the New Zealand Beaufighter Squadron, but was so keen to get to Malta that he sacrificed a stripe and became flight lieutenant. He soon regained the rank of squadron leader at Malta. After the war he did fine work with UNRRA in Europe.

December, 1943, sees a reference to Wing Commander M. J. Earle (Wanganui), photographed in a serious talk with Air Commodore Whitney Straight at a New Zealand Air Transport field in the Middle East.

New Zealanders mentioned as fighter pilots from El Alamein to the Sangro River were Warrant Officer W. G. McConnochie (Blenheim), Flight Sergeants T. A. Gillard (Morrinsville), J. E. Batten (Wellington),

S. J. Fournau (Hastings), A. J. C. Rogers (Alexandra), T. Twiname and O. P. Cross (Auckland).

With the wings of his aircraft so close to the mountain sides that the Scottish rear-gunner was startled, the Auckland, Wing Commander D. R. Bagnall, D.S.O., D.F.C., and D.F.C. (United States), smashed a viaduct linking two tunnels on the Italian line to France. The delayed action bomb created a gaping hole and set afire an engine and three goods trucks. Bagnall had then (December, 1943) carried out over seventy operational raids in the Middle East, and won his American D.F.C. in Sicily.

In August, 1943, "Cobber" Kain's old Hurricane squadron, fighting with the Desert Air Force in Sicily, had as its commanding officer one of New Zealand's leading night fighter pilots, Squadron Leader E. L. Joyce, D.F.M. (Hamilton). Another who commanded the squadron was Squadron Leader Derek Ward, D.F.C., and Bar (Whangarei), one of the first desert pilots to attempt night fighter operations. Operating from England, Ward had selected the motto, "What the Hell" for his Hurricane fighter with a drawing of a special unlucky coat of arms—the figure thirteen, a broken mirror, a man walking under a ladder, and three cigarettes being lit from the same match. After shooting down two Dorniers early in 1940 he returned to his station with the gunsights shot away. Shot down on the Belgian-French frontier later that year, far behind the German lines, after shooting down several planes in combat, he was posted as missing, his affairs wound up and name removed from the squadron list. But he turned up. For ten days, disguised as a Belgian peasant refugee, he moved across country behind the German lines and passed their front by crawling through long grass and crossing a canal. "I got a lot of food from German soldiers," he said. "Most of the Belgians I met guessed I was English but did not give me away."

In September, 1943, the twenty-year-old Squadron Leader Bruce Ingram (Dunedin), commanding officer of the Hyderabad (Spitfire) squadron operating from Italy, brought his total to nine. Previously, from Sicily, his squadron shot down ten Ju. 52's, and two Me. 109's. This made the squadron score 109. The Nizam of Hyderabad sent his congratulations.

From a forward landing ground in Sicily in September, 1943, the *Melbourne Herald's* correspondent described "a murderous sweep over the Gulf of Milazzo, near Messina" when a wing of New Zealanders, Australians and Englishmen under the command of the New Zealander, Wing Commander Colin Gray, shot down twenty-one Junkers, fifty-two transports and five Me's. Flying Officer J. H. Maxwell, formerly of New Plymouth, shot down two planes which were attacking his commanding officer.

One of the most exciting stories of an air battle is credited to Sergeant James Robinson (Kakariki) in October, 1943. His wing commander summed it up this way: "The boy got on to a Hun and stuck to him like a shadow. The chase was terrific and it was a nightmare—a bad dream. That Hun proved himself one of the most skilful pilots I have ever seen. The rest of us who saw that amazing zig-zagging with their bellies almost touching the ground will never forget it. We could only gape." This is how it happened. Baltimore attacking railway connections on the Italian mainland, when the main Allied forces were still in Sicily, had four escorting Spitfires. Six Me's came down at them from the sun. Two were downed. But a German was hard on Robinson's tail, whipping in tracer. Robinson hauled his Spitfire around, half-rolled to take the Hun head-on, the first burst blowing up the Me. It was Robinson's first fight and first victory. Then he

spotted another Me. break away from three engaged by his mates several thousands of feet below. It climbed into the sun and Robinson gave the Spitfire the gun, dropping almost vertically on the Hun, who saw him coming and dived away at more than 500 m.p.h. The Hun tried to make Robinson overshoot by smacking out his flaps and throttling back but Robinson did the same and, while the Me. pilot was thinking out his next move, gave him a burst that knocked off chunks from the port wing. The Hun climbed swiftly at a granite cliff face, shooting upwards a few yards off, but Robinson gave the Spitfire's backbone a 100 per cent. test when he followed the Me. vertically up the cliff face. They were like two flies going up a window pane. Robinson turned over the cliff top 100 yards behind, his wing actually striking the turf, and pursued the Me. which was flying only 10 feet above ground along a valley bottom, ranged by granite cliffs 400 feet high. The fighters were doing 400 m.p.h. The Hun had run himself into a blind alley and a large round hill rose before him. The Spitfire, almost tipping the Me's wing cut off the escape. Everything had failed the German, so he tried circling the hill at ground level and, the third time round, Robinson let him have it. The Me's wing dug in the ground, somersaulted several times and blew up, portions being wedged in the Spitfire's underside as it zoomed up and out of the valley. When his wing commander asked Robinson why he did not let the German have it sooner, he replied: "I had a hunch I wanted to see who was the better pilot."

Helping to cover the Eighth Army's initial landing at Reggio and Calabria were four New Zealanders in an Australian Desert Kittyhawk Squadron, Flight Sergeants S. J. Fourneau (Hastings), T. A. Gillard (Morrinsville), W. G. McConnochie (Blenheim) and A. J. C. Rogers (Alexandra). They had operated with this squadron for nine months to October, 1943, in Tripoli, Tunisia, Sicily and Italy.

Squadron Leader W. R. Kofoed, D.S.O., D.F.C. (Outram), in an Australian Halifax Squadron, took part in the campaigns for Tunisia, Sicily and Italy. He had twenty raids on Germany before going to the Middle East and returned to England in October, 1943, after his sixty-sixth raid—on a Rhodes aerodrome. In the same Australian squadron with him was Pilot Officer G. S. Halley, D.F.C. (Palmerston North), who later went on to Liberators. Kofoed commanded at Taieri on his return to New Zealand.

After serving together in the same course in New Zealand and operating together in the same Blenheim squadron in Malta, then serving as instructors on the same station, Flying Officer O. W. Thompson, D.F.M. (Waipiro Bay) and Pilot Officer L. T. Weston (Christchurch), were together again in 1943 flying in the same squadron of Mosquitoes. Thompson made forty-four raids from Malta.

Flight Sergeants A. F. Swan (Inglewood) and W. J. Robinson (Kakariki), the latter after service with the New Zealand Spitfire squadron in England, were transferred to the North African theatre and flew with Group Captain Gray's squadron at Malta and later Sicily, forming part of the fighter cover for the 5th Army at Salerno. In this squadron at the time were Pilot Officer A. Peart (Raglan), Flight Sergeant B. E. Young (Auckland), Flight Sergeant "Sandy" Macdonald (Dunedin) and Sergeant P. Ryan (Avondale). When Robinson, flying with Peart as part of a formation of six Spitfires, was jumped by eight Me. 109's, he shot down two himself.

New Zealanders at Malta in December, 1943, included Flying Officers H. J. Burrett (Auckland), G. Simmonds (Whangarei), Pilot Officers D.

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Stewart (Hawke's Bay), G. M. Buchanan; Warrant Officers D. G. Palliser, Flight Sergeant Osborne, all flying Spitfires.

When a Spitfire squadron met and destroyed four Me 109's in five minutes over the Adriatic and Albania early in 1944, Squadron Leader Richard Webb (Gisborne) and Flight Lieut. Edward Schrader (Wellington) each destroyed one and shared in the destruction of others. Pilot Officer N. Harrison (Rakaia) was in the action. Webb was commanding the squadron.

From a height of seven miles, after a 100-mile chase, Squadron Leader R. W. Leven (New Zealand) shared with an English pilot of an R.A.F. Spitfire squadron a German plane over the Adriatic early in 1944.

The Tactical Air Force in Italy early in 1944 had several New Zealanders in its squadrons, including Flying Officer E. F. Edwards (Whangarei), Flight Sergeants H. S. McCullum (Opunake), C. Parkin (Bankside), all in the same squadron flying Mitchells; Flying Officer R. H. Crook (Auckland and Suva), on Baltimores. Edwards had done sixty-six raids, including the Tunisian campaign. His squadron moved from Tunis to Malta, Comiso, Gerbini, Brindisi and then further north, more recently in support of the Eighth Army.

McCullum had then completed fifty-one raids, helping to bomb the Kasserine Pass when the Americans were being pushed back. He did twenty-three operations in Bostons, sometimes three daily, during the final stages in Tunis. Once he returned with thirty-six holes in his aircraft. Parkin had twelve operations to his credit then, including one to Yugo-Slavia. Crook began operations at the Mareth Line, Pantellaria, Sicily, and Italy following. He had then visited twenty-four countries since joining the R.A.F. Others resting from operations then, included Flying Officer N. Dumont, D.F.C. (Gisborne), sixty-three operations, and Warrant Officer W. Petrie (Ashburton), sixty-five operations.

Flying with "Cobber" Kain's old squadron in Italy in 1944 (January) was Flight Sergeant E. M. Karatau (Turakina) the first Maori Spitfire pilot. He had already flown dozens of sorties over landing beaches since the invasion of Italy, and in support of Yugo-Slav partisans. The squadron also had Pilot Officer Ted Bennett (brother of Lieut. Colonel C. Bennett, former Maori Battalion commander), the first Maori fighter pilot to join the Desert Air Force. Ever since Kain became the first fighter ace, the Dominion had been well represented in this squadron; two C.O.'s, in Squadron Leaders Joyce and Derek Ward, and others in Warrant Officer W. J. Mygind (Pahiatua), Flight Sergeant John Horn (Wellington) and Flight Sergeant T. W. Buckley (Auckland).

Attached to the City of London Beaufighter Squadron in Italy in late 1943 and 1944, was Flying Officer H. B. Newton, D.F.C. (Urenui), who flew with the squadron above the 8th Army at night during the closing Tunisian stages, and at Malta. In a week Newton shot down a Savoia 82 with a 92ft. wingspan, near Palermo, and Junkers 88, near Syracuse.

New Zealanders were among Spitfire pilots of the Coastal Air Force fighting the Germans in Southern Europe in 1944. Two old Malta formations had New Zealanders. One of them, a Gold Coast Squadron, with 322 confirmed victories, had one of the highest R.A.F. totals. Kiwis with these two squadrons were Flying Officer A. Lamb (Dunedin), Flying Officer R. S. Caldwell (Marton), Flight Sergeants C. F. Jacobsen (Wellington), R. Austin (Rangiora) and K. C. Loe (Ward). In April, 1944, they were strafing Germans on the Dalmatian coast and co-operating with Marshal Tito's forces.

Flying Officer L. J. Montgomerie (New Plymouth) was among New Zealanders operating Spitfires from the most forward fighter aerodrome in Allied Italy in April, 1944. He had previously served in England, Tunisia and Sicily. He had then shot down two Me's recently, one a most unusual experience. He set fire to the Me. engine with one burst. He flew alongside to watch the disabled enemy, who carefully undid his harness, waved to Montgomerie, and parachuted safely behind his own lines.

The four hundredth enemy aircraft of a Spitfire wing, formerly of the Desert Air Force, and later operating in Italy, fell to Warrant Officer C. Young (Bulls) and a South African pilot. It was the first Spitfire wing based outside Britain to claim 400.

Flying Officer R. B. Hendry (Masterton), one of a formation of eight Spitfires from a squadron of the First Tactical Air Force, which shot down nine out of eighteen Me. 109's in an air battle north of Rome on May 7, 1944, scored a double kill in this engagement. The whole encounter lasted only four minutes.

Squadron Leader K. G. Hart (Invercargill), who had had to bale out over France during the air cover of Dunkirk, and then again during a dog-fight over southern England, had nine enemy aircraft to his credit by June, 1944. He joined the R.A.F. in 1938 and served in France, England, Western Desert, Sudan, Eritrea and Italy. As gunner in Italy in 1944 he had Flight Sergeant R. J. Frizzell (Christchurch), a two-engined bomber veteran, and in the same squadron, Warrant Officer H. S. McCullum (Opunake) observer. Frizzell, on his third night intruder flight behind the German lines, had to bale out when the two engines cut out, and his leg caught in his parachute harness. He fell several thousand feet and landed head first in a ploughed paddock, the only injury being a severe neck jolt. The plane landed in flames nearby. He was then in an R.A.F. squadron of Boston light bombers.

Kiwi fighter pilots on Spitfires in Italy in June, 1944, included Flight Sergeants Cedric Young (Bulls) and Allan Condon (Mosgiel). The latter had already been on operations over the North Sea in Tunisia and Gibraltar. Young flew Kittyhawks over El Alamein for two and a half months, was badly burned in a crash landing and then ferried planes to various North Africa sectors. Flight Sergeant Pat Newman (Timaru) was also there, after serving in the Eighth Army front where he shot down a Me. 109. Flight Sergeant R. Aubrey (North Otago) shared in the kill of another 190 with South African Major Osler, D.F.C., a cousin of the Springbok. Flight Sergeant M. Cooper (Devonport), was a desert Spitfire fighter, then in Malta, where his squadron covered the invasion of Sicily and the toe of Italy. He got his first success over the Anzio beach head with a Me. 109 and shared a Junkers 88 with an Australian.

New Zealand Spitfire pilots were based on Corsica for the assault on southern France and to provide fighter escort to the Allied Air Force. They included Flight Lieut. D. F. Livingstone (Tauranga), who got the D.F.C. for work over Cassino and Rome, Flying Officers C. Johnson (Dunedin), T. H. Cockerill and P. M. Boyle (Wellington), Pilot Officers E. H. Doherty, D.F.M., and H. H. Moore (Gisborne), and Warrant Officer J. T. Aspinall. Before the invasion Docherty and Moore were escorting American bombers flying over the Alps to bomb targets in Austria, and Docherty got two Me. 109's from Corsica. Three specialists (ground) in Corsica were Flight Sergeant S. J. Salt (Christchurch), Mentioned in Dispatches, L.A.C. C. R. Dahlberg (Wellington) and J. F. Allen (Te Puke).

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Flight Lieut. D. M. Rolph-Smith (Auckland), White Eagle of Yugoslavia (First Class), received the D.F.C., the citation saying he had completed many hours of operational flying involving long, arduous flights over mountainous areas in extremely adverse weather. He was in North Africa early in 1943, along with Sergeant R. W. L. Cargill (Wanganui). Two other New Zealand airmen who played an important part in the pioneer work of establishing contact with the guerrilla forces in Yugoslavia in 1942 by dropping agents were Squadron Leader A. J. Madill, D.F.C. (Auckland), and Squadron Leader J. H. Smith, D.F.C. (Dannevirke). Madill and Smith were awarded the Order of the Crown of Yugo-Slavia. The first flight by Rolph-Smith lasted fifteen and a half hours — over Italy, Greece, Albania, Yugo-Slavia, Rumania and Bulgaria. During 1942 some N.Z.E.F. men were dropped. They went with commandos, and their job was to destroy an important bridge on the only railway line linking Athens with the north of Greece. Squadron Leader S. W. R. Hughes, O.B.E., R.A.F., who got his award for exceptional courage and leadership in December, 1941, was later awarded the Greek Distinguished Flying Cross. Before the war he was a journalist in Auckland. At one time he commanded a sea-rescue flight in the Middle East.

In September, 1944 Flying Officer R. H. Newton (Wellington) had the distinction of being the oldest pilot of the Shark Squadron and one of the oldest of the whole Desert Air Force. He was at this time flying Mustangs in support of the Eighth Army in its drive up the Adriatic coast. He had done all his operational flying with the Shark squadron. He took part in the Allied invasion of Southern France, protecting gliders from ground fire.

Flying Officer D. Jackson (Cheviot), a Spitfire pilot stationed near Athens in November, 1944, was helping to make things uncomfortable for retreating German forces in the Balkans. He had then been three years away from New Zealand, fought with a Hurricane squadron in North Africa, and had a hand in shooting down three of four Savoia-Machetti bombers trying to attack a convoy near Algiers.

Cliff de Couter, D.F.C. (Tapanui), after three years overseas, including Gibraltar and Malta, was engaged in civil aviation in 1945 on the Sydney service.

Pilot Officer Kenneth Salt (Opotiki) was one of an R.A.F. unit in northern Italy occupying a former residence of Mussolini late in 1944. Salt spent some of his leisure looking at oil paintings of the former dictator in dramatic poses.

MIXED AIR GRILL

In endeavouring to give some account at this stage of the New Zealanders in the air war, "loose ends" have been unavoidable. With only seven New Zealand squadrons in the R.A.F., but New Zealanders distributed among 500 squadrons, many interesting items come to light which have no connected place in a review of the New Zealand squadrons. They are given, nevertheless, in the hope that they will prove of general interest because, wherever New Zealanders served, their standard was the same—the best. Those in the overwhelming proportion of R.A.F. squadrons not known as New Zealand squadrons, by their individual efforts, kept the name of

AIR DEEDS AND MEN

New Zealand as high as those fortunate to serve in our specially designated Dominion squadrons. Some of these accounts will show how well they succeeded.

"Cobber" Kain, educated at Christ's College, was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Kain, of Wellington. He trained at Rongotai under Squadron Leader G. L. Stedman, and at Wigram. He arrived in England in December, 1936, trained at Blackburn and Uxbridge, qualified, and, given his choice, took fighters. In November, 1939, he fought a brilliant single-handed action, five miles above an R.A.F. drome in France, to bring down the latest and fastest Dornier reconnaissance plane. Fragments were distributed as souvenirs. French troops gave him Lindbergh's nickname, the "Flying Fool"; his control was so perfect that he could "sweep off his comrades' caps." With Flying Officer A. V. Hunter (Auckland) he was Mentioned in Dispatches in February, 1940. By March, 1940, he had become the R.A.F. crack ace, with five officially credited, two in one encounter. He had then baled out twice. He became engaged to marry Miss Joyce Phillips, an English repertory actress. In May, 1940, a South Australian, Flying Officer Leslie Clisby, officially credited with fourteen, was ahead of Kain, who had eleven. The American news magazine *Time* gave Kain a write-up and photograph that month, recording that he was in England to recuperate from twenty shrapnel wounds in the left leg and hand. Later that month a Press message said that Kain and an unnamed Australian had each shot down twenty-five, and four others at least twenty each. Soon after, another Press message said that three R.A.F. pilots had shot down 100 between them, forty to Kain. These were unofficial figures.

The Australian, Noel Monks, who was London *Daily Mail* correspondent with the R.A.F. in France from the outbreak till the fall of France, published *Fighter Squadrons* early in 1941, dedicated to Kain's memory. According to Monks, Britain's Advanced Air Striking Force—the force sent to France when hostilities opened—consisted, in the fighter section, of only two squadrons: No. 1 and No. 73, the latter Kain's. The rest were bombers. Clisby once flew alone at a bunch of German fighters and bombers. He shot down three bombers, was put out of action by an Me. fighter and on his way down to land, damaged a bomber, forced it to land, came down himself nearby and captured the crew at revolver point. Clisby also led eight British Hurricanes which cleared the air of ninety German fighters over Maastricht Bridge to make way for British bombers which destroyed it. Of Kain, Monks wrote: "There will be other great British aces in this war before it is over, but I'll take Kain, the long, rangy boy from New Zealand, the wizard wind that blew down Nazi sky-forts as though they were leaves, the heavenly sharpshooter who wanted so much to live." Monks also tells of watching Kain tackle, in a Hurricane, forty Heinkel fighters and Dornier bombers, which broke their formations and scattered as though some great unseen power were among them. "He appeared to be playing leapfrog over them, diving under one and over the top of another." The Australian, Clisby, Monks records, was last seen going down in flames near Rheims on May 25, 1940; also that Kain got his twenty-fifth over Rheims on June 6, 1940.

Only two officer pilots, believed killed in action, were missing in the two fighter squadrons during their nine months in France. They came from No. 1 squadron and sold themselves dearly, having accounted for twenty between them.

Kain was accidentally killed on active service in France on June 7, 1940, at the age of 22.

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Owing to the destruction of records during the Battle of France, no official estimate has ever been computed of Kain's victories, but they are stated from England to be no fewer than 18. The standard of recognition of claims in the British Empire air forces is the highest in the world. There must be some corroborative evidence of a kill.

There are some remarkable family records of New Zealanders in the air war. From Gisborne alone, there were three sets of twins, and from Raglan, two. The New Zealand ace, Wing Commander Colin F. Gray, D.S.O., D.F.C. and two Bars, and the late Flying Officer Kenneth N. Gray, D.F.C., Czech War Cross (killed on operations); Flying Officers A. M. Singer, and P. L. Singer, both D.F.C., bomber pilots with a fine record over Europe; Flight Lieut. Wallace Spencer and L.A.C. Geoffrey Spencer (all Gisborne); Flight Lieut. H. C. Wilkie, D.F.C., and a twin brother (Wanganui); Pilot Officer F. A. Eden and Pilot Officer C. A. Eden (Auckland); Pilot Officers J. A. Jackson and T. A. Jackson (Raglan); Flying Officer A. Peart and Pilot Officer R. Peart (Raglan).

The Singers both joined the R.N.Z.A.F. in February, 1941, from Massey Agricultural College, went overseas in the same draft, were commissioned and promoted at the same time, and were decorated on the same day for operations in the European zone. Their elder brother, Surgeon Lieutenant H. G. Singer, R.N., was in a ship sunk off Crete and was twenty-four hours in the sea, being picked up to become a prisoner of war in Germany.

Four came from the Trollove family of Kaikoura, North Canterbury: Flying Officer J. N. Trollove, Pilot Officer P. Trollove (killed over Norway in June, 1940); Sergeant Pilot W. Trollove (killed in action, Pacific, May, 1944); Pilot Officer D. R. Trollove (killed in aircraft accident, 1943).

Three from one family included: Flight Sergeant T. Whyte, Flying Officer J. Whyte and Pilot Officer G. Whyte (Bayswater, Auckland); Squadron Leader Desmond Paterson, Flight Lieut. Keith Paterson and Pilot Officer John Paterson (Epsom); Flying Officer A. G. S. George, D.F.C., Flying Officer F. M. B. George and Pilot Officer C. D. George (New Lynn); Flying Officer Neville Cowan, D.F.C., Flying Officer James Cowan, and Pilot Officer Bruce Cowan (Hastings), James being killed in action after fifty flights over enemy territory; Squadron Leader M. J. Herrick, D.F.C., and Bar, New Zealand's air ace, reported missing, Pilot Officer D. T. Herrick, George Medal (died from wounds while prisoner of war), Pilot Officer B. H. Herrick (missing in 1941, presumed dead), and, in addition, three other members of the family, Lieut. T. D. Herrick, D.S.C., and Bar, R.N., Lieut. L. E. Herrick, R.N., and Lance-Corporal Jasper L. Herrick (all Hawke's Bay) served in the Forces; Pilot Officer G. C. Alington, Sergeant Pilots R. H. Alington and G. W. Alington (Invercargill). The Gray twins (one killed) also had a brother in the Army who was lost on active service.

Two brothers from one family included: Flying Officer A. A. Gawith, D.F.C., Sergeant P. M. Gawith, D.F.M. (Masterton), both decorated; Flying Officer James M. Smith, D.F.C., and Flight Lieut. the late John M. Smith, D.F.M. (Te Awamutu); Squadron Leader W. G. Clouston, D.F.C., and Pilot Officer J. G. Clouston (Wellington), both in the New Zealand Fighter Squadron together in 1941; Flight Sergeant F. H. Thompson, D.F.M., and the late Flying Officer O. Thompson (Waipiro Bay); Pilot Officer B. Cullinane, D.F.M., and Pilot Officer M. D. Cullinane, D.F.C. (Wanganui); Sergeant Pilot F. L. Hookway and Flight Sergeant F. R. Hookway (Auckland); Flight Lieut. J. C. Paterson (killed in action) and L.A.C. Bruce

Paterson (Papakura); Flight Lieut Graham B. Jones and Pilot Officer E. Lindsay Jones (One Tree Hill); Pilot Officer John Foy and Flight Sergeant Edgar Foy (St. Helier's); Flying Officer C. F. H. Mansfield and Flight Sergeant A. A. Mansfield (Auckland); Flight Sergeant Bruce McAuley and Sergeant J. T. McAuley (Newton); Flying Officer Desmond Hamblyn and Sergeant Pilot Douglas Hamblyn (Parnell); Wing Commander A. A. N. Breckon, D.F.C., and Flight Lieut. I. O. Breckon, D.F.C. (Northcote, Auckland); Pilot Officer R. D. Lewis, D.F.M., killed, and Flight Sergeant W. R. Lewis, killed (Remuera); Flight Lieut. R. D. Lamb and Sergeant E. Lamb Roslyn (both killed); J. B. Starky, D.F.C., D.S.O., Pilot Officer D. B. Starky killed; Flying Officer N. Gardiner, D.F.C., and Flight Sergeant P. Gardiner (Rakaia; seven of the family of ten were in the forces); Flight Lieut. R. A. McDonald and Flight Sergeant Ken McDonald (Wadestown, a companion in the Wellington Regiment and subsequently lost on active service); Wing Commander H. R. Wigley and Squadron Leader "Sandy" Wigley (Timaru); Squadron Leader H. R. Hall, D.F.C., and Pilot Officer R. G. Hall (Wellington), the latter lost in the Battle of Britain.

The ranks and other particulars given in all these cases are those stated at the times publicity was first given to the fine records of these families. Practically all of the men mentioned were on active flying operations, and many of the families also had sons (some daughters) in other branches of the Armed Forces. One case which does not come within the category of more than one son in the Air Force is still worth mention. Derek L. Richards, R.N.Z.A.F. (Woolston, Christchurch), had seven brothers in the 2nd N.Z.E.F., one in the Home Guard, and one in the E.F.S. The remaining and eleventh brother in the family was medically rejected for service.

A famous squadron which was commanded in World War I by Group Captain K. L. Caldwell and earlier in the last by Group Captain Malan, the South African fighter ace, was commanded in Belgium in September, 1944, by Squadron Leader J. C. F. Hayter, D.F.C. (Nelson), and nearly half of the squadron's pilots were New Zealanders. Hayter got a short-service commission in 1939 and flew Fairey Battles in the Battle of France in 1940, when he shot down a Henschel 126. He shot down four more enemy aircraft during the Battle of Britain, flying Hurricanes, and three more during sweeps before going to the Western Desert in March, 1942, to command a squadron of "Hurribombers" which strafed enemy transport during the El Alamein retreat. Then he went to Turkey, instructing Turks in the use of Hurricanes and Kittyhawks for five months. Hayter's squadron, from Daba, made several attacks on Crete, being re-equipped with Spitfires and sent to Cos. When Cos fell to the Germans, a German missed Hayter at a range of twenty yards while he was telephoning. Hayter wrecked the telephone, and with three other members of the squadron, ran for the hills with Germans in full chase. They roamed the hills for several days, killing and cooking sheep for food. Then they linked up with ten special boat service commandos and found a caique in which they sailed to Cyprus. The squadron was re-formed there and did sweeps over Rhodes, returning shortly after to England where it joined Wing Commander Crawford Compton's wing. During this war the squadron had shot down more than 200 enemy aircraft; nine to Hayter. The squadron, when commanded by Hayter in Belgium, was in the wing of Group Captain Malan who had, as wing leader in charge of operations, Wing Commander Crawford Compton. New

Zealanders in the squadron, flying Spitfires, were Flight Lieutenants F. Hardman, J. L. Shanahan, C. U. M. Davis (Auckland), B. Tapley (Dunedin), Flying Officer W. W. Peet (Dannevirke), Warrant Officers J. Church, I. W. Butler, N. Carter, D. L. Johnston (Auckland), J. Eyre (Ngaruawahia). While Hayter took command eighteen months earlier in the Middle East, his New Zealanders had joined fairly recently and operated since it landed in Normandy in August, 1944, including actions when the Germans were wiped out at Falaise, on the Seine and at Rouen. Later, they had bombed German positions at Boulogne and Dunkirk. Hayter was one of four pilots trained at Wigram who had won the D.F.C. by June, 1940. The others were Flying Officer T. B. Fitzgerald (Temuka), for a successful, daring, low-level attack at Sedan when leading a flight of three Fairey Battles (the other two piloted by Hayter and Flying Officer Thomas); Pilot Officer E. W. Tacon (Napier); Pilot Officer F. H. Long (Masterton) and Pilot Officer K. N. Gray. Others engaged around the same time were Flying Officer C. E. Malfroy (the New Zealand tennis player), with an auxiliary fighter squadron (two Germans already to his credit), Flying Officer R. D. Max (Nelson), Croix de Guerre, Pilot Officer E. Morton (Auckland) and Pilot Officer V. A. Cunningham (Wellington). Later, Fitzgerald, then Squadron Leader, was the hero of one of the most unusual episodes of the war, which was the subject of a special Air Ministry communique. Detached from Fighter Command to test Hurricanes and Typhoons for the Hawker Aircraft Corporation, he was flying an old Hurricane, which had been used in the Battle of Britain, when a Dornier 217 came out of the clouds over the East Midlands. Fitzgerald, though on a test flight, climbed at once to attack with guns that had not been used for a long time. He hit the Dornier, at 200 yards, in the port wing, and got another burst in at 400. Then the enemy made off. Fitzgerald got his D.F.C. in May, 1940, for gallantry in the Battle of Sedan in which he was a bomber pilot. Fitzgerald was subsequently in New Zealand but in October, 1944, was back in the R.A.F. Fighter Command leading a wing of the latest type of Spitfire. He was described in the Press as "one of the famous few" who fought in the Battle of Britain.

A Hawera airman, Flying Officer (later Squadron Leader) W. H. Stratton, was one of three British Hurricane pilots which attacked nine Me. 110's., within a week of their appearance on the Western Front—they were then Goering's "sky terrors"—and shot down three of them. Stratton was the last New Zealander to join the R.A.F. He had gained his "A" two years before with the Hawera branch, Western Federated Flying Club. He was a member of No. 1 Squadron, R.A.F., one of the two Hurricane squadrons (the other was No. 73) which accompanied the British Expeditionary Force to France at the start of the War. He was awarded the D.F.C. in 1940, acted as an instructor in Rhodesia under the Empire Air Training Scheme, fought in Western Desert operations, took No. 134 squadron under his command to India and operated on the Burma Front; for his service in these later campaigns he was awarded a Bar to his D.F.C. Stratton returned to New Zealand in September, 1944, on transfer to the R.N.Z.A.F.

Corporal C. B. G. Knight (Christchurch) won the first decoration for the R.N.Z.A.F.—the D.F.M.—on December 14, 1939, with No. 99 Bomber Squadron when one of the crew in a Wellington commanded by Squadron Leader (now Air Commodore) A. "Square" McKee (Oxford, North Canterbury).

Many of the British airborne troops who took part in the invasion of France received their glider instruction from a New Zealand airman, Flight

Lieutenant F. J. Palmer (Auckland). Palmer flew Spitfires over the North Sea for some time, and then, after a period of instructing in Britain, he was drafted to an air school to give elementary glider training to men who subsequently took part in the invasion of Europe.

A New Zealander, Flight Lieut. C. W. H. Thompson (Stratford), had a part in the flight of the first air train to cross the Atlantic to Britain in June 1943. The train consisted of a fully laden glider towed by a twin-engined Dakota, of which Thompson was co-pilot and navigator, and it was a journey of 3,500 miles over a secret route occupying 28 flying hours. The glider carried vaccines for Russia, radio, aircraft and motor parts. The average speed was 125 miles an hour, but would have been faster had not thunderstorms, snow and ice been met with en route. This was the first time such a trip had been made across the Atlantic, or any other ocean. The glider had an eighty-four-foot wing span, and the freight load was one and a half tons. Thompson, a son of the mayor and mayoress of Stratford, began a short-service commission in July, 1939, flew 350 operational hours in Hudsons, bombed Stavanger, joined the R.A.F. Transport Command in November, 1941, as flying and navigation instructor. He was loaned to the British Overseas Airways Corporation for six months, when he acted as co-pilot and navigator to Captain Moll (the famous Netherlander who took part in the Melbourne Centenary air race), when he flew from Canada over the South Atlantic to Cairo and then to England. The passengers included Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands. It was his second South Atlantic flight, the first being in December, 1942, when he delivered an aircraft to West Africa and was offered three Christmas dinners on the way back—over Brazil, Trinidad and Porto Rico. The glider flight made front-page news in all papers and was compared with Alcock and Brown's Atlantic crossing of twenty-four years before. The crew was referred to as "men who made history." Thompson gave all credit to the glider pilot, Squadron Leader R. G. Keys, D.F.C., R.A.F., saying that the others were just Keys' stooges.

A New Zealand, Flight Lieutenant L. H. Edwards (Patea), took part in one of the first aerial combats of this war. On the third day of the war he was flying an R.A.F. Anson reconnaissance plane off the coast of Heligoland when an enemy Blohm and Voss seaplane appeared and these now-antiquated craft had a set-to. Hindered by gun stoppages, the Anson fought till three of its crew were killed or wounded. Riddled with bullets and afire, it plunged into the sea and disintegrated. The unconscious form of the pilot and only survivor, Edwards, floated up from the wreckage, and the enemy plane circled and landed and picked him up. Edwards became the first New Zealander and the first British officer to be captured in this war and he was a prisoner of war for five years till repatriated, reaching London five years and a fortnight after being shot down.

Squadron Leader A. E. Clouston, who became Group Captain at thirty-six, with D.S.O., D.F.C., A.F.C. and Bar, is one of New Zealand's most distinguished airmen—a man born to fly. He began in Marlborough, learning on a D.H. Moth at £3 an hour, made a record-breaking flight between Cape Town and New Zealand, and by May, 1944, had flown 183 different types of aircraft and 4,035 flying hours. Early in 1944, he was given command of a station which had both New Zealand and Australian Beaufighter squadrons based on it. This promotion followed his command of a Liberator squadron for a year. Clouston entered the R.A.F. in 1930, did a short-service commission in Fighter Command till 1935, and was appointed one of two civilian test pilots for the Air Ministry at Farborough. He tested many new types,

including the Spitfire and Wellesley, and experimented with barrage balloon cables, first flying into thin string suspended from toy balloons, then using thicker and thicker string, next line wire and thicker wire with larger balloons, and so on, until the standard balloon and cable for barrage purposes was decided on. He was recalled to the R.A.F. as squadron leader when war began, continuing his work as test pilot. Testing a Spitfire during the Battle of Britain, flak directed his attention to a Me. 110, which he chased and damaged. It was last seen going down into the Channel. On the chase, he saw a Heinkel 111, which he shot down. He was posted to a Beaufighter night-fighter squadron in October, 1940, flying 52 hours seeking raiders during the London blitz. Soon after he was engaged in the development of radio-location, and in 1941, appointed wing commander in charge of a squadron. During that period he helped to form nine new squadrons. In February, 1943, at his own request, he was transferred to Coastal Command, where he commanded a squadron of Liberators on anti-submarine patrols between England and Gibraltar. Once, sighting a U-boat through binoculars, seven miles away, he ordered an immediate attack, and so accurate was the enemy anti-aircraft fire, that thirty-six holes were shot in the Liberator. But the U-boat went down for good. Once, four Ju. 88's attacked his Liberator and in a fifty-minute running fight, he eluded them with only six cannon-shell holes in the Liberator's rudders. Clouston said that his gunners, one of them was Sergeant A. J. P. Souter (Wanganui), saved his life that day. Souter was later reported missing on operations. In 1938 the first Award of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Aero Club was made to Clouston.

"Have shot down two fighters. Attacked by three on target. Target bombed and aircraft damaged. Returning to base." This dramatic message, sent by the wireless operator of a Halifax, Flight Sergeant E. I. Sammfield (Kaihere) after an attack in south-western Germany in December, 1942, was typical of the New Zealand spirit.

New Zealand pilots were flying Hurricanes at Chittagong in Burma early in 1943. They included Flying Officers Roy Lyray (Auckland), I. H. Duff (New Plymouth), and Warrant Officer J. V. McIvor (Hastings). McIvor and Lyray had successes round this period.

Two New Zealanders took part in the R.A.F. highly successful raids against the Ruhr dams; Flight Lieutenant L. Munro (Gisborne) and Flying Officer (radio operator-air gunner), L. Chambers (Karamea). The Lancaster piloted by Munro did not reach the target, being hit by light flak which damaged the inter-communications, so vital on this operation, but Chambers said that the Mohne dam had just burst when his aircraft left, and he saw a bridge and power-houses smashed by the rising water.

Twenty-one-year-old Squadron Leader Michael Anthony Ensor, was an air and sea war prodigy in September, 1943, with the D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, and ranked among Coastal Command's leading six aces. When he was with the No. 500 County of Kent Squadron, it made thirty-seven attacks against submarines in fourteen days. He was then flying his "S for Sammy" Lockheed Hudson, scouring the Mediterranean. On one sub. he released depth charges from fifty feet, which collapsed the conning tower and hurled the sub. gun high into the air. The force of the explosion struck the aircraft like a thunderbolt, smashing every window, busting all instruments, damaging the ailerons and blowing the rudder and elevator almost off. The plane nosed down and Ensor's three companions raced to the tail to balance it. Then as the tail dropped they raced back to the nose. It was a life or death seesaw with "S for Sammy" bucking like a broncho in an aerial rodeo.

Ensor got it to 1,500 feet and set a course for Algiers. The starboard motor cut out, then the port. Ensor ordered the crew to bale out. The packs of the navigator and wireless operator, damaged by the explosion, failed to open, and they shared the fate of a great aircraft. Ensor and the rear-gunner were more fortunate. His score by August, 1943, was five subs. At twenty-three, Ensor was promoted wing commander in charge of a squadron in Coastal Command. He had risen from pilot officer in under three years. In Coastal Command he shared with Wing Commander E. H. McHardy, D.S.O., D.F.C., and Bar (Waipawa) the distinction of being the youngest New Zealander to command a squadron in Coastal Command and, with Wing Commander G. D. Sise, D.S.O., and Bar, D.F.C., and Bar, that of the most highly decorated New Zealander, having been awarded a Bar to his D.S.O. early in 1945. Ensor's promotion emphasised the fine part played by New Zealanders in Coastal Command. At this time, in addition to Group Captain A. E. Clouston, D.S.O., D.F.C., A.F.C., and Bar, of Nelson, who commanded a station, others who commanded or had commanded coastal squadrons included Wing Commander G. D. Sise, D.S.O., and Bar, D.F.C., and Bar (Dunedin); Wing Commander E. H. McHardy, D.S.O., and Bar (Waipawa); Wing Commander J. S. Dinsdale, D.S.O., D.F.C. (TeKuiti); Wing Commander L. A. Robertson (Auckland). Other outstanding Coastal Command pilots were Squadron Leader D. H. Hammond, D.S.O., D.F.C., and Bar (Christchurch), and Wing Commander E. W. Tacon, D.S.O., D.F.C., and Bar (later prisoner of war). Squadron Leader P. J. Lamason was shot down in 1944 and was picked up by members of the French underground movement. He was discovered in Paris and taken from there in the last German train to leave. He had two months in a concentration camp before going to Stalag Luft III, Sagan, Silesia.

The former Canterbury sprint and hurdles champion, Warrant Officer Leslie Woodward (Christchurch) was, in August, 1943, the only New Zealander in a Hurricane tank-busting squadron. He hit two German 600-ton supply ships off Holland.

Flying Officer G. A. Williams, D.F.M. (Napier), shot down a Japanese plane during the raid on Calcutta on the first Sunday in December, 1943. Flight Lieutenant A. A. Cooper (Wanganui) winged another.

The unique experience of circling round a blitzed German city which had been so badly damaged that the guns and searchlights did not go into action against him was had, late in 1943, by Flight Lieut. D. D. Perrin, D.F.C. (Invercargill), who had three years' experience of the European air war. He hunted German bombers, returning from bombing Britain, with the Czech night-flying wizard and train-busting technique inventor, Karrel Kuttelwascher. He was in Hurricanes till after Dieppe, when he transferred to Typhoons to which the squadron had switched.

Robin Miller, the New Zealand war correspondent, flew on a bombing trip to Berlin in a Lancaster captained by his brother, Squadron Leader Denis Miller, D.F.C. (Auckland). When Squadron Leader Miller bombed Stuttgart in March, 1944, it was his forty-fourth operation. Also in this 1000-bomber raid were Flight Sergeant C. R. Marriott (Christchurch) and Sergeant J. H. Barton (Southland), who, despite serious damage from a Junkers 88, proceeded on to bomb the target and got their craft back with difficulty.

A New Zealander, Air Commodore A. McKee, C.B.E., D.S.O., D.F.C., A.F.C. (Oxford), early in 1944, was commanding the group of stations from one of which New Zealanders were operating Lancasters, and many had

taken part in the recent series of big raids against Berlin, some going there three times in four nights. Except Squadron Leader P. J. Lamason, D.F.C. (Napier), who began his second tour with a raid on Brunswick, all were on their first tour, and included Flight Lieut. T. W. M. Harris (Cromwell), Flying Officers E. S. Henzel (Christchurch), H. N. Burrows (Gore), Pilot Officers D. G. Goodwin, J. L. Funnell (Auckland), W. L. Wilson (Waipukurau), G. R. Franton (Taranaki), Flight Sergeants I. Tvrdeich, C. S. Benson, M. J. Sparks, K. Dunlop (Auckland), G. D. Heathcote, R. Short (Dunedin), M. Johnston (Christchurch), D. G. Blackmore (North Canterbury), F. S. Sewell (Wairarapa), G. Gardner, C. Thurston (Wanganui), Hilford (North Auckland), D. Y. Andrews (Hokianga), J. R. Court (Woodville), R. G. Payne, E. Featherstonhaugh (Hamilton), L. Compton (Wairarapa). McKee, in 1940, had completed fourteen years' service in the R.A.F. He tried to get away in the Great War with the Canterbury Yeomanry Cavalry, when seventeen. He became interested in flying and between 1922 and 1924 learned to fly at his own expense, J. L. Findlay (now Air Commodore) being his instructor. He gave up sheepfarming in 1925 to join the R.A.F. on a short-service commission, being stationed first in Egypt and then for five years in India with No. 27 Squadron. When he returned to England late in 1932 he had 1,350 hours to his credit for operational and test-pilot flying. He did some ferrying back to India, Irak and Egypt, and in 1938 was Staff Officer, No. 3 Group, Bomber Command. On the outbreak of war he was appointed a flight commander with No. 99 Bomber (Wellington) Squadron. He became commander of No. 9 Squadron in March, 1940, as wing commander, taking part in operations over the Low Countries and France, the Battle of France, and the Ruhr Valley. In November, 1940, he was No. 3 Group Training Instructor, and eight months later Group Captain in charge of a station, going on many operations, including the May, 1942 1,000-bomber raid on Essen. His next appointment was as Air Commodore in charge of a base directing three bomber stations. His was another outstanding example of those New Zealanders who heard the call of the air early, determined to answer it, and did so with great distinction.

A varied and distinguished air career has been enjoyed by another New Zealander, Air Vice-Marshal Charles R. Carr, C.B., C.B.E., D.F.C., A.F.C. Carr was educated at Wellington College, served with the New Zealand Forces, 1914; Royal Naval Air Service, 1915; R.A.F., 1918; Lithuanian Air Force, 1920; Shackleton's Antarctic Expedition, 1921; made the first R.A.F. long-distance flight, England to Persian Gulf, non-stop, 1927; R.A.F. Egypt, 1929-33; *H.M.S. Eagle* (aircraft-carrier), China, 1936-39; Advanced Air Striking Force, R.A.F., France, 1939-40; A.O.C., R.A.F., Northern Ireland, 1940-41; A.O.C., No. 4 (Bomber) Group, R.A.F., 1941; Air Marshal Commanding base air forces, South-East Asia, 1945; A.O.C.-in-C., India, 1946.

Another New Zealander who achieved distinction was Group Captain U. Y. Shannon, D.F.C. (Oriental Bay, Wellington). He joined the R.A.F., commanded No. 30 Squadron, Irak; also a squadron which fought the Germans in Greece. He returned to New Zealand in 1942 and served eighteen months with the R.N.Z.A.F., subsequently returning to England. He received his award for outstanding courage and devotion to duty.

New Zealanders in two squadrons operating Mitchells bombed radio-controlled rocket installations in northern France in March, 1944. One of the most experienced men in these two squadrons was Flying Officer C. L. M. Forsyth, D.F.M. (Tauranga), who had done sixty-eight operations as an air gunner and previously many night raids in Intruders and Bostons. In

the crew of Flight Sergeant A. A. Mansfield (Auckland), who celebrated his twentieth birthday by attacking a target in northern France, were Flight Sergeants E. S. Harrison (Waverley), and H. R. Durant (Wellington). Flying Officer H. G. Findlater (Dunedin) also had two New Zealanders in his crew, Flight Sergeants S. M. Moss (Napier) and E. J. Fry (Wellington). They had done fourteen raids in five weeks. Flight Sergeant Corich (Wellington) was then flying with Flight Sergeant T. S. Kelly (Wellington). Flying Officer G. A. M. Struthers (Hawke's Bay) and his navigator, Flight Sergeant T. E. Brown (Hokitika), returning on one engine, found their aircraft in trouble when the undercarriage was let down to land. Struthers avoided some cottages, but hit high-tension cables. They escaped serious hurt. Flying Officer H. M. Hawthorn (Wellington) was air gunner in a crew which had done seventeen raids in four weeks. Flight Sergeants R. S. Anstey (Wellington), L. H. Jarvis (Wellington), and J. B. Winter (Invercargill) had done ten raids together. Other New Zealanders at the same station were Flying Officers D. J. Martin (Palmerston North), C. D. Chammen (Christchurch), J. H. Corvin, Warrant Officer W. J. Murland (New Plymouth), Flight Sergeant H. B. Deeley (Hawke's Bay), M. J. Miller (Kaihiku) and D. G. Burness (Waimate).

A Leigh light aircraft, with Flight Sergeant H. J. Mills (Gisborne) as air gunner, and Flight Sergeant F. Bailey (Blenheim), radio operator, attacked six U-boats in two operational flights in April, 1944, using depth-charges and cannon-fire. Debris was thrown up from one after the depth charge exploded.

Flying Officer N. W. Webbin (Wellington), an intelligence officer in Coastal Command, was eight months stationed in Iceland, before being attached to a Beaufighter squadron attacking North Sea shipping.

In May, 1944, there were two brothers in the same squadron flying Mitchells—Flying Officer C. F. H. Mansfield and Flight Sergeant A. A. Mansfield, both Auckland, with thirty-four and thirty-seven operations respectively to their credit. In a raid on IJmuiden, the former returned with seventy holes in his aircraft; the latter had one motor knocked out and had to fly through a balloon barrage to make a forced landing. Flight Sergeant M. J. Corich (Christchurch) had then completed forty-two operations and Flight Sergeant G. Burness, D.F.M. (Waimate), thirty-one.

Squadron Leader D. F. Westenra, D.F.C. (Dunsandel) was commanding officer of a Mustang squadron early in June, 1944, and while leading it on patrol, sighted four Focke Wulf 190's. After a sixty-mile chase, three were shot down, one by Westenra, to make him nine. Also in the same Mustang wing, commanding another squadron, was Squadron Leader E. L. Joyce, D.F.M. (Hamilton), who came from North Africa with eight kills and a great name as a night-fighter, and added a Heinkel 111 shortly before D Day. He was reported missing on operations in the latter half of 1944. Flight Lieutenant B. Collins (Marlborough) and Flying Officer Ashworth (Alexandra) were also in Westenra's squadron. Collins shooting down a Me. 109 on June 10, when six Mustangs tackled twenty Me.'s. This made Collins four. Westenra fought in Greece, Crete, Libya and Italy before coming to England. Flying with a formation of Mustangs of the Tactical Air Force in April, 1944, Flight Lieutenant R. Barrett (Wellington) shot down a Focke Wulf 190.

Scores of New Zealanders played their part in the landing of the Allied airborne army in Holland. Pilots and crews were in the fleets of heavy aircraft which attacked airfields in Holland and Germany, and other objec-

tives, as a landing prelude. Others flew in escorting fighters and helped to man the tug planes which towed gliders from English bases to the landing points. One of these pilots was Squadron Leader D. S. Gibb (North Canterbury).

Three enemy planes were shot down and one damaged in twenty minutes over the Normandy beach-head, early on the morning of July 30, by Flight Lieutenant G. E. Jensen, D.F.C. (North Canterbury). This put his score to six.

Flying Officer J. Whyte (Auckland) shared the destruction of a U-boat in the Bay of Biscay, with another Wellington, the latter being forced down to sea and hitting and severely damaging the U-boat, only one of the crew surviving (a Wellington man). Whyte, captain of the other Wellington, finished off the U-boat with a stick of depth charges which forced its stern out of the water. Whyte saw some of the crew dive from the conning tower and others hurled into the air by the explosion.

Typhoons were being operated from the most advanced airfields near Brussels in September, 1944, by Flight Lieutenants P. Langston (Marton) and J. E. Palmer (Auckland), while the wing in which Pilot Officer N. J. Scott (Central Otago) was operating, smashed eighty German tanks at Mortain in one day. The Falaise pocket, he said, was just a massacre.

Five rocket-firing Typhoons, led by Flight Lieutenant Earle Brough, D.F.C. (South Otago), were dived on by 25 Me's and Focke Wulfs, the latter being the first German air formations to tackle Typhoon rocket-firers. This was in the Arnhem battle area of Holland on September 26, 1944. Brough and Flying Officer H. O. Pattul (Dunedin) each damaged one. Then, according to Pattul: "I think they were scared; they just made dirty darts and, as we turned in toward them, faded away."

Pilot Officer J. A. Moller, D.F.M., was in the R.A.F. raid which resulted in Hitler's Brown House in Munich being burnt down. He was in all the 1,000-bomber raids on Germany and once returned from Essen with 156 flak holes in his aircraft. He had done two tours with bombers and many trips over Germany in Pathfinders. Thrice to Turin, once to Genoa and the Skoda armament works at Pilsen were among his experiences. He returned to New Zealand in September, 1944. A companion on the trip home was Flying Officer Moon who had been in seven raids on Berlin and others on Milan and Turin. A twenty-millimetre cannonshell passed into his chest, through a lung, out of his back and then exploded. Lieutenant R. Goldstone, back at the same time on transfer to the R.N.Z.A.F., had served in the South African Air Force on coastal duties from West Africa and as an instructor.

With the spectacular exploits of New Zealanders in aerial combat the deeds of other long associated with commercial flying are apt to be overlooked. One such instance is that of Captain Walter G. Pudney, formerly of Wellington, whose great-grandfather, Joseph Pudney, and his wife, arrived in the *Aurora* at Pito-one Beach in 1840. Their son, Joseph, was believed to be the second white child born in Petone. Captain Walter Pudney, when only 17, joined the third reinforcements of the First N.Z.E.F. in 1914. He was wounded on Gallipoli and invalided to England. He recovered quickly and was commissioned in the Royal Flying Corps, and fought in France. He served with the R.A.F. for several years after the war, and then branched out into civil aviation pioneering in a firm in which he was a partner. He returned to the R.A.F., then went to the R.C.A.F. as an instructor and later did similar work for clubs in England. He began a survey of West African aerial routes in 1931 in a Blackburn Bluebird (Gipsy III), continuing this

exploratory work for several years. He has more than 10,000 flying hours to his credit. During the present war he was specially mentioned in London as one of the pioneers of the Imperial Airways route across Africa by means of which great quantities of supplies and hundreds of aircraft were ferried to the Allied forces in the Middle East and Near East. The United States Lend-Lease Administrator, Edward R. Stettinius (later Secretary of State) paid a tribute to the pioneers of this route when he said: "It could not have been done without the British. They pioneered the way, built a skeleton air route complete with weather stations and radio beams. They taught the West African natives to man weather stations and service the planes." A London paper added to this tribute that "men like Captain Pudney and other members of the original band of Imperial Airways pilots are now flying the trans-African routes and other Empire air routes for the British Merchant Air Service operated by British Overseas Airways."

Flight Lieut. Leonard Ernie Clark, of Christchurch, who flew solo from England to New Zealand in 1936, was awarded the D.F.C. in January, 1941. He had been commissioned in the R.A.F. in November, 1939. In his 1936 flight in a Percival Gull, he left England on October 26 and reached Darwin on November 5. After some days in Sydney he flew the Tasman in twelve hours fifty minutes, landing at Blenheim and proceeding almost immediately to Christchurch where he landed in darkness.

A New Zealander, Air Commodore H. D. McGregor, was appointed air officer commanding in the Levant in succession to Air Commodore Coleman. This was in November, 1944, when McGregor was only 34 and one of the youngest officers to hold air rank. He commanded a squadron during the Battle of Britain and was a member of the special staff which drew up the plans for the invasion of Europe.

Early in 1945, as a result of the policy of enlarging the Fleet Air Arm, 100 members of the R.N.Z.A.F. were transferred to fly with the Navy. One outcome was that several New Zealanders had the experience of having worn the uniforms of all three services in this war. Flying Officer J. J. Bishop (Auckland) when a second lieutenant in the N.Z.E.F. was transferred to the R.N.Z.A.F. during 1943, when there was a surplus of Army officers. He was trained as a pilot in the R.N.Z.A.F. and then joined the Fleet Air Arm. Others in the same position included Flying Officers G. M. J. Brown, of Auckland, and V. H. Maisey, of Cambridge.

Two New Zealand airmen were awarded the Military Cross in this war—Squadron Leader E. D. Crossley (Wellington) in 1942, and Flight Lieutenant G. Allen (Whangarei) in 1945. Crossley with two others escaped from Hongkong to the mainland in a sampan. On the first night they were attacked by five armed bandits and on the second by sixty.

The events following the invasion of Europe naturally saw a considerable traffic of "very important persons" between England, France, Belgium and Holland. Several New Zealanders, who had previously completed a tour of operations, served in a communications squadron, flying "Vips." These men included Flight Lieutenant C. P. Cowan (Whangarei), Flying Officers E. J. Fry (Wellington), J. W. A. Johnston (Auckland) and H. G. Findlater (Dunedin), and Pilot Officers E. D. Moon and J. R. J. Bailey (Christchurch).

Flight Sergeant N. P. Burgess (Christchurch) and his crew, whose four-engined bomber crashed behind the German lines just north of Caen on D-Day, took sixty prisoners. They were taken prisoner first and on June 7 found themselves sharing a slit trench with their captors to shelter from British mortar fire. That night they all shifted to the basement of a burnt-

out château. That was a hot night for all—bombs and naval shells. At daylight the German commander asked Burgess to take him and his party prisoners and scout round for a British Tommy. Burgess (radio operator) and the navigator found one and marched the sixty Germans to brigade headquarters. The airmen were taken in a captured German staff car to the beach-head and boarded a ship about to sail for England.

Pilot Officer V. R. Jamieson (Auckland), a New Zealander who shared one of the best-kept secrets of the war—the dropping of arms and supplies to the resistance movement in Europe—received the award in September, 1944, of the Distinguished Flying Cross for gallantry and outstanding service on air operations. Supplies for the Maquis who liberated Paris were dropped in substantial quantities by the R.A.F. Bomber Command, which had been supplying the underground forces of occupied countries for a considerable time. In September an official announcement ended a period of complete secrecy about the constant supply of arms from England to Europe.

Since April, 1944, when he began his second tour of operations, Pilot Officer Jamieson had flown as rear-gunner in Stirling bomber to many secret rendezvous. He saw containers dropped by night on selected areas, where "reception committees" of the underground forces were waiting to collect them. In three months 10,000 containers of food, as well as weapons, were dropped by the R.A.F. in operations calling for particular skill and courage. Pilot Officer Jamieson was on this job eleven times. The D.F.C., however, was the reward for a large number of sorties, including attacks on Dortmund, Dusseldorf, and Berlin. Over the latter city one night he destroyed two enemy fighters. He shared the destruction of two others.

A record flight from Australia to New Zealand was made on February 5, 1945, by a Liberator of the R.A.F. Transport Command piloted by Captain D. Teel, who comes from Texas. The actual time for the flight was five hours thirty-five minutes from Mascot aerodrome, Sydney, to Whenuapai. Teel had then recently brought a Liberator to Sydney on a record non-stop flight from Guam. West-bound, Lieut. J. Kuver, U.S.A.A.C., flew a B-25 Mitchell from Whenuapai to Mascot in five hours four minutes on April 4, 1946—a record.

Air Marshal R. V. Goddard (Air Officer in Charge of Administration, South-east Asia Command), former Chief of the Air Staff, New Zealand, was presented with the American Distinguished Service Medal for "exceptionally meritorious and distinguished service to the Government of the United States in a duty of great responsibility as Chief of Air Staff and Officer Commanding the R.N.Z.A.F. in the South Pacific area from December, 1941, to July, 1943."

New Zealanders were in a wing of Mitchell medium bombers operating from Belgium in December-January (1945) which accounted for many Germans in attacks on troop concentrations near St. Vith. Those who took part in this and other bombing raids on enemy communications and armour in von Rundstedt's salient were Flying Officer N. D. Freeman (Dunedin), Pilot Officer W. T. Anderson (Christchurch), Sergeant I. M. Comrie (Wellington), and Warrant Officer H. T. J. Fernandez (Auckland). This wing previously carried out several raids on German positions in northern Holland, including the Venlo and Maas bridges.

Flying Officer Freeman, who previously operated Blenheims and Marauders in the Mediterranean, was mentioned in dispatches and had done sixty-five operations, thirty-two of which were in Mitchells.

AIR DEEDS AND MEN

The navigational officer for the wing was Squadron Leader R. A. Reece, D.F.C., D.F.M., Christchurch. He joined the R.A.F. in 1938, and fought through the Battle of France in 1940 in Blenheims. He took part in several attacks on shipping in the Mediterranean in 1941 and was at one time a member of the New Zealand Ventura Squadron. He later flew with a Mitchell squadron and made many excellent attacks on flying-bomb bases before the invasion. He won the D.F.M. for his first tour in Blenheims and the D.F.C. for his work with Mitchells.

Little is known of the deeds of New Zealanders in Burma but even were full accounts available, that of an R.N.Z.A.F. air gunner, Flying Officer John Spencer Horan (Auckland), would more than deserve mention. Though fatally wounded, and with one hand blown off, he remained at his post and undoubtedly saved the lives of the rest of the crew. It was stated in an official news dispatch from the Air Command, South East Asia, in January, 1945, that a Sea Otter rescue aircraft was on a reconnaissance trip off the Akyab coast when it was suddenly discovered that eight Japanese Oscars were on its tail, two of which came in to attack. Flying Officer Horan, gunner in the Sea Otter, opened fire. Two minutes later he reported that he was hit. The first navigator went aft and found him unconscious with his left hand blown off. Recovering consciousness as he was being dragged back into the fuselage, Horan insisted on returning to the guns. He jammed them against his chest and continued to hold off the enemy.

The engine was now on fire, the instrument panel shattered, the flaps shot away and the tail ablaze. Bullets from the enemy were continually passing through the aircraft. Horan received seven further wounds on his head, but his fire never failed. He fired 800 rounds and was still firing as the pilot managed to land the blazing aircraft outside the breakers and beach her. Flying Officer Horan died immediately. Two hours later, the remainder of the crew including the navigator, Flight Sergeant J. A. Lawson (Onehunga) were flying again, and succeeded in rescuing a Spitfire pilot from the sea.

Flying Officer Horan was 24. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. P. Horan, reside at Manurewa, Auckland. Before he joined the R.N.Z.A.F. Horan was employed on a farm at Okoroire. He was educated at the Matamata District High School and left New Zealand for the United Kingdom in April, 1940.

On the Burma front in January, 1945, a landing by Fifteenth Corps forces on Ramree Island, Arakan coast, sixty miles south of Akyab, was preceded by a terrific bombardment by British, Australian and Indian warship and Liberators and Mitchells carrying New Zealand and Australian crews. This was the third amphibious attack of the Burma war. One Liberator was captured by Flying Officer J. E. Haycock (Nelson) and another by Flight Lieutenant R. C. Wallace (Fiji and Epsom). Flying Officer J. A. Wilkinson, D.F.M., also took part. For the great part they played in helping the army to capture a heavily defended Japanese position in Burma, one of the oldest R.A.F. squadrons in existence had the distinction on January 26, 1945, of being presented with a captured Japanese sword by the air officer in command of the group, Air Commodore, the Earl of Bangor. The squadron, which was commanded by a New Zealander, Squadron Leader J. M. Cranstone (Wanganui), operated with the Eastern Air Command. Another New Zealander, Flight Lieutenant R. S. Jenkins (Manurewa), was one of the squadron's flight commanders. Soon after, another squadron in India commanded by a New Zealander was presented with a Japanese ceremonial sword. The sword was captured by West Africans in the Kaladan Valley and presented to an Indian Air Force Squadron of the Eastern Air Command.

The commanding officer was Squadron Leader Geoff S. Sharpe (Gisborne). The presentation was made on the third birthday of the squadron to mark the gratitude of the soldiers for the valuable close support it had provided.

Squadron Leader Sharpe first served in Singapore, then he was with the well-known No. 67 Squadron in Burma till the fall of that country. After that he was for a period a staff officer at Air Headquarters, India, and later commanded a fighter training squadron for twelve months.

Squadron Leader J. S. Humphreys (Otaki), commanded a squadron of Hurricane bombers of the Eastern Air Command which bombed a target sixty miles beyond the recognised range of their aircraft. The squadron not only bombed it but strafed the Japanese as well, earning high praise from the 14th Army. Squadron Leader Humphreys flew with the Hurricane squadron in the Battle of Britain and later operated on Typhoons before going to India.

In the first rescue of its kind on the Arakan front, a resourceful New Zealand air-sea rescue pilot made a gallant effort to save the life of his seriously wounded navigator. This was officially reported in February, 1945. Flying with the air-sea "Manna from Heaven" Squadron in Sea Otter amphibians, Flying Officer C. G. Beale (Napier) was engaged on air-sea rescue work when he was suddenly attacked by six Japanese "Oscars." His navigator was seriously wounded. Beale tried to locate as quickly as possible a hospital ship he had seen in the vicinity some time previously. When he finally located the hospital ship it was escorted by destroyers. Replying to signals from the aircraft, she instructed the pilot to put down beside a destroyer. A doctor and medical orderlies were pulled across to the aircraft. After one glance at the patient, the doctor decided to make for the hospital ship immediately. So while he stayed aboard the aircraft, the destroyer's boat filled with medical orderlies was hitched on behind and towed to the miles-distant hospital ship. He had previously picked up a Canadian pilot from the sea during the Akyab recapturing operation.

Leaving New Zealand for the United Kingdom in April, 1941, Beale arrived in India in February, 1942, with the first fighter wing, proceeding straight to Burma under the command of the celebrated fighter ace Wing Commander "Chota" Carey. Later, while a member of the first Spitfire squadron to operate on this front, Flying Officer Beale shot down two Japanese aircraft.

Flying Officer Arthur N. Sanes, D.F.C., had a remarkable record. He flew in a Spitfire squadron for more than 800 hours, transferred to rocket-firing Typhoons in which he flew nearly 500 hours, shot down two and a half enemy planes, shared in the destruction or damage of twenty-five ships, one tank destroyed and planes shot up on the ground. He also operated against flying bombs and took part in sea rescues.

The distinction of being a medical officer with "wings," having served with the Main Body of the 1st Expeditionary Force on Gallipoli, the Royal Flying Corps on the Western Front as pilot and observer, is held by Wing Commander J. Garfield Stewart, M.C., R.A.F., of Takapuna, Auckland. He was appointed to the R.A.F. medical service as wing commander in 1940, was at the Air Ministry, London, for a year, then senior medical officer to a Fighter Group, served in Iceland and three years in India. On his return to New Zealand in May, 1945, he said that until recently the R.N.Z.A.F. men in India were rather a legion of the lost. The existing tour of duty—three years for married men and four years for bachelors—was too long. He found as supervisor of medical services to stations spread over 500,000 square

miles that the incidence of sickness was higher in India than any other part of the world. The incidence of sickness more than doubled itself each year and the tour of duty was uneconomical at three and four years, let alone the six-year service of the Army. The American tour of twelve to eighteen months was long enough in a country where the sickness rate was extremely high. A shorter tour would not only mean less sickness but more efficiency. These observations of Wing Commander Stewart show the difficulties under which R.N.Z.A.F. personnel served in India.

The first New Zealander to set foot on German soil in the invasion of occupied Europe was believed to be Squadron Leader Douglas Haig Palmer (Wellington) of the R.A.F. (Second Tactical Air Force). He went to Normandy at the beginning of September, 1944, with the British forces. He flew in France in close contact with the Army and was the only New Zealander to enter Brussels at its liberation.

Even though his Mosquito aircraft was attacked by five Messerschmitt 109's and forced out of a formation, Pilot Officer C. G. Baker, D.F.C., of Wellington, and formerly of Timaru, flew on with one engine to make independent bombing runs. Pilot Officer Baker was subsequently killed in action and did not live to receive the award. After his bombs were seen to burst on the primary target, Pilot Officer Baker's aircraft was burning fiercely and a crash landing had to be made. That was accomplished successfully without injury to pilot or crew. The occupants of the aircraft had to crawl for a quarter of a mile through a cornfield to evade capture and reached the British lines in face of shell fire from both sides. They surmounted barbed wire entanglements, mines and booby traps, and they were able to furnish valuable information. After leaving base to attack the Comiso airfield in Sicily on July 8, 1943, nothing more was heard of Pilot Officer Baker.

A New Zealander who had given distinguished service with Bomber Command and was involved in the war from the outset, Air Commodore Geoffrey Twyford Jarman, D.S.O., D.F.C., R.A.F. (Lower Hutt), returned to New Zealand on loan in 1943 as Deputy Chief of the Air Staff when Air Vice Marshal Isitt became Chief of the Air Staff. Jarman, formerly with the Public Works Department survey staff, went Home at his own expense and was given a short service commission in the R.A.F. in 1930. He was then 24. He was appointed to a permanent commission when his short service commission expired. He was awarded the D.F.C. in April, 1941, and four months later, the D.S.O. in recognition of his further distinguished service. Born at Ashburton in 1906, he received his secondary education at Wellington College and represented North Otago at Rugby.

A Spitfire pilot, Flight Lieutenant L. T. Hunter (Nelson), shot down a Japanese aircraft in operations over Burma in September, 1944.

Two New Zealanders were in hermetically sealed Mosquitoes which flew over Mount Everest. One was Flight Lieut. Jack Irvine (New Plymouth and Auckland) and the other Squadron Leader C. G. Andrews (Wellington). They were jockeyed off their course by monsoon conditions in July, 1945, and flew two hours trying to avoid turbulent cloud. Suddenly they came into clear sky over Everest. They were flying at 30,000 feet. The planes of the formation filmed the glittering crags and glaciers, possibly for the first time. In the same plane as Irvine and Andrews was Wing Commander McConachie (London) who took part in the Houston expedition to Everest.

The R.A.F. Fighter Wing in Russia in 1941 was led by the New Zealander, Group Captain H. N. G. R. Isherwood (Lower Hutt). He has long service with the R.A.F. from 1930, including four years on the North-west

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frontier; a short period in Abyssinia; test pilot at Martlesham Heath (1936) when he was one of the first to fly a Spitfire, being a close friend of R. J. Mitchell, the designer; Russia, 1941; command of R.A.F. Battle Supply Wing, Burma, 1945. Isherwood and three others were awarded the Order of Lenin as an expression of thanks for the work of the R.A.F. Wing in Russia. By July, 1945, he had 2,915 hours in his logbook and was still flying at least once daily.

Squadron Leader H. R. Hall, D.F.C. (Wellington), commanded the giant Lancaster, *Aries*, which made missions to Empire air stations in Africa and India to demonstrate the latest navigational methods and equipment. Hall was chief lecturer and demonstrator. Halls holds the Gold Eagle award for members of Pathfinders making at least forty-five flights. His younger brother, Pilot Officer R. G. Hall, was lost in the Battle of Britain when nineteen. The *Aries* set out in May, 1945, on the first exploratory flight ever made by the R.A.F. to the North Pole. The automatic pilot failed shortly after leaving base but the long flight was accomplished almost entirely under manual control. The captain, Wing Commander D. C. McKinley, was awarded a Bar to the A.F.C. Four other members of the crew received the A.F.C. or A.F.M. and the rest were commended. McKinley led the Lancaster goodwill flight to New Zealand in October, 1944. In 1946 Hall was granted a permanent commission in the R.A.F., and appointed to command a post-graduate navigation school.

Flight Lieut. Wally Mills, a New Zealand Catalina captain, rescued two Australian fighter pilots in a week after they had baled out in Japanese-held territory and escaped through enemy lines. In one case—that of Flying Officer F. Inger, Sydney—after being signalled that there was a depth of more than six feet in a narrow jungle stream which Inger reached, he landed the Catalina on a stretch barely wide enough for the wings to clear the jungle-fringed banks. The other pilot rescued less than a week before was Squadron Leader P. Jones (Sydney).

A New Zealander, Wing Commander Alfred Harding, D.F.C. (Wellington), commanded a Dakota squadron of No. 229 Transport Command, R.A.F., India, which covered more than 1,000,000 miles in 7,500 hours' flying to be the fourth holder of the Group Airmanship Cup presented by Air Marshal Sir Ralph Cochrane, Commander-in-Chief R.A.F. Transport Command. The squadron operated daily services from Delhi round the east and west coasts of India to Ceylon, and in the first six months of 1945 recorded 2,000,000 miles of flying in 14,500 hours. Only two minor incidents occurred during this period, and there were no mechanical failures of aircraft in flight. All transport squadrons of this group maintained an exceptionally high safety standard. When the Japanese surrender was announced the groups of the services had completed a year free of fatal accidents, a year in which 8,500,000 miles and 61,000 hours had been recorded.

FOR VALOUR

The deed for which the late Flying Officer Lloyd A. Trigg, D.F.C. (Auckland), was awarded the Victoria Cross was one of the outstanding actions of gallantry of the air war. He attacked a U-boat when his own aircraft was already in flames, knowing well that he could have no possible chance of survival. With him perished four other New Zealanders, Flying Officer I. Marinovich (Auckland), Flight Sergeant T. J. Soper (Takaka), Flight Sergeant A. G. Bennett (Wellington), Flight Sergeant L. J. Frost (Auckland), and a Canadian and two members of the R.A.F. At the time of

his death. Trigg had an outstanding record of service on convoy, escort and anti-submarine duties. He had completed forty-six operational sorties and had invariably displayed skill and courage of a high order. The citation accompanying the award of the V.C. stated:—

"One day in August, 1943, Flying Officer Trigg undertook as captain and pilot a patrol in a Liberator bomber, though he had not previously made any operational sorties in that type of aircraft. After searching for eight hours the Liberator sighted a surfaced U-boat. Trigg immediately prepared to attack. During the approach the aircraft received many hits from the submarine's anti-aircraft guns and burst into flames, which quickly enveloped the tail. The moment was critical. Trigg could have broken off the engagement and made a forced landing in the sea, but if he continued the attack the aircraft would present a no-deflection target to deadly anti-aircraft fire, and every second spent in the air would increase the extent and intensity of the flames and diminish his chances of survival. There could have been no hesitation or doubt in his mind. He maintained his course in spite of the already precarious condition of his aircraft and executed a masterly attack. Skimming over the U-boat at less than fifty feet with anti-aircraft fire entering his open bomb doors, Flying Officer Trigg dropped his bombs on and around the U-boat, where they exploded with devastating effect. A short distance farther on the Liberator dived into the sea with her gallant captain and crew. The U-boat sank within twenty minutes and some of her crew were picked up later in a rubber dinghy that had broken loose from the Liberator. The Battle of the Atlantic has yielded many fine stories of air attacks on underwater craft, but Flying Officer Trigg's exploit stands out as an epic of grim determination and high courage. His was the path of duty that leads to glory."

Trigg was born at Houhora, North Auckland, in 1914, educated at Victoria Valley and Kaitiaki primary schools, Whangarei High School and Auckland University College. He was a lover of the outdoors, though he had a successful scholastic career, and worked on many stations and farms throughout the North Island till 1940 when he became an agricultural machinery salesman. He married Miss Noalla McGarvie at Carterton in 1937 and there were two sons of the marriage. He was awarded the D.F.C. in June, 1943.

THE R.N.Z.A.F. AGAINST JAPAN

R.N.Z.A.F. squadrons operating in the south and south-west Pacific areas flew a total of 21,468,000 miles from the opening of hostilities in the Pacific up to V-J Day. They carried out 54,670 sorties against the enemy and were airborne for 158,800 operational hours. They shot down 103 Japanese aircraft, ninety-nine of which were accounted for by fighters, probably destroyed fifteen, and damaged sixteen. Another ten enemy aircraft were destroyed by American aircraft receiving ground control from R.N.Z.A.F. radar units. Their count of shipping destroyed was conservatively given at 200, mostly barges and other small craft, with a further 300 claimed as probably destroyed or damaged. In addition, they claimed one submarine probably destroyed, and two probably damaged.

New Zealand pilots were at the Japanese within a matter of weeks after the blow at Pearl Harbour. Fighter Squadron No. 488 pilots were on the final stages of their training when Japan struck. This squadron reached Singapore in October, 1941, took over twenty-one Brewster Buffaloes from the R.A.F., fought a short and bitter campaign in the battle for Malaya.

Out-machined and out-numbered, they shot down four Japanese planes, damaged and probably destroyed others, for the loss of one pilot and three missing. The squadron was partly re-equipped with Hurricanes towards the end of January, 1942, but they had to evacuate before trying out what were then high-class fighters.

Besides this New Zealand fighter squadron, there were also New Zealanders, serving in the R.A.F., in the Malayan campaign. No. 34 Bomber Squadron, R.A.F., for instance, had eleven New Zealanders, and in an R.A.F. fighter squadron was Sergeant B. S. Wipiti, D.F.M., New Plymouth (later reported missing on operations with the New Zealand Spitfire Squadron in the rank of Flying Officer), who, with Sergeant C. Kronk, Napier (killed in aircraft accident at Calcutta), shared the honour of bringing down the first Japanese bomber over Singapore Island. Pilot Officer C. Wareham, D.F.M., was decorated for his photographic reconnaissance work over Malaya. He was later with the A.T.C. in New Zealand.

The 488 Squadron was serviced by New Zealand ground staff who finally evacuated Singapore with the infiltrating Japanese only a few hundred yards off their aerodromes. The ground staff remained after the pilots left by air on February 6, 1942, under instructions to maintain 232 Squadron, recently arrived from England. They were the last ground staff to remain on the island. After destroying everything that could possibly be of use to the enemy, they left Kalang aerodrome and embarked for Batavia. Forced to evacuate at the same time was the New Zealand Aerodrome Construction Unit, which had been engaged in building landing strips at Johore and Singapore. They suffered heavy bombing both before and after evacuation. One section of the Aerodrome Construction Unit saved the ship which evacuated them, helping to fight off bombers, man the engine-room, plug bomb holes in the hull, and carry out other emergency repairs.

The 488 Squadron operated in Batavia for a few days with the Hurricanes, and again were forced to evacuate, this time on a dash to Fremantle, Western Australia. Prior to evacuation, many were killed, injured, or were subsequently listed missing, while others escaped to India where they continued the fight.

In addition to these, other New Zealanders came out to India with R.A.F. squadrons from where they fought the Japanese. From Pearl Harbour to the end of 1942, approximately 1,000 New Zealand aircrew personnel were serving between the Middle East and India. On re-forming in the United Kingdom, 488 was equipped with Beaufighters and, later, Mosquitoes, but the personnel who returned to New Zealand on March 24, 1942, provided the nucleus of a Pacific squadron, soon to be fighting back the Japanese, and showing that, with good planes, they would tackle the enemy at any odds. These personnel claim they are the original 488, but officially, anyway, those who went to the United Kingdom and were re-formed have the honour.

Here it is worthwhile re-stating that to fight the Japanese in the air, even at equal matching, was no push-over. The Jap. had his weaknesses as an airman, but he had strong points and, generally speaking, these might be summarised as courage, determination, the win-or-die psychology, fanaticism, and, asking no quarter, giving none. In the air fight with the Japanese, there was none of that occasional sportsmanship which, at least in the last war, had it place in dog-fights between British Empire and German fighter pilots. It was "kill or be killed."

This brief reference to those New Zealand airmen who hit the Jap. early in Malaya does not start the history of what eventually became New

Zealand's special sphere of operations against this foe. A year before the Japanese came in, the R.N.Z.A.F. was providing air reconnaissance and shipping escorts in the Pacific, in addition to carrying out normal operational training there. The Tasman Empire Airways flying boats, *Aotearoa* and *Awarua*, were also employed on special reconnaissance duties beyond shore-based aircraft (at that time), special flights being carried out in connection with the sinkings of the *Turakina*, *Rangitane* and *Holmwood*.

When the balloon went up in the Pacific, New Zealand airmen left the mark smartly enough to enable United States heavy bombers to be using an island base, built by an aerodrome construction unit, within a month after Pearl Harbour. A New Zealand bomber reconnaissance unit had already been a year in the Pacific. In the year 1942-43 the R.N.Z.A.F. was represented at four Pacific locations by bomber-reconnaissance, flying boat and fighter squadrons.

Between the outbreak of the war with Japan, and the opening of the Second Front in Europe, R.N.Z.A.F. fighters in the Pacific had destroyed ninety-nine Japanese aircraft, with their losses one-fifth of this total, plus a further thirteen probables and fifty probably damaged. Bombers had accounted for one gunboat, one probably destroyed, one submarine sunk, another probably destroyed, many enemy barges destroyed, and, as a mere routine, innumerable damaging attacks on Japanese installations and ships. It is no braggadocio to state here that when a New Zealand airman is credited with a shoot-down or any other success, the victim has been well and truly laid low, and that when they set out to bomb a target, that is where the bombs land.

In considering the performance of the R.N.Z.A.F. in the Pacific theatre, it is pertinent to bear in mind that these squadrons operated under United States control. Their job was to do the task allotted them. They performed this in such a way as to earn the highest respect and regard of the Allies commanding in this area. It could not be otherwise. These were the same New Zealanders who have made so notable and courageous a contribution to the air victory in Europe. Their skill, courage and ability was not affected by location. Wherever they were, they gave the utmost.

Once all danger to New Zealand and Australia had passed there was some criticism of the strength of the R.N.Z.A.F. in the Pacific. There were, however, wider issues involved and also considerable transport problems, the latter caused through lack of shipping. This meant irritating delays in sending squadrons and servicing units further forward. The wider issues were the future of the Pacific, from an Anzac viewpoint particularly and that of British interests generally. It may well have been a case where the interests—even the morale—of individuals had to take second place to national and Empire considerations. In this respect I express the view that it is a sorry outlook for the future if agreement cannot be reached with the Americans in respect of areas where Anzac, British and United States interests, from a defence viewpoint, are probably identical. A more vital problem in the days of peace may be that of which nation is prepared to expend considerable capital in the development of the almost untapped natural wealth of the Pacific.

The navigational work of the New Zealand airmen in the Pacific was always outstanding; of tremendous value to the United States air, land and sea forces. When New Zealand aircraft did navigational escort for Allied aircraft on bombing and other missions, it was a cinch that they took them right to the spot and home again. One pilot told me how a United States

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officer expressed his opinion of New Zealand navigators' ability. He said: "I guess you fellas must have some sort of 'intooishin'." It wasn't intuition; just good training and application to the job, however unspectacular.

Before New Zealand sent operational squadrons into the South Pacific to meet the enemy, this country's role in the war with Japan underwent a change from the defensive to the offensive. The strategical situation, and with it the threat to these shores, was changed by the Coral Sea (May 4, 1942) and Midway Island (June 4 and 6) battles, and the landing of United States troops in the Solomons.

Once the immediate threat was removed, the policy was bold, not self-centred; based on a wide conception of the Dominion's duty and responsibility. Fighter and bomber forces moved forward into the Pacific to co-operate with U.S. Forces, and a bomber squadron, from Henderson Field, Guadalcanal, on November 14, 1942, had the honour of being the first R.N.Z.A.F. bomber squadron to engage in operations; the first echelon of this squadron had left New Zealand on October 2. Months before, as already stated, bomber-reconnaissance squadrons, operating from an island base, had provided a large measure of air cover for increasing Allied shipping movements.

Then came the fighters, the nucleus of pilots from the old 488, with the first echelon leaving New Zealand on March 26, 1943, equipped with Kittyhawks (14 Squadron). No. 15 squadron was formed at Whenuapai in June, 1942, and by October moved part way up the Pacific to take delivery of more Kittyhawks from a United States pursuit squadron. This latter New Zealand squadron was actually the first to reach the combat zone—Guadalcanal, April, 1943. Others continued to move forward from New Zealand at regular, brief intervals.

The New Zealanders had good aircraft, but not the most modern, and during 1943 and early 1944, re-equipment of the squadrons began with Ventura PVL's in lieu of Hudsons, and Corsairs in place of Kittyhawks and Warhawks.

All bomber-reconnaissance squadrons in the forward area had each completed more than 3,000 hours of operational flying during the year ended March 31, 1944, while one which had remained in a forward area six weeks additional to its normal tour, had done 4,776 hours. The general rotational plan was for bomber-reconnaissance squadrons to do three months in a combat area, three months in a support area, and six months in New Zealand; the similar plan for fighters was, six weeks, three weeks, and nine weeks, respectively. The rotational plan for servicing units was on longer terms.

In fact, New Zealand fighter squadrons operated as a fighter wing from a forward area from October, 1943, but the wing was not officially recognised until December 8, 1943, when Wing Commander T. O. Freeman, D.S.O., D.F.C., R.A.F., of Dunedin, was appointed commanding officer. He landed the first operational aircraft at this area on October 21, 1943, and it was the first occasion on which an R.N.Z.A.F. commanding officer had United States forces under his control. Freeman, after a distinguished career, was reported missing following the first R.N.Z.A.F. attack over Rabaul on December 17, 1943. He was succeeded by Squadron Leader J. S. Nelson, and the wing moved forward again in January, 1944. The wing then came under the command of Group Captain, then Wing Commander, C. W. K. Nicholls, D.S.O., R.A.F., and by November, 1943, its tally was sixty-two enemy aircraft destroyed. Group Captain Nicholls (Auckland), appointed officer commanding the R.N.Z.A.F. Fighter Wing and officer in charge of fighter oper-

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ations at Torokina in February, 1944, was the first airman to gain the D.S.O. in the Pacific. He received an immediate award. Nicholls showed complete disregard for his personal safety and the citation stated that it was due primarily to his untiring efforts that continued operations from the Torokina base were possible. In addition to his work as controller of the airfield, he took part in twenty-one operational missions, usually as leader of a fighter wing. Nicholls was born in Palmerston North, educated in Auckland, and gained an "A" licence with the Auckland Aero Club. He left for England in 1934 and was appointed to a short-service commission in the R.A.F. He served five years in the Middle East and Kenya before returning to England to take a post as test pilot. He fought day and night in Hurricanes during the early stages of the Battle of Britain. He then did test piloting for the Air Ministry. He returned to New Zealand on loan in 1943. His father, Captain C. L. Nicholls, was adjutant, 5th (R.I.) Lancers during the Great War; and later settled in New Zealand.

Around this time came one of the highlights of the R.N.Z.A.F. fighters in the Pacific. An example, not of wanting to fight with an even break, but just to get at the enemy under any conditions. Flight Lieutenant (later Squadron Leader) R. H. Balfour, of Waimate, was leading a section patrolling inland from Empress Augusta Bay, when thirty-five to forty Zeros were seen 200 feet below. Four Warhawks went in amongst them, five Nip. pilots died for the Son of Heaven, and at least six more Zeros were damaged.

A month later R.N.Z.A.F. fighters made their first raid on Rabaul and in three days had destroyed seven Japanese aircraft in combat. Freeman led the first sweep, sent down a Zero, only to be shot down himself. This was a great loss, as not only had he proved himself all of a fighting leader in the Pacific, but he had a high reputation behind him as a bomber pilot in the European theatre. Others who shot down Zeros in those early engagements over Rabaul were Flight Lieutenant Vanderpump, D.F.C. (United States), Flying Officer J. Meharry, Flight Sergeant E. C. Laurie, Flight Sergeant D. A. Williams, Sergeant A. S. Mills. Vanderpump also had an unidentified enemy aircraft to his credit.

Over the grimly defended Japanese key base of Rabaul, R.N.Z.A.F. fighters fought their biggest action in the Pacific in December 24, 1943, when Warhawks shot down twelve Japanese for certain, with six others probably destroyed or badly damaged. Two R.N.Z.A.F. squadrons of twelve each and twenty United States Hellcats fought in this engagement. The New Zealanders were led by Squadron Leader Arkwright and Squadron Leader Newton. Every pilot made contact with the enemy. The attack was led by Arkwright's squadron, while Newton and his men followed down. The engagement started at 18,000 feet over Rabaul harbour and finished at sea-level. There was a general dog-fight with everyone working round in some piece of sky. While they were following their enemies down the New Zealanders ran into another batch of Zero fighters and flew straight through them. The R.N.Z.A.F. fighters became heavily outnumbered and fought themselves clear of the enemy forty miles off Rabaul. In this action Zeros fell to Squadron Leader Newton (Wellington), Flying Officer D. L. Jones (Christchurch), Flying Officer G. R. B. Highet (Wellington), each two; Squadron Leader Arkwright (Marton), Flight Lieutenant J. H. Mills (Auckland), Flying Officer A. G. S. George (Auckland), Flying Officer A. G. Mitchell (Auckland), Flight Sergeant I. P. Speedy (Bulls), Flight Sergeant P. A. Tilyard (Wellington), one each.

While the R.N.Z.A.F. fighters failed by one to reach 100 in the south-west Pacific (Wing Commander R. J. A. Oldfield shooting down the ninety-ninth on February 13, 1944), other units claimed aircraft, to make the R.N.Z.A.F. total over the century. The one hundredth enemy aircraft downed in the Pacific fell to fighter pilot, Flying Officer H. E. Boucher, over Rabaul, on January 28, 1944. With Rabaul, the number of targets had greatly diminished by the end of April, 1944, and the lack of enemy fighter opposition caused squadrons to be converted to fighter-bombers. By May, 1944, Rabaul had been completely nullified as an offensive enemy base.

About this time the fighter wing was being re-equipped with Corsairs, and the wing came under the command of Wing Commander J. A. Oldfield, D.F.C., and later, Wing Commander Quill.

Only five of the R.N.Z.A.F. fighter squadrons in the South Pacific were fortunate enough to encounter the enemy and shoot him out of the sky. Later squadrons did valuable strafing and patrol work, when bomb racks were fitted. Three of the fighter squadrons did three tours of duty.

The first actions by R.N.Z.A.F. fighters in the Pacific took place when Guadalcanal was being hard-pressed and subjected to many daylight bombing attacks. In those days two squadrons took part in many interception attacks when a start was made with the difficult task of pushing the Japanese back along the Solomons. The squadrons stood guard over troops and shipping and many engagements were fought, outstanding examples being the battles over Rendova and Munda when one squadron gained most of its victories. Similar actions were fought during the landing on Vella Lavella over New Zealand troops taking part in the assault, one squadron shooting down seven Japanese planes in one day during an enemy attempt to interfere with the landing operations.

The first large-scale action by R.N.Z.A.F. fighters was on June 7, 1943, when forty Zeros were intercepted by Allied forces over the Russell Islands and twenty-three were shot down for the loss of seven, twelve Japanese being credited to the New Zealand squadron taking part. Zeros were claimed by Squadron Leader M. J. Herrick, Flight Lieutenants Greig and Duncan, Sergeant Martin. October, 1943, saw the fighters' score, fifty.

Four Warhawks, led by Squadron Leader Herrick, patrolling between the Treasury Island and Bougainville, sighted seventy enemy aircraft. The Warhawks attacked; in a brief engagement, Flying Officer A. M. Davis (Wellington), and Sergeant A. M. Cliffe (Ngaruawahia) got one each, with Squadron Leader Herrick and Flight Lieutenant G. H. Grimsdale (Dunedin) sharing one. Four pilots of another New Zealand squadron were in the same area, and Flying Officer L. A. Rayner (Wanganui) got one enemy. Herrick, who was D.F.C., and Bar, later returned to England, where he had served as a Hurricane pilot in the Battle of Britain and shot down five German planes. He was reported missing on air operations.

Great work was done by R.N.Z.A.F. Catalina flying boats in the Pacific. They picked up fifty-three men from the sea, directed rescue boats to ships and ditched aircraft; in one case alone, when a United States transport was torpedoed, Catalinas directed motor-boats to men scattered over twenty miles of sea. The first rescue was effected on May 2, 1943, when eight survivors off a torpedoed ship were picked up from a raft. On one occasion, in less than twenty-four hours after a crew had rescued ten of a Liberator aircrew, it picked up nine survivors from a C47 Dakota. Some of the rescues were carried out directly under enemy observation. Other jobs included searches for submarines, spotting for naval guns, ambulance and ferry trips,

dropping medical and other supplies at lonely outposts, and normal reconnaissance patrols.

The first R.N.Z.A.F. bomber-reconnaissance squadron (3) to go into the combat area began operations from Henderson Field on November 24, 1942, and by May 23, 1943, had sunk one submarine, one submarine possibly sunk, one float-plane shot down, one float-plane sunk on the water, one set afire, and one believed sunk. The highlight was the interception of the Tokio Express which was at its best about the end of 1942. It consisted of fifteen to twenty destroyers which left Bougainville and headed south for the northern tip of Guadalcanal with reinforcements and supplies for the Japanese forces beleaguered there. United States dive-bombers were its worst enemy and the Japanese tried to keep their ships out of the danger zone in daylight. That programme was upset by the reconnaissance of the bombers of this particular squadron, and, as a direct result of its sightings, United States forces, during five weeks in the heyday of the Express, sank two destroyers, bombed and damaged fourteen, sank two cargo ships, bombed and damaged four. The squadron lost three aircraft, but the value of its contribution to this phase of the Pacific war may be gauged from the fact that six members won British and United States awards: Wing Commander G. H. Fisher (Auckland), U.S.A. Air Medal; Wing Commander A. C. Allen (Morrinsville), Air Force Cross; Squadron Leader R. B. Watson (Wellington), American D.F.C. (the first to be awarded to an R.N.Z.A.F. man in the Pacific); Flight Lieutenant J. J. McDowell (Christchurch), M.B.E.; Flying Officer G. E. Gudsell (Christchurch), U.S. Air Medal; Warrant Officer R. T. Doak, D.F.M.

Another bomber-reconnaissance squadron (No. 9) did 264 operational sorties from Espiritu Santo, and one flight of it, temporarily detached to Guadalcanal under Squadron Leader H. M. Macfarlane, D.F.C., did ninety-seven sorties from there before returning to Espiritu Santo.

From Munda, another squadron did 332 anti-submarine sorties, attacking enemy submarines four times. There were no attacks by submarines in the area which came under its protection. It did sixty-six strafing and bombing attacks over Bougainville, New Britain and New Ireland, and the important Japanese radar station at Adler Bay, New Britain, was located and destroyed. This station had been a serious menace to Allied shipping. This squadron moved on by April 26, 1943, and did 134 operational sorties on Bougainville, largely reducing the productivity of areas on which Japanese were relying for food.

During a survivor patrol one aircraft of another squadron was attacked by six to nine Zekes and shot down three of them; possibly two more. A second aircraft was attacked by two Zekes, one of which was damaged in the resulting action.

One of the recorded epics of the Pacific war was that of the battle of a lone R.N.Z.A.F. Ventura bomber with nine Zeros, which attacked it when it was returning from a raid in the vicinity of Bougainville and New Britain one day, late in 1943. Two of the Zeros were definitely destroyed, three probably destroyed, and two damaged, but the crippled bomber got back to base and the crew were made the first awards to members of a New Zealand Ventura bomber squadron in the Pacific. They were: Flying Officer Donald F. Ayson, D.F.C. (New Plymouth), a former linotypist on the staff of the *Taranaki Daily News*; Warrant Officer William N. Williams, D.F.C., D.F.M. (Auckland and Dunedin); Flight Sergeant George E. Hannah, D.F.M. (Invercargill). The attack by the Zeros was sudden. The bomber's fire com-

troller was wounded and the inter-communication system wrecked by the fighters' fire. Ayson continued evasive action till another member of the crew could take over fire control and give him intermittent reports of the enemy attacks. During one attack the rudder controls were shot away, and it was only Ayson's courage, determination and coolness in handling the damaged bomber that enabled it to be brought back safely. His skilful manoeuvring during the attacks contributed materially to the destruction of the enemy. Williams took over the duties of fire controller when this man was wounded, and, moving sharply between the astro-hatch and the pilot, gave Ayson information of the enemy movements which enabled him to take evasive action. When he saw a Zero attack from astern, Williams took over the belly guns and operated them to such effect that the Zero pulled up sharply and fell to the turret guns. Williams was a hairdresser in civil life. Hannah skilfully operated the turret guns, withholding his fire till the enemy were at the most effective range, with the result that he destroyed one Zero, shared in the destruction of another, and damaged five—three so severely that they probably did not get back.

Dive-bomber and torpedo-bomber squadrons were the next to go to the Pacific, equipped with Dauntless and Avenger t.b.f. aircraft. The dive-bomber squadron was disbanded on its return to New Zealand after taking part in attacks on Rabaul. During the Japanese infiltration towards Bougainville airfield the ground staff had the unusual experience of seeing their own aircraft score direct hits on Japanese gun positions.

One torpedo-bomber squadron, after advanced operational training at Gisborne, went into the forward area in January, 1944, and commenced offensive action on March 25, making nine strikes in five days during the first five days of its operations. Rabaul airfields were among the many targets. It returned to New Zealand in May, 1944, and was disbanded. Another moved into the combat area in May, 1944, and was disbanded on completion of its tour.

When the only dive-bomber squadron of the R.N.Z.A.F. in the Pacific returned here in June, 1944, it had five months' combat service. Part of the job was to supply twelve aircraft daily for the major strike on Rabaul, and from the average strength of fifteen, it sent up twelve every day but one for nine weeks. The leader was Squadron Leader J. M. de Lange, D.F.C., of Auckland. Before returning to New Zealand the Dauntlesses were flown to an American base and handed over. Lange later went to the South-East Asia Command and was appointed R.N.Z.A.F. liaison officer.

To secure delivery of aircraft more quickly, a Pacific Ferry was established in May, 1943, ferrying flying boats from the West Coast of America to the Pacific and Ventura P.V.I.s from Honolulu to New Zealand. In the first year, more than 100 were delivered without loss or mishap.

Before delivery of Corsair aircraft was taken in the Pacific area, fighter pilots, back in New Zealand for a spell, were flying back single-engined fighter aircraft, fitted with belly tanks, in four "comparatively short" hops to the combat areas. The total distance was about 2,000 miles, or fourteen hours flying. In February, 1944, I had a few words with Squadron Leader S. G. Quill (later Wing Commander) who was about to lead a batch of fighter aircraft on a flight back to the Pacific. He said to me then: "The old hoky about single-engined crossings over long stretches of water doesn't mean a thing to us the way these trips are organised. We fly together all the way, with navigational escort provided by bigger aircraft. We're in radio communication with the forward escort craft and with each other through-

out." And then he was off, on a bright summer's morning, from Whenuapai for lunch 600 miles across the water. At this time these new fighter aircraft had been flown to the Pacific for ten months, and not a pilot lost. Quill was awarded the D.F.C., in September, 1944. His unit had destroyed twenty-three Japanese aircraft, plus several more probables, with the loss of only three pilots in combat. He led his unit on seventy-six missions, covering almost the entire Solomons campaign. Another D.F.C. award at the same time was to Flying Officer R. A. Weber who had given a consistently fine performance as a fighter pilot against the Japanese, first in Malaya and later in the Solomons. In four tours of operations he completed the exceptional total of 329 operational hours in 136 missions. He fought in Malaya as a sergeant pilot and finally escaped to India before returning to New Zealand. In three tours in the Solomons between June, 1943, and March, 1944, Weber enhanced his reputation as a courageous, skilful, and completely imperturbable fighter pilot.

Around the story of the transport service in the Pacific is that of a trail-blazing, record, trans-oceanic flight of 3,704 miles in twenty-three hours thirty-one minutes actual time, made by Squadron Leader L. H. Parry (Hokitika), captain and astro-navigation specialist, Flying Officer J. Hudson (co-pilot), Flying Officer J. Beynon (Christchurch), navigator, Pilot Officer C. D. Lett (wireless operator), Sergeant E. J. S. Richardson (Cambridge), flight engineer. The time given includes that for meals, rests and re-fuelling. This flight was part of the work of a special mission selected in April, 1943, to pioneer R.N.Z.A.F. transport routes in the Pacific. The objectives were to collect all information as to routes, weather, landing fields, test radio navigational aids at long range, and generally blaze trails over uncharted air seas. The leadership was distinguished—Squadron Leader F. J. ("Pop-eye") Lucas, of the famous 75 Squadron, who had already done two tours, and, after this mission was completed, returned to the United Kingdom for a third. There was only one aircraft—a Dakota. So that ground crews could service it by day, most of the flying was done at night. Between April 13 and 29, they flew eighty hours and kept up this average for the two months of trail-blazing. The crew for these flights was Lucas, captain, Parry, co-pilot, Flying Officer D. W. Newall, D.F.C. (Christchurch), navigator, who had done a tour in Stirling bombers and was navigational leader on the first R.A.F. raid across the Alps to bomb Italy; Flight Sergeant E. C. Robson (Dunedin), flight engineer, after a forward tour in the Pacific; Sergeant F. Mayer (Auckland), flight engineer, and described to me as everything an aircraft engineer should be. It was an all-New Zealand show. With his job done, Lucas returned to the United Kingdom and handed over the command of the R.N.Z.A.F. Transport Squadron to Squadron Leader J. (Jack) Adams, D.F.C., A.F.C. (Christchurch), a man who had a first-class operational record. He has flown on R.A.F. operations in Europe (being one of the 75 Squadron originals), with the R.A.F. Transport Command on the Atlantic ferry service, the United States-Africa ferry, the United States-Australia ferry, Australia to New Zealand, and some test flying in America.

Adams captained the Lancastrian which did a record flight 62 hrs. five mins. (flying time, 55 hrs. 15 mins.) from Northolt, England, to Ohakea, arriving on March 9, 1946. Flying Officer W. R. Birdling was captain of the second crew. Time for the round trip was 123 hrs. 37 mins. (flying time, 111 hrs. 37 mins.). Arriving at Ohakea on March 10, a second Lancastrian (Squadron Leader A. J. Bradshaw and Flight Lieutenant C. D. Milne) made

a new record of 60 hrs. 43 mins. (flying time, 56 hrs. 17 mins., including Perth-Ohakea non-stop, 3,355 miles, in 14 hrs. 20 mins.). Bradshaw's crew was all New Zealand: Flight Lieutenants E. King, C. G. B. Knight, E. L. Hill, Flying Officer A. C. Hilliam, Flight Sergeant W. J. A. Ball. On the return the second Lancastrian left Ohakea at 2.4 a.m. G.M.T., March 11, and reached Bassingbourne, Herfordshire, at 11.57 a.m. on March 14 after an overnight stay at Bordeaux because of bad weather.

Between April, 1943, and August, 1944, the squadron had flown 3,500,000 miles, or equivalent to 140 trips round the world. This was all accident-free. The pilots' aggregate was 23,900 hours, with individual records of as much as 150 hours a month. In nineteen consecutive days, one pilot flew 124½ hours. The squadron carried to and from the Pacific anything from jeeps, aero engines, drugs, foodstuffs, and whatever else required to fight a war, as well as personnel coming back for rest periods, or going to for the first time, or re-entering, combat areas. More than twenty of the pilots had already won awards on operations before being posted to transport work. All crews were ex-operational. Adams and his second in command, Squadron Leader F. J. Steele, D.F.C. (Napier), flew regularly to "keep their hands in."

In the latter part of 1944, No. 41 transport squadron was formed. By July, 1945, transport squadrons based on Whenuapai had flown nearly 5,000,000 miles to maintain the important service of supply of personnel and equipment to Pacific establishments. In one month alone in 1944 1,220 passengers and more than 100 tons of freight were carried. An important addition to the R.N.Z.A.F. air transport organisation was the arrival on December 2, 1944, at Auckland, of four Short Sunderland flying-boats allocated to the Dominion and flown out from the United Kingdom by New Zealand crews. These boats had a normal range of 1,780 miles and an overload range of nearly 3,000. The crews which flew them out had completed a tour of operations in the Northern Hemisphere and they maintained their boats throughout the whole 16,000 miles flight from the United Kingdom to West Africa, Brazil and Texas, across the United States and the Pacific. The longest hop was 2,400 miles from the United Kingdom to Bathurst, West Africa. The crews were the original members of the New Zealand Catalina squadron which was re-equipped with Sunderlands. The arrival was marred by a mishap but skill averted more serious consequences. The tail of a Lockheed Lodestar from Whenuapai, carrying official photographers, was struck by a propeller of the fourth Sunderland near the New Zealand coast. The Lodestar went into a dive but the pilot made a skilful recovery and brought his aircraft back safely. The flying-boat (Flight Lieutenant J. S. Shepherd, Dunedin) made a forced landing between Whangarei Heads and Mangawai. It was taken in tow by launches. In the four boats, 100 men of the services returned as passengers. The crews were, Wing Commander D. W. Baird, A.F.C., being in command of the flight:—

No. 1 Boat.—Flight Lieutenant B. E. Layne (Hamilton), Flying Officer T. E. Neave (Kurov), Pilot Officer J. D. Garrett (Riccarton), Flight Lieutenant P. C. K. Morrison (Auckland), Flying Officer E. R. Ruffles (Auckland), two Australian flight engineers, Warrant Officers L. W. Cox and Gunnourie, and the Bristol Company engineer, Mr. Jones.

No. 2 Boat.—Flight Lieutenant J. S. Shepherd (Dunedin), Flying Officer L. A. E. Schwabe (Gisborne), Flying Officer A. Holdsworth (Christchurch), Flying Officer N. E. Dawson (Hamilton), and three Australians, Flying Officer T. P. Druhan and Pilot Officers A. J. Taylor and C. S. Mitchell.

No. 3 Boat.—Flight Lieutenant H. K. Patience (Khandallah), Pilot Officer T. J. Ladd (Te Awamutu), Flying Officer C. J. Berry (Christchurch), Pilot Officer E. W. Buchanan (Sandringham), Warrant Officer G. N. Roberts (Parnell), Flight Lieutenant N. A. Ward, D.F.C. (New Plymouth), and two Australians, Flying Officer J. Russell and Flight Sergeant P. F. Sheridan.

No. 4 Boat.—Flight Lieutenant J. C. L. Pettit (Wellington), Flight Lieutenant D. F. Blackmore (Christchurch), Flight Lieutenant R. E. Stevenson (Invercargill), Flying Officer A. G. Sutherland (Invercargill), Warrant Officer D. A. Anderson (Invercargill), and two Australians, Pilot Officer F. Kerrison and Flight Sergeant G. L. Fry. The Officer Commanding the Flight, Wing Commander D. W. Baird, A.F.C. (Wellington), and the Technical Signals Officer J. A. Fraser (Auckland), were also in the fourth boat.

Transport aircraft, leaving Whenuapai at 7 a.m., were in the New Hebrides at 4 p.m. the same day; from there to Guadalcanal it was four hours. Allowing for a good sleep Guadalcanal and back could be made comfortably in three days; under first-priority pressure, in little over twenty-four hours. Fiji was eighteen hours return, spread over two days; Norfolk Island, return, eight hours. And the Pacific can produce some of the worst flying weather in the world. By May, 1944, the focal point of R.N.Z.A.F. transport in the Pacific was Guadalcanal. Here was being operated a detached flight of Douglas C47's from Nos. 40 and 41 Squadrons. It started off with one aircraft and gradually built up until by May, 1945, it had seven C47's (this aircraft is known as the Skytrain), and several Hudsons, the latter for inter-island mail and light freight work only. This flight had at May, 1945, 56,000 flying hours (equivalent to approximately 84,000 miles) to its credit, 2,400 hours of which had been flown since December, 1944. It was shifting an average of 415,000lb. (nearly 108 tons) of freight, mails and passengers a month. The figure had risen, as more aircraft were available, from 240,500 in December, 320,000 in January, 387,400 in February, 415,000 in March, to 414,000 in April. Personnel transported north average 600 a month (615 in March and 674 in April). The amount of work was increasing. The C47's carry 4,700lb. The transport flight ground personnel had the typical New Zealand initiative. It was necessary to fly a PV1 (Ventura) wing to Green Island urgently. This was set under the fuselage of a C47, secured by iron brackets and bolts. This had been done only once before—between Whenuapai and Norfolk Island. American fliers, on one occasion, flew a Kittyhawk across the Owen Stanley Range in New Guinea, the wing secured under the fuselage and the engine and other equipment in the body of the plane. In May, 1945, the transport flight on Guadalcanal handled 700,000lb., or 100,000 per available aircraft. A medium-sized ship would have done the same job though, with urgent supplies, not so quickly. No ship, however, could be made available from the Allied pool. The 647 carries a crew of five; the Hudson (C63), three. Among officers with the flight were Flight Lieut. A. Arnott (an original member of No. 41 and one time engaged on ferrying Venturas from Honolulu to New Zealand), Flight Lieut. Harvey Piper (personal pilot to the Air Officer Commanding, Group Headquarters), Flying Officer F. Thomson, Flying Officer S. Evison. They gave the credit to the ground staff who keep the planes aloft. Other well-known transport types were Flight Lieutenants Bill Pettit; Colin Marceau, who during the great dust storms in Australia knew dust particles between the New Hebrides and Whenuapai to be so thick that the aircraft had to be flown on instruments; Peter Durning; Alan Lawson. Squadron Leader Steele had charge of the detached flight at Guadalcanal.

been delivered at Auckland, or other New Zealand ports, and assembled and tested at Hobsonville before being flown forward to the Pacific. Hobsonville had set a fine standard in the assembly and testing of aircraft. When I was over there early in 1944, every machine that came into New Zealand (except the Tiger Moths, dealt with in Wellington by the De Havilland Company) were being assembled and tested there. The test pilots then were Flight Lieutenant Day, ex-fighter pilot from the Pacific, and Flight Lieutenant R. W. Macmillan (Ashburton) who had been at grips with the Japanese in the Malayan campaign. In between testing all types of aircraft, from fighters (taken to 10,000 feet, dived at up to 400 miles an hour, plus all the aerobatics and other try-outs) and then multi-engined bombers, Day used to play patience in the hangar office. McMillan liked a game of cards for relaxation, too. One of the most interesting assembly personalities at Hobsonville was Flight Lieutenant R. J. Johnson, who, back in 1915, was with the old New Zealand Flying School on the shores of Auckland harbour, and since then has hardly been out of the sight and sound of aircraft. Practically everything was then coming to Hobsonville in greased bits and pieces, except such as the Grumman Avenger, which, with its folding wings, could easily be accommodated whole on a ship's deck. These Hobsonville standards were maintained in the Pacific. The site of the base workshops had been cleared from jungle, coral carted and rolled in, and suitable buildings erected. Some of the equipment was more up-to-date than that in New Zealand workshops. Work which previously had to be sent back to New Zealand was done on the spot, and time saved without loss of efficiency. The workshops were doing work for both New Zealand and United States forces. The New Zealanders took their standards of maintenance for granted; British and American observers said it was second to none.

Some of those who sweated hardest in the Pacific were No. 1 (Islands) Works Squadron, of 400 to 500 men in flights of personnel of all works trades. As the Japanese were pushed back, and accordingly spheres of operations advanced, they went ahead to do the pioneering work of preparing camp sites, building temporary workshops, hangars and the like, all in face of frequent enemy air attacks. They dug tunnels and foxholes which saved many lives, tent-huts, mess rooms, canteens, post offices, and all types of essential buildings and, in the initial stages, lived in rough, primitive conditions. From salvaged case timber, carpenter personnel could turn a table, chair, cribbage board, and, from local timber, "a genuine Solomon Islands" souvenir walking stick. No one heard much of them, but they certainly made life much easier for many thousands of R.N.Z.A.F. personnel, both ground staff and air crew.

Twenty-four hours before the Japanese had completely evacuated the Guadalcanal-Malaita Group (February 8, 1943), thirty-five sawmillers and tunnellers of the R.N.Z.A.F. were landed at Beach Road, Guadalcanal. They were two days and nights on the beach without rations and had to take food from a nearby United States bulk ration dump. The third day they were transported to the mill site near the Matanikau River. They depended on a nearby Marine unit for supplies and had no medical service or kit of their own. Malaria was soon rife but, ignorant of its early symptoms, these pioneers kept on as long as they could stand, or while they could. Thirteen days after their arrival at the mill site—virgin jungle—they were producing timber. Within a month the whole party had contracted malaria; some had dysentery, too. This is not pitching a tale for the airmen sawmillers and tunnellers; just something to show the conditions under which they started.

Soon they were producing 6,000 feet of timber a day. In this time they were subject to regular enemy bombing raids, particularly at night. Their original equipment was only a Pacific bench (a log conveyor for slicing timber into board lengths). They constructed their own breast bench, Marines helping out with missing parts. Sawmilling in the tropics is not to be compared with this job in New Zealand. Where the first unit started the temperature ranges up to ninety-three degrees on some days, according to the Pacific Year Book, with night temperatures of seventy-three degrees. Before the Americans completed their magnificent effort in mosquito and malaria control, bushmen in the dim jungle were exposed to the malarial mosquito which does not attack in light. The common mosquito was always on the job. The cuts, sap burns and abrasions of mill work and tree-felling were aggravated by local conditions which created festers and delayed healing. When this first mill closed down on November 24, 1944, it moved on to Los Negros. The second R.N.Z.A.F. mill to start in the Pacific was on Arundel Island, New Hebrides. It cut out 802,900 feet of timber before moving to Guadalcanal to set up at Tenerau. This mill closed up about June, 1945, after cutting out more than 2,000,000 feet.

The formation of a New Zealand Task Force for forward operations in the Pacific was announced by the Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones, early in September, 1944, following negotiations with the British and United States Governments. The Minister said that bomber and fighter squadrons, with ground units, would form part of a Task Force which would move forward against the Japanese while other New Zealand bomber, fighter and flying boat units would protect bases and shipping supply routes across the Pacific from several widely dispersed bases, while two transport squadrons would provide essential supply and air transport services. Approximately 1,200 of all categories of aircrew would be required for the Pacific.

In mid-December, 1944, the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal Isitt, C.B.E., announced on his return from a Pacific inspection that eighty per cent. of R.N.Z.A.F. bomber and fighter-bomber squadrons employed in the Pacific had been transferred from security duties in the South Pacific to combat duties in the South-west Pacific. The R.N.Z.A.F. was now almost wholly occupied with combat operations in the South-west Pacific, chiefly in support of the ground forces conducting the campaign against the strong Japanese bases in the Bismarck-Northern Solomons area. Squadrons were also employed in Coastal Command duties, in air-sea rescue activities, and in vital transport work. An earlier R.N.Z.A.F. official news services from Bougainville, dated December 12, 1944, stated that less than 48 hours after the receipt of the word "go" a New Zealand Air Task Force unit had established itself at a new base 800 miles west of Bougainville, and Corsairs bearing the blue and white roundel of the R.N.Z.A.F. in the Pacific were airborne on operations in a new area. The fighter-bombers, after acting as escort for the transport aircraft carrying essential supplies, touched down at the new base, stayed only long enough for servicing, refuelling, and re-arming, then took off again on new operational assignments. A new fighter squadron, equipped with Corsairs, which arrived in the South-west Pacific from New Zealand about this time, was notably youthful. Three of the pilots were nineteen, seven only twenty, and the others from twenty-one to twenty-three. They had experienced leadership in Squadron Leader J. R. C. Kilian, Croix de Guerre, who had served with the R.A.F., and Flight Commanders J. L. Scott (Te Aroha), at twenty-two one of the youngest flight commanders in the R.N.Z.A.F., and J. E. Sanders (Oamaru), both with several Pacific tours

to their credit. Before concluding its tour at a forward Pacific base eight Corsairs led by Kilian made what was believed to be the first night attack by R.N.Z.A.F. fighters in the Pacific. This was on a bivouac area, eight depth charges being landed squarely in the middle of it. Two squadrons of Corsair pilots, which then moved forward into the South-west Pacific area to replace those returned to New Zealand for a rest, were commanded by Squadron Leader G. M. Fitzwater (Hawera), and Squadron Leader B. H. Thomson (Gore). At least sixty Japanese in canoes and whaleboats in Karavia Bay, near Rabaul, were strafed and killed in one morning by four Corsairs led by Pilot Officer P. Crump (Dargaville).

It was announced by the Minister of Defence, Mr. Jones, on June 20, 1945, that (1) some units would be moved nearer Australian Army forces; (2) there would be a heavy reduction of air crew enlistments and the virtual conclusion of air-crew recruiting from the civilian population; (3) Group and Task Force headquarters would be amalgamated; (4) Guadalcanal would close but for servicing and stores parties; (5) bomber reconnaissance squadrons would be gradually de-commissioned and personnel transferred to other duties now more essential; (6) air-crew intake, now one hundred a month, would be nil from July to November and thence forty a month; (7) future intakes would be from the A.T.C. and R.N.Z.A.F. ground staffs. He quoted Admiral Nimitz's message regarding the R.N.Z.A.F. to the effect that "this splendid work is still required." It was impossible, said the Admiral, to forecast when the R.N.Z.A.F. could be spared from Pacific Ocean combatant duty.

A comparatively minor military operation on Bougainville Island, in the northern Solomons, early in December, 1944, had special significance for Anzacs. It marked the renewal of close association in battle of the fighting forces of the two Dominions. The A.I.F. was supported in action by squadrons of the N.Z. Air Task Force, as well as by units of the R.A.A.F. Within a week of landing on Bougainville, Australians, moving out from the Torokina defence perimeter, established by the Americans, launched attacks against a Japanese force strongly entrenched on two high features. The positions were important because they dominated the enemy supply line. Before Australian infantry attacked, Australian guns pounded the Japanese positions, which were then subjected to heavy bombing and strafing by planes of the R.N.Z.A.F. Both ridges were taken with few Australian casualties but fairly heavy losses were inflicted on the Japanese.

A message of January 12, 1945, from the R.N.Z.A.F. official news service, recorded that New Zealand airmen entered the Philippines for the first time when fighter pilots of an R.N.Z.A.F. Pacific squadron flew from their own base to Leyte to deliver United States Marine Corsairs for use by the Americans in the new offensive on Mindoro. The New Zealanders accomplished their mission without mishap. The aircraft they had ferried were going immediately into action against the enemy.

The echelon was under the command of Squadron Leader J. J. de Willimoff, D.F.C., Auckland. Squadron Leader de Willimoff brought the formation down on the busy Tacloban airstrip. The pilots who made the flight were Flying Officer R. S. McIntosh (Auckland), Pilot Officer E. A. Thompson (Wellington), Pilot Officer M. Guntton (Auckland), Pilot Officer D. Pollock (Napier), and Flight Sergeants R. J. Scott (Auckland), D. H. Trim (Wellington), and L. A. Fraser (Dunedin). Squadron Leader de Willimoff, a veteran fighter pilot associated with the Pacific campaigns since the R.N.Z.A.F. sent its first fighters into the Pacific, returned to New Zealand

with his squadron the same month. It had been on a station commanded by Squadron Leader W. B. Cowan, D.F.C. (Hastings). Associated with de Willimoff as flight commanders were two well-known New Zealanders with equally distinguished records, Flight Lieutenants A. M. Davis, D.F.C., of Wellington, and J. S. Lockyer, of Napier, who were also making their fourth operational tour in the Pacific. These three pilots had been together ever since the first flight squadron formed at Ohakea in March, 1942.

January 15, 1945, was a day of tragedy for the R.N.Z.A.F. in the Pacific. Eight pilots failed to return. One, after being shot down, struggled nine hours in the sea. The other seven were lost as the result of weather conditions, a grim reminder of one of the natural enemies to fliers in the Pacific. The day was one of disaster. In a strike on Tobai, south of Rabaul, in Simpson harbour, New Britain, the Corsair of Flight Lieutenant F. G. Keefe (Ponsonby) was hit direct by anti-aircraft fire. He bailed out and landed near the north end of Simpson harbour, almost in the lap of the Japanese. He started to swim towards the harbour mouth; the only place where a Catalina could land with any reasonable chance of taking off again was outside the harbour entrance. Keefe started his long swim soon after nine a.m. The time for the water landing was set at 6.15 p.m., fighter pilots being briefed to engage shore batteries during the time the Catalina was on the water. As a second string a Ventura was standing by with two rafts fitted with rubber dinghies, paddles and provisions. Keefe, however, after an amazing nine hours' struggle, became exhausted before reaching a point where he could be picked up and started drifting back into the harbour. A rescue attempt by the Catalina would have been suicidal. The rafts were then dropped, each within 100 yards. Keefe, however, was done for and made no sign. He was lying face downward across a log. Subsequent searches showed no trace of him. The tragedy of the day was only beginning. Fifteen Corsairs started off on the return flight from Simpson harbour. Only eight made their base—just a patch of coral in the great ocean. A tropical front built up between the aircraft and the base. Visibility was almost nil, heavy rain drove into the fighters' cockpits and lighting frequently temporarily blinded the pilots. One of the first flight was lost, crashing into the opposite side of the atoll from the airstrip. Of the second flight of four, two collided in the haze, and a third, avoiding the collision, hit the sea. A third flight got safely through the front but one lost touch in circling prior to landing and was not heard of again. The remaining flight, flying low, lost two aircraft which crashed into the sea. The other two climbed and found the base by means of a stationary searchlight which had been shone up through the clouds for guidance.

The Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones, announced in February, 1945, that the New Zealand Air Task Force was operating from Emirau and Los Negros in the Admiralty Group as well as Green Island and Bougainville. Australian ground troops, working in conjunction with the R.N.Z.A.F., had the task of clearing 55,000 Japanese from the Solomons-Bismarck area and occupying territory in which British interest predominated. United States forces had done a magnificent task in clearing a path to this area. Under the command of Group Captain G. N. Roberts, A.F.C., the Air Task Force headquarters at Bougainville worked in close co-operation with the Australian Command.

A remarkable endeavour to evacuate an injured airman by air, involving the construction of a landing strip on a mountain ridge, was one example of the service always available for R.N.Z.A.F. men in the Pacific. An official

account gives the bare facts which need no embellishment. Sole survivor of a crash in enemy occupied territory in December, 1944, Flight Sergeant Neville Gardiner (New Plymouth) was turret-gunner in a Ventura operating from a New Zealand Air Task Force base which crashed in mountainous country on December 21. He suffered a broken leg and burns to the hands and neck. Advanced troops searched for and found the injured New Zealander. He was later made as comfortable as possible at their camp, while Allied headquarters were signalled that the airman needed urgent medical attention. Because it was judged that Flight Sergeant Gardiner was in great danger of losing his life, an effort was made to evacuate him by air. This involved the tremendous task of constructing a landing strip along a mountain ridge several thousand feet above sea level. It had to be done by hand. For three days, working in burning heat, parties of men toiled to clear away the jungle undergrowth and the rain forest. It was a race against time, too, for there was no telling at what moment the enemy might come down upon them. He was not far away. While men worked, others kept guard. A light aircraft was converted as an ambulance. When the strip was open, the rescue aircraft took off, the pilot locating the strip on a razor-edge ridge high in the mountains. He made a good landing, but at the end of his run struck a rough patch of earth which forced his aircraft to tip over on its nose, damaging the propeller. The mishap was observed by the pilot of another aircraft. A spare propeller was flown to the emergency strip, where it was dropped only to be broken by impact with the earth. Another attempt to drop a spare propeller was successful.

Though suffering a good deal of pain, Gardiner had made considerable progress toward recovery during the intervening days. Out in the jungle with his leg broken, his hands and neck bandaged, the Japs not far away, and his chances of rescue not yet certain, he could still eat the Christmas dinner dropped to him, and the friends he had around him, from the air. Three days later, the injured New Zealander was carried up the side of the mountain to the rescue aircraft, which had now been repaired. The pilot commenced his run along the rough surface of the improvised airstrip. The tail of the aircraft would not come up. The machine would not lift. The pilot had to make a quick decision. Had he been on his own he might have risked the run right to the end of the strip and the plunge over into a deep ravine on the chance that his machine might become airborne. He chose to slow his machine and slew it into the trees.

In running off the strip the aircraft was damaged, but both the pilot and the injured passenger came through with only minor bumps. It was decided that the alternative of transporting the injured man by litter to the coast should be adopted. This journey was made through rough, mountainous jungle country at any part of which there was the possibility of encountering an enemy patrol. On the fourth day the coast was reached and a short journey by sea brought the injured New Zealander to a base hospital where he was treated and later evacuated to New Zealand.

Flying Officer R. L. Shuttleworth (Nelson) was awarded the United States Air Medal for drawing the fire of Japanese anti-aircraft batteries to enable rescue craft to save the crew of a United States Navy Ventura forced down in the Solomons. Shuttleworth belonged to a bomber-reconnaissance squadron and went to the Pacific in November, 1942.

There were many outside tributes to the quality of the New Zealanders in the Pacific. Here is one from an article published in 1944 in the United States aeronautical magazine, *Flying*.

The article dealt mainly with the first phase of the South Pacific campaign covering the Solomons and Bismarck Archipelago. The New Zealanders were then flying Warhawk fighters as close cover to American bombers making attacks on Japanese airfields on Bougainville, New Britain, and New Ireland. Later the daily programme of bombing and strafing the Japanese forces remaining on those islands was done with Corsair fighter-bombers and Ventura bombers.

The article in *Flying* recalled that R.N.Z.A.F. flying and ground personnel arrived in the combat zone in November, 1942, moving into the fighting on Guadalcanal. The writer explained how the system of high, medium, low, and close cover for bombers was developed, entailing four layers of fighters above each formation of bombers to prevent interception by Zeros.

The R.N.Z.A.F. provided the close cover for many months. The article explained that this was the most difficult and most dangerous work of the lot, because the fighters remained with the bombers as they went right across the target area and were exposed to the fiercest attacks of the enemy fighters and the full intensity of anti-aircraft fire. In addition, the article pointed out the New Zealanders took part in numerous fighter sweeps over enemy territory and fought many combats with the Zeros. They did that with so much success that by the time enemy air power in the Solomons-Bismarck area was neutralised, ninety-nine of the enemy aircraft shot down went to the credit of the R.N.Z.A.F. fighter squadrons.

The article quoted several instances to show that New Zealand Warhawks even though heavily outnumbered, outfought formations of Zeros. It also stressed the less spectacular but equally valuable work done by the R.N.Z.A.F. dive-bomber and medium-bomber crews. Discussing the New Zealanders as individuals, the article said:—

"Tough, knotty, good-natured, they seem to make a fetish of taking on impossible jobs with cheery unconcern. All through the Solomons they are favourites. An outstanding characteristic is their extreme modesty. In the face of compliments your average New Zealander will probably turn red, hem and haw, splutter and gurgle, and then desperately attempt to steer the conversation into some other channel."

Elaborate tribute was paid to the maintenance staffs of the R.N.Z.A.F. Commenting on the New Zealand characteristic of skilful improvisation, the article said: "Any stray metal on Bougainville magically disappears and turns up next day on a plane of the R.N.Z.A.F. . . . Whenever one of their planes crashes within measurable distance of their headquarters, the New Zealanders lug it home, no matter how bad its condition. . . . The sight of a group of these cheerful men dragging pieces of unidentifiable wreckage out of the jungle no longer causes any amazement in the Solomons. Everybody realises the smashed-up aeroplane will somehow rise again like a Phoenix."

The stories of the early squadrons in the Pacific are full of colourful personalities, some of whom I met, and others whom fellow pilots have mentioned. No. 15 was the first to go overseas, to Tonga, in October, 1942, under Alan Crichton. The squadron was doing anti-sub. patrols in P40E's. They stayed in Tonga until February, 1943, when part of the personnel went to the New Hebrides, making the first ocean flight by New Zealand fighters. After a month there they returned [to Fiji], joining an American carrier group land based at Nandi. There they learned American fighter tactics (having used English tactics up till then) and there is no doubt this experience later saved dozens of pilots. The main factor in the American tactics was the protective weave known as the Hatch weave after its

originator. It was then just coming into use. Crichton was killed while working with U.S. aircraft, practising the weave; he collided with a Dauntless dive-bomber. At this stage the Americans had received a minor check at Guadalcanal and No. 15 Squadron was rushed through to Espiritu de Santo early in April, 1943, where they picked up the first New Zealand-owned fighter aircraft to be used in the Pacific war, which had been flown out by No. 14 Squadron. These were Kittyhawks; P40K and P40M. No. 15 did its first operational tour from the Canal, led by Squadron Leader Herrick who had taken over from Crichton. Herrick had been a night-fighter pilot with the R.A.F. with five German planes already to his credit, and the first to shoot down two in one night. In all, No. 15 was eleven months away from New Zealand and ended the first tour with three Zeros and one float plane. They pulled out of the Canal on June 16, 1943, when No. 14 took over. At this time the Japs had been putting over attacks regularly every two or three days and the combats were Battle of Britain style. No. 16 Squadron had also started to move up from New Zealand at this time. No. 15 had handed on the American fighter tactics to No. 14 and then, at Santo, to No. 16, and later to No. 17, then preparing to leave. That started off the rotational system. Herrick stayed with No. 15 for two tours and was one of the foundation members. He handed over to Squadron Leader Johnny Gibson, D.S.O., D.F.C., who was in No. 15 earlier. Gibson returned to the R.A.F. A survivor of the first Battle of France and the Battle of Britain, he had then thirteen and a half German planes and one Jap to his credit. He shot down several more on his return to Europe.

Herrick also returned to the R.A.F. and continued his fine work until, in a fighter-bomber aircraft crew, he did not return from a patrol to Denmark on June 16, 1944. His loss closed a distinguished career. He was educated at Wanganui College, from which he went to England in the middle of 1939 and entered the R.A.F. College, Cranwell, as a cadet. He was nineteen years old when he won the D.F.C. That was in the European theatre, in September, 1940—the outcome of an action in which he destroyed two enemy aircraft while on night interception patrol. In the Battle of Britain, in which he flew Hurricanes, he shot down five Nazi aircraft. Later he was posted to New Zealand, and he led the first R.N.Z.A.F. squadron into action in the Pacific theatre. He destroyed two enemy aircraft on his first tour, and another on his second tour, and his own example and his inspiring leadership developed a high fighting spirit in his squadron. This was acknowledged in the citation to the award of the bar to his D.F.C. which paid tribute to outstandingly gallant service in the Pacific. Herrick was the youngest of five boys, four of whom were decorated for valour and three of whom gave their lives in this war. Of two who joined the Navy, one was awarded the D.S.C. and bar, and the other the D.S.C., and the fourth, a member of the R.N.Z.A.F., was awarded the George Medal for conspicuous bravery before he left New Zealand. A fifth served in the Army in New Zealand. Squadron Leader Herrick was awarded the United States Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial combat against Japanese forces in the Solomon Islands area from May 2 to June 9, 1943. The citation stated: "Leading a fighter escort for a bomber striking force, Squadron Leader Herrick sighted a hostile plane and, skilfully manoeuvring to attack, made a stern run and shot it down on the first pass. In an engagement over the Russell Islands on June 7, he led an interception flight and while orbiting at 22,000 feet, started pursuit of a Zero. He held persistently to his target till he destroyed it in a burst of fire. His gallant leadership and outstanding

devotion to duty throughout this period contributed to the success of our forces in this vital area."

Other No. 15 personalities were Johnny Arkwright, D.F.C., later to lead No. 16; Squadron Leader M. T. Vanderpump, D.F.C. and D.F.C. (U.S.), who served with No. 15, No. 16, No. 17, No. 19 and then No. 24 Squadrons. He was also to have been with a No. 18 Squadron but it was not formed; Squadron Leader Doug. Greig, A.F.C., a flight commander with No. 15 on the first tour, and later running a Corsair conversion unit; Flight Lieut. Ian Murdoch who had his aircraft punctured with seventy holes by a Zero on one occasion and brought it back safely, proof that the Kittyhawk could take tremendous punishment. There were cannon holes through which it was possible to stick your hand to the petrol tanks. On this occasion McKenzie was trailing a Zero and with his windscreen oiled up, did not notice another Zero stalking him until he found that the gun mountings on one side had been blown off. He crash-landed at Canal, telling the engineer officer he had only brought back the plane in case he could get some parts from it; Squadron Leader Sholto Duncan, an original No. 15 who later commanded No. 20 which was the first squadron to fly Corsairs in the Pacific, based on Bougainville; Squadron Leader de Willimoff, later commanding No. 23; Squadron Leader Cray Blundell who later took over No. 14 and was lost near Rabaul; Flight Lieut. Ralph Court (Auckland), who did two tours with No. 15, later went to No. 19 as a flight commander and then commanded No. 22; Flight Lieut. Maxie Davis, D.F.C., Flight Sergeant, later Flight Lieut. Bob Martin, Air Medal (U.S.), who shot down the first Zero by a New Zealand pilot in the Pacific when flying over the Russell Islands with Court who attacked first but had his guns jam; and the following who later became flight commanders—Eric Smart, Bill Hardham, Johnny Lockyer, J. L. Scott ("Scotty"), and Bill Boucher, who was lost. The discipline of the squadron under Herrick was strict but it saved lives and on the other hand, lost chances to pilots of shooting down Japs. The discipline meant sticking without deviation to the primary job such as escorting U.S. high-altitude and dive-bombers. Not one bomber was lost under No. 15 escort and in three tours only one pilot, due to A.A. fire. With No. 23, No. 15 leads the fighter squadrons' scores and may have even done better as on one bomber escort, when at least thirty Japs attacked and then heckled for forty minutes, the bomber pilots later reported two Japs shot down. However, no one claimed them. The first Jap aircraft shot down by a New Zealander in the Pacific was a float plane, credited to Herrick. A Hudson used to leave the Canal daily on a shipping search south of Bougainville. It used to pass this Jap plane doing the same job from an opposite direction but each just looked at the other. Then one day the Jap brought along some Zeros which attacked the Hudson but it escaped. So the Hudson on the next trip took out some U.S. Lightnings but they flew too high and lost contact. An all-New Zealand show was then turned on and Herrick and Duncan attacked almost simultaneously, smashing the float plane which was known as "Dave" into bits. Another outstanding event on the second tour was when three sections of four each under Herrick, Willimoff and Court got seven of eleven Jap dive-bombers (Vals) while patrolling over Kula Gulf. The other four Vals limped off. That same day Maxie Davis got shot up, cannon-shells blowing off his exhaust ports, but he brought his plane home, despite the mess it was in.

A few days later when the New Zealanders landed on the Treasury Islands, a large flight of Zeros came in while Herrick was leading a patrol of four. The Japs had started from the orbit of Shortland Island and the

theory was that they had come from Truk (they were fitted with belly tanks) to land at Kahili but found the aerodromes there too badly knocked about by Allied dive-bombers. There were so many Jap planes that when Herrick led in his section, they did not even notice them and the four Kittyhawks got three Zeros without even a shot fired in return. The other three New Zealanders were Davis, Sergeant W. Cliffe and Gordon Grimsdale. Grimsdale and Davis had each got two Vals in the Kula Gulf action already described where Tony Pierrard and de Willimoff got one each and Herrick and Flying Officer Parlance shared one.

Another outstanding event was when eight of No. 15 Squadron attacked a Jap light cruiser, escorted by two destroyers, in Ferguson Passage, Kula Gulf. Their task was to silence the ack-ack from the warships before the dive-bombers went in. They strafed at mast height (Greig, Martin, Arkwright, Herrick, Davis, Court, Lockyer and another whose name I do not know) but to cap it off the U.S. dive-bombers did not get one direct hit. As soon as they returned to base, Herrick offered to lead torpedo-bombers out to attack and did so but the U.S. commander of the operation called it off when about fifteen miles off the Jap ships because he thought the weather too bad. It was a disappointing day. However, it was not entirely fruitless as the warships were either evacuating or landing troops by barges and the New Zealanders went through them like a fine-tooth comb.

Stan Quill took No. 14 Squadron to the Canal with some of the originals like Howard Brown, D.F.C., Fiskin, D.F.C., Paul Green (later to command No. 16 Squadron), "Snowy" Renolds, Harry Wigley (later commander of No. 19), Keith Macdonald, D.F.C. (later to command the New Zealand Fighter Squadron in the R.A.F. during the important stages of the drives which beat Germany) and Johnny Oldfield, D.F.C. Oldfield shot down three Zeros in nine operational hours, went home and brought back No. 18, just formed. Subsequently he had a meteoric career, shooting down Zeros right and left. Other No. 14 men were Len Rayner and Jimmy Balfour. When Stan Quill was wounded he was succeeded by Wing Commander H. R. Wigley (Timaru). Wigley did one tour fighting from Guadalcanal, giving cover to bomb strikes on Munda, defending landing operations and attacking Kahili on Bougainville. Before the war, in his own plane, Wigley carried 3,000 passengers in two years, mostly from Queenstown. A brother, Squadron Leader "Sandy" Wigley, flew Mosquitoes in Britain and was attached to a Lancaster squadron as a Pathfinder. Their father, R. Wigley, managing director of the Mount Cook Tourist Company learned to fly when he was over fifty and piloted his own plane until late in 1944. Harry Wigley later became station commander at Bougainville and by his personal drive, and keen interest in all his men, aloft or on the ground, produced a good spirit. It was fairly tough in the early days. Any man shot down over enemy territory, and still alive, stood a one hundred per cent. chance of having his throat cut. Early in 1945 the Japs hanged a naked body of a white man to a tree, his throat cut, where Bougainville Corsair pilots going over to bomb and strafe them, could see the grim exhibit. The early United States squadrons were first-class, mostly permanent staff men and damned good in every way; at that time better perhaps than the New Zealanders, some of whom had not the same flying experience. Flying Officer Ted Avery once performed an amazing feat in bringing back an aircraft that had literally little left of it to fly. The rudder had been shot off and the ammunition had exploded in the wings. A colourful personality of 16th Squadron was Squadron Leader Johnny Nelson. Other solid types were Squadron Leader G. A. Delves (Wanganui) and Flight

Lieut. J. R. Day (Auckland). I saw Delves have an amazing escape on Piva strip, Bougainville, on May 11, 1945. He was about fifteen feet airborne in a Corsair loaded with a 1,000lb. armour-piercing bomb when the motor cut out and, with undercarriage retracted, he had to make a belly landing. Everybody held their breath; some Australians on nearby trucks jumped off and took cover on the ground. There was a trail of sparks but the bomb did not explode. The only casualties were a few of the Australians bruised or cut in their effort to take cover. Had the bomb not been armour piercing, with a consequent heavier covering, it would not have stood the strain of being scraped along the air strip. All the successes were creditable in the early days for more often than not the Jap planes outnumbered those of the New Zealanders as much as ten to one. The fighters were doing long patrols in the early stages, up to seven and a half and eight hours a day. On some Dumbo escorts as much as five and a half hours were flown, a fair stretch for a fighter aircraft. Wigley once flew eight hours in one day and others comparable figures. He had one patrol of four hours ten minutes, and one of four hours fifteen minutes. It's a long time over enemy territory where, if you survived a crash, the Japs would soon torture or kill you. No. 14 original squadron were a good game crowd, No. 18 shone in aggressive types with squadron commanders like Oldfield, an original member of No. 14, and Jimmy Balfour. Oldfield was a darned good leader, always on the ball and the morale of those he was associated with was high. They lost quite a lot of men. The first adjutant of No. 14 was Flight Lieut. Baragwanath, of the *New Zealand Herald*.

Personal gallantry of high order in aerial combat was recorded in the citation of the award of the D.F.C. to Flight Lieut. E. L. Avery (Hamilton) who had completed 225 hours' flying in three tours up to June, 1945. During a fierce action over Munda in July, 1943, his tail assembly was largely shot away but he flew the aircraft 200 miles over sea to base and with a fresh plane took part in further offensive patrols.

Paul Green was awarded the D.F.C. in July, 1945. He had then completed 112 operational missions as a fighter and fighter-bomber pilot in four tours covering almost the entire Solomons-Bismarcks campaign. In January, 1945, he played a splendid part in a risky attempt to drop rafts to another pilot down in Simpson Harbour, Rabaul.

Squadron Leader Johnny Arkwright did a good job with No. 17, and Flight Lieut. Rayner with No. 14 before he was lost dive-bombing Rabaul. This squadron was the first to be used to any great extent in dive-bombing over Rabaul. Squadron Leader Renolds, an original No. 14, and Squadron Leader Guy Corbett were a pair who had close support down to a fine art over Bougainville. Probably one of the best squadron leaders in the Pacific was Paul Green, with No. 16 in 1945, a forceful personality with the right idea. Ralph Court (Auckland) and Peter McNab (Blenheim) were another pair who went well. The Americans got more Nips as they had the chances. The New Zealanders with their perfect formation flying and co-ordination were handed out a lot of close support work for bombers. The Kittyhawks (Alison motor and one super-charger) did great service but later issues of an identical plane were named Warhawk (powered with a Packard motor and two super-chargers) possibly as a sop to the public. The description of Warhawks as the very latest did not please the boys much. There were lots of others in the early days whom I have not mentioned but overall, it was always a matter of opportunity and the R.N.Z.A.F. did not get the chance its quality deserved in straight-out combat flying.

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

No. 16 Squadron was formed at Ohakea in July, 1942, under Squadron Leader F. James (Dunedin), a former member of a Spitfire squadron in the R.A.F. Flight commanders were Peter McNab (Blenheim), later commanding No. 14, W. R. Raymond, D.F.C. (Waipawa), and formerly of the R.A.F.; Don Robins (Bulls) who went to England and flew Lancasters; Johnny Nelson (later O.C., No. 16). Others included J. R. Day (Auckland), subsequently test pilot at Hobsonville; Flying Officer A. J. Hyams (Kelburn, Wellington), G. A. Delves (Wanganui), Stan Duncan (Auckland, posted missing on the first tour, over Kahili); A. G. S. George, D.F.C., later O.C. No. 24; Flight Sergeant J. E. Miller (Waihi) who got the American D.F.C. on his first tour; Pat Tilyard, D.F.M. (Wellington); Sergeant S. Sharp who was shot down on his first tour and picked up from the sea near Rendova by an American P.T.; Len Williams (Hawera), posted missing after a dogfight in the Rendova area; K. Anderson (Gisborne), and K. McDonald (Otago); G. R. Benton (Auckland) was first adjutant. No. 16 did its subsequent training based on Fairhall, Woodbourne, also being part of the Wellington area home defence forces. It was the third New Zealand fighter squadron to move into the Pacific, arriving at Santo in June, 1943. After two weeks it went to the Canal to relieve No. 14. There had been a reshuffle before leaving New Zealand, when Squadron Leader Johnny Nelson took over, with R. L. Spurdle (Wanganui) and J. R. Day as flight commanders. Some new members joined at Santo—Flight Lieut. J. Arkwright (Marton), Flight Lieut. D. A. Greig, A.F.C., Flying Officer M. T. Vanderpump, Flight Sergeants Mulligan (North Auckland) and "Morry" Willis (Wellington). On the first tour the squadron shot down eight Jap aircraft and damaged many more. Sammy Sharp had to bale out once while "Honk" Miller was shot up over Munda, but both came through all right. It was an interesting tour operating from the Canal to Kahili, Bougainville, where the Japs had formed a strong fighter force, and some fun was always assured. Towards the end of the tour Vanderpump and Miller gave cover to a disabled Liberator returning from Kahili, warding off several determined Jap attacks. Both were made an immediate award of the United States D.F.C., Miller getting his from the commanding general on Guadalcanal ten minutes before leaving for New Zealand, while Vanderpump received his award at Santos on the way home. After six weeks the squadron reformed at Fairhall, this time with Arkwright as squadron leader. His flight commanders were Delves and Vanderpump, while newcomers included Flight Lieut. M. Jones (Wellington), later O.C. of No. 16, and Denis Page, E. Dark (Wanganui), J. R. (Johnny) McFarlane and Flight Sergeant Laurie (Auckland), later awarded the D.F.M. and lost on active service. On December 11, 1944, the squadron moved up to Ondonga, New Georgia, from where it did patrols over Empress Augusta Bay when the Americans were making their original landing on Bougainville. It also took part in the first fighter missions from the south-west Pacific over Rabaul which was previously "serviced" from New Guinea. A highlight was participation in the first fighter sweep over Rabaul on December 17, 1943, combined with No. 14 Squadron and U.S. squadrons. Wing Commander Freeman and Johnny McFarlane were lost here while Flight Sergeant Laurie and Vanderpump had successes. Spurdle was one of the first pilots in the Pacific to start barge strafing and he had a great spotting eye. On Christmas Eve, 1943, there was another scrap over Rabaul, when in conjunction with No. 17, No. 16 had its biggest fight to date. In all they shot down about twelve. Pat Tilyard was one who had successes that day. Eric Dark and Dennis Page were lost. Johnny Arkwright and Flying Officer A. Mit-

chell were then joining the squadron for the second tour. Flight Sergeant Keith Mulligan had a narrow escape when shot down south of Empress Augusta Bay. He baled out and spent the night in Jap-held territory but made his way out to sea next day by dinghy and was picked up by a P.T. Warrant Officer McDonald and Jack Williams (Gisborne) were lost on this tour. After this tour, Vanderpump formed a new fighter operational training unit at Ardmore and Delves was one of his flight commanders.

No. 26 came up in March, 1945, under Delves, now Squadron Leader, with P. Bradley (Ongaonga) and Peter McKinley (Dunedin) as flight commanders. Others included Flying Officers C. J. Berryman (Christchurch), J. R. King (formerly of the Colonial Service as intelligence officer), J. M. Goldsack, O. J. Hawkins, L. J. Juno, C. M. O'Neill, Pilot Officers P. F. Rowley, Ian Tyerman, J. F. Weller, L. J. Wilson, Flight Sergeants J. Ballard, J. P. Bell, F. J. Bish, R. T. Edwards, A. Emett, P. L. Godfrey, J. R. Holland, R. F. Jans, P. D. Reid, C. H. Tallott, I. C. Walker, R. N. Westlake, L.A.C. D. A. McLean (squadron clerk), Warrant Officer A. L. Buchan and Warrant Officer J. Edwards. (Edwards won the D.F.M. with No. 17 for outstanding personal courage as a fighter pilot.)

No. 17 and No. 15 were based together on the Canal, the former on its second tour, and it was the first time two New Zealand fighter squadrons had been together in a forward area. Squadron Leader Guy Newton was commanding and others were Bruce Thomson, later to be leader of No. 22, Alec George, D.F.C., later with No. 24, Doug. St. George, D.F.C., who has just finished commanding No. 17 (April, 1945) and handed over to Boyd Le Pine, and Warrant Officer Ian Speedy (Hamilton). No. 17 was first formed at Seagrove in early 1942 under Squadron Leader "Killer" Reid with Johnny Arkwright and Guy Newton as flight commanders. Others in the squadron were Vanderpump, Dick Armstrong, Alister Buchanan, Bruce Sladden, Geoff. Highet, Des. Hogan, George Luoni, Ian Speedy, Jack Edwards, Paddy Bradley, Terry Honan (ex Singapore). No. 17 went overseas in July, 1943, Bruce Thompson and Doug. St. George, later to become C.O. on the squadron's third tour, had joined up before this. Two months was spent training at Santos, not unrelieved by a little conviviality. There the squadron was rejoined by Alec St. George and Doug. Jones. The latter was a remarkable type. He fought in the Battle of Britain, escaped from Singapore with four others in a Dutch plane [one was a well-known Dutch pilot now flying with K.L.M. commercial airline and the only living survivor of the four]. Though he got little publicity Jones had a wonderful career. Over Munda, just after the Japs evacuated, he was beaten up and fell from 22,000 to 14,000 feet, the canopy being jammed, preventing him from escaping by 'chute. He crash-landed on Munda and after the jammed canopy was lifted, walked out! Later he was badly shot up again over Kahili, just managing to land at Munda again. There was only a week between these two incidents. Some of his escapades were hair-raising. Speedy and Jones once landed at Noumea and could not get a drink but saw many casks of wine on the wharf. They went to the hospital, got some rubber tubing, tapped a cask and sipped away for a couple of hours. The gendarmes were curious. Jones was later shot down over Rabaul on his third tour with No. 17. They were hopelessly outnumbered on this occasion. Bruce Sladden (Nelson), Alister Buchanan, Flight Lient. Peter Worsp and Flight Serg. R. A. Covic (Napier) were lost at the same time. The C.O., Guy Newton, got three Zeros in this engagement. They did not get all the support they might have got from other Allied squadrons. There was a great celebration that night (Christmas Eve, 1943).

The squadron and American fliers (based on Ondonga on its second tour) co-operated well in convivial nights. The squadron then moved to Torokina in January, 1944, and was largely engaged in escort work for bombers over Rabaul. On the third tour Squadron Leader St. George was C.O. and the work was purely harassing Japs on Bougainville and Rabaul. Two were lost on this tour, Flying Officer Stan Broadbent and Warrant Officer B. A. McHardie (Hamilton). Some of the squadron members have vivid recollections of the local brew at Norfolk Island while at Noumea, the Pacific was the meeting place. No. 17 was the last squadron to operate with Kittyhawks. Speedy did three tours with No. 17 and a fourth with No. 22. During the heavy fighting over Rabaul, No. 17 enjoyed remarkable service from the ground staff. They had ninety-five per cent. of their planes serviceable, despite the number badly shot-up and requiring all-night work by a comparatively small number of men.

Ralph Court brought up No. 22 Squadron with Flight Lieuts. Skip Watson and R. A. McDonald (Wadestown) as flight commanders, making things uncomfortable for the 12,000 Japs still on Bougainville in May, 1945. The squadrons then on Bougainville, briefed by the A.O.L.'s, Captain Johnny Fagan, A.I.F., and Captain Bill Freeman, A.I.F., put on a great Anzac crack at the Japs on April 26, 1945. This was the largest army support yet undertaken in co-operation with the Australians. The men who made the strike deserve a mention. They were: Squadron Leaders Peter McNab (Blenheim), J. R. Court (Auckland), and G. A. Delves (Wanganui), Flight Lieutenants D. A. Corbett (Westport), N. C. Sutherland (Dunedin), J. M. Wilson (Christchurch), R. A. McDonald (Wadestown), A. Watson (Auckland), Flying Officers J. H. Murray (Palmerston North), R. A. Barnett (Rotorua), H. D. Coppersmith (Westport), P. D. Reid (Blenheim), J. L. Hill (Auckland), M. E. Groome (Otane, Hawke's Bay), R. E. C. Black (Matamata), J. F. Weller (Auckland), C. J. Berryman and J. R. Claydon (Christchurch), Pilot Officers P. G. Moore (Petone), L. C. Jeffs (Hawera), R. P. Mitchell (Petone), A. J. Ewert (Rotorua), O. C. Abbott (Christchurch), A. R. Horn (Auckland), J. M. Goldsack (Lower Hutt), P. F. H. Rowley (Invercargill), I. W. B. Tyerman (Gisborne), Warrant Officers I. Edwards, D.F.M. (Invercargill), I. P. Speedy (Hamilton), R. Offen (Dunedin), R. A. M. Soar (Taumarunui), Flight Sergeants D. McNab Wanganui), M. N. King (Hamilton), R. S. Bennett (Dunedin), R. J. Pascoe (Christchurch), W. Heslop (Leeston), N. M. Quarrie (Hunterville), R. F. Jans (Waitara), J. R. Holland (Auckland), I. C. S. Walker (Palmerston North) and F. J. L. Bish (Auckland).

In four months from December, 1944, to March, 1945, the Allied air operations in the northern Solomons (ninety per cent. R.N.Z.A.F.) recorded a total of 11,564 combat sorties, 6,312 tons of bombs dropped, 1,039 huts destroyed and 426 damaged, 132 vehicles destroyed and 123 damaged (including one tank destroyed and one damaged), sixteen bridges destroyed and twenty-seven damaged, ten airstrips damaged, five jetties damaged, forty-one gun emplacements hit, twenty-five supply dumps hit, 180 fires started, 100 explosions caused, 615 Japanese killed, seventy-eight boats destroyed and eighty damaged. This effort was over Bougainville, Rabaul and Kavieng. Only observable results, confirmed by ground reports, were counted. Flying a grand total of 4,274 combat sorties over the whole area during May, Allied aircraft unloaded 2,618 tons of bombs on the enemy. They killed 220 Japs to bring their total for five months of 1945 to 975. They wrecked 329 huts, put thirty vehicles off the road, most of them for

good, and destroyed or damaged forty-five boats. The Allied aircraft were ninety per cent. R.N.Z.A.F.

From the time the A.I.F. relieved United States ground forces on Bougainville in November, 1944, until June, 1945, R.N.Z.A.F. squadrons based there had flown 27,370 combat sorties and dropped 14,153 tons of bombs on Japanese shipping and positions, plus innumerable rounds of ammunition used in strafing enemy troops. All this was done at a cost of twenty-seven aircraft, seven of which were brought down by anti-aircraft fire and seven lost in a tropical front on the one day. Other results were 2,086 huts destroyed and 788 damaged; 220 vehicles destroyed and 275 damaged; 138 small craft destroyed and 190 damaged; 66 bridges destroyed and 89 damaged; 44 supply dumps blown up; 417 extensive fires caused; 169 explosions among ammunition and petrol dumps; 1,208 Japanese definitely killed.

One of the most successful New Zealand Corsair squadrons to operate in the Bismarck-Solomons area, commanded by Squadron-Leader L. R. Renolds, of Gisborne, completed its tour in March, 1945. In nearly 300 missions, involving 1,344 sorties the Corsairs destroyed 467 huts and buildings and damaged 192, sank six barges and damaged nineteen, sank sixteen miscellaneous small craft and damaged six, destroyed nine cars, destroyed sixty-three trucks and damaged nine, knocked out one tank, destroyed five heavy guns and damaged one, destroyed twelve light guns, and wiped out eight enemy supply dumps. In addition to these results, the squadron had a confirmed total of 354 Japanese killed. These results were achieved with 566 tons of bombs and 202,600 rounds of ammunition. Pilots of this squadron in one morning, in two attacks, put up a score of forty-nine buildings destroyed and nineteen damaged, six trucks destroyed and four damaged, five cars destroyed and two small water craft damaged.

No. 1 Bomber Reconnaissance Squadron was the first to bomb Rabaul and always led the B25's (Mitchells) which used to drop on them. For two months it went out daily over the same target. The commander was Squadron Leader R. W. McSkimming (Otago), a son of Jim McSkimming, and a man among men. Some of the best-known were George Williams (on his fourth tour in May, 1945), Pilot Officer E. B. Boulton, one of the best wireless operators in the Pacific, Vic. Traves, later with No. 40 Transport Squadron and the first pilot to fly a PVI (Ventura) with one motor cut out, I. M. (Curly) Clarke (Riverton), later with No. 40 Squadron, who returned to operations at his own request under Squadron Leader Bethwaite, Bill Bocock (Dunedin), Ernie Hunt (Waimate), the most popular man in the squadron, Flight Lieut. Bernie Simmons (Wellington), Mick House (Christchurch), Max West, G. W. Lee (Grey Lynn) and Max Moore, operations officer (Wellington).

Flight Lieut. V. W. H. Traves (Auckland), awarded the D.F.C. in 1945, did 104 operational missions on three tours and was cited as having displayed exceptional skill, courage and determination.

No. 1 Bomber Reconnaissance Squadron, one of the oldest in the R.N.Z.A.F., returned to New Zealand in June, 1945, after operations against the enemy on New Britain and New Ireland. The hottest spot on the tour was heavily defended Kavieng, New Ireland. At Guadalcanal and Emirau on this tour it flew 322 missions and in the first eight days of June, 1945, flew 209 hours, held to be a record. The commander was Wing Commander A. A. N. Breckon, D.F.C. (Auckland), one of the original members of No. 75 (New Zealand) Bomber Squadron, R.A.F., whose earlier history is mentioned in the account of that squadron. Flight commanders

were Squadron Leaders Ian Ewen (Wellington) and F. D. Bethwaite (Wanganui) with a high standard of maintenance given the squadron by a servicing unit under Flight Lieut. W. A. Chandler, B.E.M. (Feilding). This unit served bomber squadrons at Emirau continuously since the R.N.Z.A.F. first arrived there.

The No. 3 Bomber-Reconnaissance Squadron was New Zealand's first squadron to operate against the Japanese in the heyday of Guadalcanal, first to drop bombs on the enemy, first to shoot down a Japanese aircraft, first to sink an enemy submarine, first bomber squadron to land at the R.N.Z.A.F.'s northernmost base of Emirau, the first heavy squadron into the Bismarcks to operate from the strip at Jacquinot Bay, New Britain.

The squadron was formed on April 1, 1941, at Harewood, and assisted in protecting New Zealand shipping during the days when German raiders were only a short distance off the shores of the Dominion. In October, 1942, the squadron left for Espiritu Santo, from where sea patrols were carried out till late in November, when the squadron began to move to Guadalcanal. With Hudsons the New Zealanders flew their first patrol here on November 24 and were attacked by three enemy floatplanes. Six days later they set a floatplane on fire and destroyed it in Rekata Bay, Santa Ysabel. The Japanese were still resisting on Guadalcanal and their aircraft were bombing Henderson Field by day and night, while enemy destroyers and other vessels were busy supplying their hard-pressed troops—and later evacuating them. The "Tokio Express"—some fifteen or twenty destroyers which made regular night trips between Bougainville and Guadalcanal—was at its peak. U.S. dive-bomber strikes made as a direct result of the squadron's reports during five weeks resulted in two destroyers being sunk, fourteen bombed and damaged, two cargo vessels sunk and four cargo vessels bombed and damaged. No. 3 Squadron's losses were two aircraft which failed to return.

During its first tour of duty the squadron destroyed three enemy aircraft and probably destroyed another, and sank one submarine and possibly sank another. The squadron returned from its first Pacific tour in January, 1944, re-forming again in May, to head northward for operations from Piva airstrip, Bougainville, and subsequently from Emirau. The squadron was kept busy pressing home attacks against enemy airstrips and strongholds in Bougainville, New Britain and New Ireland. They still found plenty of opposition from enemy gunners and through all causes lost five aircraft on the tour. In February, 1945, the squadron re-formed for the last time and moved up to Green Island from where, besides striking targets on New Ireland and New Britain, and carrying out valuable photographic work, it helped the Australian advance in south Bougainville by its accurate medium level bombing of strategic targets behind the Japanese lines. The squadron was switched to Jacquinot Bay in July; a sound position to concentrate on Rabaul and surrounding targets less than 100 miles away. From this last tour the squadron returned unscathed. While serving with the squadron Pilot Officer C. S. Marceau, was first to win a D.F.C. in the Pacific by his skill in sinking a Japanese submarine. The first D.F.M. to be won in the Pacific was awarded to a No. 3 Squadron gunner, Warrant Officer R. T. Doak for his work as an air gunner during an engagement with three Japanese aircraft. His pilot, Flight Lieutenant G. E. Gudsell, was awarded the U. S. Air Medal. Another squadron member, Flight Lieutenant W. R. B. Watson, won the first American award made to a New Zealander in the Pacific, receiving the American D.F.C. as the result of a skilful bombing attack and reconnaissance in spite of fighter opposition. Among officers to

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command the squadron at various times were Squadron Leader C. L. Monckton, Wing Commander G. H. Fisher, Wing Commander D. E. Grigg, Group Captain J. J. Busch, Wing Commander H. C. Walker and Wing Commander I. G. Morrison.

No. 9 Bomber-Reconnaissance Squadron was one where I had friends and for whom I had the highest admiration. It was first based on Fiji in 1942, purely in local defence, and was the first B.-R. to go forward—to Santo just before the battle of Santa Cruz. Here they did submarine patrols and convoy coverages in Hudsons on an inner perimeter while U.S. Fortresses covered an outer perimeter area. Geo. Fisher, later O.C. at Whenuapai, was the first squadron commander with "Gubby" Allen (Wing Commander A. C. Allen, A.F.C.), the subsequent C.O. throughout No. 9's history, a flight commander. Among the pilots were Alister McD. Stevenson, Tony Horrocks, Norman Hardie. Personalities in squadron history included Ken Lumsden (who went up with one of the first fighter squadrons before he joined No. 9 B.-R. and had the experience of being shot down by a Jap Zeke, being fired on by an American destroyer, shot at by an American Corsair on the way down, and then when he was safely in his dinghy, being tackled by an American Army light craft); Darcy Walker (navigator); Keith Sarginson (a tour in England and three in the Pacific); Basil Heath; Noel Foreman (previously on Cats.); Bert Partridge; Fraser Mitchell; Jim Coltman; Arch. Deazer; Lyons Montgomery; Alec. Lowen; Chas. Callender; Jim Robertson ("Robbie"); Des McKearney (all third-tour men); Johnny Johnson (operations officer who had done a tour with Coastal Command as navigator and one with a Pacific Catalina Squadron before he came to No. 9 as Ops.); Marty Burns (trained in Canada as navigator but struck ear trouble and came to No. 9 as an operations officer, two tours); Bill McLaren (intelligence officer for three tours who always made a point of looking over the targets and went on as many raids as he could; no theoretical I.O., this type); "Lucky" Trim (a tour in England on Bolton-Defiance Intruders before he came to No. 9 as gunnery leader); Jack Peters (another gunnery leader who did a tour in England and had to bale out twice, qualifying for the Caterpillar Club badge "and bar"); Dick O'Dea (Hawera) and Des. Paterson. No. 9 preserved its identity throughout but crews were shifted in the early days to No. 4 and No. 3 Squadrons. It came back to Whenuapai from its first tour on November 1, 1943; left again in February, 1944; was away again until August; and then from January 1, 1945, till the end of May. It was on Guadalcanal just after the American landing, then on Bougainville when the Americans held the airstrip perimeter, doing low-level bombing and reconnaissance; next Emirau on low-level bombing and reconnaissance over New Ireland, medium-level bombing and photographic reconnaissance over Rabaul and the Gazelle Peninsula, New Britain. No. 9 was always a good-spirited crowd. In its unofficial history will always be remembered the correspondent of a weekly newspaper who wanted to go on an operational flight. "Uncle Gubby" was not keen but the correspondent produced his authority and was enthusiastically insistent. Tony Horrocks was deputed to "give him the works." And he did. The correspondent stuck it like a man despite being sick and green with the motions of all a flier like Horrocks could do with a Ventura. In the concentration of the major task of entertaining the correspondent the wrong target was bombed (the boys were rather browned off about this and plastered the right target hot and strong next day). After the show Horrocks asked the correspondent if he was going to include in his article a description of his reaction. Replied the

correspondent; "That's fair enough if you allow me to mention you bombed the wrong target!" No. 9 were intensely loyal to each other. When one crew was shot up the squadron made it a rule to fly over the spot next day, with as many planes as they could muster, and give the show a proper beating-up. It worked well. Graham Parker, who did a part-tour with No. 9, performed an act of outstanding courage, endurance and bravery for which he was made an immediate award of the D.F.C. Low-level reconnaissance of southern Bougainville roads saw him struck by a solitary bullet which took four inches of bone out of one arm. He dropped his bombs on the target, flew his aircraft (Venturas have one pilot) safely home and made a perfect landing. Then he passed out. One of the best stories about Vanderpump, the fighter pilot, was told me by a member of No. 9. Over Rabaul, Vanderpump was boxed in, Jap Tonys sitting on top of him. So he flew down the main street of Rabaul, down the side streets and out on to the harbour, among the shipping and straight out to safety. The Japs had not been game to follow him in his daring low-level escape manoeuvres.

D'Arcy Walker, squadron navigation officer and bombing leader, was awarded the D.F.C. in July, 1945. He had seventy-seven operational missions against the Japs, shone in finding difficult targets, often cunningly hidden in jungle, and more than once assisted a pilot to bring home aircraft damaged by enemy fire and in the worst weather.

In May, 1945, four squadrons of the Royal New Zealand Air Force, which had completed operational tours of duty against the Japanese in the Bismarck Archipelago, received commendations from the Commander of Aircraft in the Northern Solomons, Major General R. J. Mitchell, U.S. Marine Corps. The units commended were No. 3 Bomber Reconnaissance Squadron, No. 4 Bomber Reconnaissance Squadron, No. 19 Fighter Squadron and No. 22 Fighter Squadron. Expressing appreciation of "meritorious performance of duty" the citation to the commendation addressed to No. 3 Squadron states that during the tour of duty under review the squadron flew 115 missions against the enemy, and was the first New Zealand squadron to operate from Emirau. The dawn and dusk patrols and ocean searches carried out were of valuable aid to the Allied forces in keeping the airfields, supply dumps, bivouac areas and barge movements of the enemy on New Ireland neutralised. "Many of these flights," adds the citation, "necessitated flying through treacherous tropical storms and fronts, but the excellent airmanship and judgment of the pilots and crews continued in bringing their planes safely home and in maintaining good target coverage. Skilled co-ordination of tactics and superior airmanship resulted in the highly successful strikes, both medium and low altitude, carried out by the squadron on selected targets and in the face of intense and accurate anti-aircraft fire. On one strike at Panapai in which the squadron commander's aircraft was badly hit by anti-aircraft fire and a crew member wounded, the tail-gunner in turn killed the crew of the entrenched anti-aircraft position." Major General Mitchell described the work of No. 4 Squadron as "a valuable contribution of the success of our forces in this area." His citation of commendation records that the squadron flew a total of 534 missions involving 2,025 flying hours and gathered important information on enemy installations by excellent photographic coverage. "The high sense of co-ordination displayed on strikes was a contributing factor in the neutralisation of enemy airstrips as well as in the destruction inflicted on supply dumps, motor parks and bivouac areas." In his tribute to No. 22 Squadron General Mitchell stated that excellent airmanship and accurate marksmanship resulted in the devastation of

many enemy installations. In 381 missions involving 2,501 flying hours, the squadron carried out important dawn to dusk patrols over New Ireland and provided Dumbo with cover. "Superb co-ordination of tactics was displayed by an eight-aircraft strike in conjunction with fifteen P.B.J.'s on Balgai bivouac area," added the citation. "The precise timing and excellent hits on the target by No. 22 Squadron's spearhead attack displayed their fine teamwork and capabilities." Engaging in 399 missions No. 19 Squadron's Kavieng Patrols were "an important factor in keeping the airfields and heavy enemy concentrations of strongly defended Kavieng Peninsula neutralised. When the Marine fighter squadrons were withdrawn from Emirau the entire responsibility for these tasks fell to No. 19 Squadron, who carried out the additional duties with excellent efficiency. Another of the squadron's tasks was to provide Dumbo with an escort when covering strikes, or on special flights and searches. On their fighter-bomber and strafing missions, the squadron encountered intense and accurate anti-aircraft fire yet pressed home their attacks with determination and devastating accuracy."

Newspapermen made good as intelligence officers. Flight Lieut. Reg Lund, the Invercargill editor whose war summaries were the best given at headquarters of Commander, Air, North Solomons, who thought so much of Lund that he sent him on a special trip to the Philippines; Flight Lieut. Geo. Wells of *The Southern Cross*, Flying Officer W. H. Bickley, former editor of the *Wanganui Chronicle*, and several others. But all intelligence officers were not newspapermen. Such good types as Pat Curran, now with Group Headquarters, and who had a high opinion of the Americans from personal experience; Flying Officer Dan Lethbridge, of Turakina, a town which once bore the name of his family; Flying Officer Bill McLaren, of Lower Hutt, with No. 9 Bomber Reconnaissance Squadron which under "Gubby" Allen and with such personalities as Des Patterson, Dick O'Dea, Jack Peters (ex R.A.F.) was a good team; Flying Officer Fred Smith (Northland) and many others too numerous to mention but all good men.

There were some fine padres in the Pacific. Perhaps the best known was Flight Lieut. Wilf. Ainsworth, priest and sportsman and friend to hundreds of all denominations; Padre A. L. Dixon (Presbyterian), formerly of Feilding and then with the R.N.Z.A.F., Hamilton; Flight Lieut. Chris Feehly, S.M., keen peace-time pilot, always out with any sort of R.N.Z.A.F. aircraft whenever he got half a chance and withal, liked all round as a man who knew both the religious and service "score." His exhibitions of magic with former Wellington dentist, Captain Harold Dover, both members of the Wellington Magicians' Club will always be remembered. In May, 1945, Feehly fulfilled a desire to do a bombing raid over the Rabaul area. He went as second pilot in a Mitchell (U.S. medium bomber). Padre Dixon distinguished himself "on loan" to an A.I.F. Battalion in a sticky action on Bougainville in April, 1945. Thereafter, on lonely jungle trails and in all sorts of odd places, I found Aussies inquiring when he was coming back. The battalion commander wrote to Dixon afterwards: "The courage which you have displayed and the manner in which you have voluntarily undertaken arduous work and service without thought of yourself, among the forward troops under enemy fire, has been an inspiration to many... your work and presence counted immensely in the maintenance of morale during a difficult and dangerous period." The medical officers of the R.N.Z.A.F. in the Pacific were mostly young men but they did a good job, often with inadequate facilities, but with United States and Australian hospitals, well set-up, equipped and staffed, always at the service of New Zealand airmen.

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

Some of the best-known M.O.'s were Flight Lieutenants T. W. E. Raine, J. C. McNeur, V. H. E. Whitehead, B. de Lambert, J. C. Baird, I. B. Faris, R. G. Drendon, R. A. Rodda, T. C. Anderson, and among the nurses, Sister Madge Congreve. A bright personality was Harold Haines, an Air Movements officer, just one of many who did a routine job but a lively spark wherever he was. Flight Lieut. de Lambert was awarded the George Medal for courageous conduct in rescuing an airman from a burning aircraft on Bougainville.

The doyen among catering officers was Ken Usmar, onetime journalist and later secretary to Sir Ernest Davis and associated with the liquor trade firm of Hancock and Company, Auckland.

An armament personality was Flying Officer Frank Hiom (Christchurch) with twenty-seven years service with the R.A.F. He can look back with pride on the days when the present King, George VI., was his adjutant on an English R.A.F. station. Frank was the man who turned tent-poles to good purpose on "daisy-cutter" bombs. These had a light steel rod at the nose. The idea was that the rod took the first shock of impact with the ground, causing the bomb to spread its effect above ground instead of burying itself almost harmlessly. The steel rods were weak, buckling on impact. So Frank used tent poles—more effective and cheaper.

Another engineering officer, Flying Officer Victor Hjørring (Blenheim), awarded the M.B.E. in 1945, was cited to have shown the greatest devotion to duty. From Base Workshops, Pacific, he was largely responsible for the unflinching regular delivery of assembled and tested Corsairs for forward operations against the Japanese.

The unenviable record of having had his plane hit three times on three occasions by anti-aircraft fire while attacking enemy targets was held by Flight Lieut. D. W. Cocks (Wellington), a veteran Pacific pilot who did four tours in the Pacific, completing 121 operational missions and flying 365 hours in the Solomons-Bismarcks area. Awarded the D.F.C., he was stated to have led his squadron with gallantry and distinction. Flying Officer H. B. Cassie, D.F.C. (Wellington), did 1,001 hours of operational flying—one tour in the United Kingdom and Middle East and three in the Pacific. A navigator he was in raids on Rotterdam, Boulogne, Kiel and Hamburg, flew extensively in the Middle East in 1941, including Greece, Crete and the Western Desert, and then anti-submarine patrols in the Pacific and sweeps and sorties on New Ireland. Another to serve in both theatres was Flying Officer J. J. Oliver (Petone), wireless operator, who had 875 operational hours when awarded the D.F.C. in July, 1945. He did one tour in Europe and three in the Pacific. His aircraft crashed into the sea on his first tour (Europe) but he was on the job again there, and in the Pacific he took part with distinction in attacks on Rabaul.

Squadron Leader J. D. Paterson (Auckland), on whom was conferred the O.B.E., was stated to have carried out important attacks with gallantry and determination, and with his crew to have been instrumental in saving an American fighter-pilot who was three weeks adrift in a dinghy.

An outstanding man, A. F. H. Tye, D.F.C. (Dunedin), was reported killed on operations early in 1945. He was a wing commander at twenty-four, served with an R.A.F. squadron operating from the north of Scotland; went to Iceland with the same squadron and carried out eighty-nine operational flights on anti-submarine patrol; awarded the D.F.C. in 1942 for attacks on submarines and landing his aircraft on one engine, the other being afire; made a record operational flight for the type he was flying from Iceland to

Greenland; joined a photographic reconnaissance squadron making daylight flights over Germany; returned to New Zealand in 1942 and was an instructor at Ohakea; joined a transport squadron operating between Whenuapai and the Pacific; had charge of training and conversion of transport pilots; went to the Pacific in charge of an operational squadron.

On Bougainville, main base of the R.N.Z.A.F., in March, 1945, information from native patrols and a captured Japanese showed that the enemy was organising suicide parties to come into the Torokina area where the main airstrip (Piva) was situated, sabotage aircraft and attack senior officers. For some weeks the camp was on the alert. Guards were posted everywhere, arms carried at night within the camp, half-track trucks were fitted with high-calibre machine-guns and did patrols, and all persons leaving the camp precincts at night were issued with a password. This always contained the letter L which Japanese have difficulty in articulating. A.I.F. scouting parties found traces of the enemy up as far as the edge of the Torokina area but they did not penetrate. It was a hectic period while it lasted and in a sense, reflective of the aggressiveness of the isolated Japanese force on the island. There were occasions when the R.N.Z.A.F. Corsairs with their low-level bombing and striking saved A.I.F. troops from very awkward situations.

A point not widely appreciated in New Zealand was that the R.N.Z.A.F. acted under the supreme command of American headquarters in the South-west and South Pacific zones. Even when the R.N.Z.A.F. Task Force was established on Bougainville the American Air Commander, North Solomons, was still in occupation, not of his own desire, but because he and his staff had not yet got orders to move on. In May, 1945, the number of New Zealanders in the same areas was only one-fifteenth of the total number of Allied servicemen and earlier that year, only one-thirtieth. There may have been some truth in the belief that in addition to supporting our American and Australian Allies New Zealand, wanting to have a say in the post-war Pacific, had to make the best effort to establish this right. How successfully remains to be seen. There was no doubt that the R.N.Z.A.F. had to do the tasks allotted it by the higher command, but all the aircrew and most of the ground staff wanted to get nearer the enemy rather than be engaged in the dull routine of operations described by the unfortunate and unflattering term of "mopping-up." Some pilots felt they were just acting as "bulldozers" in clearing areas for infantry advance by means of daisy-cutters (500 and 1,000lb. general purpose bomb) or depth charges. Certainly they helped the A.I.F. tremendously. The daisy-cutter was designed to clear areas above ground instead of embedding itself and only making a crater. A three-eighths inch steel rod with nose fuse was fixed to the bomb nose. When it hit the ground the rod took the shock and the effect was to spread the blast. I saw trees blasted into the air and quite large areas absolutely devastated by a concentration. The R.N.Z.A.F. Corsair pilots got so good at this that they operated only 200 yards ahead of A.I.F. troops and strafed within a few yards of flank patrols. The Australians used to admire the airmen for their job and the pilots in turn thought them game to stand-to at such a short distance from the start of the bombing line. There is no doubt, to my personal knowledge, that on occasions they saved Australian ground forces when they were in very sticky spots.

No mention of the Pacific war would be complete without a reference to the native peoples. There were some who worked for the Japs, impressed by the fact that for a time the Nip seemed on top. But others showed

amazing loyalty to the American and Anzac forces; the Fijians always. With white coastguards, Solomons, New Guinea and other natives did splendid but dangerous work on various Jap-occupied islands as intelligence and spotters. Guadalcanal used to get up to two hours' warning of Jap bombers coming from Rabaul, and they were able to wait in the clouds to jump them. The fuel position was not so good for a time and Allied aircraft would work out the approximate time of arrival of the Japs and take off just before. Many Allied airmen were rescued by natives. A number of organised bands under the direction of an Australian Wing Commander (who would prefer to be known just as "Robbie") had a score of Japs comparable at one stage to that of the army. "Robbie" had spent twenty-three years in the islands. The natives, known as "Boongs" or "Coons" got Japanese by all means; the silent, primitive bow with its poisoned arrows, the blowpipe, Japanese rifles, light machine-guns and grenades. They always returned the captured ammunition to the Japs! The Nip was cruel but the native soon outshone and struck terror into him. I remember one case of a native who boasted a good number of kills. "Robbie" pointed out that he had not seen any of the victims and that the native had never brought in one alive. So he went out and stalked a Jap sergeant-major. He jumped him and there was a terrific struggle before the native had him beaten. Then he said: "You come long 'Merican, plenty kaikai," and fished a tin of bully beef out of his jacket. The Jap replied: "No good, 'Merican kai number ten." (That meant tenth grade; the natives used to refer to all Allied troops as Americans, even when working for the Australians.) The native tried more persuasion but the Jap was stubborn. So he lost patience, killed him and cut him up in bits and distributed them round the jungle tracks. This incident, described in the first telling in pidgin, was the sort of thing that terrified the originators of cruelty and bestiality in warfare. There was a bounty system to reward natives for their kills, which reminds me of a case both humorous and grim. Often they would bring in fingers to show they had accounted for so many. Once the officer directing these native patrol operations pointed out that one man had eight fingers and two thumbs and for all he knew they might be claiming a Jap per finger. A few days later the same party came back, one of them sheepishly carrying something in an old rag. Asked for results he produced the contents of the bundle. They were not fingers but a part of the anatomy which left no doubt that each such represented one man. Perhaps the training of these natives in modern warfare, with its consequent re-awakening of their savage instincts may have post-war repercussions though some good judges think they will soon settle down and forget there ever was a war. One hundred and eighty Fijians under European officers were attached to an Australian company on Bougainville during the Japanese occupation. They were watching Japanese aerodromes and signalling the movement of enemy bombers. Some were killed, others captured. An example of Japanese cruelty occurred with one member of the Fijian force who was so tied that he could only crawl and, forced into a stream, he drowned. The New Guinea police boys were then guarding the coast-watchers, twelve being attached to each two coast watchers. They accounted for quite a few Japs. One New Guinea boy had three notches on his long cane-handled knife and eleven notches on his rifle. They saved a number of airmen who crashed in the jungle. The coast-watchers were a mixture of men who had been planters in civil life and others members of the Australian administration. Members of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate administration also did courageous work on Guadalcanal and Tulagi, moving into the hills and

organising information services about enemy movements which were of great help to the Allied forces. The coast-watchers further north, in the early stages, led a lonely life. They had to subsist mainly off the land, got mail and supplies by submarine "once in a blue moon." The first patrol to cross Bougainville from the American perimeter at Empress Augusta Bay was that of B Company under Major Freeman. This was on January 4, 1944. Twenty days later a patrol of 300 Japs was after them and A Company (Captain E. R. Chivers and Lieut. N. Macdonald) went out to reinforce. The two met and formed a perimeter under the command of Lieut. Colonel G. Upton. One patrol under Lieut. Tony Phelps (later killed) got clean through to the beach but the Japs lay in wait for the next. Lieut. G. Thompson was wounded and remained all night among the Japanese but crawled out. He lost all sense of direction and was found by two Solomon Islanders four days later. The Fijians were deadly in the jungle. They gave the enemy no warning of approach and were themselves never successfully ambushed. A Fijian named Esiborosi Kete was shot 200 yards out from the perimeter during a Jap counter-attack, the bullet injuring an ear and an eye. He was left for dead but the Japs finding him still breathing treated him to half-inch bayonet jabs in the chest. While they were working on him a barrage scattered them. He dived into a foxhole where there were five Japs. A shell-burst killed them but Kete survived and was found four days later. He did not want to be evacuated from the island; this was the typical Fijian warrior spirit.

An outstanding native whose loyalty was characteristic was Sergeant-Major Vouza, retired, British Solomons Islands Protectorate Native Constabulary, whom I met in a village a few miles up in the hills from Guadalcanal. He holds the George Medal, Silver Star (United States) and Long Service Medal. He may be the only native in a British protectorate to hold the coveted George Medal, but I have no means here of checking on this. At fifty (1945) he is an old man for a Solomons Islands native, among whom the average age is seldom more than forty-five. This man was the essence of dignity; not only did he win his decorations but he knew how to carry them. Among the heroes of Guadalcanal campaign, Vouza can take second place to none. Twenty-nine years ago, as a young man, he paddled across the bay from his native village to Tulagi, then the seat of British government in the south Solomons, to join the native constabulary. By 1929 he had reached the coveted post of sergeant-major—there is only one such senior n.c.o. in the constabulary. Vouza knew practically all the natives of the vast territory the constabulary covered. He also knew one, Isimoto, a Japanese boat repairer who worked on the craft of planters and traders in the group. Isimoto knew the reef-strewn waters of the Solomons as well as any native and, significantly, went back to Japan in 1940. Vouza did not like Isimoto, though he had only his instinct to guide him at the time. Events proved it perhaps more discerning than that of many Europeans. Vouza retired on pension in 1941 with the Long Service and Coronation Medals, and settled back in his native village and took unto himself a wife, who bore him five sons. Then the Japanese started their invasion of the southern Solomons, first Tulagi, from where the Europeans had been evacuated to Guadalcanal. They landed there in March, 1942, after wasting thousands of bombs softening up an island deserted but for its native population. By May they crossed to Guadalcanal, twenty miles across the bay, to occupy the coconut plantation area near Lunga Point and Kukum. The European population had been evacuated but for the British Solomon Islands Pro-

tectorate officers, who moved back into dense country, still carrying out their administrative work among the natives. The Marines landed on Guadalcanal on August 7, 1942. The natives were back in the hills and jungle, but that afternoon a sentry spotted a native canoe bearing inshore. In it was a native with his hair peroxidized, as is the peculiar custom of many natives here, a ginger shade. The canoe landed and Vouza stepped ashore. He wrote his name neatly thus, "S.M. Vouza," adding "Me fellow man Vouza. Sergeant Major Vouza." Conversation was not so easy as the Marines had not then picked up pidgin English. Vouza was deputed to act as liaison between the Marines and the natives, to whom he explained that the "fellow man 'Merican" was on the side of big fellow man King George. After an expedition Vouza returned with information that the Japanese had landed troops south-east of the Americans' position. "One, two thousan' fellow man Jap," he reported. This advice was valuable to the Americans for the pending battle of Tenaru. Vouza was sent off to warn his people whose village lay in the path of the Japanese. He was taken prisoner, and who should question him after he had been firmly lashed to a tree but the erstwhile boat repairer, Isimoto, now political officer for the enemy on Guadalcanal.

Vouza was thrashed with the flat of bayonets because he would not talk and finally bayoneted in the throat and left for dead. But he was too tough even for cold steel. He recovered consciousness, freed himself and stole through the Japanese lines on a ten-mile trek to the American position. Half-crawling and half-walking, he made it and, delivering his information, then collapsed. Doctors thought he had no chance. But in eight days he was on his feet again and back with his native police. In November, scouts reported a Japanese intelligence unit, with wireless transmitter, living in two huts near Taivu Point. Vouza asked permission to accompany the patrol sent to wipe them out and acted as guide. The huts were surrounded and not a Japanese was found alive after the bullet and grenade assault. Among the dead was Isimoto.

That is the story of Sergeant Major Vouza, retired "number one fellow man" of the native constabulary. Though he is past the average age of natives, he looks hale and hearty. Many R.N.Z.A.F. personnel have met Vouza; they wish him long life and so do many Americans who passed on to conquer in bigger fields. There are others of the Solomons forces who have been decorated for their bravery, some of whom will be known to men of the Third Division, Second N.Z.E.F., those who landed at Mono and Treasury Islands. Elala was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal and Frank Wickham the Military Medal. They were in forces recruited by the British Solomon Islands administration, led by British officers, and performing tasks allotted by the United States command.

Another remarkable character whose trail I crossed was Musiamo, the "Black Brigadier," who was once very much offside with the British Administration, but who later with his native following, struck terror into the Japanese on Bougainville. To the native it is a sign of weakness to show mercy to an enemy. Before the war the Administration was forced to take punitive action against Musiamo. Till the war he had probably spent more time in custody than in freedom. However, he started to organise against the Japanese before either Americans or Australians came to Bougainville. He had to do something to rally his tribesmen round him. So he started, in a small way, ambushing Japanese and securing their weapons. One day he met up with Australian commandos and offered the services of his band. That day Musiamo was wearing an Australian slouch hat, Japa-

nese shorts and a soiled singlet. His party was armed with Japanese rifles and ammunition and their deadly bow and arrow, whose swift silence is appropriate to the jungle. For a while he was reluctant to operate under the Australians till convinced that this would speed the liberation of fellow natives in Japanese-held territory. Next came the need for a spectacular effort to show his own people and the Australians what he could do. He decoyed fifty Japanese into a gorge, having blocked the exit. Then he sent a message through Australian sources for air support. The R.N.Z.A.F. was over quickly and not a Japanese escaped. Musiamo collected the weapons. This may be the first known instance where a native guerrilla, only a generation or two ahead of savages who leaned towards cannibalism, has called for air support. There was another instance when a native flew in an R.N.Z.A.F. aircraft to pin-point enemy concentrations, dumps, gun emplacements, and so on. Sometimes when native guerrillas were nearby after Japanese posts had been bombed, they stepped in and annihilated the lot before they had recovered from the disorganisation caused by the bombing. Musiamo's "brigade" was not ragged, ill-trained or undisciplined. He had already set up a small arms training school before he linked with the Australians, and had his own spy system to keep track of enemy movements and positions. The bow and arrow had its part in Musiamo's school. They had made this weapon more deadly. At first the wounded Japanese used to pull out the arrows, but Musiamo added additional vertical barbs of flying fox bone and weakened the arrows near the head. The result was that the arrows "stuck" better and when a Japanese tried to pull one out, it snapped off at the head, leaving that part, and the barbs, in him.

A Fijian soldier, Corporal Sefanaia Sukanaiyalu ("Suka") was awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry on Bougainville. In the face of Japanese fire "Suka" crawled ahead and rescued one of his platoon who had been wounded and had then gone back to get another. This man was dead when "Suka" reached him, and shortly afterward while still going forward "Suka" himself was hit in the groin and thigh by a burst of Japanese fire. He lay for several hours alone with occasional tracer bullets whistling just over him. Then the order came to withdraw as night was coming on, and the position of the platoon was becoming extremely dangerous. His friends told "Suka" to hold on, that they would not leave him to fall into the hands of the Japanese, and that they would come and get him. He realised the position clearly. He knew that if his companions stayed they would be annihilated during the night. He knew that they would not go while he was still alive. He knew that if they tried to get him some at least of those who made the attempt would be killed. Reinforcements arrived to help in the withdrawal of the platoon. "Suka" saw movements and thought that the effort to rescue him had begun. Those who were watching saw him quite deliberately raise himself on his hands before the Japanese machine-guns and then he fell, riddled with bullets, and his platoon withdrew and got safely away.

The Aussies on Bougainville were a cheerful tough crowd. With insufficient heavy equipment, often having to manhandle everything from rifles, mortars, machine-guns, ammunition and food thousands of yards through stinking, muddy jungle tracks, often waist-deep in swamp. Later the dropping of supplies by parachute from R.A.A.F. C47's relieved this to some extent, with their ability to drop rations for 400 men for four days in one trip. On the other hand I have seen native safaris of 150 to 200 strong, plus Australians when the native labour was insufficient for the job, forming long single-file columns along the jungle tracks. The New Guinea boys were

probably the best. They would say: "Me A.I.F. Him (other natives) 'chokko' (chocolate soldier)." It used to rock the Australians on Bougainville to read statements by their politicians that they had the best equipment [true in respect of what little they had]. On the other hand they were using shovels to make or widen jungle tracks and cutting and splitting logs to form a hard surface, when they should have had bulldozers and all the other heavy modern stuff with which the Americans built wonderful roads, often an aggregate of 200 miles on one island, draining swamps that had never known the hand of man, smashing down trees like matchwood and making almost ridiculous some of the attempts I saw to clear away jungle with machetes and axes. Probably the heavier equipment and landing barges were more urgently needed elsewhere.

When the A.I.F. was withdrawn from the Middle East there were unthinking and ill-informed people who thought they were going to something soft. Instead it was hell in comparison and good soldiers who fought in both theatres said so. Not only was there the eerie conditions of jungle warfare with its intense cruelty but a constant fight against diseases like malaria, hookworm, dengue, the fatal scrub typhus, foot-long shell-backed centipedes whose sting was so severe that the victim was put under morphia for several days, and lots of other things unknown, and perhaps unrealised, in New Zealand. In New Guinea they had the leeches which crept up trouser legs and sucked silently until they dropped off filled with human blood. When the Japs shelled at night the Aussies had to get up and dive into fox-holes half-full of stinking water or, if dry, with an odd centipede for company. There was the countering of the suicide Banzai charges and the restraint not to yield to Jap tricks at night to disclose fire positions. To this end the Japs would crack twigs, let off fireworks or shout: "Come out, you Australian —." It was not exaggeration to say that twenty per cent. of these Japs spoke English and the more proficient would try to lure members of Australian patrols by such calls as: "Is that you, Jack?" and the familiar coo-ee. The Japs became very good at the coo-ee; maybe all they got from the war was this Australian addition to their vocabulary. The Aussies would take no prisoners unless an odd one for questioning; often Jap wounded saved a lot of trouble by blowing themselves up with grenades or continuing to show some fight until they were killed off. The saying was: "The only good Jap is a dead one." Despite the opinion that the Japs are copyists they had some first-class jungle weapons, specially in rifles and machine-guns. Their artillery fire was excellent. But the officers had the strange habit of carrying swords; about the most cumbersome thing imaginable in the jungle. In suicide charges they would rush at tanks with swords and revolvers and then realising the futility, disembowel or shoot themselves in the track of the Matildas. Often they would fling themselves on heavily defended positions with utter disregard. One such occasion in March, 1944, saw wave after wave of them come over a one-hundred-yard-wide crest on Bougainville with the object of retaking Piva airstrip. The Americans moved them down with intense machine-gun fire until the ridge was piled deep with corpses. Still the Japs came on and a few parties got through to the second line of defence where they were annihilated. The R.N.Z.A.F. was dug in as a third and final line. The battle over, thousands of Jap dead were turned into the ground with bulldozers, improving an already fertile soil. The Japs had plenty of equipment left behind from the days when Bougainville was one of their main supply bases for the projected attack on Australia. Similarly on the Gazelle Peninsula (Rabaul area) which even as late as the

time of writing (May, 1945) was recognised as one of the most heavily defended places in the world. They had vast stores and, comparatively undisturbed for two years, had built a maze of underground tunnels estimated at eighty to one hundred miles. Over Rabaul harbour they were able to put up a terrific ack-ack barrage. Some R.N.Z.A.F. fighters and bomber-reconnaissance squadrons moved in, June, 1945, to Jacquinot Bay, New Britain, a closer base to bomb Rabaul. A.I.F. troops were then holding a static line. It looked then as if two or three infantry divisions, naval and air forces would be required to crack Rabaul or alternatively, the heaviest bombers to smash the defences in preparation for amphibious operations. One of the factors at this time was that if Japan gave in early, these troops on Rabaul, Bougainville, Shortland Island, Balali, Choiseul and elsewhere would return home as undefeated heroes and propaganda material for yet another preparation for war. The Japs on Bougainville and in New Guinea, cut off from supplies, practised cannibalism. A.I.F. troops found human hearts and livers broiling over fires, human steaks stewing in dioxies and the dissected bodies of Japanese lying in improvised abattoirs. But still some people thought these areas of the Pacific war easy going. They would not had they seen these things, known the ruthlessness of fighting where no prisoners were taken but occasional ones for questioning and the rules of civilised warfare were unknown; if they had seen A.I.F. troops, after a long stretch in jungle mud and swamp, take off their boots with the skin peeling off with the sox.

One of the most unusual stories to come out of the Pacific concerned an altar stone probably looted by Japanese from a mission chapel and abandoned in the Laruma River, off the Numa Numa trail on Bougainville. This trail was the scene of bitter fighting. An Australian Catholic chaplain was walking along the trail when his eye was caught by a dull, grey object half-buried in the riverbed. Out of curiosity he recovered the object and found it to be an altar stone with the seals intact. The stone is an oblong block of marble, nine inches by seven inches by three-quarters of an inch. The strange thing is that this chaplain was perhaps the only man in the hosts which passed along the trail who would have known what the stone was. The stone was placed in the chapel of St. Bernadette on Bougainville, which was built under the supervision of Flight Lieutenant C. F. Feehly, C.F., S.M., by men of several of the United Nations and local natives from salvaged material.

Father Francis Vernon Douglas, son of Mr. and Mrs. G. C. Douglas (Johnsonville) died after being tortured for three nights and three days by Japanese military police, who demanded that he reveal his knowledge of Filipino guerrillas who had come to his church in Pillila, Luzon, for confession.

There was always speculation about the relations of the New Zealanders and the Americans. From the South-West Pacific, in a dispatch published in *The Dominion*, Wellington, I recorded some of my impressions, in part, thus: "When large numbers of American servicemen came to New Zealand more than two years ago and onward, they made a big splash in a fairly small pool. They were out for a good time; it was the last many of them had before they died in the series of battles beginning with Guadalcanal which first arrested the Japanese drive toward New Zealand or Australia. This splash caught many people; its effects were more on individuals than on the nation. The Americans had plenty of money to spend and did not mind getting rid of it; civilians were pegging along on stabilised wages and

the New Zealand servicemen, who had no accumulations of pay like that of the visitors who had been some weeks at sea, were financially low in comparison. It would be sheer humbug to deny that there were some irritations.

There is a lot to set off against these irritations, and I think most of the airmen in the Pacific would like some of these things to be told. They meet the Americans on a man-to-man footing, free from the complicating situations which arise when swarms of "rarin' to go" (while they still can) servicemen set foot in any country with civilised amenities. The Americans did a lot for the R.N.Z.A.F. in the Pacific at the start to make all the difference between reasonable comfort and what the New Zealanders describe in two words, the latter of which is "poor." They are still helping. They built roads, brought the mosquito menace under control—an experience dearly bought when they first landed on islands where clearing Japanese came before controlling mosquitoes. When the shipping situation held up the delivery of pre-fabricated huts and of motor transport from New Zealand, they helped gladly and willingly and let no red tape bar the way. They do things in a big way; they don't send a boy on a man's errand; they would rather do it the other way round. For a time New Zealand airmen were fed in American messes; the Americans are good but balanced eaters. You get plenty of meat but lots of vegetables with it. Much of both came from New Zealand but lost nothing in the cooking. They gave the New Zealanders the same privileges of dealing at their post exchanges (canteens) as their own men. Here men from a country already denuded of what in some instances we might call luxury lines, like fountain pens, candies, latest novels and magazines, towels, underwear, razor blades and the like, were able to buy articles at prices that they had never known before, not even during the world economic depression. Imagine a forty-five-inch white towel of good quality for less than three shillings in New Zealand money, underpants for thirty cents, the best fountain pens for four dollars fifty cents (half the selling price in America), a carton of 200 cigarettes for fifty cents. These are only a few of the items among scores. They made many of the same lines available to the New Zealand canteens as they got under way.

On the medical side, the Americans had the best and latest, and what they had was also for the New Zealanders. Many airmen have reason to be grateful to the American hospitals. This is no reflection on the New Zealand medical set-up because there would have been no sense in having two sets of highly equipped and specialised hospitals in the same areas when American generosity and friendliness made all they had in equipment, skill and attention readily available. I had a personal experience of this. I could have been treated in one of our own hospitals, but to one of the American hospitals I went without any red tape, and was treated as if I were a home-town kinsman of the specialist and each of his staff in my particular ward. The Americans supplied practically all the films—these were the latest—shown on New Zealand stations, and New Zealanders could also attend screenings at American camps. Whatever impression may have been created by Americans on fun-making leave in New Zealand, their discipline on service was firm, maybe hard. I mentioned this impression to some American officers, but they countered by pointing out the good relations between our officers and men; I had not noticed anything otherwise about theirs. Just about every American is an ambassador of goodwill. If you thank them for anything, they tell you how good New Zealanders were to their folk. This tells inadequately just a few of the things we have reason to be grateful for, on behalf of our

airmen, to the Americans in the Pacific. My impression is that the New Zealanders here will long remember their unstinting generosity."

Among those who served throughout the Far East campaign was Flight Lieutenant C. M. Simpson, D.F.C., believed to have had the longest service in the Far East of any New Zealand aircrew. He sailed from New Zealand for Singapore in June, 1941, and completed four years and a half overseas. "Simmie" has vivid recollections of the biggest Japanese raids on Rangoon on December 23 and 25, 1941. His squadron, No. 67, flying Buffaloes, and the American Volunteer Group (one squadron of Tomahawks) were the only fighter defence for Rangoon. On both days the squadrons took off to attack three waves of bombers, each of twenty-seven, escorted by fighters. Twenty of the Japanese were shot down—an outstanding achievement considering that none of the pilots of 67 Squadron had had any operational training. After serving with various units in India and Burma, including two months on liaison work with the late Major-General Wingate's Chindits, Flight Lieutenant Simpson returned to 67 Squadron in April, 1944, when it was equipped with Spitfires. The squadron moved into Akyab, at fighter defence, three days after the first Allied landings. It was through Akyab that Simpson was evacuated when the Japanese were driving the British back in Burma. In one sortie at Akyab early this year he shot down two Oscars, and shortly after this he was awarded the D.F.C. In the latter part of 1945 he was a test pilot at Cawnpore.

Flight Lieutenant M. W. Wrenall, captain (Westmere), and Flying Officer R. N. McKenzie, wireless operator (Northland, Wellington), were members of the first Allied aircraft to land at Kai Tak, Hongkong, after the surrender of the island early in September. They were members of a R.A.F. squadron transporting passengers and supplies across the Hump, and were detached from this work to carry supplies into Hong Kong. Wrenall's aircraft was closely followed by another aircraft piloted by a New Zealander, Flight Lieutenant Cliff Say, who landed five minutes later.

Another distinction gained by a New Zealander was that of being pilot of the first aircraft on a scheduled run from Calcutta to Hongkong—Flight Lieutenant J. Stuart, D.F.C. (Birkenhead, Auckland). Warrant Officer E. P. Stocker, D.F.C., was laying mines between Penang and Georgetown and flying over heavily defended Bangkok.

New Zealand airmen who flew with 52 Squadron, R.A.F., from Dum Dum, Calcutta, to Kunming, China, across the Himalayas, included Flight Lieutenants Cliff Say, "Snowy" Wrenall, and John Stuart, D.F.C. (all Auckland). Flying Officer Ron McKenzie (Northland, Wellington), Flying Officer Bill Fernandez (Auckland), Flying Officer Bob Thornton (Wellington) and Flight Lieutenant Jack Elliott.

THE R.N.Z.A.F. ON THE HOME FRONT

In recounting something of what New Zealanders did in the air war, it is fitting to consider the background in the country which produced them. There has always been a not inconsiderable proportion of young manhood with a yen for adventure, and a high sense of duty. This, however, would have been insufficient had not a sense of air-mindedness not been inculcated in and developed among the rank and file of youth. This development is not solely a growth of the present war. New Zealand was worthily represented

in the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service (these became the Royal Air Force from April 1, 1918). An official publication of 1920 gives the number at 192. Unfortunately, no official or unofficial account of their collective deeds was ever given. The only references to some of them are in books about other airmen, but these books are of such a quality that hundreds of thousands have read them, and many more will still. Two New Zealanders at least are mentioned in *War Birds—The Diary of an Unknown Aviator*—Group Captain Keith Caldwell, M.C., D.F.C. (now Air Commodore), and Flight Lieutenant Don Inglis, D.C.M., of Wellington, who helped to ground many an Air Training Corps cadet in the traditions established by the old R.F.C., and was later adjutant, No. 42 Squadron, Rongotai. Caldwell commanded the famous 74 Squadron during the Great War from beginning to end and had a personal score of twenty-one which, according to available records, makes him the New Zealand air ace of 1914-18.

In *Captain Albert Ball, V.C., D.S.O.*, an historical record by R. H. Kiernan of this first great British ace, who was only twenty when he fell with a score of forty-three victories, it is written of Caldwell: "The squadron in which he (Ball) first served, No. 74, one of the most successful units in the business of killing which ever crossed to France, was largely inspired by the Ball tradition, which meant the offensive wherever the enemy was to be found. Major Keith Caldwell, who had served with Ball in No. 60, impressed the soul of the dead fighter upon his pilots of No. 74, in the days of their fledgling and in the time of their renown." In *War Birds*, the unknown aviator, whose diary ended with his death in combat (he was an American volunteer in the days before the United States entered the Great War) mentions both Inglis and Caldwell. Of Inglis, he said: "I hate for anybody else to fly my machine and this is the first time anyone else has touched it. But — wants Inglis to have a look at the lines and get his bearings, so when one of us goes west, he will be ready to take his place. I wonder whose place it will be. He's a nice fellow, a New Zealander, and got the D.C.M. at Gallipoli with the infantry." And again: "Inglis was flying with Mannock when the latter was killed. Mannock picked up a two-seater over Estaires. He held his fire and turned the Hun for Inglis. Inglis got him, and they started back, but they were low down. Mannock got hit by machine-gun fire from the ground and dove right on into the ground." (Mannock was the greatest British ace, with a total score of seventy-three. He was interned in Turkey when war broke out and because of an infirmity in his left eye, was included in a batch of prisoners exchanged in 1915. He bluffed his way past the medical board which examined him for the R.F.C.). The mention of Caldwell in *War Birds*, reads: "No. 74 is a stout outfit. We knew them well at London Colney, where they mobilised. The other day, 'Grid' Caldwell, the C.O., and Captain Cairns collided in a fight. Cairns got down under control, but the whole squadron saw 'Grid' go spinning down. That night they had a wake . . . about midnight 'Grid' walked in. They thought they were seeing a ghost as he was all bloody and his clothes were torn to pieces. He had set his tail stabiliser and crawled out on the wing and got the plane out of a spin. His aileron control was jammed and part of the wing tip was gone, but he balanced it down and landed this side of the trenches by reaching in and pulling the stick back before he hit. The plane turned over and threw him into a clump of bushes. It had taken him ever since to get back as he crashed thirty miles away. So he resumed command and took charge of the evening, and when the squadron went out for the dawn patrol, he led it. Then he went to the hospital."

The well-known English air writer, Captain W. E. Johns, in his book, *The Air P.C.'s*, also mentions Inglis in his account of Mannoek's end. He says that Inglis saw Mannoek's machine go into a slow turn and then crash in flames. Inglis circled over the spot for a minute or two, and then flew home to make his report. It seemed he was fortunate to escape as his petrol tank was punctured and he had to land only a few yards inside the British lines.

When Inglis went as adjutant to No. 42 Transport Squadron, Rongotai, he joined up with another New Zealander who represented New Zealand in the R.F.C.—Wing Commander J. D. Hewett, A.F.C., Croix de Guerre, with Palm. Hewett paid his own passage to England to join up, and in conversation with me, recalled that in those days a pilot was posted to the front with twenty-five hours' flying, against 200 hours or more of the present day. Hewett was mostly on artillery co-operation, but he got a score of five enemy machines.

Air Commodore Caldwell (twenty-one enemy aircraft) and Air Commodore R. B. Bannerman, D.F.C. (fifteen enemy planes shot down single-handed and credited with many more possibles) were the New Zealand air aces of 1916-18. Early in 1945 Caldwell was appointed to command London headquarters of the R.N.Z.A.F. in the rank of Air Commodore.

The present Chief of Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal L. M. Isitt (the first New Zealander to be Chief of the Air Staff), obtained a transfer to the R.F.C. while on sick leave in London after being wounded with the New Zealand Rifle Brigade on the Somme in 1916. Isitt was with the R.F.C. in France, largely on artillery co-operation. In September, 1919, he obtained the first commercial navigator's licence issued by the Air Ministry and therefore numbered one. At that time he also held a commercial pilot's licence for all types of aircraft. He was the signatory for New Zealand at the Japanese surrender aboard the U.S. battleship *Missouri* on September 2, 1945.

Another New Zealander with an outstanding record in the Royal Flying Corps was Squadron Leader M. C. McGregor, D.F.C. and Bar, who lost his life in a civil flying accident at Rongotai on February 19, 1936. McGregor learned to fly at the Walsh Brothers' school at Kohimarama and joined the R.F.C. in 1916. Later he served with the famous No. 85 Squadron and had a fine record in combat. He contributed much to civil aviation in New Zealand and was a pioneer in commercial flying. With Mr. H. C. Walker he flew the Manawatu Aero Club's Miles Hawk in the MacRobertson Centenary Air Race from England to Australia, finishing fifth at Melbourne, an outstanding performance (for that class of machine) which was described in a foremost British aviation journal as unsurpassed in British aviation. The time from England to Australia was five days, fifteen hours, thirteen minutes, which was 30 per cent. less than the existing light aeroplane record.

Among others who served with the R.F.C., or R.N.A.S. (later R.A.F.) were Captain Euan Dickson (Auckland), D.S.C., and Bar, D.F.C., Croix de Guerre; Douglas Gray (Gisborne and Wairarapa); Ken Hall (Hororata); —, Beamish (East Coast); Jack Carr (Auckland); —, Harkness (later killed in flying accident); Wing Commander Norman A. Avery, of R.N.Z.A.F. Pacific Group headquarters and by occupation a sheepfarmer near Havelock North; Wing Commander Jack Canning (Waipukurau); Group Captain T. W. ("Tiny") White; P. K. Fowler (Palmerston North); Air Commodore J. L. Findlay (who transferred to the R.F.C. after being wounded at Loos and on the Somme with an English county regiment); F. S. Gordon (Rotherham).

In the earliest days of the 1914-18 war New Zealand was represented in the Royal Flying Corps by Captain J. J. Hammond, of Feilding, whose

parents were Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hammond, and grandfather, Mr. Matthew Hammond, of "Killeymoon," Bulls. An appreciation of Hammond, written in 1919 by Captain C. E. Blayney, R.A.F., stated that in his estimate Hammond "knew no fear and was the best pilot England possessed at the time." Also that "as a test pilot Joe was without equal and the Air Ministry soon recognised this and sent him off to Lincolnshire where for a long time he was engaged in testing new machines. . . ." After being posted to Bristol where he was engaged in testing the famous British fighter aeroplanes, he was sent to the United States when that country entered the war. It was there he met with an accident which proved fatal. Hammond was stated to have had more hours of flying to his credit than any other member of the R.F.C. He was the first New Zealander to become a fully fledged aviator. Hammond was an old boy of St. Patrick's College, Wellington, where there is a tablet commemorating his death in the service of his country. He left New Zealand in 1906. He qualified at Rheims, France, where aviation tests were held, and was granted a certificate as pilot aviator of the Aero Club of France. This was the highest credential of the times. The day he passed his final test the wind was so strong that he was the only one who would fly. On his second flight he did twenty-five miles cross-country at 2,000 feet in a Sanchez-Besa biplane. The French Press acclaimed him. His skill in the air brought offers from several countries. Early in 1911 he visited Australia with a No. 10 Bristol plane (60 h.p. Gnome engine), was the first aviator to make successful distance flights in Australia and at Perth reached an altitude record of 3,000 feet, increased to 5,000 feet on a subsequent trip from Altona Bay to Geelong—forty miles in fifty-five minutes and beating the express! Australian Press tributes included: "The God in the Machine," and "A Modern Daedalus." In 1913 the British Government offered New Zealand a Bleriot monoplane (80 h.p. Gnome engine) as the first unit of a proposed Imperial Air Fleet. It arrived in the *Athenic* on September 29, 1913. Hammond, on leave from the Royal Flying Corps at the time, made several demonstration flights over Auckland—the first on January 17, 1914. Hammond was the first to fly over a New Zealand city. When war broke out the machine—named *Britannia* and shown at the Auckland Exhibition—was shipped back to England with the Main Body in troopship No. 10, *Arava*.

Other New Zealanders in the R.F.C. who subsequently attained distinction included Air Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham, K.C.B., C.B., D.S.O., M.C., D.F.C., A.F.C. (who joined the R.F.C. in 1916 after serving with the New Zealand Forces in Samoa and Egypt) and commanded the North-West Africa Tactical Air Force, and Air Vice Marshal Sir Keith Park, K.B.E., C.B., M.C., D.F.C., Air Officer Commanding the Mediterranean and later South-East Asia, and who commanded the No. 11 Fighter Group during the Battle of Britain. He is a son of Professor J. Park, Dunedin.

A Wellington man, Major A. de Bathe Brandon, had the distinction of shooting down a Zeppelin, an achievement for which two others (Flight Sub-Lieutenant R. A. J. Warneford, R.N.A.S., and Lieutenant Leefe Robinson, R.F.C.) were previously awarded the Victoria Cross. Brandon was awarded the M.C. for a gallant attack on a Zeppelin and the D.S.O. for services in the destruction of Zeppelins.

There were two private flying schools training pilots during the Great War for the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service—Walsh Brothers' school at Kohimarama, Auckland, and the Canterbury Flying School, Wigram, Christchurch. These two schools trained 296 pilots during 1914-18, 180 of this total at Wigram. The Walsh Brothers had actually built

and flown their own plane in 1911. The Christchurch school was established by Sir Henry Wigram, a benefactor of civil and military aviation in New Zealand at a time when it most needed encouragement. In 1923, when Wigram aerodrome was purchased as a base he gave £10,000 towards the cost and subsequently eighty-three acres of land.

The Walsh Brothers and Dexter founded the Auckland Flying School early in 1915. The tuition fee was £100. The aeroplane used was a locally-built Curtis flying-boat, with a ten-cylinder Anzani engine. The instructor was Leo Walsh, still in business as a machinery merchant in Auckland. He had taught himself to fly. The first two pupils were G. Callander and Group Captain Caldwell. They qualified early in 1915. The flying-boat was under-powered and could not take two off the water, so they had to teach themselves, too. At Wigram, in its early days, the instructor was Hill who was killed in a home-made aircraft built by Mackie: it broke up in mid-air. The aeroplanes used in training were Caudrons and photographs of the trainees are still hanging on the walls of the airmen-pilots' room at Wigram. Group Captain C. W. K. Nicholls was the tenth pupil to qualify at Wigram but on the day he was due to qualify the first student up crashed and the passing-out had to be postponed until the aeroplane was rebuilt.

The civil aero clubs did a great deal to foster practical interest in aviation, and many New Zealanders who subsequently served the Empire with distinction in this war had their interest encouraged and their natural aptitude for flying developed by the clubs. Now that victory has been won, the clubs will once again provide a nursery for the development of those ready to defend their country, and the British Commonwealth generally, should the need again arise. The aircraft possessed by the clubs at the outbreak of war were also most valuable for training and other purposes, and while, in a sense, the Government took over the aircraft, it was from hands extended to deliver them immediately the call came. For these reasons, briefly stated as they are, the aero clubs are deserving of the greatest private and State encouragement after the war, and no doubt they will get it. There will certainly be many among the thousands of returned airmen, and those who served in New Zealand, anxious to use club facilities to indulge their love of the air.

Other factors which stimulated interest are worth suggesting. The deeds of British (including New Zealand) airmen in the Great War (of which some mention is made in this section and elsewhere) in planes which most people would regard today with suspicion, even for a run across Cook Straits; the trans-Tasman flights; the inborn desire of New Zealand youth to prove itself in a comparatively new sphere; the development of commercial air services with splendid safety records. In fact, between 1928 and 1938, there were twenty trans-Tasman crossings, seven of these in single-engined, and thirteen in multi-engined, planes; seven in a westward direction (New Zealand to Australia) and thirteen in an eastward direction. One exception, the crossing made by F. C. Chichester in 1931, was the only occasion then when a flight was not made in one hop. Calls were made at Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands, necessitating great navigational accuracy. The first attempt to fly the Tasman was by Messrs. Hood and Moncrieff in 1928, in which they were lost, but the same year Squadron Leader (the late) Sir Charles Kingsford Smith and Flight Lieutenant (the late) C. P. T. Ulm, co-pilot, with Messrs. McWilliams and Litchfield as wireless operator and navigator respectively, made the first successful crossing.

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

As far back as 1920 the advisability of encouraging commercial aviation as an essential part of defence policy was recognised by subsidies to the existing aviation companies, which were being run at a loss, partly as the result of a cessation of training pilots for service in the R.A.F. Arrangements were made to loan defence machines to the civil companies for training purposes and in 1922-23 they received £2,975 in subsidies (three companies) and £2,700 as payment for refresher courses for defence officers. On June 14, 1923, the New Zealand Air Force was formed, consisting of the Permanent Air Force (a part of the permanent Military Forces) and the New Zealand Air Force (a part of the Territorial Forces of the Dominion). Aviation was stimulated by the Government's 1929 offer of financial assistance to flying clubs and legislation empowering local authorities to establish and maintain aerodromes, make charges for the use thereof, contribute to the cost of establishment and to the funds of clubs. In 1933, with the object of increasing the mobility and defensive power of the R.N.Z.A.F., and to provide for the development and safety of civil aviation, a scheme for establishing a chain of landing grounds throughout the Dominion was approved by the Government. During 1937-38, £361,000 was expended on such development, and £400,000 provided for 1938-39. There were then forty-seven licensed aerodromes complete in New Zealand (some of them formed before the inauguration of the scheme) and seventy others, including emergency landing fields, complete or partially complete. Eleven aero clubs were receiving the Government subsidy and 910 pilots had secured "A" licences and forty-four "B" licences. The clubs had carried 45,000 passengers and flown approximately 4,700,000 miles, nine out of the eleven having started operations before or by 1930. There were also ninety-one ground engineers' licences in force. They had 2,457 associate and 422 flying members and 422 private and 28 commercial licences were valid. There were 20 commercial planes, 43 aero club planes, 25 privately owned and three experimental. The Government subsidy was abolished from March 31, 1937, when the Civil Reserve Scheme was introduced by which the Government entered into an agreement with approved clubs for the training of civil reservists and Air Force candidates. By the outbreak of war there were 15 clubs, with 66 aircraft, 401 private licences current and three commercial. Between the inauguration of the first clubs in 1928 and 1940, more than 81,000 hours had been flown solo, and over 31,000 dual. The R.N.Z.A.F. had requisitioned seventy-six club and commercial company aircraft.

The year, 1936, was an important stage. It was obvious then that aircraft development was at a stage—and an ever-increasing one—when the ocean was no longer a natural boundary between belligerents, however isolated their respective positions. The importance of aircraft in Empire defence was recognised in all its implications for good or ill. The Government decided to obtain expert advice from overseas. Accordingly, Group Captain the Hon. R. A. Cochrane, C.B.E., A.F.C., R.A.F., came here to investigate. Then there were only two air force stations, Hobsonville and Wigram, with few aircraft, inadequate equipment, no ammunition and no bombs. Service aircraft at Hobsonville consisted of five Vickers Vildebeeste bombers, two Fairey 111F. floatplanes, and one D.H. Moth, while at Wigram there were seven Vickers Vildebeeste bombers, two Grebe S.S. fighters, four Hawker Tomtit, and four Avro 626 training machines, one D.H. Moth, one Whitney Straight and one Percival Gull.

Later to be promoted Air Vice-Marshal and knighted, Cochrane remained in New Zealand as Chief of the Air Staff (the first)

until March, 1939, with the rank of Group Captain. His visit to New Zealand was particularly timely and well spent. His advice to the Government, specially in the development of plans for the establishment of an adequate system of aerodromes and landing grounds throughout the country, paved the way for the rapid expansion of the R.N.Z.A.F. after the war started. In 1941 he was appointed Director of Flying Training at the Air Ministry, London, and in 1945, he became Air Officer Commanding the Transport Command, R.A.F., in succession to Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Bowhill. At other periods after returning to England and his appointment to the Transport Command, he commanded various bomber groups. Commissioned in the Royal Navy in 1915, Cochrane later transferred to the Royal Naval Air Service and served for part of the last war in airships. In 1919 he was transferred to the R.A.F., and served in Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, Aden and Great Britain.

Following the Cochrane report the Air Force Act of 1937 enabled the Air Force to be organised and developed as a separate branch of the defence services. From June 14, 1923, it had been known as the Permanent Air Force and was part of the permanent military forces, with the Territorial squadrons part of the Territorial military forces, but in 1934 the force was reorganised and became the R.N.Z.A.F. An exchange of officers with the R.A.F. was started from 1938, and the short service commission scheme inaugurated, whereby young New Zealanders of a suitable type could enlist with the R.A.F. A steady stream of them had already been going over on their own initiative for some years, but this scheme put matters on a proper footing and ensured that a man who wanted to train to defend the Empire should not have to bear the expense of going to England without any guarantee of acceptance. This was a splendid scheme, the fruits of which were reaped right from the first day of the war, and the harvest of honour for Empire arms, and those of New Zealand in particular, has continued ever since. In the first year of the scheme, 1937-38, 104 New Zealanders went to the R.A.F. under this scheme; in 1938-39, 144. When it is remembered that there were 507 New Zealanders in the R.A.F. on the outbreak of war, the contribution of this scheme can be appreciated. A squadron of Baffins arrived in 1938 and other aircraft were already in the country or on order. The strength of the regular Air Force at March 31, 1937, 1938, and 1939, was respectively in order of officers and airmen: Twenty-one and 156; twenty-seven and 302; fifty-seven and 622. The similar position of the Reserve was: ten officers and no civil reserve of pilots; thirteen officers and 106 civil reserve pilots; sixteen officers and 160 pilots. The Territorial Air Force figures were: Seventy-one officers, no airmen; seventy-three officers and seventy-five airmen; seventy-nine and 265. In July, 1944, the strength of the R.N.Z.A.F. in New Zealand was 28,196, and overseas 13,351; more than two army divisions.

Another important stage followed the visit of the United Kingdom Air Mission in April, 1939. A factory was established at Rongotai by the De Havilland Company, whose name is part of British aviation history, for the production of training aircraft. They turned out 300 such aircraft at Rongotai during the war years. An expansion of the short service commission scheme was provided to give an annual output of 220 pilots. New Zealand agreed to train, in the event of war, 1,000 pilots annually for the R.A.F. This was subsequently altered, at the request of the United Kingdom Government, to 650 pilots and a total of 650 air-gunsners and observers. The Empire Air Training Plan was proposed by the United Kingdom Government on September 26, 1939. Canada, Australia and New Zealand were to co-operate

in the training of aircrew personnel, costs to be shared proportionately. New Zealand agreed to supply 880 fully trained pilots annually, 520 trained to elementary standard (advanced training to be done in Canada), 546 observers (initial training only) and 936 air-gunners (initial training only, with further training in Canada). In addition, it was agreed to train maintenance personnel for the R.A.F., approximately 800 trained mechanics to be sent overseas each year, starting 1941. The tremendous organisation and expansion this required is too obvious to require detailing. Building and construction expansion alone, from 1937, to March, 1940, totalled £2,103,000, and later a further £1,600,000 was authorised. Here the foresight of 1936-37 had its reward. Without it, such commitments could never have been undertaken within at least one or two years after war actually began and if the pre-war development plan had been too rigid, early participation in the Empire Training Plan would have been difficult. As it was, New Zealand contributed 7,511 to the Plan. Further, the establishment of training schools adjacent to railway workshops in the four main centres, improved the facilities for mechanical and technical training, while on the education side, correspondence courses (and radio broadcast lessons in wireless telegraphy) brought men up to the required standards. The education part of the air training programme was unspectacular but deserving of the greatest commendation.

Preparations were made during the precautionary period prior to the actual outbreak of war which resulted in immediate mobilisation of regular personnel, the calling-up of Reserve and Territorial Air Force members, including a number in the Civil Reserve whose trades suited them for immediate employment in service units. The Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch Territorial squadrons were mobilised and at full strength within seven days. The early training of men for flying duties was on aircraft that, even in those days, were outmoded, and it was not till March, 1941, that modern aircraft were arriving from overseas. Air crews could then complete their training in New Zealand on Oxfords, instead of the faithful Vincents with their 125 to 130 miles an hour, and on Harvard trainer-fighters instead of Hawker Hinds. By then New Zealand had practically finished the complex organisation needed for the maintenance of a modern air force. This included an educational service for pre-entry recruits, initial training wing, elementary flying training schools, technical training schools, aircraft repair depots and the like. The training organisation established under the Empire Air Training Plan was completed by May, 1941. The programme originally called for training nearly 4,000 air crew, including 1,500 fully trained pilots, per annum, but this was modified in 1941-42 by lengthening the courses. This improved the general standard of the trainees. Later, the war with Japan further modified the plan, and aircrew personnel for the Pacific were fully trained in New Zealand instead of being sent to Canada. On the ground side, up to the time of the Japanese entry into the war, 1,000 riggers and mechanics, and more than 1,000 of other ground staff trades, were being trained annually. Two other developments of 1940-41 were the inauguration of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force and the Air Training Corps.

The R.N.Z.A.F. established the first women's auxiliary unit in the Dominion—the Women's Auxiliary Air Force—on January 16, 1941, doing clerical work, driving, technical duties, mess servicing and other avenues of essential military employment, which helped to release large numbers of men for active service. The strength of the W.A.A.F. reached approximately 3,500, second only to the New Zealand Women's Army Auxiliary Corps,

AIR DEEDS AND MEN

which had a peak of 4,000. The strength of the W.A.A.F. on January 14, 1945, was 2,700, in forty separate trades.

The Air Training Corps, formed in October, 1941, was destined to become a considerable factor in the "big brother," specially in the later stages of the war when the drain on manpower for flying duties on both the European and Pacific fronts began to manifest itself, both in numbers and aptitude. Then the A.T.C. came into its own, producing the best material. Its strength at August, 1944, was 9,300, which was double the 1942 total. More than 3,000 had entered the R.N.Z.A.F., over half of these as air crew, while at least 1,000 were in technical positions, many of them with maintenance units in the Pacific. The A.T.C. made a considerable contribution to the welfare of New Zealand youth—quite apart from considerations of war. At a time when some loosening of general behaviour standards among youths too young to enter the forces was inevitable, it brought the advantages of disciplinary, educational and technical training, and good companionship to many thousands. I recall the thrill the best six of each from courses of 250 (given special holiday courses at Milson in the 1943-44 Christmas and New Year holiday period) got from a flight in an operational craft from Ohakea, piloted by a former A.T.C. cadet who had been awarded the D.F.C. for his services in the Middle East.

War in the Pacific on December 7, 1941, resulted in a readjustment of the operational and training programme. Aircraft used for training had to be used for operations, and aerodromes used for training schools made room for operational squadrons. Pilots who would otherwise have gone overseas were retained and given further training under operational conditions. In the ground trades additional personnel were required for the Pacific. Suitable training was provided and technical training schools expanded. The first manpower difficulties were experienced. On the one hand skilled tradesmen were required for various sections of war industry, specially munitions and armament; on the other hand, men of such qualifications were required by the armed forces, including the R.N.Z.A.F. Unskilled men had to be trained, necessitating a big expansion in this programme. Air training was facilitated by the arrival of Oxfords, Hudsons, Ansons, Kittyhawks and Harvards. The R.N.Z.A.F. continued to play an increasingly important part in general reconnaissance, the guarding of approaches to main ports, protection of shipping, escorts of merchant ships and convoys, including troop transports, patrol flights and other duties vital in the defence of a country which, had the attack come, would probably have had its first warning from the air arm. Similar work was being done by army co-operation and reconnaissance units in the Pacific. The supply of equipment had to keep pace with expansion. The local manufacture of wooden airscrews, aircraft tyres, armament parts, fuel tanks, pumps, photographic apparatus and gun sights were part of a wide range of first-class quality.

There was a big job ahead in the Pacific, the strength had to be considerably increased, and concentration given to the operational side. This was done to such an extent that in the year 1942-43, the strength of the R.N.Z.A.F., after allowing for casualties, was more than 31,000, with over 3,000 already dispatched to the Pacific by March, 1943. At the same time other overseas commitments had been met and 8,500 personnel sent to other overseas theatres. Both the Army and the Air Force wanted men and War Cabinet authorised a survey of Army personnel to ascertain how many were willing to volunteer for the Air Force. It was finally agreed to transfer 6,000 under this scheme.

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

While the Japanese continued their southward drive through New Guinea and the South Pacific early in 1942, there was an extensive development of operational units designed primarily for the defence of New Zealand against invasion and raiding, and for the protection of shipping. The middle of 1942 saw the strategical situation altered. The Midway Island and Coral Sea engagements, the United States landing in the Solomons, and the halt of the Japanese advance in New Guinea, all contributed to lift the threat from New Zealand, and bring about a change from the defensive to the offensive. Bomber reconnaissance and fighter squadrons were released to co-operate with the United States forces from forward bases in the South Pacific, while still maintaining adequate home defence requirements. As the situation improved later in 1942, the main effort was in the formation of new squadrons and the re-equipment of existing ones; all for forward area service with the United States forces.

The favourable turn of the war was reflected in the announcement of the Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones, on September 6, 1944, that an R.N.Z.A.F. Task Force was to be formed for forward operations in the Pacific, Northern (Auckland) and Southern (Christchurch) Group Headquarters eliminated (Wellington headquarters were already closed down), two stations, Gisborne and Seagrove, were to be placed on a care and maintenance basis, and the maximum age for air crew enlistment, raised in the early days owing to the manpower shortage, was to revert to twenty-five years, no married applicants to be accepted. The Group headquarters had been primarily established provide for operational control in the face of the Japanese advance. Later, Southern Group became virtually a training command, while Northern Group dealt with various phases of R.N.Z.A.F. operations affecting New Zealand as a base. The Minister said that "the reorganisation of the R.N.Z.A.F. marks a new phase in the Dominion's already notable contribution to the war against Japan. The gallant deus or New Zealand air and ground personnel in the campaign which removed the enemy threat from our shores will go down in our history. I am confident that in their future operations against the Japanese they will distinguish themselves with the same courage and resolution."

Then, on September 27, the Minister announced that four additional air station were to be closed (Delta, Ashburton, Tauranga and Levin), other units amalgamated, and a further 2,400 officers, airmen and W.A.A.F. administrative and ground staffs released as further reorganisation steps following the improved war situation in Europe. The recent decision to send no more air crew personnel to Canada had now been followed by a request from the United Kingdom Government that no further trainees should be sent direct from New Zealand to the R.A.F. This meant a substantial reduction in R.N.Z.A.F. training establishments, as only a fraction of the multi-engined bomber personnel previously being trained for the R.A.F. could be absorbed in the Pacific. Some of the 2,400 aircrew personnel then in training in New Zealand would become surplus, chiefly those intended for the R.A.F., while others not yet in actual flying training were over the new age limits. Fighter pilots then receiving training would not be affected as there would be a continuing need for them in the Pacific. There would still be required for the Pacific approximately 1,200 annually of all categories of aircrew. Sixteen hundred officers, airmen and W.A.A.F. administrative and ground personnel had been released in August, 1944, and now a further 2,400 would be progressively released. Steps had been taken to return to New Zealand those with three or more years service with the R.A.F.

In view of the then current agitation concerning the strength of the Air Force in New Zealand, the following statement by the Minister was of special interest: "We have in New Zealand and the Pacific only about eight men on the ground to one in the air. This compares most favourably with any other air force. Though comparisons have been drawn between the size of the R.N.Z.A.F. in New Zealand and that in the Pacific, there are several important factors to consider, including increases in the Pacific. Under the Pacific rotational service scheme, personnel, particularly air crews, have comparatively short tours of duty overseas before returning to New Zealand for rest and re-forming. This naturally increases the strength of our home establishments, though they should rightly be regarded as active service personnel. Put in another way, if we used some Pacific base instead of New Zealand as the centre for rest, re-forming, overhaul, supplies and related administration, we could make great reductions in our home establishments, but only by sending many thousands more overseas. It is considered that the present system is preferable." I personally could not reconcile the percentage of ground staff to flying personnel quoted in this statement. In the Pacific, all on the ground included, the proportion was nearer fifteen to one. Taking, on a most conservative estimate, the early 1945 strength of the R.N.Z.A.F., in New Zealand and the Pacific at 28,000, the proportion of eight to one would have meant an air strength far beyond that possessed in these theatres at any stage; that is, on a basis of aircraft actually in use for operations, training and transport.

On June 23, 1945, Defence Minister Jones announced that 3,000 aircrew would be returning from the Pacific; 2,000 ground crew would be released from New Zealand stations; the full-scale effort in the Pacific would not be reduced; two flying training stations in the Dominion would close; no more aircrew recruits were wanted; 500 now undergoing initial flying training could be released for ground duties or service with the Army, those under twenty having the option of ground duties or return to civil life until they were of military age.

On August 27, 1945, the Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones, announced that 25,000 personnel of the R.N.Z.A.F. would be demobilised within six months. The figure included 5,000 in the Pacific and 4,000 in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. The New Plymouth, Hamilton, Swanson, Taieri, Harewood and Nelson stations would be closed, making a total reduction to date of sixteen. That left Hobsonville, Ohakea, Wigram, Woodbourne, Whenuapai and Ardmore, and, four stores depots. From VJ Day to January 31, 1946, 7,563 airmen out of a total of 8,155 had been evacuated from the Pacific zone. The strength in New Zealand had been reduced from over 30,000 to between 7,000 and 8,000. The total demobilisation from VE Day to January 31, 1946, was over 25,000.

No. 42 Transport Squadron, based at Rongotai, did a great job on communications flights in New Zealand under the direction of Wing Commander J. D. Hewett, A.F.C., Croix de Guerre, with Palm (in 1934, partner with Wing Commander C. E. Kay in the Melbourne Centenary Air Race). Hewett's flying has been spread over twenty-eight years and the hours must reach the five-figure mark. The work may have appeared humdrum compared with bashing Berlin, but it was absolutely essential, and started with a humble beginning of light aircraft from clubs and private owners. Later, it possessed a mixed bag of Dominies, Wacos, Vega Gulls, Rapides and Miles Whitneys. Wairoa won't forget them, anyway. When this district was flood-isolated early in 1944, and there was no yeast to make bread, the

squadron flew it there in face of bad weather conditions. They did for Wairoa what once happened in Burma when one of Wingate's infiltrating columns ran short of bread and signalled back to the supply officer (Captain Lord) this Bible reference: "O Lord send us bread." He was equal to the occasion and signalled back the reference "The Lord has heard thy prayer." Bread arrived by air within a few hours.

Rongotai was closed down as an R.N.Z.A.F. station early in 1945, and the only important unit remaining at Rongotai was No. 42 Transport Squadron. In July, 1940, Rongotai was transformed from the Dominion's principal holiday attraction—the Centennial Exhibition—to an R.N.Z.A.F. station. The first commanding officer was Group Captain (then Squadron Leader) T. W. White, later R.N.Z.A.F. Liaison Officer at Ottawa. He took up his appointment on July 8, 1940. Early in 1942 Wing Commander G. L. Stedman succeeded Group Captain White, and when Wing Commander Stedman went to Woodbourne in October, 1943, as Commanding Officer, Wing Commander A. J. Turner took over at Rongotai. Later, Wing Commander J. D. Hewett, A.F.C., who since June 21, 1940, had been officer commanding Communications Flight (later 42 Squadron) assumed command of the Rongotai Station. Almost from the start, Rongotai housed the R.N.Z.A.F. Technical Training Schools. Subsequently those schools were moved to Nelson.

Wing Commander (then Flight Lieutenant) A. M. S. Manhire was appointed as the first officer commanding the Technical Schools, taking up his appointment on July 8, 1940. Associated with him were Wing Commander (then Flying Officer) A. T. Giles, M.B.E., and Flight Lieutenant (then Warrant Officer) P. W. Ward. Others who played a prominent part in the Technical Schools were Squadron Leader G. F. Chippendale, Flying Officers G. Maynard, N. Moore, W. J. Horton and H. R. Wallace. The Technical Training Schools were divided into two main sections. There was the preliminary technical training school, popularly known as the P.T.T.S., and the technical training school which was called the T.T.S.

During 1941, the Technical Training School expanded rapidly and a system of selection was instituted to obviate wastage in training. A number of personnel could not complete the courses. After the system of selection and preliminary technical training was inaugurated, wastage fell to one per cent.

In June, 1943, the Technical Training School was transferred to Nelson. Expansion was too great and the schools could not be accommodated at Rongotai. The preliminary technical training school remained at Rongotai for another year and then it was also shifted to Nelson. The first passing-out parade of technicians from the Rongotai schools was held on November 10, 1940. The T.T.S. was transferred to Hobsonville after the war.

No mention of the Air Force in New Zealand and the Pacific would be complete without a mention of the R.N.Z.A.F. Band. It had a fine reputation as a musical and marching combination in New Zealand and was a great advertisement for the Dominion among thousands of United States servicemen in the Pacific. The musical credits for conductorship belong to Flight Lieutenant Gladstone Hill. The Band, in charge of Squadron Leader "Jimmy" Duncan, did a three and a half months tour in the Pacific in 1944, returning to New Zealand on September 20. In seventy-five working days—the remainder of the time was occupied by travelling—the band gave 180 performances under the most trying of climatic conditions before enthusiastic audiences. Some of the places where the band appeared were near the battle front at Bougainville, in New Caledonia, Guadalcanal, Tulagi, the Russell Islands, Espiritu Santos, and Fiji, and on occasions three and four perform-

ances were given in one day. Travelling 150 miles by dusty roads the band gave three performances in one day in Fiji. On one occasion United States troops waited in heavy rain for hours to hear the band. Rather than disappoint them the performance was given with the drums shielded and the clarionets and cornets playing under oilskin capes. The lights failed at another concert at Bougainville, where there was an audience of 7,000 Americans. The band continued to play the overture, *Morning, Noon, and Night*, without a falter in the darkness. A ceremonial march at Bougainville was witnessed by about 15,000 troops and natives.

Though it is not part of the New Zealand naval or air effort here may be recorded a claim made in captured enemy documents that aerial reconnaissance of Wellington and Auckland harbours was made in 1942. These documents were those of a large Japanese submarine—one of a flotilla of five from which were launched the midget sub. attacks on Sydney harbour on the night of May 31-June 1. The documents recorded a series of submarine-carried small float-plane reconnaissance of approximately twenty places in the Pacific, including Pearl Harbour. It recorded that from one of these five large submarines a float-plane it carried made a reconnaissance of Sydney at dawn on February 7, 1942, Melbourne on February 26, Hobart on March 1, and Auckland on March 13. A second submarine's float-plane reconnoitred Suva and then Auckland (May 24), then proceeding to off Sydney where a reconnaissance was made at dawn on May 29 as a prelude to the midget attacks.

The second New Zealand air V.C., Squadron Leader Leonard Henry Trent, D.F.C., whose award was not announced until March 1, 1946, is mentioned on page 64. The citation stated in part:—

On March 3, 1943, Squadron Leader Trent was detailed to lead a formation of eleven Ventura aircraft in a daylight attack on the power station at Amsterdam. The target was known to be heavily defended. The importance of bombing it regardless of enemy fighters or anti-aircraft fire was strongly impressed on the aircrews. Squadron Leader Trent told the deputy-leader that he was going over the target whatever happened. When the Venturas and their fighter escort were nearing the Dutch coast one bomber was hit and had to turn back. Suddenly large numbers of enemy fighters appeared. The escorting fighters were hotly engaged and lost touch with the bombers, which closed up for mutual protection, and commenced their run up to the target. The fighters detailed to support them over the target reached the area too early and had been recalled. Soon the bombers were at the mercy of fifteen to twenty Messerschmitts. Within four minutes six Venturas were destroyed. Trent continued on his course with the three remaining aircraft, and in a short time, two more Venturas went down. Heedless of murderous attacks and of heavy anti-aircraft fire, Trent completed an accurate bombing run and even shot down a Messerschmitt at point blank range. The aircraft following him was shot down on reaching the target. Immediately afterward his own aircraft was hit, went into a spin and broke up. Trent and his navigator were thrown clear and became prisoners of war. The other two members of the crew perished. On this, his twenty-fourth sortie, Trent showed outstanding leadership. The other pilots followed him unwaveringly. His cool, unflinching courage, and devotion to duty despite overwhelming odds, rank with the fine examples of these virtues.

Trent is the son of Mr. and Mrs. L. N. Trent, The Port, Nelson, and was educated at Takaka and at Nelson College. In 1936, out of 2,000 applicants, he was one of the first twelve selected for training in the Air Force.

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The Royal New Zealand Navy has fought quietly but with an efficiency perhaps better known to the enemy than to the public of New Zealand and the homes from which the men came. Even now it may surprise many to know that in late 1944 there were more than 9,000 New Zealanders serving in the R.N.Z.N., and including those ashore, among whom were 500 members of the W.R.N.Z.N.S., 10,000. The identity of naval men is largely merged in that of their ships and the service. The particular nature of naval warfare precludes much spotlight on individuals; theirs is a team job. But no amount of reticence ever affected the confident public feeling that the Royal New Zealand Navy, and New Zealanders wherever they served, were upholding a tradition of service upon which the foundations of Empire were laid, maintained and strengthened.

There is as yet no cohesive account of the part played by New Zealanders in the Merchant Navy. Suffice to say their part was in the tradition of the Navy. They were among the seamen who helped maintain the vital chain of supply between New Zealand and the United Kingdom, and also between this Dominion and its Pacific bases. Theirs were all the hazards of the sea but with little means to fight back beyond the skill of their commanders, the stoutness of the ships, and their own courage. The job was not to fight but to get through—food for the most part, one way, and essential goods and munitions the other. Many merchant seamen gave their lives. New Zealand's merchant fleet is not large but it paid its toll in losses. The Union Steam Ship Company's *Atatea* was among New Zealand liners which served as transports and she met a gallant, fighting end during North African campaign landing operations. She fought like a battleship, said the Admiral in command of the particular operations.

Both in peace and war the people of New Zealand have good reason for gratitude to the Merchant Navy. One way they can show it is by unstinting support of various organisations ashore which provide amenities for seamen. This support can never be too great, if the debt is to be even partly repaid.

For probably quite good reasons there were not the same facilities to examine naval records as was the case with the Army and Air Force, which have well-staffed archives section. Part of the material which appears here was supplied officially by the Navy Department, through the Director of Publicity, for newspaper publication for which it was prepared by Mr. S. D. Waters, the well-known New Zealand naval writer and historian.

The performance of the Royal New Zealand Navy over the long and perilous years since September, 1939, is in its essentials the story of all naval warfare. It is a record mainly of long, monotonous sea-goings and patrols, of unending hard work and unceasing day-to-day operations. All of these have had but one ultimate objective—to maintain command of the sea—not only across the wide oceans of the world, but in the narrow seas and coastal waters. Command of the sea today depended upon a combination of the Royal Navy, the Merchant Navy and the Air Forces, together with bases from which to operate. War at sea consists of

a struggle to maintain command of the sea, the result of which is to enable the victor to command and control the communications across the seas and oceans, whereby we can nourish the peoples, maintain war industries and transport vast armies and their equipment and supplies to all theatres of war. This struggle at sea, as history has taught us, and as Mr. Churchill has never ceased to remind us, has been the foundation of all the efforts of the United Nations. If we had lost command of the sea upon which our very existence depends, then all else would have been denied to us.

The ships and men of the Royal New Zealand Navy have played a worthy and world-wide part in the struggle at sea. New Zealand seamen in their own ships, as well as in ships of all types of the Royal Navy, have served on the narrow seas and wide oceans in every part of the world. A good number have acquitted themselves well in the Fleet Air Arm.

When, on September 3, 1939, she received the signal to commence hostilities against Germany *H.M.N.Z.S. Achilles* (Captain W. E. Parry) was already far out in the Pacific proceeding to take up her allotted war duties as a unit of the South American Division, America and West Indies Station. The only Allied warship in the eastern Pacific, she patrolled the west coast of South America for six weeks, protecting Allied trade and searching for enemy ships between Panama and Cape Horn, a long stretch of some 4,100 miles. In the last week of October *Achilles* proceeded through the Strait of Magellan to the Atlantic, where she spent another six uneventful weeks patrolling the long coastline of Brazil.

Then came the sudden climax to these proceedings—the Battle of the River Plate. Correctly anticipating the enemy's movement, Commodore Harwood had concentrated his three cruisers, the *Ajax*, *Achilles* and *Exeter*, and soon after dawn on December 13, 1939, having just completed exercising his ships in the tactics he proposed to employ in action, intercepted the German pocket battleship *Admiral Graf Spee*, which had crossed the South Atlantic after sinking eight merchant ships.

The weight of gunnery was well in favour of the *Graf Spee* but she was outdone by the spirit and skilful tactics of the British ships. The *Exeter* was put out of action early, but the *Ajax* and *Achilles*, after an all-day pursuit, shepherded the big German into Montevideo roads at midnight. Four days later the *Graf Spee* was scuttled and set on fire by her own company.

The *Exeter* was 8,390 tons, with six eight-inch guns, and the *Ajax* and *Achilles*, 7,000 tons, with eight six-inch guns. The *Graf Spee*, 10,000 tons, mounted six eleven-inch and eight five-point-nine-inch guns. The combined broadsides of the British cruisers totalled 3,136 pounds, including that of the *Exeter*, 1,536 pounds, which, as stated before, fell out of the engagement early. The *Graf Spee's* broadside was 4,708 pounds.

The running battle lasted in all eighteen hours. When the *Graf Spee* put out from Montevideo before being scuttled in the presence of 500,000 shore watchers, she had only one hundred and five minutes to leave or be interned. The limit was 8 p.m., December 17. The *Graf Spee* disembarked at Montevideo thirty-six dead and sixty wounded. The *Achilles* was unscathed and only three New Zealanders were injured, not seriously. Casualties aboard the *Exeter* were sixty-one killed and twenty-three wounded; the *Ajax*, seven killed, five wounded. The dead were buried at sea on December 14. The complement of the *Achilles* included 327 New Zealanders, two of whom were officers. Lord Strabolgi (formerly Commander Kenworthy, R.N.) said in the House of Lords, that it was a ballistic miracle for a ship of the *Graf Spee's* armament to be attacked successfully by light cruisers.

Mr. Churchill, as First Lord of the Admiralty, in a broadcast on December 18, 1939, paid a tribute to the fighting of *H.M.S. Exeter*, *Ajax* and *Achilles*—to find any more brilliant or resolute it would be necessary to go back a long way in naval history.

Admiral Harwood, who commanded the cruiser force spoke of the "very high standard of efficiency and courage displayed by all officers and men throughout the five days of the operation. . . . There are many stories of bravery, devotion to duty and of the utmost efficiency . . . the *Achilles* was handled perfectly by her captain, officers and ship's company." Captain Parry, in his message, stated: "The bearing of officers and men throughout the action was magnificent and does the greatest credit to their country. I am proud to command such a magnificent ship's company."

Of the part played by the *Achilles* Admiral Harwood wrote of "the honour and pleasure I had in taking one of H.M. Ships of the New Zealand Division into action," and fully concurred with Commanding Officer of *H.M.N.Z.S. Achilles* that "New Zealand has every reason to be proud of her seamen during their baptism of fire."

The *Graf Spee's* victims as a raider were the *Clement*, *Newton Beach*, *Ashlea*, *Huntsman*, *Trevanion*, *Africa Shell*, *Doric Star*, *Tairoa* and *Streonshalh*. All were sunk in the South Atlantic bar the *Africa Shell* which was sunk off the east coast of Africa. When she put into Montevideo, the *Graf Spee* landed sixty-two British seamen prisoners, some from the *Shaw*, *Savill* and *Albion* steamer, *Tairoa*. They realised they were lost if the *Graf Spee* sank during the action because the steel doors to their cell were closed. Nonetheless they counted the hits by the British guns and cheered for the attacking cruisers.

During the period the ship was absent from New Zealand on her first war cruise—August 29, 1939, to February 23, 1940—*H.M.N.Z.S. Achilles* steamed 52,323 miles, having spent 168 days at sea and only ten days in harbour. Not counting the four days and nights of patrolling outside Montevideo, the action with the *Admiral Graf Spee* lasted about eighteen hours.

Early in 1943 the *Achilles* proceeded to England for rearming and complete refit. The ship was recommissioned on March 23, 1944, and proceeded to the Mediterranean and thence to Indian waters, where she served for three months in the Eastern Fleet. In December, 1944, the *Achilles* transferred to the British British Pacific Fleet, with which she served in operations against the Japanese. Her new commanding officer was Captain F. J. Butler, M.B.E., R.N., a man with a "grudge" against the Japanese, because they bombed and sank the *Empress of Asia* while he was conveying her to Singapore in 1941. He volunteered to return to the Pacific theatre in order to "pay off a few scores." The crew, in large measure the same as the earlier manned *Leander*, were 85 per cent. New Zealand and the remainder largely Imperial men with wives and families in the Dominion. Captain Butler's last seagoing command was *H.M.S. Danae*. On leaving the *Danae* Captain Butler was appointed captain of the Gunnery School at Devonport, England, and served there till he took over the *Achilles*. When she returned to Britain to refit, after an absence of over four years, the *Achilles* was commanded by Captain W. Gronow Davies, D.S.C., and had steamed 246,000 miles during the war. She bore a scar received in the Pacific when a Japanese aircraft hit her with a 550lb. bomb. One of her guns, which took the full force of the explosion, was split, while the turret was smashed and thirteen men killed. Miraculously, five men came out alive from that turret. If the bomb had fallen three feet on either side of the gun, the *Achilles* would now be resting fathoms deep off Guadalcanal, for her magazine would have exploded. A large-scale refit was indicated, and a visit to a British dockyard was ordered. An accident there



Members of the New Zealand Fighter Squadron (488) in Malaya where, with obsolete aircraft they fought with outstanding courage, though greatly outnumbered.



Corsairs of the R.N.Z.A.F., flying in formation at Guadalcanal.



Men of the *Leander* at work in the Indian Ocean.



LIEUTENANT COMMANDER G. J. MACDONALD, D.S.O., D.S.C., and two Bars, Ment, in Dispatches (twice), R.N.Z.V.R., one of the great M.T.B. leaders of the war.



The sinking of the Italian commerce raider, *Ramb I*, by H.M.N.Z.S. *Leander* in the Indian Ocean on February 27, 1941.

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prolonged the job, a gas explosion forward killing seventeen dockyard workers and injuring nearly 100. This mishap turned the repair and refit job into what amounted to nearly a rebuilding of the cruiser. Into the shell of the cruiser were built all the lessons learned in the war, and they had been plenty. The reborn ship was built to order for the type of fighting the Pacific theatre had developed.

Commander H. B. C. Holmes, R.N., of Masterton, was second-in-command. He was in *H.M.S. Ajax* at the River Plate engagement. Later he served in an anti-aircraft cruiser for two years, and saw the New Zealand Expeditionary Force being evacuated from Greece. He was in the battle north of Crete in May, 1941. New Zealand executive officers in the *Achilles* included Lieutenant-Commander L. King, D.S.C. (Wellington), Lieutenants H. Boyack (Auckland), P. W. C. McCallum (Tokomaru Bay), J. S. Pringle (Eltham), F. S. Phillips (Gisborne), and T. B. Hogan (Hastings).

Paymaster-Commander L. J. Black, Lieutenant-Paymaster J. M. Fletcher and Lieutenant C. S. Sharp (Auckland) were among the officers. The chief medical officer was Surgeon-Commander E. R. Harty (Dunedin, and formerly Auckland). The chaplain was the Rev. C. F. Webster, R.N.Z.N. Commissioned warrant and warrant officers included T. G. E. Hallin, W. R. Ellis and R. B. Waddell (Auckland).

After nearly two years absence the *Achilles* was back at her old berth at the Devonport naval base in February, 1945. She was then in relation to size as well equipped as any ship in any Pacific fleet and more modern in equipment than most.

The crew had four unusual types. One man was a native of Niue and three others were Fijians, the first natives from that British possession to circumnavigate the globe as members of the Navy. The refit had not been completed in time for the cruiser to share in the first landing on D Day, but she was sent to the Mediterranean to assist in the coverage of the landing in the Marseilles area. That landing was not opposed and the assistance of the guns of the *Achilles* was not required. Some patrol and convoy work, including escort of the ship which carried the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester and their family to Sydney, made up the rest of her activities prior to her return to Auckland. The cruiser then took up ordinary patrol and other duties as a unit of the Royal New Zealand Navy, taking part as required in the activities of the British Pacific Fleet. Among the officers manning the *Achilles* were men of the widest battle experience, men who were with her at the Battle of the River Plate and subsequent Pacific actions and other men who were with Royal Navy ships on the Russian convoys and in Mediterranean actions. Also, two had served in submarines. After this visit to New Zealand the *Achilles* joined the British Pacific Fleet at a refuelling area and was present for the last two days of a series of carrier strikes against the Sakishima Islands. The Fleet withdrew to Sydney for replenishment and refit but the *Achilles* was left behind at Manus (Admiralty Group) and was one of a small force which attacked Truk early in June. When the Fleet reassembled for the operations in Japanese home waters shortly before Japan sued for peace, the *Achilles* was in it and present for the various carrier strikes which were still in progress when the war ended. The *Achilles* was the only ship in the whole British Navy which was present at the first naval engagement of consequence in this war (The Battle of the River Plate) and also at the final combat operations. She re-visited New Zealand on August 31, 1945. The *Gambia* was also due to return but was re-routed to represent the Royal New Zealand Navy at the Japanese surrender.

H.M.N.Z.S. Leander was employed on patrol duties in New Zealand waters during the first four months of hostilities. On January 4, 1940, she proceeded from Wellington to Lyttelton to act as escort for the two transports carrying the

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South Island section of the First Echelon of New Zealand troops for overseas service. In the forenoon of January 6 the *Leander* and her charges made contact in Cook Strait with the main part of the convoy from Wellington. The six troop transports were *Empress of Canada*, *Strathaird*, *Orion*, *Rangitapu*, *Dunera* and *Sobieski*, and they were escorted by H.M.S. *Ramillies*, H.M.A.S. *Canberra* and H.M.N.Z.S. *Leander*.

Off Sydney Heads on January 10 the New Zealand ships joined up with the Australian convoy and H.M.A.S. *Australia* relieved *Leander* who proceeded into Sydney. Thence she returned to New Zealand and on February 5, 1940, she was present at the celebration at the Bay of Islands of the centenary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi.

H.M.N.Z.S. *Leander* proceeded overseas on May 2, 1940, and was employed for nine months on patrol and escort duties in the Red Sea. That was arduous and exacting service in tropical heat, the monotony being broken occasionally by bombing attacks by Italian aircraft. During the night of October 20-21, 1940, two Italian destroyers attempted to attack a convoy which was being escorted by the *Leander* and other ships. The escort engaged the enemy, but contact was lost in the darkness. At daybreak H.M. destroyer *Kimberley* contacted the *Francesco Nullo*, and after a forty-minute action the Italian destroyer ran aground and was finished off by a torpedo.

While operating in the Indian Ocean the *Leander* on February 27, 1941, intercepted the Italian commerce raider *Ramb I*. On being ordered to stop, the enemy opened fire, but was quickly silenced by five salvos. Eleven officers and ninety-two ratings were picked up by *Leander* who suffered neither casualties nor damage. The Italian ship burned fiercely and sank fifty minutes later.

On March 2, 1941, the *Leander* joined company with H.M.A.S. *Canberra* on patrol in the Mauritius area. Two days later two enemy supply ships were intercepted. One, the German vessel *Coburg*, was sunk by gunfire from the *Canberra*, and the other, the former Norwegian tanker, *Ketty Brovig*, scuttled herself. The survivors, including two boatloads of seamen held as prisoners by the Germans, were picked up by the *Leander* who landed them at Mauritius. On March 23 the *Leander* intercepted a Vichy French steamer and sent her into Mauritius for examination. The *Canberra* was sunk off Tulagi on August 9, 1942.

In June, 1941, the *Leander* proceeded into the Mediterranean and joined a squadron operating off the coast of Syria, where she took part in a short, inconclusive action with two Vichy French destroyers. The *Leander* and several destroyers also bombarded enemy positions which were impeding the progress of British troops along the coast. Enemy aircraft made several unsuccessful bombing attacks on the ships. The *Leander* arrived back in New Zealand waters in September, 1941, after an arduous and successful cruise that had lasted sixteen months.

Mention of the *Ramillies* makes it appropriate to recall one of the ship's most treasured possessions, the pui-pui, or flax kilt presented to her captain when the ship visited Wellington in December, 1939. The presentation was made by members of the Ngati-Poneke Maori Club and the captain was enjoined to wear it whenever the ship went into action. This was done a number of times, including D Day (June 6, 1944) and succeeding days when the *Ramillies* supported landing operations on the Normandy coast. A New Zealand officer in the battleship, writing of D Day, stated:—

"I had occasion to see the captain. He was wearing the Maori skirt. Before we started he spoke over the ship's broadcasting system. He began: 'The die is cast . . . and ended, 'Remember as we join battle that I shall be wearing the *Ramillies Skirt*.'"

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The piu-piu is held in the special custody of the ship's captain, who must take it on to the bridge and wear it in action. The ship's song says:—

In Wellington this ship was blessed with Maoris' full tradition,

A skirt of grass was given her to guard her on her mission.

In action and in battle's sway this ship shall have no hurt,

Provided that the captain wears this gift, this Maori skirt.

The *Ranillies* is carrying on in the Royal Navy the Maori tradition established by *H.M.S. New Zealand* during the war of 1914-18. When the latter ship visited the Dominion in 1913, the Maoris assembled at Rotorua presented Captain Lionel Halsey with a piu-piu and a greenstone tiki with the injunction that they were always to be worn by the captain of the *New Zealand* when in action.

With the gift was made a prophecy by an old Maori chieftain that the ship would be in action and be hit in three places including the after turret, but that the casualties would not be serious. The Maori chieftain was told that his prophecy might come true but that it was of no personal interest to the officers and men then in the ship as she was due to pay off in September, 1914, and a completely new company would join the *New Zealand*. But the old Maori was emphatic that the same officers and men would be in the ship in action. He was right, for the outbreak of war prevented the ship's paying off and many of those serving in her in 1913 were still in her at Jutland, when she was hit only on the after turret and there were no casualties, and later the *New Zealand's* piu-piu and tiki were worn in action by Captain Halsey at Heligoland Bight on August 28, 1914, and Dogger Bank, January 24, 1915, and by Captain J. F. E. Green at Jutland, May 31, 1916. More than a year later, on the last occasion that the *New Zealand* sighted enemy ships during the war, on November 17, 1917, there was an amusing example of the seamen's faith in the ship's mascots.

"Early in the morning some German light cruisers were sighted and engaged by our light cruisers and in the *New Zealand* we went to action stations," wrote an officer. "The Admiral, the Captain (now Captain R. Webb), and myself were all on the upper bridge when I saw a sailor come up the ladder, peep round the corner, and then disappear. 'It's all right, he's got it on,' I heard him tell several men on the lower bridge, from which I understood that he was a scout sent out when there was a possibility of an action to make sure that the Captain actually was wearing the piu-piu and the tiki."

In the Royal New Zealand Navy the commanding officer of *H.M.N.Z.S. Tui* is the custodian of the Kokowai mat presented by Maoris of the Waikato and a 400-year-old tiki loaned by the Arawas. These were worn by him on several occasions in the South Pacific.

One of the proudest stories in New Zealand's merchant shipping history is that of the *Monowai* (Union Steam Ship Company) which first as an armed merchantman, and then as an assault ship, steamed the oceans during the war. As a naval vessel in the Pacific, as a first-line assault ship in the Normandy landings, and as a troopship in the Far East, she was in most places where history was being made, and came through unscathed. Captain G. B. Morgan, D.S.O., D.S.C., the Union Company's best-known skipper, and formerly commander of the *Avatea*, was master since the beginning of 1944. Few British merchant ships had a more varied career. After being taken over by the naval authorities in 1940, the liner was converted early in the war into an armed merchant cruiser for escort duties, some of her tasks being in convoying drafts to Fiji and the Fanning Islands. It was off Suva in January, 1942, that the *Monowai* was first in action. She was

attacked by a Japanese submarine which, after a brief exchange of fire, broke off the action and dived. On the completion of long service in the Pacific, the *Monowai* arrived at Liverpool in June, 1943, and was handed over to the Ministry of War Transport for conversion into a landing ship, infantry. Her New Zealand naval crew, with one exception, were transferred during conversion, and when she was ready for sea in February, 1944, the *Monowai* had only four Dominion officers, Captain Morgan, Mr. J. Billingham, chief officer, of Auckland, Mr. H. Simmond, D.S.C., chief engineer, of Port Chalmers, and Mr. M. Hurley, purser. Mr. A. Packman, who remained with the liner, was the only person who had been with the vessel throughout the war. The *Monowai* was later joined by several engineer officers from New Zealand. The conversion was a lengthy task, for accommodation had to be provided for troops and provision made to carry twenty assault landing craft, which enabled her to land between 800 and 900 fully equipped infantrymen. On April 12, 1944, the ship joined the invasion armies as a unit of J Force at Southampton, and began a period of training in preparation for the landings. When the *Monowai* put her Canadian troops ashore in Normandy on D Day it was the second time that a New Zealand merchant ship had been in the first line of a major invasion during the war. In 1942 the *Awatea* had made history off Algiers—"a merchant ship that fought like a battleship"—and it was the same captain who took the *Monowai* to another historic beach-head. The *Monowai* put her men ashore and returned safely to England. Then began a shuttle service across the Channel, running the gauntlet of mines, submarines and light coastal craft month after month. Between November and April, 1945, the *Monowai* made forty-six trips across the Channel from Southampton, first to the three main beach-heads, Utah, Omaha, and Juno, and then later to Le Havre. In this period she carried 74,163 troops to France. From April to June, 1945, she ran between Marseilles and Odessa, taking Russian repatriates one way and returning with French, Belgian and Dutch. In June she picked up a draft of Indian troops returning home from Italy, troops of the 1st Battalion of the 5th Gurkha Rifles, one of the crack British regiments, with four Victoria Crosses to its credit. Throughout the war this Battalion was closely associated with the New Zealand Division, and the men were delighted to be repatriated on a New Zealand ship. At the end of the voyage the troops presented Captain Morgan with a kukri, the Gurkha's traditional weapon. Returning to Suez for more Indian troops, the *Monowai* was nominated for the role of an assault ship in the next Far East invasion, but the Japanese surrender came before this was necessary, and the vessel sailed for Madras with an administrative staff and soldiers in the second merchant convoy to enter Singapore, arriving a few days after the surrender. She was the first ship to leave Singapore with British prisoners of war. It was the intention of Captain Morgan, when the *Monowai's* service was completed, to present the Devonport Dockyard Chapel at Auckland with a model of the *Tainui* canoe and a chieftain's cloak, which were given by the Tainui Maoris when the ship was commissioned as an armed merchant cruiser. Following the example of the captain of *H.M.S. New Zealand* in the Great War, Captain Morgan wore the cloak whenever action seemed imminent.

In September, 1941, the King approved the proposal that the New Zealand Naval Forces should be designated the Royal New Zealand Navy. This honour was greatly appreciated in New Zealand as implying the recognition of the war services not only of the personnel trained and serving in the Royal Navy but also of those officers and men who entered the Service as New Zealanders and of whom the Service in New Zealand predominantly consists.

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ACTION AGAINST JAPAN

When hostilities against Japan commenced on December 8, 1941, the ships *Achilles*, *Leander* and *Monowai* were engaged on patrol and escort duties in the South Pacific area. In the early hours of that memorable morning an urgent request was received in Wellington that the *Achilles* should proceed to Singapore to reinforce the Eastern Fleet, which was desperately short of cruisers. The request was approved at once by the War Cabinet and in less than four hours a signal was made to the *Achilles*, then at sea on a passage to Fiji, to "proceed with all despatch to Suva and complete with fuel. Probable final destination, Singapore." Two hours later this was amplified by another signal instructing the *Achilles* to proceed from Suva to Port Moresby, New Guinea, and thence, after refuelling, "with all convenient despatch," to Singapore to join the Eastern Fleet. Twelve hours after receiving the first signal the *Achilles* sailed from Suva and, proceeding at top speed, arrived at Port Moresby in the evening of December 11. In the meantime the situation had changed rapidly and while she was still oiling the *Achilles* received orders to cancel her sailing to Singapore and return to Auckland, where she arrived in the forenoon of December 16. The paramount duty of available naval forces in the South Pacific was the protection of the sea communications of Australia and New Zealand. To this end the Anzac Squadron came into being, comprising the available ships of the two Dominions. The *Achilles* proceeded from Auckland at midnight on December 16-17 to join the Anzac Squadron, which met an important United States convoy and escorted it to Brisbane. Subsequently the squadron acted as an escort to the *Aquitania* and another ship carrying troops and supplies to Port Moresby. Subsequently the *Achilles* took part with the *Leander* and the *Monowai* in covering the considerable movements of New Zealand troops and supplies to Fiji. Later the *Leander* and the *Achilles*, operating under the United States commander of the South Pacific area, were employed as escorts for important convoys transporting personnel and supplies from the United States to the South Pacific and the United States task forces in the Solomon Islands area. On January 5, 1943, a task force covering the passage of reinforcements to Guadalcanal was attacked by Japanese aircraft. One bomb hit the *Achilles* on a gun turret, her casualties being thirteen killed and eight seriously wounded. The *Leander* returned to Auckland on July 29, 1943, and was docked for temporary repairs, having been struck by a torpedo in the Solomons. The ship subsequently sailed for the United States for permanent repairs and re-arming. She arrived at Boston, on December 23, 1943, having completed seven and a half years' service in the Royal New Zealand Navy.

The 25th Minesweeping Flotilla, composed of the New Zealand corvettes *Matai*, *Kiwi*, *Moa*, *Tui*, *Breeze* and *Gale*, were also placed under the operational control of Commander South Pacific Area for duty in the Solomon Islands where they performed much valuable service. The Flotilla served more than three years in the South Pacific, operating as an anti-submarine escort to United Nations transports and supply ships arriving at and departing from forward bases.

During the night of January 29, 1943, H.M.N.Z. Ships *Kiwi* and *Moa*, while patrolling off the northern end of Guadalcanal, detected the presence of a submarine which surfaced after a depth-charge attack and used its superior speed in an effort to escape into the darkness against the land. The small ships opened fire with their two four-inch guns, the U-boat replying with its five-point-five-inch gun. A fierce action lasted more than an hour, during which the *Kiwi* thrice rammed the submarine which finally struck a reef and was wrecked. One Japanese survivor was picked up. Beside the crew a Japanese landing party of soldiers also perished.

United States awards were made after the remarkable action. Admiral

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W. F. Halsey, U.S.N., Commander of the South Pacific Area, under whom the New Zealand ships were operating, remarked in his first signal announcing the action, that "the alert and courageous actions of the crews of these gallant little ships merits the highest praise." In a message of congratulation to the *Kiwi* and *Moa*, Admiral C. Nimitz, U.S.N., Commander-in-Chief United States Pacific Fleet, expressed his "highest admiration for the skill, courage and tenacity which carried the action through to complete destruction of the enemy."

The United States Navy Cross was awarded posthumously to Leading Signalman C. H. Buchanan, R.N.Z.N.V.R., of Port Chalmers, for service as set out in the following citation:—

"For extraordinary heroism and distinguished service in the line of his profession while serving on board a corvette which participated in the action against a Japanese submarine near Guadalcanal Island on the night of January 29 and 30, 1943. Leading Signalman Buchanan, although mortally wounded, courageously remained at his battle station during the entire action. He skilfully trained a searchlight on the submarine and kept the target illuminated for the guns of his ship. During the engagement the submarine, after being forced to surface by depth charges, was rammed twice and hit several times by the gunfire from his ship. His valorous action, taken with complete disregard for his own safety, contributed materially to the destruction of the enemy, and was in keeping with the highest traditions of the Naval Service."

The Commanding Officers of the *Kiwi* and *Moa* were both awarded the United States Navy Cross. The citation of Lieutenant Commander Gordon Bridson, D.S.C., of *H.M.N.Z.S. Kiwi* said he "displayed exceptional tenacity in maintaining close action until the submarine was destroyed." He was also awarded the Distinguished Service Order for his part in the action. Of Lieutenant Commander Peter Phipps, D.S.C., of *H.M.N.Z.S. Moa* the United States citation said he "expertly utilised his ship to her best advantage during this hazardous night engagement. His ship kept the enemy craft under accurate gunfire and forced it into the beach. His exceptional display of tactics and his tenacity in pressing the attack contributed directly to the destruction of the submarine." Lieutenant Commander Phipps was awarded a bar to his Distinguished Service Cross.

On the following night the *Moa* and *Tui* engaged four enemy landing craft, two of which were sunk. The *Moa* was sunk off Tulagi in a dive-bombing attack by Japanese aircraft on April 7, 1943. Five ratings were killed and fifteen others and the commanding officer injured.

In August, 1943, the *Tui*, which was escorting a convoy from Noumea took part with aircraft in the sinking of another large Japanese submarine, from which six survivors were picked up.

Operating as a unit in an American Task Force of cruisers and destroyers *H.M.N.Z.S. Leander* took part in the night action of July 12-13, 1943, against two groups of Japanese destroyers and at least one cruiser, which were attempting to reinforce the enemy troops on New Georgia. In this action, known as the Battle of Kolombangara, two American cruisers and the *Leander* were damaged by torpedoes and a U.S. destroyer was also torpedoed and had to be sunk some hours later. *Leander's* casualties were twenty-eight killed and missing and fifteen injured. The Japanese lost one cruiser and possibly three destroyers sunk while one destroyer was severely damaged.

Early in 1944, twelve Fairmile motor-launches of the Royal New Zealand Navy were placed under the operational control of Commander South Pacific

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Area for service in the Solomon Islands, and covered many thousands of miles carrying out their important patrol and escort duties.

All these ships of the Royal New Zealand Navy played their part in maintaining the security of sea communications in the South Pacific, upon which the successful prosecution of the war against Japan depended and without which New Zealand's overseas trade and her splendid contribution to the Allied war effort could not have been maintained. The officers and men manning these New Zealand ships proved themselves grand seamen and with fighting qualities second to none. Both in action and in carrying out the sometimes monotonous routine escort and patrol work, they earned the highest regard of Admiral W. F. Halsey, U.S.N., and the United States Navy, and added to the high reputation of the Royal New Zealand Navy.

The Chief of the New Zealand Naval Staff, Commodore Sir Atwell Lake, R.N., received tributes to the service of the R.N.Z.N. in the South Pacific from Admiral W. F. Halsey and his chief of staff, Rear-Admiral R. B. Carney. The latter said: "New Zealand's naval contribution to the South Pacific campaign has invariably been loyal, thorough, whole-hearted and rugged. Your lads are grand sailors and have earned the respect and admiration of our people. My association with your outfit leaves a fine taste in my mouth, and they will never have a better friend than me."

A notable event was the commissioning on September 22, 1943, of *H.M.S. Gambia* as a unit of the Royal New Zealand Navy. This modern ship was on foreign service under the operational control of the Admiralty. Subsequently the corvettes *Arabis* and *Arbutus*, manned by New Zealand officers and ratings, were commissioned for service. These were presented by the Admiralty to the R.N.Z.N. The *Arbutus* reached New Zealand in October, 1944, and the *Arabis* some time before. All officers and seventy-five per cent. of ratings were New Zealanders. The *Arabis* joined the 25th Minesweeping Flotilla and the *Arbutus* did duty with the British Pacific Fleet.

The *Gambia* is one of a class of twelve 8,000-ton cruisers named after British Crown Colonies, and is larger and more heavily armed than the ships of the *Leander* class. Her armament includes twelve six-inch guns mounted in four triple turrets, eight four-inch, and a number of smaller anti-aircraft guns, and she carries three aircraft (one catapult). The ship was laid down in 1939 and completed in 1942.

Gambia, after which the ship is named, is a small colony in British West Africa, a strip of territory along the Gambia River, which flows into the Atlantic south of Dakar, which is at the most westerly point of Africa.

Before joining the R.N.Z.N. *H.M.N.Z.S. Gambia* was re-commissioned by Captain N. J. W. Williams-Powlett, D.S.C., R.N., with a crew composed of New Zealand and Royal Navy personnel, including many New Zealand officers and ratings who served in *H.M.N.Z.S. Achilles* during the action with the *Graf Spee*.

During December, 1943, the *Gambia* took part in the operations in the Atlantic against German blockade runners, one of which was sunk by aircraft. The cruisers were then free to operate against enemy destroyers which had come out into the Bay of Biscay to meet the blockade runner. The weather was bad and the *Gambia*, which had been stationed well to the westward, was still some 100 miles away when two other cruisers engaged ten German destroyers, three of which were sunk and others damaged in a fast running action.

Subsequently the *Gambia* proceeded out to the Indian Ocean, joined the Eastern Fleet, and was engaged in the Madagascar campaign. She took part in several successful operations against Japanese bases and held her own as a most efficient ship among the cruisers of her squadron which was subsequently trans-

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ferred to the British Pacific Fleet. She came to New Zealand in October, 1944, on her first visit, and was at Wellington on November 4 with the corvette *Arabis*. In company with the battleship *Howe* she left Auckland in February, 1945, linking with the Fourth Cruiser Squadron at Sydney on February 17, and joining the rest of the British Pacific Fleet Task Force at a base north of New Guinea. At Leyte, in April, Captain William-Powlett was relieved by Captain Ralph Edwards, C.B.E., R.N., former Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief, British Eastern Fleet, Admiral Sir James Somerville. The *Gambia* was in the Okinawa campaign as part of the British task force which attacked airfields and other important targets in the Sakashima Islands, and also took part in two operations in northern Formosa. She returned to Sydney early in June for a short refit and returned to northern waters in mid-July. She was one of 130 United States and British warships which attacked the main Japanese islands of Kyushu, Honshu, Shikoku and Hokkaido. At no time was the Fleet more than 300 miles from the Japanese coast and during hours of darkness battleships and cruisers proceeded close inshore to bomb vital industrial targets. On August 9, two days after the news of the dropping of the first atomic bomb, the *Gambia* and the *Newfoundland*, under the command of Rear-Admiral E. P. Brind, were detached from the main British task force and joined the United States bombarding force of three battleships and four cruisers to bomb industrial targets by daylight in the town or Kamaishi. Photographs taken after the surrender showed the *Gambia's* target to be almost entirely destroyed. This was done in face of air attacks, including by *kamikaze* or suicide planes. This was the last bombarding operation against the Japanese mainland and the *Gambia* fired the final shots. There were further suicide air attacks after the armistice, pieces of one plane shot down by a Seafire falling aboard the *Gambia* and a bomb close to port, but harmlessly. On August 27 the fleet moved into Tokio Bay and anchored at Sagami Wan in the approaches. Of all the ships which had set out from Australia in February only the battleship *King George V*, and the *Gambia* went to Tokio.

The first members of the British landing force to step ashore on the Japanese mainland were B Company, which, with the exception of one platoon from the battleship *King George V*, was manned and officered by New Zealanders from the *Gambia* and was under the command of Lieutenant-Commander G. R. Davis-Goff, R.N.Z.N. B Company was part of the British force which occupied Yokosuka naval base. Davis-Goff was torpedo officer in *H.M.N.Z.S. Gambia*, the most senior of New Zealand officers on continuous service in the R.N.Z.N. He entered the Navy as a seaman boy (second class) with the first draft to be sent to the training ship *Chatham* in August, 1921. In April, 1924, he was promoted Able Seaman and in 1932, at the age of twenty-six Davis-Goff became the first New Zealander to be given his warrant, and it was as torpedo gunner that he served in the *Achilles* at the Battle of the River Plate. In 1942 he was commissioned and appointed lieutenant. He was in the *Leander* as torpedo officer when that cruiser was torpedoed in the Solomons. When she went to Boston for repairs and modernization he was appointed to stand by her in command of the work. Later he went to England and saw service with the Royal Navy on Russian convoys. He joined the *Gambia* when she was commissioned in 1944 for service with the R.N.Z.N.

After the signing of the surrender, the *Gambia's* chief duties were aiding in the evacuation of prisoners of war from the Kobe area, operating from the small port of Wakayama at the eastern entrance of the Inland Sea. The *Gambia* then returned to Tokio and thence to Auckland by way of Manus in the Admiralty Islands, and Sydney.

Not only were trawlers and other suitable craft taken over and fitted as minesweepers and anti-submarine vessels, but the flotillas were reinforced by new ships built in the United Kingdom and the construction of such vessels in New Zealand.

Since the early days of the war the minesweepers and anti-submarine and patrol vessels of the Royal New Zealand Navy performed much arduous and valuable service around the coasts of New Zealand, including the sweeping of minefields laid by a German raider.

The Germans laid hundreds of mines round the New Zealand coast in the early days of the war. The most dangerous enemy minefield was in the Hauraki Gulf where 228 of the moored contact type were laid by a raider in seven hours. The first victim was the *Niagara* carrying a valuable consignment of gold (subsequently recovered) and half New Zealand's small arms ammunition intended to help out the United Kingdom after the Dunkirk disaster. Mines were sown in 1941 close to the harbour entrances of Wellington and Lyttelton. On June 12, 1940, in darkness, the powerfully armed German raider *Murmark*, No. 36 (Raider "A") moved into the Bay of Plenty and laid a minefield across the approaches to the Hauraki Gulf. This ship had left Kiel in the first week of April, refuelled from a waiting tanker in the South Atlantic and on May 19, rounded Cape Horn and proceeded direct to New Zealand. Arriving in the Bay of Plenty she laid the first row of mines in a zig-zag barrage in from forty-five to sixty-six fathoms across the eastern entrance to the channel between Great Mercury and Cuvier Islands. Running wide of the Cuvier Island light she ran a second zig-zag barrage across the eastern side of Colville Channel from north of Cuvier to a point off the south-eastern end of Great Barrier Island. A third and much longer barrage was laid across the northern end of Great Barrier in a wide arc six and a half miles off Moko Hinau and thence in a straight line to the north-west, passing about six miles clear of Maro Tiri Island to a point five miles from the mainland. The operation was completed at 2.30 a.m. and the ship made off north-east.

Every endeavour had to be made to ensure the safety of all shipping in New Zealand coastal waters against any possible form of attack. This necessitated building up an organisation of considerable magnitude, including a variety of shore installations which had to be manned day and night continuously. In addition it was necessary to develop bases, a ship repair organisation and facilities for refuelling ships and maintaining supplies of naval stores. Provision had also to be made for the maintenance and repair of our local anti-submarine minesweeping and patrol craft. It was necessary, too, to provide facilities for handling a vast amount of naval wireless traffic, to set up a Naval Intelligence Department and to institute schools for training personnel in wireless, signalling and anti-submarine duties. It was essential to establish a naval control service for overseas shipping and to build up a very comprehensive system for the control and routing of shipping in the Pacific. In this respect the Royal New Zealand Navy had accepted responsibility over a vast area entailing the maintenance of a very accurate "plot" of every ship in that area.

To all the men and women of the Royal New Zealand Navy who, during the six years of war, carried out these most important but often dull and monotonous duties in a most efficient and loyal manner, much credit is due. The Dominion owes to them a great debt of gratitude which, due to the unspectacular nature of their duties, is not fully appreciated.

Ships and men of the final group of Royal New Zealand Naval vessels to be detached from American operational command in the South Pacific received the sailor's coveted award of a hearty "well done" from Vice-

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Admiral W. L. Calhoun, U.S.N., Commander South Pacific Area and Force. In a message to the New Zealand Naval Board and to the commanding officers of the fifteen ships concerned, Vice-Admiral Calhoun expressed his sincere appreciation for the splendid service given by all hands during their months of duty in co-operation with American naval forces under his command. Included in the group of New Zealand ships congratulated by Vice-Admiral Calhoun were *H.M.N.Z.S. Arabis*, a corvette, *Tui* and *Kiwi*, minesweepers, and twelve Fairmile sub-chasers, the Q400 to Q411, inclusive. Previously detached and returned to the control of the New Zealand Navy after distinguished service with American naval forces in the South Pacific were the minesweepers *Matai*, *Gale*, *Breeze* and *Viti*.

At the outbreak of war in September, 1939, permanent New Zealand naval personnel then serving totalled eight officers and 716 ratings, together with seventy-four officers and 541 men on loan from the Royal Navy. In addition, there was in New Zealand a Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve organisation totalling seventy officers and 600 men who formed an invaluable nucleus for the rapid expansion in naval personnel that became inevitable on the outbreak of hostilities. In 1944 the permanent New Zealand naval personnel serving in the Royal New Zealand Navy comprised twenty-seven officers and 839 men, together with eighty officers and 643 men of the permanent R.N.Z.N.V.R. In addition there were 1,565 temporary officers and 5,966 "hostilities only" ratings. The peak wartime strength of the Royal New Zealand Navy was some 10,000 officers and men, nearly 95 per cent. of whom were New Zealanders.

Of the total personnel of the Royal New Zealand Navy some 4,000 officers and ratings were serving in ships and establishments of the Royal Navy, including about 1,000 in the Fleet Air Arm. Many of them were recruited under Scheme "B" (for general service) and Scheme "F" (for Fleet Air Arm). They were to be found in all types of ships from battleships and aircraft-carriers to submarines, minesweepers and motor torpedo-boats. They had taken part in most, if not all, the major British naval operations of this war as well as in numberless minor engagements. They served in the Mediterranean during the critical days of 1940-41 and played their part in assisting to escort valuable convoys to Malta, in minesweeping operations off the North African coast and at the landings in Sicily and Italy. Some served in ships escorting convoys to North Russia, and some were present at the sinking of the *Bismarck* in May, 1941, and of the *Scharnhorst* in December, 1943. Many had served in the English Channel, in minesweepers, motor-torpedo-boats and other coastal craft; and many were present on D Day and took part in the successful landing operations on the Normandy coast. Reports of commanding officers and other authorities invariably testified to the high standard of conduct and ability of New Zealand personnel serving in the Royal Navy.

The Women's Royal New Zealand Naval Service fulfilled an important part in the duties of the Royal New Zealand Navy. When the problem of manpower in the Dominion began to become acute it was decided that a Women's Naval Service was desirable to enable naval ratings performing certain essential shore duties to be released for service overseas. Accordingly, Governmental approval of the proposal was given. On May 26, 1942, the appointment of a Director and Deputy-Director was approved and the Women's Royal New Zealand Naval Service, generally referred to as the "Wrens," began to function.

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The first Wren rating was entered on July 4, 1942, and in 1944 there were some 500 in the Service in New Zealand, employed as wireless telegraphy operators, visual signallers, writers, mail clerks, boats' crews, telephone switchboard operators, motor transport drivers, messengers, coders and plotters, cooks, stewards and in many other duties.

Though still a young service, the Royal New Zealand Navy, during this war, earned for itself a magnificent fighting record of which New Zealand can well be very proud. It played its full part in maintaining the security of our sea communications and retaining command of the sea.

The New Zealand Government, in agreement with the Admiralty, decided early in 1946 to replace H.M.N.Z. ships *Gambia* and *Achilles* with cruisers of the improved Dido class as a major part of the post-war Royal New Zealand Navy. The *Gambia* left Auckland in February for the United Kingdom where she reverted to the Royal Navy. The *Achilles* remained with the British Fleet in the forward area until March when it returned to New Zealand for a minor refit and was set to sail for the United Kingdom late in 1946. Following its arrival there the two Dido class cruisers were scheduled to leave in company for New Zealand.

Details of the awards and decorations won by New Zealand naval officers and ratings (to March 31, 1946) are:—

	Serving in R.N.Z.N.	Serving in Royal Navy.	Total
D.S.O.	2	5	7
Bar to D.S.O.	—	1	1
D.S.C.	10	83	93
Bar to D.S.C.	1	7	8
Second Bar to D.S.C.	—	1	1
C.G.M.	1	—	1
D.S.M.	25	7	32
D.F.C.	1	—	1
Mentioned in Despatches	46	135	181
Commendations	—	1	1
Albert Medal	—	1	1
Non-Operational:			
C.B.	2	—	2
O.B.E.	9	1	10
M.B.E.	18	3	21
B.E.M.	18	3	21
Totals	133	248	381
Foreign Awards:			
American Navy Cross	3	—	3
American Silver Star	5	—	5
American Bronze Medal	2	1	3
American Letter of Commendation	23	—	23
French Croix de Guerre	—	2	2
Total	33	3	36
Grand Total of all awards and decorations			417

Approximately half the awards were to ratings.

The Netherlands vessel *Oranje* during her use as a hospital ship made thirty-nine voyages, covering a total of 370,000 miles. She carried 30,000 sick and wounded personnel. The *Oranje* left hurriedly on her first commission on September 3, 1939, from Amsterdam to Java. Then the Netherlands Government

offered her to the New Zealand and Australian Governments for use as a hospital ship. The conversion took place in Batavia and the equipping in Sydney, from where she left in August, 1941, on her first voyage in the role of hospital ship. The Netherlands Government paid for the conversion and equipping and payment of Netherlands personnel. Shortly after the declaration of peace she transported civilians and others from Malaya to Holland.

The *Maungani*, which served in World War I as a troopship, operated as a hospital ship in World War II without mishap. She did thirteen trips to the Middle East and back, carrying 5,677 sick and wounded. In neither war did she suffer from enemy action. She reached Wellington on her final hospital ship trip on March 20, 1946. Captain A. H. Prosser, the master, had been chief officer on her when she was a troopship in 1918. She was mainly on the Middle East run, but when the European part of the war ended she transferred to the British Pacific Fleet and was a floating hospital at Manus. On the Japanese surrender she went to Hong Kong to pick up prisoners of war, entering the port two days after the British Fleet. Other masters of the ship during World War II were Captains W. Whitefield, F. L. G. Jaunay, A. T. Totten. The matrons were Misses E. M. Lewis (eleven of the seventeen trips), M. B. Briscoe and G. L. Thwaites. Officers commanding troops were Colonel D. N. W. Murray, Lieut. Colonels P. V. Graves, W. P. P. Gordon, C. E. Reid and F. O. Bennett.

The Albert Medal was awarded on November 23, 1943, to Stoker First Class Donald William Dale, R.N.Z.N., who was serving in a ship of the Royal Navy. Stoker Dale hails from Timaru. The circumstances in which the award of the Albert Medal was gained were set out in the official citation as follows:—

"When there was a bad explosion in his ship in dock, Dale, as all anti-smoke apparatus was already in use, tied a handkerchief around his mouth, and went down into the smoke-filled compartment, from which he helped four workmen. He then came up for a spell, after which he went down in another part of the ship to the compartment in which the explosion had taken place. With help from one other man, he here rescued two dockyard workmen, getting them up through a manhole with ropes. To reach the scene of destruction Dale, who was still without apparatus, had to grope his way through smoke and debris. The last twisted vertical ladder down which he went fell short of the deck below. Hearing the cries of those trapped, he trusted to chance and jumped. Luckily the deck proved firm. Although unaware of the full damage which had been caused to the ship, Dale well knew that he was facing the gravest danger."

Lieutenant-Commander George James Macdonald, R.N.Z.N.V.R., of Wellington, who saw considerable service in motor-launches was six times decorated. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross on April 21, 1942, for good service in Channel convoys. On July 13, 1943, he was awarded a bar to his D.S.C. "for courage and outstanding devotion to duty" and on July 4, 1944, he gained a second bar to the D.S.C. "for outstanding leadership, zeal and devotion to duty in successful operations in light coastal craft." His fourth decoration came on September 19, 1944, when he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order for good services in coastal forces in various actions with the enemy. On January, 1945, he was awarded a Mention in Despatches for gallantry in a North Sea action. Macdonald was mobilised at the outbreak of war, being then an active member of the Wellington Division of the R.N.Z.N.V.R. After serving as a rating (gunner), he quickly gained commissioned rank, passing out top of his class with a

first-class certificate. He received specialised training with the coastal forces. He was promoted lieutenant at twenty-two, and lieutenant-commander at twenty-three, in recognition of "his experience and skill in leadership of light coastal forces." He was New Zealand's ace in the Royal Navy coastal forces. He returned to New Zealand in February, 1946, with the outstanding record of having been awarded the D.S.O., triple D.S.C., and twice Mentioned in Despatches. The Royal Humane Society also conferred on him its certificate for saving life at sea. When seventeen, and a junior on the Bank of New Zealand staff, he had left the Dominion to join the Royal Navy (September, 1939).

"Besides my own there were three boats running from the flotilla that night, one commanded by Macdonald, a stout-hearted New Zealander and veteran of about a dozen actions who has an uncanny knack of always doing the right thing." This extract from Lieutenant Commander Peter Scott's history of the light coastal forces 1939-45 in the North Sea, the English Channel and in the Mediterranean under the title, *The Battle of the Narrow Seas*, is but one of the many references in the book to Lieutenant Commander Macdonald. The author, Scott, was a prominent officer of the R.N.V.R. in the light coastal forces and is a son of Captain R. F. Scott, R.N., C.V.O., the famous Polar explorer. According to him, Lieut.-Commander Macdonald played no small part in the history of the light coastal forces.

After describing an attack in March, 1942, in which M.T.B. 31, after sinking an enemy ship in a lone-hand assignment had been surrounded by enemy craft, badly shot up and set on fire, with one man killed and several severely wounded, including the commanding officer, Sub-Lieutenant John Weeden, Lieut.-Commander Scott proceeds: "Macdonald, the first lieutenant, an imperturbable New Zealander, had placed the wounded, including the commanding officer, in the Carley raft, while he and the able-bodied members of the crew had abandoned ship by holding on to the splinter mattresses, which had been cut adrift to act as additional rafts. For some time they had lain off, but then the boat did not blow up and the fire seemed if anything to be abating. So Macdonald, who was a great swimmer, swam back and climbed aboard and finally got some more of the crew back, and began to tackle the fire. It was at this stage that we had put in our most welcome appearance. That was my first introduction to Coastal Forces. For their work that night Weeden and Macdonald were awarded the D.S.C. It was my first meeting with Sub-Lieutenant Macdonald, afterward to become one of the great M.T.B. leaders of the war." Reference is made to Macdonald's skilful rescue under fire of Lieut. P. G. C. Dickens, D.S.O., M.B.E., D.S.C., R.N., and his crew from a ship ablaze and lost in a Channel fight, and to another action in May, 1943, three miles from the Hook of Holland, when four British M.T.B.'s engaged a force of German M class minesweepers which packed quite a heavy punch so far as M.T.B.'s were concerned, sinking two. Scott referring to Lieutenant-Commander Macdonald's services as senior officer of the 21st M.T.B. flotilla, says: "This New Zealander led his flotilla into action successfully time after time, and earned for them and himself a great reputation in coastal forces. Since that night in March, 1942, when I had first met him, wet and bedraggled, in the moonlight on board his burning M.T.B. in the Dover Strait, the night on which he won his first D.S.C., he had earned two bars to it and a D.S.O. His was a record of exceptional skill and infinite spirit."

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

In October, 1944, the senior New Zealand naval officer, Captain Ralph Newman, of Christchurch, was presented by the High Commissioner, Mr. W. J. Jordan, with the Volunteer Officers' Decoration awarded for continued service in the R.N.Z.N.V.R. since January 10, 1928. Captain Newman was awarded the D.S.O. in March, 1941, for courage and devotion to duty in the Channel convoys.

Ships of the Second Mine-Sweeping Flotilla, commanded by Captain Newman, in the *Aberdare*, were being paid off that month after four years' strenuous service in the Mediterranean. The personnel of the flotilla received congratulations from Admiral Sir John Cunningham, Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean. Admiral Cunningham's signal stated that the work of the flotilla had been watched with admiration, and officers and men would leave with the knowledge and satisfaction of a job well done. The flotilla, before it paid off its men, had operated off Singapore, Malta, the Eastern Mediterranean, off Tobruk, Greece, Crete, and Tunisia, and more recently in the Gulf of Taranto and on the east coast of Italy. It was one of the ships of Captain Newman's flotilla which, temporarily flying Admiral Cunningham's flag, received the surrender of the Italian fleet at Alexandria. Captain Newman was formerly commander of the Canterbury division of the New Zealand Naval Volunteer Reserve. He served in the last war and then continued his career in the mercantile marine. For many years he was in the New Zealand Shipping Company's service until he came to settle in New Zealand. Captain Newman left New Zealand in 1940 in charge of the first large party of R.N.Z.N.V.R. personnel to go to Britain.

In eleven months K. L. Elliott, R.N.Z.N.V.R. (Wellington) rose from the rank of lieutenant to commander. This was rapid promotion for a naval officer, and in recognition of Commander Elliott's ability as a radar expert. Commander Elliott, spent his youth in Feilding. He was radio officer in the Union Steam Ship Company's ships *Kaikorai* and *Waitaki* in the early days of the war. He arrived in England in February, 1940, as a civilian and was given an immediate commission in the R.N.Z.N.V.R. He devoted his time to secret radar equipment, and in the course of his duties he had been in touch with most types of ships serving with the Royal Navy. He was in one of the cruisers which escorted *H.M.S. Victorious* when the *Bismarck* was sunk.

Lieutenant L. H. Herrick, D.S.C., R.N., a brother of the air ace, was one of the few New Zealand submarine officers. He served in *H.M.S. Tigress* which, with her sister submarine, the *Trident*, sank five enemy ships in northern waters in 1941. In another attack nearer England they sank three more ships of a heavily escorted convoy. Herrick went to Russia in the *Tigress*, commanded several other submarines, served in the Mediterranean and with submarines operating against the Japanese from Australia.

Lieutenant Jack Kennedy (Christchurch) between June, 1940, and May, 1943, had served in six submarines, the first the *Thunderbolt* (originally the *Thetis*) which sank on trials but was raised, salvaged and renamed. Kennedy, by May, 1943, had seen two U-boats and six merchantmen sunk by submarines in which he was serving.

The D.S.C. for gallantry and skill on patrols in submarines and the D.S.O. for "great gallantry in most hazardous operations during the assault on Norway" were awarded to Lieutenant H. P. Westmacott, whose father is a sheep-farmer at Otorohanga. A British midget submarine, X24, twice penetrated the German-held harbour of Bergen and sank a 7,500-ton merchant ship, a floating dock and a smaller vessel. In the second attack made in September, 1944, Westmacott took the submarine through thirty miles of narrow sea passages and mine-

fields at periscope depth in daylight. He won a cadetship at Dartmouth Royal Naval College in 1934, and when he entered the college at the age of thirteen he was the youngest there. He was at sea as a midshipman when war broke out.

Against submarines Lieutenant-Commander L. P. Bourke, R.N.Z.N.R., who went to the United Kingdom as gunnery officer in *H.M.N.Z.S. Monowai* in 1943, did splendid work for which he was awarded the D.S.C. and Bar. He commanded frigates, the last of which was *H.M.S. Baynton*, and shared in the sinking of at least fifteen U-boats in about eighteen months loan service with the Royal Navy. In one case his ship fought a submerged U-boat for two hours. When the Germans capitulated the group to which Bourke's frigate was attached received the surrender of eighteen German U-boats from bases on the coast of Norway. His ship a few weeks later steamed into Oslo Fjord as part of the escort for the first British merchant convoy to reach liberated Norway. Bourke, before the war, was a chief officer in the service of the Union Steam Ship Company. A New Zealander who served under Bourke in *H.M.S. Baynton* was awarded the D.S.C. for his part in anti-submarine operations.

The first British naval man ashore on the Channel Islands after their liberation was Signalman J. R. Crispin (Kamo, Northland). He hoisted the White Ensign on the flagpole at Guernsey from which the swastika had flown previously. Crispin was in *H.M.S. Bulldog*, aboard which Major-General Heine signed the surrender terms on a rum barrel on the quarter-deck.

A New Zealander, Instructor-Lieutenant Lawrence Hogben, D.S.C., played an important part in the forecasting of the weather for D Day. The meteorological officer on General Eisenhower's staff took the combined forecasts of the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force, and the United States Army Air Force experts, which were discussed at telephone conferences, at which decisions, preferably unanimous, had to be reached. Lieutenant Hogben was one of the naval officers and took part in these conferences.

The forecast dealt with wind, sea, and swell, which particularly concerned the Navy, and also with cloud, which particularly concerned the air forces. The decision to postpone D Day for twenty-four hours resulted from this meteorologists' conference, in which famous meteorologists, including American, Norwegian, and British experts, took part. The decision that the weather after twenty-four hours' delay would be possible, if by no means perfect, for invasion, was the biggest meteorologists have ever had to make. As it proved, the event justified the decision. Lieutenant Hogben, who is a mathematician, was appointed a Rhodes Scholar in 1938, and joined the Navy from Oxford as an instructor-lieutenant. He specialised in meteorology from the outset, and was at sea until February, 1943, serving in *H.M.S. Sheffield* during the chase and destruction of the *Bismarck* and the bombardment of Genoa. He took part in several Arctic convoys, one Malta convoy, and the North African invasion. He was awarded the D.S.C. early in 1943 for his services in Arctic waters. He was the first instructor officer to win this decoration. He was transferred to the Royal New Zealand Navy in 1942, and was appointed to the Admiralty in February, 1943.

Approximately 140 New Zealanders were lost when the British cruiser *Neptune* was mined in the Mediterranean in December, 1941. New Zealanders comprised a substantial portion of the ship's company. Three cruisers, *Neptune*, *Aurora* and *Penelope*, screened by the destroyers *Kandahar*, *Lance*, *Lively* and *Havock*, had sailed to intercept an important enemy convoy which was bound for Tripoli. They were steaming south in single line when, without warning, the leading ship, *Neptune*, appeared for an instant dark against a flash of flame. The concussion of a heavy underwater explosion reached *Aurora*, the next ship in line,

She hauled out to starboard, but the next moment she, too, lifted to a staggering detonation as her paravane exploded a mine. Two minutes later *Penelope* followed suit. The cruiser force had run into a minefield in a depth of water and at a distance from land which made it utterly unexpected. With great luck, *Aurora* contrived to turn and steam out of the field without further catastrophe. She was followed by the *Penelope*, but the *Neptune*, drifting helplessly, had already struck two more mines in quick succession. The commander of the force, Captain W. G. Agnew, R.N., in *Aurora*, considered the situation in all its dire gravity. The ships were twenty miles from Tripoli, and the dawn, which could be expected to bring hostile aircraft, was not far distant. *Aurora's* speed was reduced to ten knots, and the Admiralty account says that Captain Agnew's duty was to get her as far from the enemy coast as he could before daylight. At the same time, the risk of sending another ship into the minefield to tow *Neptune* out was not justified, but the need to save life made it imperative. Captain Agnew therefore ordered Commander Robson, of the destroyer *Kandahar*, to detail one destroyer of his division to go alongside *Neptune*, and two destroyers to escort *Aurora* back to Malta. *Penelope*, whose speed was not impaired, was ordered to stand by the *Neptune* in support, keeping clear of the minefield. Commander Robson, as senior officer of the destroyer division, judged it to be the right of *Kandahar* to enter the minefield in an attempt to reach *Neptune*. But no sooner had he started than the destroyer struck a mine. The commander of *Neptune*, Captain R. C. O'Connor, flashed a warning: "Keep away." A little while after that, his ship struck a fourth mine, and her doom was sealed. She turned over and slowly sank. Even this tragedy did not deter the destroyer *Lively* from a desperate and unsuccessful attempt to reach the stricken *Kandahar*. "She has ordered me out of the field," was her indignant comment, as she rejoined *Penelope*.

Commander Robson looked at the eastern sky from the bridge of the crippled *Kandahar*, and made his last signal to *Penelope*, "Suggest you should go," he said bluntly. "I clearly cannot help," replied Captain A. D. Nicholl, of *Penelope*. "God be with you." He then gave the course to *Lively*. But still the captain of the latter ship, Lieutenant-Commander W. F. E. Hussey, D.S.C., could not harden his heart. "Suggest I go for *Neptune's* survivors," he urged. The reply came: "Regret not approved," and a little later: "I hate to leave them, but I am afraid we must." And that was all there was to it. At dawn, concludes the account, *Kandahar* was still afloat, but submerged from abaft the funnel. Of possible survivors from *Neptune*, nothing could be seen.

The losses of well-known ships in New Zealand waters, and in the Pacific, by enemy surface action and through striking mines, were telling reminders to the people of the dangers faced by all who travelled by sea. Some of the losses were of ships on New Zealand articles; others, well-known ships engaged in trade with this Dominion.

The *Niagara*, 13,415-ton Canadian-Australian liner, veteran of the Pacific trade, struck a mine and sank off the east coast near Auckland at 3.40 a.m. on June 19, 1940. All aboard were saved, though the ship foundered within two hours. The 146 passengers and 203 crew took the eighteen boats calmly. The liner struck the mine within two hours of leaving Auckland. All were safe again in Auckland that night. The ship disappeared at 5.32 a.m. An aeroplane was over the survivors at 7.50 a.m., and by 11 a.m., the first boats' complements had been transferred to a coastal steamer and later to a liner. The *Niagara* had been twenty-seven years in the Vancouver service and was one of the Union Steam Ship Company's most popular ships. It was estimated she had made 150 round trips between Sydney, Auckland and Vancouver. In her when she sank was half of New Zealand's supply of small arms ammunition which was being shipped to

Britain to relieve the shortage arising from Dunkirk. To replace the loss an arrangement was made with Canada whereby an equivalent shipment reached the United Kingdom in almost record time. Captain W. Martin was commander of the *Niagara* when she was lost. An expedition which worked secretly for twelve months recovered ten tons of gold bars, valued at £2,397,000, from the wreck of the *Niagara*. The salvage was carried out under dangerous conditions in 438 feet of water—a world record.

Captain J. P. Williams, of the Commonwealth Salvage Board, was in charge of the salvaging of the *Niagara's* gold and later distinguished himself in the salvage of the 6,500-ton steamer, *Santhia*, from the bed of the Hooghly River, beside a Calcutta wharf, where it was embedded in thick clay and covered by forty feet of water at high tide. Eighty thousand tons of this clay had to be removed. Other salvage organisations had rejected the job which the Commonwealth Board undertook at the request of the Indian Government; the cost was £85,000. It was one of the most difficult salvage feats ever accomplished.

The British steamer *Turakina* (New Zealand Shipping Company, 9,691 tons), gave an example of the outstanding courage of the Merchant Navy when attacked during twilight on August 20, 1940, in the Indian Ocean. Armed with only a stern gun, she fought a heavily armed raider with its trained fighting crew, for nearly three hours. Nearly two-thirds of the *Turakina's* crew of fifty-eight were killed.

The German raider *Murmark* (Raider "A") under the command of Rear-Admiral Kurt Weger, which laid the minefield outside Hauraki Gulf (and which was operating with Raider "B" when the *Holmwood* and *Rangitane* were sunk) was the same raider which attacked and sank the *Turakina*. On the day before the *Niagara* was sunk, she captured the Norwegian motor-vessel *Tropic Sea* which was carrying a cargo of wheat from Sydney to England, via Panama. The *Tropic Sea* was sent away in charge of a German prize crew with orders to take her to Germany if possible. Passing Cape Finisterre on the north-west coast of Spain, she was sighted by the British submarine *Truant* and scuttled by her prize crew. The *Truant* took on board twenty-four British seamen of the steamer *Haxby*, which had been sunk by the raider earlier in her cruise, and who were on board the *Tropic Sea*. Two months after capturing the *Tropic Sea*, Raider "A" claimed another victim. Shortly before 6.30 p.m. on August 20, 1940, a distress signal was received in New Zealand from the *Turakina*, on her way from Australia to New Zealand to load for the United Kingdom, stating that she was being shelled by an enemy raider, and giving her position. An intensive but fruitless search by sea and air of the locality was made. No more was heard of her for four months. Then wreckage and large quantities of fuel oil were washed ashore on the north-west coast of the North Island, proving that she had been sunk. In January, 1941, survivors from seven of ten Allied ships which had been sunk in the Pacific during the latter part of 1940, including those of the *Rangitane*, were rescued from Emirau Island and landed in Australia. No survivors of the *Turakina* were among them but through a German guard the rescued persons had heard the meagre facts of the engagement. Although she was armed with only a 4.7in. gun against the six or eight 5.9in. guns of the raider, the *Turakina*, it was stated, fought the raider for nearly three hours and went down with colours flying. Over two years later two mess stewards of the crew of the *Turakina* escaped from a German prisoner of war camp. They were two of the twenty-three survivors of the *Turakina's* original crew of fifty-eight, and had got away from the blazing ship in two lifeboats. The *Turakina* had scored one hit on the raider, but had not greatly damaged her. According to these stewards, the raider finally sank

the ship with two torpedoes. They were picked up by the raider and eventually taken to a German prisoner of war camp.

Before he left Sydney on the fateful voyage the master of the *Turakina*, Captain J. B. (Jock) Laird, had vowed that "if attacked, his ship would fight to the end."

Captain Laird and his men had evidently felt they had at least a sporting chance of escape from the raider. The *Turakina* was not a great distance from the New Zealand coast when attacked, and the captain may have thought that they could hold the enemy off long enough for assistance to arrive, or that the *Turakina* might at least disable the enemy. [In 1917 Captain Smith, of the *Otaki*, "all but succeeded in destroying the enemy."] Like the *Otaki*, the *Turakina* had only one gun, which could be only fought with the enemy astern of her.

Mr. A. Forbes, who spent four and a half years in a German prison camp after the *Speybank* was captured by the German raider, *Atlantis*, in the Indian Ocean, said on his return to New Zealand that there were three *Turakina* officers in the same camp, the third officer, Mr. J. Mallett, and two engineer officers, Messrs. C. L. Morris and A. Slater. Captain Laird, the chief officer, Mr. H. Neagle, and the second officer, Mr. J. Hudson, all perished in the action.

The first ship on New Zealand articles to fall victim was the *Holmwood* (ex *Tees*, Holm and Company, Limited, 526 tons, Captain James H. Miller). Three German raiders flying Japanese colours seized her twenty-seven miles west-south-half-south of the west reef of Chatham Islands early on the night of November 25, 1940. The passengers and crew were taken aboard a raider and the ship sunk by shellfire at 1 a.m. next day.

The 16,712-ton New Zealand Shipping Company *m.v. Rangitane* (Captain H. I. Upton), with 111 passengers and 201 crew, was attacked and sunk by German raiders early on the morning of November 27, 1940, about 320 miles off the East Cape. Of eleven deaths, seven were women, of whom there were forty-six aboard. New Zealand personnel for the Fleet Air Arm and R.A.F. were in the ship.

The *Komata* (Union Steam Ship Company, 3,900 tons, Captain W. W. Fish) was sunk by two raiders near Nauru shortly after. Shrapnel blew the first mate to pieces and the second mate died of wounds aboard a raider.

Four hundred and ninety-six survivors of ships sunk by the raiders were landed on the small island of Emirau, Bismarck Group, north of New Guinea, on December 21, 1940. A flying-boat reached them on Christmas Eve, taking back to its Australian base the ships' captains. A rescue ship was soon on the scene to embark the others who were landed in Australia. They were passengers and crews from the *Komata* (thirty-one New Zealanders), *Rangitane* (eighteen), *Holmwood* (thirty), *Triaster* (one), and *Triadic* (one). These survivors were of British, French, Polish and Norwegian nationality, and included seventy women and seven children. After the rescue it was announced that the raiders had also sunk the *Triona*, *Triaster* and *Triadic* (British Phosphate Commission ships of 4,413, 6,032 and 6,378 tons respectively, built for the phosphate trade to New Zealand and Australia), *Vinni* (Norwegian motor-ship, 5,181 tons), *Notou* (ex *Margam Abbey*, Societe le Nickel, 2,489 tons), and *Ringwood* (Norwegian motor-ship, 1,203 tons).

H.M.S. Puriri, of the 25th (New Zealand) Minesweeping Flotilla, struck a mine in the Hauraki Gulf at 11.40 a.m. on May 14, 1941, and sank immediately. One officer and four men were lost. The *Puriri* was engaged in mine-clearance operations at the time. She was built at Leith in 1938 for the Anchor Shipping and Foundry Company, Limited, of Nelson, and arrived in New Zealand in 1939. She was taken over by the Navy in 1940 and fitted out at Auckland for mine-sweeping duties. The three latest and fastest motor-cargo ships of the Shaw,

Savill fleet, the *Waimarama*, *Wairangi* and *Empire Hope*, which had visited New Zealand were lost while raising the siege of Malta in August, 1942.

The *Port Hobart*, when outward bound from the United Kingdom to New Zealand on November 24, 1940, was sunk 500 miles north-east of Puerto Rico by the *Admiral Scheer*. The crew and passengers (mostly women) were transferred to the German supply ship, *Nordmark*, which in the disguise of an American freighter, reached Bordeaux in February, 1941.

A German national magazine claimed that it was the armed merchant cruiser *Orion* which sank ten Allied ships in the South Pacific in 1940-41 on a voyage which lasted seventeen months and covered 112,000 miles. The ships claimed to have been sunk by this merchant cruiser were the *Holmwood*, *Rangitane*, *Triaster*, *Triadic*, *Triona*, *Komata*, *Ringwood*, *Tropic Sea*, *Notou* and *Turakina*. Besides, the raider laid mines in sea lanes. She carried a seaplane. The master was forty-two-year-old Captain Weyther, who was awarded the highest order of the Iron Cross on his return to Germany. The raider sailed round the north of Russia at the most favourable time of the year and entered the Pacific through Bering Strait.

The port of Wellington accommodated in six years of war some fine liners, three of them of more than 40,000 tons, and two of approximately 36,000 tons. Among them were the *Aquitania* (44,876 tons); *Ile de France* (43,450); *Empress of Britain* (42,328); *Nieuw Amsterdam* (36,287); *Mauretania* (35,739); *Dominion Monarch* (27,155); *West Point* (27,000); *Empress of Scotland*, formerly *Empress of Japan* (26,032); *Andes* (25,689); *Stirling Castle* (25,550); *Mount Vernon* (24,289); *Wakefield* (24,289); *Monticello*, formerly *Conte Grande* (23,861); *Hermitage*, formerly *Conte Biancamano* (23,255); *Orion* (23,371); *Orcades* (23,456); *Empress of Canada* (21,517); *Strathaird* (22,281); *President Coolidge* (21,936); *Republic* (21,200); *Mooltan* (20,952); *Oranje* (20,017); *Rangitane*; *Johann van Oldenbarnevelt* (19,429); *Ceramic* (18,713); *Matsonia* (17,226); *Monerey*; *Empress of Russia* (16,810); *Ruys* (14,155); *Batory* (14,327); *Esperance Bay* (14,204); *Dunera*; *Moreton Bay* (14,193); *Tegelberg* (14,150); *President Grant* (14,119); *President Polk*; *Republic*; *Sobieski* (11,030); *Amerika* (10,218); *Rangitane*; *West Point*, formerly the *America*; *Mount Vernon*, formerly the *Washington*; *Wakefield*, formerly the *Manhattan*; *Marechal Joffre*, later the *Rochambeau*; *Bloemfontein*; *Jagersfontein*; *Minsk* and other Soviet ships bound for Vladivostok; the tanker *Hoegh Grant* (10,990); and many others. Some of the ships mentioned visited Wellington more than once and they represented mainly British and United States ownership plus the Netherlands, France, Norway, Denmark, South Africa and Poland. Among lesser but unusual visitors were Greek ships and a Yugoslav tramp, the *Recina*, from Chile. There were also hundreds of Liberty ships and lesser craft. The First Echelon, 2nd N.Z.E.F., sailed in the transports *Orion*, *Strathaird*, *Empress of Canada*, *Rangitane*, *Dunera* and *Sobieski*, escorted by the battleship, *H.M.S. Ramillies*, and the cruisers, *H.M.A.S. Canberra*, and *H.M.N.Z.S. Leander*. The convoy left Wellington on January 6, 1940, the *Leander*, *Dunera* and *Sobieski* being met in Cook Strait after the two transports had embarked South Island troops at Lyttelton. The convoy for the Second Echelon on May 2, 1940, comprised the *Aquitania*, *Empress of Britain*, *Empress of Japan* and *Andes*, the last-named having embarked South Island troops. The escorts were the cruisers *H.M.A.S. Australia* and *H.M.N.Z.S. Leander*. Another large convoy consisted of the *Mauretania*, *Empress of Japan* and *Orcades*, the last-named with the South Island troops, which left for the Middle East on August 28, 1940. The new Netherlands' liner, *Nieuw Amsterdam*, was eight times at Wellington, six of the occasions being in 1943 when she carried United States forces to the Pacific.

United States trans-Atlantic liners, *West Point* and *Mount Vernon*, converted to transports, made several visits to Wellington. Some of the ships were lost through enemy action. The *Empress of Britain* was sunk in the North Atlantic on October 28, 1940; the *Orcades* off the Cape of Good Hope on October 10, 1942; the *Ceramic* in the Atlantic on December 7, 1942; the *Empress of Canada* in the Atlantic on March 14, 1943; the *America* in the Atlantic in 1943. All but one were definitely sunk by U-boat action, the *Empress of Canada* being lost as the result of an air attack and possible submarine attack.

There was a sensational fire aboard the U.S.S. *John Davenport* at Wellington on July 7, 1943. She was carrying a cargo of bombs, T.N.T. and chemicals sufficient to have caused considerable damage, loss of life and injury, at least in the waterfront vicinity. The fire was discovered at 5.40 a.m. in number three hold, then covered with large cases and other deck cargo. The ship was moved from Queen's Wharf to Aotea Quay at 8 a.m. where the Wellington Harbour Board's floating crane, *Hikitia*, removed cases from the deck to the wharf. The captain of the *John Davenport* was in favour of taking the ship out to sea and sinking her rather than endangering life and property ashore. The Wellington fire-brigadesmen, however, were confident they could save the ship and her valuable cargo of munitions which was for the Pacific theatre. They worked hard and without thought of danger and at 9 a.m. had the fire under control. A reduced number of firemen stayed on the ship until July 12 because welding operations had to be continued to repair damage done in a storm en route to Wellington. Welding operations, incidentally, caused nearly all Wellington's wartime ship's fires. The ship (10,000 tons) and her cargo were valued at nearly £2,000,000 but the cost to the owners for the services of the Wellington Fire Board's officers, men and equipment was only £156/12/6. Another United States ship, *Serpens*, AK97, which was concerned in a waterfront fire in the port of Wellington early in January, 1945, met a disastrous end at Guadalcanal later that month (29th) when she blew up while loading ammunition a mile offshore. Only two men of more than 150 aboard survived and the force of the explosion was felt some distance inland by men of the R.N.Z.A.F. While at Wellington fire broke out in some sandbags being carried by the *Serpens* as cargo. These bags had been chemically treated against rotting but as a result they were easily inflammable. Most serious of eight fires in ships at Auckland during the war years was the outbreak in the British tanker *Trocas* on the morning of November 15, 1943. One fireman lost his life. Following a first fire at sea about 1,000 miles west of New Zealand, the *Trocas* was brought into port by harbour tugs. At the time of the second fire the tanker was undergoing repairs at the export wharf, and the outbreak was suppressed by the Auckland brigade only after many difficulties, including the cutting of a hole in the side of the ship in order to gain access to the engine-room.

Ships of five navies visited Wellington during the war, including the Netherlands light cruiser, *Tromp*, the French destroyer *Le Triomphant*, and United States, English and Australian warships.

New Zealand had a prize of war—the Finnish four-masted barque *Pamir*. Not the least useful purpose she served—and the barque was not kept as an ornament—was to provide an outlet for the seafaring ambitions of a number of young New Zealanders.

The well-known New Zealand Shipping Company's 16,000-ton *Rimutaka* had the honour of taking the new Governor-General of Australia, the Duke of Gloucester, and his family, from the United Kingdom to Sydney. The Union steam Ship Company liner *Monowai* was in the forefront of the landing of Allied troops in Normandy on D Day. There was no casualties among the

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ship's company and her boats were the first ashore on her sector. After the landing the *Monowai* carried more than 100,000 passengers to the Continent. The *Aorangi*, on D Day, acted as mother ship for 150 tugs. The captains and most of the principal officers and engineer-officers in both ships were New Zealanders. After nearly three years in the Pacific under the flag of the United States' navy, the Richardson Line motor-ship *Kopara*, of 679 tons, was returned to her owners in May, 1945. She saw action. Other small New Zealand coastal ships which had a war role in the South-West Pacific were the Northern Steamship Company's *Bellbird*, converted into a salvage repair ship at a cost of £30,000, and the auxiliary *Tuhoe*; G. H. George and Company's auxiliary steamers, *Miena* and *Will Watch*. They did a great job, often under fire, in New Guinea and other waters.

More than £1,000,000 was spent during the first five years of the war in developing the R.N.Z.N. dockyard at Devonport, Auckland. Some of the works completed since 1939 or in hand during 1945 were: A second lengthening by forty feet of Calliope Dock; an extension of 500 feet to Calliope Wharf, the main berthing space at the base, now about 1,700 feet in length; the reclamation of a substantial part of Stanley Bay, and also of a large portion of Ngataranga Bay; the construction of such new buildings as an electrical shop, sail loft, boiler shop, very large stores, boatshed and workshop, boat harbour, four tunnels for the underground storage of fuel-oil, one traffic tunnel right through from the base to Ngataranga Bay and to the new stores and victualling section there and several smaller tunnels designed as air-raid shelters for base personnel. A smaller base was built at Shelly Bay, Wellington.

There were some outstanding events in New Zealand's naval history in December, 1944, and January and February, 1945. First was the arrival at Auckland on December 19, 1944, of Admiral of the Fleet, Baron Keyes of Zeebrugge. Lord Keyes visited many parts of New Zealand. Next was the arrival of the Commander-in-Chief of the British Pacific Fleet, Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, in his flagship, *H.M.S. Howe*. The *Howe*, an escort of destroyers, and *H.M.N.Z.S. Gambia* took part in battle practices in the Hauraki Gulf in February. When the battleship moved up Rangitoto Channel to enter Waitemata Harbour, in line astern were the destroyers, *Queenborough*, *Quality* and *Quadrant* and *H.M.N.Z.S. Achilles*. *H.M.S. Howe* was the second most up-to-date ship in the Pacific Fleet, the *Achilles* with the benefit of her refit being in first place.

Commodore G. H. Faulkner, D.S.C., succeeded Commodore Sir Atwell Lake as Chief of the Naval Staff in July, 1945. He was previously in New Zealand in *H.M.S. Hood*. As sub-lieutenant he served in destroyers of the Harwich Force in 1914-18 and was soon promoted lieutenant for good service in *H.M.S. Laertes* when she got a full salvo from the German cruiser, *Mainz*, in the Heligoland Bight on August 28, 1914. He was wounded. Before coming to New Zealand he was from September, 1939, to March, 1941, on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, the Nore; May, 1941, to February, 1943, in command of the cruiser *Berwick*; April, 1943-1945, Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic, and principal sea transport officer for South Africa.

Ships engaged in the New Zealand trade suffered heavy losses. The companies seriously affected were the New Zealand Shipping Company and the Federal Steam Navigation Company. The ships lost were the *Turakina* (mentioned elsewhere), *Cumberland*, *Hurumui*, *Norfolk*, while en route to New Zealand, the *Opawa*, and *Westmoreland* (homeward bound), the *Cambridge*, *Rotorua*, *Rangitane*, *Middlesex*, *Nottingham*, *Somerset*, *Huntingdon*, *Piako*, *Otaia*, *Hertford*, *Surrey*, *Dorset*, *Empire Avocet*, *Empire Whimbrel* and the *Samsip*. The *Hororata*, *Orari*, *Sussex*, *Durham* and *Essex* were among those damaged. The

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companies lost twenty-two ships directly through enemy action plus one sunk after a collision in convoy. The final loss of life among the seagoing personnel of the two companies was 244 killed in the companies' ships, eighteen killed on loan to other companies, and twelve with the Royal Naval Reserve. Seventy-three were taken prisoner and many others suffered injuries.

THE FLEET AIR ARM

The Fleet Air Arm was described by Commodore W. E. Parry, then Chief of the Naval Staff (New Zealand), in November, 1940, as more than a fighting force; it was a natural expression of two of the qualities of British make-up which came to the forefront in times of crisis—a traditional love of the sea and an urge to explore the unknown and particularly that comparatively new realm, the air. In addition to the aircraft-carriers, there were the aircraft which almost every battleship, battle-cruiser and cruiser carried, and which were launched by means of a catapult while steaming at high speed. Men of the Fleet Air Arm needed to be equally good seamen and airmen. Primarily it was their duty to work in conjunction with the Navy and in this alone, they saw a variety of service. This included reconnaissance which meant seeking out the enemy on sea and land and in the air. They were the eyes of the Navy whose vision they had increased from a few miles to hundreds of miles in all directions. Day by day they scoured the sea for prowling raiders, surface or U-boats, and bombed them or guided destroyers to them to drop depth charges. They patrolled the skies to protect Allied ships from enemy bombers. They gave fight to any aircraft which did not evade them and bombed warships or supply ships which would dispute the Navy's command of the sea, or, hovering over a target, directed the fire of ships many miles away. Besides, they engaged on offensive operations similar to the R.A.F. They were constantly carrying the war into the enemy's country—attacks on bases, war factories, communications, supplies, fuel stocks, invasion ports, troop concentrations and so on.

New Zealanders in the Fleet Air Arm were scattered among the ships of the Royal Navy and what was mentioned of individuals was largely confined to those referred to in newspaper reports.

In July, 1940, the first draft of naval airmen, second-class, left New Zealand under what was known as Scheme F for service in the Royal Navy. In three years 480 commissions in the Air Branch, R.N.Z.N.V.R. had been granted to those under Scheme F and 117 were then still undergoing training. Of the others, only ninety-eight failed to qualify as pilot or observer, and of these fifty-three had transferred to general naval service as a.b.'s, a good proportion subsequently gaining commissions in the Executive Branch, R.N.Z.N.V.R. These Fleet Air Arm men had done duty over the Arctic, Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans, over the North Sea, the English Channel and the Mediterranean, as well as the shores of North and East Africa, India and Ceylon. By far the greater number were fighter pilots. The Distinguished Service Cross had then been awarded to six New Zealanders in the Fleet Air Arm and five officers had been Mentioned in Dispatches. Awards to July, 1943, covered service with convoys to Malta, and North Russia, as well as general convoys, the landing in Madagascar, and co-operation in the North African campaigns. During these three years thirty-eight New Zealanders serving as pilots or observers lost their lives. More than 1,000 New Zea-

landers served in the Fleet Air Arm (nearly 10 per cent. of the pilots in the Air Arm of the Royal Navy).

Sub-Lieutenant G. M. Holden (Wellington) was one of the first three New Zealanders to enter the Fleet Air Arm. He joined the *Repulse* after anti-submarine patrolling in the Orkneys, and was in her when she sank. He again operated catapult aircraft from the cruiser *Enterprise* and once flew thirty hours in five days on a Bombay-Aden convoy. Sub-Lieutenant J. McAleese (Warrington) and Sub-Lieutenant J. Tucker (Ashburton) were together on an aircraft-carrier for two trips between England and the West Indies.

Three New Zealanders hit by torpedoes between them an Italian eight-inch cruiser, an Italian destroyer and three merchantmen carrying supplies to Rommel during their six months in Malta, stated a report of June, 1942. They were Lieutenant H. T. Hawken (Wellington), Sub Lieutenants C. D. Jacobsen (Wellington), and J. A. Cramp (Hamilton). Cramp had the distinction of leading a flight of four Albacores against the Italian Fleet attacking a Malta-bound convoy from Gibraltar on June 15.

In a Malta-bound convoy in August, 1942, Lieutenant F. A. J. Pennington (Wellington) with his English C.O., attacked twenty-one Italian three-engined Cant bombers and shot down one and probably destroyed another. Sub. Lieutenant Hugh Morrison (Masterton) attacked, single handed, twelve Junkers 87's, and was in turn attacked by a Me. 109 which he shot down. Sub-Lieutenant D. S. Hill (Auckland) shot down an Italian Macchi fighter while patrolling over the convoy. Other New Zealanders aboard the same convoy were Lieutenant Commander A. P. Napper (Christchurch), Mentioned in Dispatches, Sub. Lieutenants G. Reece, A. S. Long (Auckland), and R. Richardson (Wellington).

In December, 1942, Lieutenant Pennington received the D.S.C. at Buckingham Palace. He was in an aircraft-carrier, flying Seafires, and with Sub. Lieutenant D. S. Hill (Auckland) chased a Junkers 88, the port engine of which was set afire. In the same ship were Sub. Lieutenant N. Munro (Auckland) who dive-bombed Algerian coastal ports; Sub. Lieutenant A. Richardson (Auckland), Mentioned in Dispatches, for work in flying Fulmars on Army co-operation. (Seafires are Spitfires adapted for use on aircraft carriers.)

The only New Zealander on the aircraft-carrier *Eagle* when she was torpedoed in the Mediterranean was Sub. Lieutenant H. E. Duthie (Epsom), who was in the water twenty yards from her when she went down. Wearing a "Mae West," he was picked up by a destroyer in half an hour. "There was no suction," said Duthie. "I saw two men step off the rudder as the *Eagle* sank and swim away." Duthie was with the *Eagle* during a previous Malta-bound convoy when he was credited with shooting down one and a half Savoia-Machetti three-engined bombers, and probably destroying another. Another pilot and he destroyed two one morning. The same night they attacked seventeen more Savoia-Machettis, sharing one, and then the other pilot's oil tank was hit and he left. Duthie carried on, using up the rest of his ammunition till he saw the starboard engine of one bomber burst into flames. These incidents were recorded in a report on September 3, 1942.

Albacores of the Fleet Air Arm supported the Eighth Army's advance from El Alamein to Misurata, flying always at night, sometimes bombing, carrying out reconnaissance, acting as illuminators for bombers and at other times for Hurricanes, lighting up targets with flares. With this squadron was Sub. Lieutenant A. Brunt (Christchurch), who was awarded the D.S.C. in October, 1942, Sub. Lieutenants M. Farrer (Hamilton), W. L. Griffin

(Marton). W. S. J. H. Wilkinson (Wellington) crash-landed at Mersa Matruh and was captured on his first operation. Brunt had then been fourteen months with the squadron and one of the earliest of his fifty-four operations was to drop mines in Tobruk Harbour the day after the British pulled out, retreating towards Alamein. The squadron played an important part when Rommel was preparing for his dash to Alexandria. For two days sandstorms prevented day bombers from strafing the big concentrations of German and Italian tanks and transports but at night when these died down Albacores found Rommel's troops and dropped many flares to give excellent targets for the R.A.F. bombers. Brunt said: "If you can imagine an ant colony; well, the German and Italian tanks and vehicles looked the same. It is estimated they numbered 5,000. There is no doubt that the bombing made Rommel change his mind." Farrer did good work one night illuminating for Hurricanes during General Montgomery's final thrust to Tripoli. His flares aided the Hurricanes to destroy many German aircraft and he hit two with his own bombs.

Five Axis ships were torpedoed by Sub. Lieutenant Colin White (Cheviot), during seven months at Malta, according to a February, 1943, report. Sub. Lieutenant E. F. Pratt (Christchurch), flew with White several times and hit two ships but was killed on January 17. From 300 feet White hit a 4,000-ton ammunition ship off Pantellaria and the explosion flung his aircraft up to 700 feet. Pratt sank a 10,000-ton tanker off Maretimo. Sub. Lieutenant Owen Richards (Christchurch) had recently gone to Malta, and Sub. Lieutenant D. J. Nairn (Wellington), who flew Grumman Martlets in the Mediterranean, was going to America as a test pilot. White had an extraordinary experience. Just as he was about to drop a torpedo at a 7,000-ton merchantman, a destroyer of about 2,000 tons came to the front of it with the result that the destroyer collected the "fish," blew up and completely disappeared. A hand in the sinking of the first U-boat officially credited to planes operated from converted merchantmen aircraft-carriers was had by Sub. Lieutenant W. G. Bowles, R.N.Z.V.R., piloting a fighter from the British aircraft-carrier *Archer*. The action took place in the Atlantic, mid-1943. The sub. was travelling full speed towards a convoy when sighted and was attacked by one plane. It attempted to dive but surfaced again with thirty feet of the stern sticking out of water. The crew started to man the guns when Bowles came up in support. He dived on the U-boat with guns blazing, silenced its fire, after which the crew jumped into the water. The U-boat sank three minutes later.

Seafires, some piloted by New Zealanders, played an important part in the landing at Salerno and the opinion was expressed at the time that the landing would have failed without Fleet Air Arm support. The R.A.F. aircraft were based on Sicily and had to make three-hour flights to Salerno, leaving only half an hour for patrolling there. It was hoped to occupy the landing ground at Montecavino a day after the first assault but a counter-attack stopped this and the full weight of covering troops fell on the Fleet Air Arm. New Zealanders who took part included Lieutenants F. A. J. Pennington, D. K. Evans, P. Bethel, P. Bourke (Wellington), H. Morrison (Masterton), H. Lang (Palmerston North), G. Reece (Hamilton), G. Bourke, Sub. Lieutenants R. A. Gowan (Christchurch), R. Colbeck (Waikato), and H. Foot. Lieutenant H. A. Morton (Timaru) in the Sicilian landing, got two planes, an E-boat, and knocked out six shore batteries.

The first official booklet on the Fleet Air Arm, paid a tribute to New Zealanders in the *Achilles* in connection with the sinking of the *Graf Spee*. It told of an incident in Crete where New Zealanders, defending Maleme airfield, did

not have enough Bren guns, so rigged up a Browning from a naval aircraft with hand-made mountings. The incident occurred when Petty Officer Wheaton and an R.A.F. man were captured by the Germans and forced to march ahead with orders to shout to any British troops they encountered to surrender. They approached within earshot of a trench manned by New Zealanders when Wheaton, after warning his companion, shouted: "I am ordered to tell you to surrender but I am going to make a dash for your trench." Both men rushed forward and streams of bullets flew past them as both sides opened fire. The R.A.F. man was shot in the back but the New Zealanders rescued him. Wheaton reached the trench unhurt.

A direct hit on the German battleship *Tirpitz* in April, 1944, was credited to Sub. Lieutenant J. Herrold (Rotorua). Sub. Lieutenant J. A. Gledhill (Island Bay) reported that there was a terrific glow amidship when he dived on the ship, while Lieutenant H. R. Emerson (St. Helier's Bay) was senior pilot of one attacking squadron and the second machine to attack the *Tirpitz* which was nestling under a high cliff. He hit her with a 1,600-pound armour piercing missile. At least ten New Zealand pilots and observers took part. It was then estimated that the *Tirpitz* would be useless for at least months. Barracudas were used for the attack on the *Tirpitz* and Emerson had 300 hours on these, believed to be a record only exceeded by test pilots. Two other New Zealanders who achieved prominence for their work in Barracudas were Lieutenant J. E. Armitage, D.S.C. (Napier) and Sub. Lieutenant M. C. Farrer, D.S.C. (Te Kuiti). Others mentioned for gallantry were Sub. Lieutenant N. Perrett (Wellington) and Sub. Lieutenant L. J. Ryan (New Plymouth). Perrett and Sub. Lieutenant V. H. Martin (Timaru) were pilots of naval aircraft which worked from dawn to dusk in support of troops as the Allies landed in Southern France. Soon after the landing, when leading an attack against German transport fleeing north of Crusades, Sub. Lieutenant G. Steven (Christchurch) could not land back on *H.M.S. Khedive* as his rudder had jammed. He baled out but the parachute caught on the fuselage and was torn away. After moments of suspense hurtling down he tugged the rigging lines to force open what was left and held it open till he landed safely in the water where he was soon picked up.

Lieutenant Commander A. Richardson (Gisborne) was the hero of the attacks on the *Tirpitz*. Three times he led his squadron of Hellcat fighters in low-level sweeps over the battleship, diving down through intense flak to reach the target. In the second attack, after his ammunition gave out, he lowered his arrester hook (used for landing on an aircraft-carrier) and tore away the aerials of a nearby German radio station. The third attack was his last. He swept in over the *Tirpitz* in a hail of flak and a shell disintegrated his plane. The majority of his co-pilots were Dutchmen who refused to be comforted for his loss and made vicious attacks on the *Tirpitz* after their leader perished.

In May, Lieutenants E. S. Erikson (Waiuku) and W. C. Dimes (Wellington) shared a Junkers 290 reconnaissance bomber which had launched a glider bomb near a convoy.

Spotting for the battleship *Warspite*, Lieutenant H. Lang (Palmerston North) was attacked by three Focke Wulfs. He fired at one and saw it start to spin down, when his engine was hit. He tried to bale out but could not open the hood and hit a large tree ten feet above ground in a forest east of the River Orne. French peasants took him to an air-raid shelter where the invasion was being celebrated with cognac and soon he was safe at a paratroops' casualty clearing station.

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Flying a Mosquito "on loan" to an R.A.F. squadron, Sub. Lieutenant M. H. J. Petrie (Fleet Air Arm) shot down two Junkers 88's off the Allied beach-head in France soon after the invasion. Lieutenant J. A. Cramp, D.S.C. (Hamilton), with much Mediterranean service, took part in an air attack on the Italian Fleet near Malta. In 1944 he was loaned to a Royal Air Force Mosquito Intruder Squadron and destroyed at least twelve locomotives while strafing over Bordeaux. He received the D.S.C. when he hit an Italian cruiser with a torpedo in the Mediterranean in 1942. A birdseye view of the naval contribution to the invasion of Europe was had by Spitfire pilots of the Fleet Air Arm. Sub. Lieutenants H. Lang (Tuakau) and R. Foxley and Flying Officer N. Gall (Rangiora) were sitting over targets spotting for naval guns. Other New Zealand pilots based on the same station were Flight Lieutenants J. J. McNeil (Tiki Tiki), E. R. Lowry (Te Aroha), J. Gorton (North Canterbury), Lieutenant M. L. Heath (Taukau), Sub. Lieutenants L. R. Martin (Nelson), A. W. Bradley, B. C. White. McNeil took over before daylight on D Day and directed fire from the *Nevada* on to a battery on the French coast. Heath was over France at 5.30 a.m., located two batteries near Caen, and a battleship got hits, left, right and centre.

In his first encounter with the Japanese after the Sabang bombardment in July, 1944, Sub. Lieutenant Francis Heffer (Waikanae), flying a Corsair fleet fighter, shot down a Zero. He was a farmer before the war. Among the pilots of the Fleet Air Arm who took part in the September, 1944, Eastern Fleet attack on the important Japanese cement works at Indaroen, near Padang, Sumatra, was Sub. Lieutenant Stuart Taylor, of Thames. As a pilot of Barracuda dive-bombers, he had previously flown in many attacks on shipping off the coast of Norway, including that on the *Tirpitz* in Alten Fjord. Another New Zealand pilot, Sub. Lieutenant Wilbur Valentine, of Auckland, and formerly of Southland, made a high photographic reconnaissance of the target area after the attack, as his first operational flight. Flying at a great height, he experienced a change of temperature of almost 100 degrees, flying from the carrier in equatorial waters into a temperature about ten degrees below zero.

Several New Zealand Fleet Air Arm pilots took part in the Royal Navy attack on the Japanese-held island of Car Nicobar, in the Indian Ocean, reported in November, 1944. Sub. Lieutenant J. H. Richards, R.N.Z.N.V.R. (Wellington) was one of a formation which intercepted a force of ten Japanese fighters, four of which were shot down and two badly damaged without loss. Sub. Lieutenant G. W. Wiley, R.N.Z.N.V.R., former Wellington insurance clerk, cleaned up a Japanese army truck with soldiers aboard, and fired on a jetty and barges. Sub. Lieutenant A. J. West, R.N.Z.N.V.R. (Woodville) hit a group of soldiers near an airfield on the island, military huts, anti-aircraft posts, landing barges and a jetty. Sub. Lieutenant H. A. Rhodes, R.N.Z.N.V.R. (Rangitikei), made three individual attacks on the Japanese-held island of Nancowry, in the Nicobar Islands. He hit three small landing-craft and an observation post. Rhodes spent three months in the New Zealand Territorial Force before joining the Fleet Air Arm.

For services in action in air strikes against the German battleship *Admiral von Tirpitz* in August, 1944, the D.S.C. was awarded to Sub. Lieutenant W. Percy, R.N.Z.N.V.R. (Dunedin) and Sub. Lieutenant D. Morten, R.N.Z.N.V.R. (Christchurch) and an award of Mention in Despatches to the late Lieutenant Commander A. Richardson (Gisborne). It was as the result of the operations for which he was posthumously mentioned in dispatches that Com-

mander Richardson was reported missing, presumed killed, on August 24, 1944.

Lieutenant-Commander D. K. Evans (Wellington) was the first New Zealander to be appointed commander (flying) in a fleet carrier. He led a squadron of Corsairs from the aircraft-carrier *Victorious* in successful strikes against the home islands of Japan shortly before the surrender. Evans left New Zealand with the first draft of volunteers for the Fleet Air Arm in 1940 and was almost continuously on active service during the war.

"I consider the pilots from New Zealand have been second to none and to have ever excelled in the offensive spirit," said a message received by the Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones, from the Flag Officer Commanding, First Aircraft Carrier Squadron, British Pacific Fleet, Vice-Admiral Sir Philip Vian, K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., on September 14, 1945. Sir Philip said he wished to assure the Minister how great had been their part in the carrier operations against Japan. At Wellington in December, 1945, when he visited New Zealand in the aircraft carrier, *Indefatigable*, Sir Philip said of the New Zealanders: "They were in it at the beginning as at the end, for there were New Zealand airmen in the successful dive-bombing attack on the German cruiser *Koenigsberg* in early 1940, the very first warship to have been sunk by dive-bombing, as there were, also, your naval airmen in the last bombings of Japan. It has been my experience in command of the British carrier force that New Zealanders are naturally possessed of the qualities which made for eminence in air combat.

"Here are three examples typical of the fighting spirit of New Zealand pilots," he continued.

"When operating off Sumatra last year the fleet was attacked by Japanese aircraft of the suicide type, all save one of which were shot down in time by our guns or fighters. This one penetrated the screen into the main body of the fleet, where it was a menace and difficult to hit by gunfire through fear of hitting other ships; and it was hard of access by our fighters on account of the fire of our guns. A Hellcat piloted by Sub-Lieutenant Keith Alexander McLennan, R.N.Z.N.V.R., of *H.M.S. Indomitable*, my flagship, was flown off at this time. He had to take off while his own ship's guns were firing at the enemy. Without hesitation he flew through the gunfire of the fleet and shot down the enemy, a *Helen*, into the sea. A second example was provided by Lieutenant Alexander Macrae, D.S.O., R.N.Z.N.V.R., of *H.M.S. Indomitable*, who was severely wounded in the thigh when carrying out a low strafing attack during the first fighter sweep our aircraft made on the Sakishima Gunto airfields. Though in great pain, he carried out two more attacks. It was not till he ran out of ammunition that he told his leader that he was wounded and was returning to his ship. Encouraged by messages from the ship, he flew back 100 miles alone, injecting morphine on the way to ease the pain. On arrival he found he could not lower his wheels. His right leg was now useless, and he was weak from loss of blood, but he made a perfect crash landing on the deck. He was lifted unconscious from the cockpit. On a further occasion, more recently, the British Pacific Fleet was operating alongside three American carrier task groups off Ianan. During the day Japanese shadowing aircraft had sighted the combined fleets; at dusk a concentration of hostile aircraft was detected by our radar. For some reason this detection was not accepted by the U.S. fleet, who, therefore, did not send out their specialized night fighters, with which they were equipped, to intercept the enemy. The *Formidable* carried four Hellcats which were not equipped for night fighting but whose pilots were experienced in night flying. Two of these were flown off, led by a New Zealand pilot, Sub-Lieutenant Richard MacKie, D.S.C.,

R.N.Z.N.V.R., of Hawke's Bay. It was now dark and the position critical because heavy ships in a mass at night are particularly vulnerable to attack by torpedo bombers, which these aircraft were adjudged to be. The radar showed us that the Hellcats were close to one group of the enemy. Suddenly there was a ball of fire falling in the sky—some plane had been hit. A fighter pilot's voice—MacKie's—announced over the radio the destruction of a torpedo bomber, then another, and another, and a fourth hit.

"U.S. fighters now arrived to drive off the remaining enemy group, and an ugly situation was saved. The admiral signalled: 'Well done your radar team and pilots.'"

THE SECOND N.Z.E.F.

"At this long-awaited hour when peace has returned to Europe the Army Council send to the Second New Zealand Expeditionary Force and to all land forces of New Zealand a message of gratitude for the gallant contribution they have made to the victory now consummated. In the battles they have fought in Greece, in Crete, in the desert, and in Italy, through times of good fortune and of bad, they have worthily upheld the glorious traditions of New Zealand's arms. Their unflinching resolve, even when the shores of their own islands were threatened with invasion, has carried them forward to the final triumph. To them now as they stand in the van of the armies which have overthrown the enemy's southern bastion we convey our sincere gratitude."

—The message of the Army Council to New Zealand on VE Day.

The best tribute to the 2nd N.Z.E.F. has been paid by the actions of British commanders who chose them for most difficult tasks in critical campaigns. The particular nature of air warfare makes it possible to dwell on the achievements of individuals and, in the process, overlook many thousands who did not make even the sub-lines but whose aggregate courage and devotion to duty were a telling factor in victory. The story of the Army is a different proposition. Here the men were a team, fighting as a whole either as a Division or in specialist units singled out for some particular job. But each man is entitled to regard the work accomplished by the Division or his particular unit, as something to which he made a direct contribution. Further, he is entitled to regard its high name as something which would not have been established had he, and thousands of others unnamed and, insofar as awards go unhonoured, not given of their best irrespective of the cost. They were willing to make that sacrifice—and so many did—which is beyond material reckoning to save for their kith and kin, and for the world that previous gift of liberty which is also beyond price. In the following accounts of the activities of the 2nd and 3rd Divisions, full acknowledgment is made to the splendid interim surveys of the various campaigns published by the Army Board, Wellington, written by the official archivists and assembled for presentation in their excellent form by the staff of the Archives Section, Army Headquarters, Wellington. Due to their efforts, and those of the official war correspondents of the Divisions, New Zealand did not lack interesting, informative and accurate information of the doings of fighting men who were, to say the least, as good as any.

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

FIRST LIBYAN CAMPAIGN

The threatened invasion of Britain had its bearing on the early doings of the 2nd N.Z.E.F., Middle East. The Second Echelon, which had left New Zealand on May 2, 1940, in the *Aquilania*, *Empress of Japan*, *Andes* and *Empress of Britain*, was diverted from the Middle East to the United Kingdom on May 15, arriving at Cape Town eleven days later, and leaving on May 31 for Home, via Freetown. It arrived at Clyde, Scotland, on June 16. The result was a delay in forming a complete New Zealand Division in the Middle East and prevented it from taking a combatant part, as such, in the first Libyan campaign when Wavell's Army of the Nile, with bare equipment and numbers that were, on paper, insufficient to tackle Graziani's 250,000 strong Imperial North African Army, captured 135,000 Italians, with all their equipment, while the remnants fled back to Tripoli. But New Zealand, far from being excluded from the campaign, actually, through specialist units, played an important part in it. These units were the Long Range Desert Group, Divisional Signals, N.Z.A.S.C., 4th M.T. Company, and engineers and ordnance units. The L.R.D.G. were the first of the New Zealand Division to see action in the present war. The background for their activities was laid long before the war—back in 1926-32—when desert exploration motorised expeditions proved the practicability of covering great distances without refuelling or collecting fresh water supplies for periods of up to a month and, in 1938, for more than a month. When Wavell approved of the formation of L.R.D.G.s, on June 23, 1940, the personnel to be self-reliant, hardy and accustomed to desert conditions, New Zealanders were chosen on the recommendation of General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson. Already six months in Egypt, they had shown remarkable adaptability to conditions far removed from the cool greenness of their native land. The men were taken from the Divisional Cavalry Regiment, plus specialists from anti-tank and machine-gun units. Major Bagnold, a British officer who had taken a leading part in pre-war desert exploration, was appointed commanding officer, Lieutenant W. B. K. Shaw (Palestine Department of Antiquities), intelligence officer, Lieutenant L. B. Ballantyne (N.Z. Div. Cav.), adjutant and quarter-master, Lieutenant F. B. Edmundson (N.Z.M.C.), medical officer, and, to command the three patrols, Captain D. G. Steele (a New Zealand machine-gun battalion), Captain A. P. Clayton (formerly of the Egyptian Survey Department), and Captain E. C. Mitford (a British tank regiment). Clayton and Shaw had made similar pre-war journeys to those of Bagnold. All trucks in the patrols were to be fully packed with twenty-seven hundredweight of arms, ammunition and equipment, and sufficient petrol for a minimum 1,500 miles, and rations and water for sixteen days, each man. The task ahead was into the great unknown; uncharted seas of desert in the most difficult country, navigating over unmapped territory hundreds of miles within enemy bounds. A peculiar difficulty was the persistence of desert tracks, unless on hard tracks or moving dunes. The 1932 tracks of Bagnold's exploration were still clear; tyre marks of 1916 car patrols still identifiable. While all these preparations were under way the Italian garrisons at Kufra and elsewhere rested, they thought, secure behind the barrier of the largest sand dune in the world (the Great Sand Sea), a natural barrier to outflanking from the east, and the 200-mile barbed wire fence along the Libyan frontier (erected in 1932), from the coast, south to the Great Sand Sea, and crossable only at four closely guarded points. After a preliminary journey by Clayton, five New Zealanders and an Arab, three columns piloted by Bagnold

and Shaw began the first military expedition to cross the Great Sand Sea. They crossed it, entered the level gravel plain of the interior, and separated for pre-arranged reconnaissance. Nothing more was heard of them at G.H.Q., Middle East, and they were given up for lost. But after a month three bands of the L.R.D.G., appeared in Cairo with prisoners and bags of captured enemy documents. Mitford's patrol had penetrated 350 miles into Libya, captured four trucks, 2,500 gallons of fuel, medical supplies, and the official mail for Kufra and Uweinat, which contained details of the enemy dispositions in the inner desert. Clayton's patrol reached Tekro, in French Equatorial Africa, and returned to meet Steele's party at Uweinat, where it had destroyed a large dump of petrol and bombs and an unguarded enemy bomber. Next month, October, 1940, there was a second expedition which separated into patrols, mining the road between Jalo and Jedabya and the road crossing the basin of the Aujila oasis, at which place seven direct hits on the mud walls of the fort sent the garrison off pell-mell to a nearby native village. The patrol removed the fort armaments and headed for Cairo. These expeditions made it clear that the Italians were planning no offensive south and the L.R.D.G. made its operations more extensive, scattering anti-Fascist literature in Arabic over the desert roadways, while one patrol, under Mitford, made a daring attack on Ain Dua, near the Uweinat, the latter a high island rock in the Libyan plain which was of military importance because of its abundance of natural caverns for the concealment of stores and vehicles, suitable air landing grounds nearby, and the fact that there were no natural barriers between it and the 400-mile distant Nile valley, nor between it and Kufra. A patrol commanded by Mitford was attacked for sixty-five minutes from the air on the open plain south-west of Karkur Murr later in November, when 300 small bombs were dropped, thirty-two directed at one vehicle. Neither a man nor a vehicle were touched. Next day the patrol attacked the garrison at Ain Dua, estimated at thirty men with three machine-guns, one troop under Lieutenant J. H. Sutherland (New Zealand), making the left flank attack, while the rest of the patrol gave covering frontal fire. Six of the enemy were killed, many of the others wounded, and the patrol unscathed.

December, 1940, saw the fruits of the L.R.D.G. activity in the disorganisation of communications between Italian outposts, the necessity for these to be heavily reinforced and daily air patrols introduced, the enemy's attention drawn from the coastal area and, equally important, a fear implanted of never knowing where these fearless, audacious warriors were going to strike next.

The opening phase of the first Libyan campaign saw the Reserve Mechanical Transport, N.Z.A.S.C., in an important role. Before dawn on December 6, they transported Indian troops just south of the Italian fortified area inland from Sidi Barrani and at dawn on December 9 a British armoured detachment attacked Nibeïwa camp while the Indians surrounded it. Infantry took the position with the bayonet and within 105 minutes, General Maletti, commander of an Italian flying column station at Nibeïwa was killed, his second in command, fifty other officers, a large number of other ranks and much equipment, including thirty tanks, were captured. The R.M.T. then carried Indian troops for the attack on Tummar West, a strongly fortified camp which fell early that afternoon, while another section transported the Rajput Rifles into action against Tummar East, which Indian troops occupied on the morning of December 10. From Hill 90, a fourth enemy-occupied fort, heavy artillery fire was opened on Tummar East,

which was evacuated by the afternoon. Indian troops captured this hill fort. The R.M.T. did not just stick to their vehicles and look on. At both Tummar East and West they got their passengers to within a few yards of the outer defences and then grabbed rifles themselves from the truck racks, followed right on the heels of the Indians and got stuck into the surprised Italians. To offset a flank counter-attack, a sergeant-driver, regardless of danger, wheeled a convoy forward and when the Rajputs attacked, he attached himself to a Bren gun section which accepted his leadership. He led a bold attack to capture a machine-gun post. This man received the D.C.M. A New Zealand doctor, who attended wounded in the open under heavy fire, working fourteen hours without respite on one day, was awarded the M.C. These were early days in the New Zealanders' military history in this war, but this doctor showed the spirit that was never lacking from start to finish. The main attack on Sidi Barrani succeeded that night, December 10, and the N.Z.R.M.T. again transported the Indians, the same evening, for a dawn attack on the Sofafi area. The enemy had retired. In the following days, while the frightened Italians fled west, the New Zealanders took the captured to Mersa Matruh. The Italians resisted strongly in the Sollum area, their last stand on Egyptian territory, but Sollum fell on December 16, and the New Zealand company engaged on the dangerous and urgent work of transporting war materials from the fort, through the main pass (Halfaya), to dumps on the escarpment under the fire of long-range artillery from Bardia and enemy bombing. Christmas Eve saw a particularly heavy raid and one section suffer severe casualties.

The next development was the drive into Cyrenaica, with motor transport drivers, signallers and engineers representing the 2nd N.Z.E.F. On the N.Z.A.S.C. developed the responsibility of transporting food, ammunition, petrol and oil to thousands of front-line troops. They were so keen to uphold the reputation of their Division that they would spend their nights ensuring their their vehicles were in first-class order for the following day. No one was going to take their place in the column bearing the necessities of war if they could avoid it. Their trucks were, more often than not, their homes. Thousands of Australians were transported in 200 New Zealand trucks for the battle of Bardia. The drivers spent New Year's Eve in the desert. After thirty-six hours actual fighting, Bardia and its defences were in British hands—on January 5, 1941. And so, on to Tobruk, with the Mechanical Transport Company starting on January 6, carrying Australian troops from Bardia to the new battle area. The job done, the company resumed the establishment of field supply depots south of the line of advance. The thirty-mile outer defence line of Tobruk was surrounded by January 6 and the main attack began at dawn on January 21. The main force was Australian, with some British armoured units and a Free French detachment. The whole defended area—the inner line was nineteen miles in length—was occupied by the night of January 22. The British casualties were under 500; the spoils were Tobruk, 15,000 Italian prisoners and great quantities of war materials. New Zealand transport then carried Australian troops to Derna, which fell by January 30. Meantime, the R.M.T. had returned to Tobruk to continue war materials transport. The Divisional Supply Column and Petrol Company and Ammunition Company detachments were in the forward area from December to February, transporting ammunition, petrol, stores, rations, and equipment, sometimes troops, to the battle zone, their operations taking them to Sidi Barrani, Sollum, Bardia and Tobruk. Return cargo was prisoners and salvage. They earned a reputation



A Japanese submarine's prow sticks out of shallow waters after it had been sunk by the New Zealand corvettes, *Kivi* and *Moa*, off Guadalcanal. The action lasted over an hour in which time the *Kivi* rammed the submarine three times.



NEW ZEALANDERS IN BRITAIN TRAINING FOR THE FLEET AIR ARM.

Back: E. F. L. MONTGOMERY, E. S. INGLE, S. G. WOODROFFE, C. T. WHITE, H. LANG, D. W. ADAMS, N. B. HUSTWICK, A. RICHARDSON, K. N. CAMPBELL.

Middle: J. R. COWAN, O. G. RICHARDS, L. JACKSON, H. A. FOOTE, J. A. PICKARD, L. G. C. REECE, F. N. HITCHCOCK, W. B. McMANEMIN, D. A. KNIGHT, J. L. TUCKER, A. R. MECKLEJOHN.

Front: M. Q. PETHERICK, L. H. PRATT, A. G. THOMPSON, A. E. MABIN, R. J. SPIDERS, R. H. GYLLIES, A. W. ROBERTSON, J. A. MILLAR, T. C. R. FENWICK, F. M. WILSON.



The First Echelon, 2nd N.Z.E.F., drawn up in front of Parliament Buildings, Wellington, after a public parade before going overseas.



The Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones, with the G.O.C., New Zealand Division, Lieutenant General Freyberg, in the Middle East.

for fast and reliable movement; a "Colonial Carrying Company" of the best desert warfare standards. Almost immediately after the occupation of Derna, the New Zealanders moved there and worked on a line of communication forward from Sollum. The port was made usable, and large supplies of urgently needed petrol were transported to dumps by the R.M.T. Company. This company operated to Barce, and then to Magrum, a town fifty miles south of Benghazi. It was withdrawn by the New Zealand Division late in February, 1941, and returned to the New Zealand camp at Helwan for a complete refit before their departure for Greece. The R.M.T. had then seen more action than any other unit of the 2nd N.Z.E.F. during the first year in the Middle East and had suffered some of the first casualties.

"I know that the Western Desert Force could not have carried out its task without their help." This was in a special Order of the Day issued by the Corps Commander, Lieutenant General Sir Richard O'Connor, on the occasion of the departure from the desert campaign of the New Zealanders of the Corps Signals Unit. This was high praise, notable for the obvious fact that such a small army as defeated Graziani's mighty force by the sheer boldness, courage and rapidity of its direction and action, would have been vitally dependent on the maintenance of a first-class communication system.

Communications is Command! This is what the signaller has drummed into him in various ways. When it seemed almost inevitable that Italy would enter the war, the New Zealand Division was called upon to provide from its Divisional Signals the nucleus of a corps signals unit to set up and maintain communications throughout the whole Western Desert Force. Six officers and 130 other ranks went to the site of the new force headquarters, near the Maaten Maggush oasis, and here absorbed various detachments from the Royal Corps of Signals and the Indian Signal Corps. A New Zealand post office engineer was in command as Chief Signals Officer, Western Desert Force. They bore the heat and burden of the day as the preparations for the first Libyan push approached a climax. Their work was night and day because nothing could progress, or even keep pace with daily requirements, unless there were efficient and adequate means of communication. From the nerve centre to distant headquarters and other points of tactical value, the communications system was carried over hard country and under trying conditions. A small section of N.Z. Div. Sigs. was at Daba, fifty miles east of main headquarters, for several weeks, providing a further link in the long line of communications from G.H.Q., Cairo, to the most forward units in the Western Desert. Corps Headquarters made its first move on December 5. The first stages of the advance took the signallers away from the civil telephone line routes of the coast, but not for long, and the enemy retreat was so hasty that he did not greatly damage the existing lines which were readily repaired, diverted and extended to meet the changing needs. Wireless was important for maintenance of communications when lines were in the transition stage and for maintaining continuous contact with the mobile armoured formations. When the retreat became a flight, tremendous difficulties were overcome by the signallers in maintaining communications for a rapidly advancing army, and wireless became a most valuable means to this end. Christmas saw them on the Halfaya escarpment, close to the Libyan border. Then Bardia and Tobruk fell, and the signallers moved rapidly west, via Gambut and Tobruk, to Bomba. Here, most said good-bye to the campaign, for they were relieved by units of the Royal Corps of Signals. They returned to Tobruk and left for Alexandria by sea. A small party carried on to the finish of the campaign: through Derna to

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

Benghazi and beyond. On the completion of the campaign in February, 1941, they returned to their own unit, the New Zealand Divisional Signals.

The 5th Field Park Company, 19th Army Troops Company of the New Zealand Engineers and the 10th Light Aid Detachment of the New Zealand Ordnance Corps were the third group of specialists to participate in the campaign. There are many items vital to an army; some to any sort of life, and one of these is water. This is where the 5th Field Park Company (and the 10th L.A.D.) came in. In January its detachments were strung out for seventy-five miles, from Sollum to Tobruk. At Sollum they operated a pumping house on the quay, re-opened pumping houses at Bardia, and, by salvaging Italian motor transport and fitting tanks to lorries and trailers, provided a water-carrying convoy. They set up a water supply for Tobruk while other sections dealt with enemy mines, booby traps and bombs. Relieving an Australian Field Park Company at Derna early in February, they supervised the power-house and restored lines, set workshops going again, and maintained pumping installations at Agheila, Martuba and Um Er Rzem, erecting a sixty-ton water tank on a twelve-foot-high building at the last-named place. They restored what the retreating enemy had hastily sought to destroy and, as the pace of the retreat quickened, so was the task of restoration easier. At Barce they showed their resourcefulness by replacing, with the aid of steel scaffolding salvaged from an enemy hangar at Tobruk, 230 miles away, a 140-foot-wide concrete bridge, spanning a deep main road gully, which had been demolished by the enemy. A chapter about them in *Prelude to Battle*, one of the Official Archivist office excellent periodic surveys, was aptly headed "Engineers and Diplomats," for a staff sergeant of the 5th Field Park Company, who led a small advance party, consisting of a lance corporal and a sapper, into Appolonia, west of Derna, was elected mayor! The residents of assorted French, Greek, Turkish and Italian antecedents had retired to caves for fear of disorders. The party was asked to restore normal life. By the afternoon of next day, things were almost normal again and, installed in the palatial home of the governor, the New Zealanders called a meeting at which a council was appointed, representative of each national group. The sergeant was elected mayor and took over the keys of the bank, the civic offices and the courts. But his duties did not end there. On the third day he was asked to name a newborn babe, about to be christened, after some New Zealand statesman. This was appropriate, for the sergeant had himself proved somewhat of a statesman and ambassador for New Zealand. He chose the name Michael Joseph, after the Right Hon. M. J. Savage, P.C., M.P., then Prime Minister. Mr. Savage died the following month (March 27), but this tribute from a Kiwi many thousands of miles from his homeland, must have pleased him if the news of it reached New Zealand in time. The next day this baby (M. J. Ebico) would not stop crying and would not feed, and such faith had the parents in the New Zealand mayor, that he was called upon to stop this, too. An imitation of Plunket methods then followed and succeeded. It was fortunate that an Australian administrative party arrived two days later. Otherwise there might have been no limit to the faith of the people of Appolonia in their New Zealanders. May the "Michael Joseph" of Appolonia (now, it is hoped, a sturdy youngster) make his name also remembered among his people. The little band was sorry to leave, but handshakes, kisses, salaams and cheers, and many presents, including a silk municipal flag, left no doubt of the place they had won in the hearts of the people.

And now for the 19th Army Troops Company. If variety be the spice of life, they had it. At the beginning of December, 1940, the company started to construct an aqueduct at Burbeita oasis. Four days before Christmas, a small detachment went to nearby Mersa Matruh to help man two water barges bound for Sollum. Four New Zealanders were on one barge; five on the other. An hour after reaching Sollum, on December 23, eight bombs were dropped across a barge commanded by a New Zealander, which had set about to take troops out to a ship a few miles offshore. No one was hurt. On Christmas Eve day the Italians managed to land three bombs on the quay, one through the deck of the New Zealanders' barge, and another struck the forecastle of a third barge which had actually taken part in the Gallipoli landing in 1915. Nineteen were killed, and thirty-three others were casualties, mostly Australians and Cypriots. The New Zealanders lost five killed from the R.M.T. Company, while five were injured. The Army Troops Company had one killed, a corporal. The bomb which went through the barge did not explode; an Australian removed it from the water tank. Christmas Day saw fifty Italian planes attack the shipping while the New Zealanders were three miles out to sea running a water barge between Sollum quay and water-carrying ships off coast. They did not stop the service. Boxing Day saw another escape. The barge was alongside a ship, the decks of which were crammed with cases of benzine. Italians bombed all round, but, as was fairly usual, never hit the target. Again, "Bardia Bill," the long-range gun at Bardia, once landed a shell six feet off the barge, lifting her right out of the water. The New Zealanders continued their job, despite the frequent bombing.

The 19th Army Troops Company took the remaining barge to Tobruk to do similar work, and once the propellor was lost, the barge remaining two hours in a minefield before it drifted off. No ship could venture close enough to take it in tow. But water was not all the work. Land mines were removed, recovery depots established, and aerodromes levelled along hundreds of miles of the coastal belt. Italian vehicles were recovered from abandoned camps, the company collecting 400 of these, and that was only a small percentage of those left behind by the enemy. Two sappers gave the Libyan landscape a typical New Zealand county road touch when they operated a road grader, sleeping in an attached trailer. They followed wherever roads wanted repair, almost as far as Derna, at the heels of the battling forces. To round off this account of their varied adventures, they featured in a rescue when a ship carrying 500 Italian prisoners, guards and crew was grounded and wrecked on the rocky reefs parallel to the coast near Sidi Barrani. A detachment of the New Zealanders was camped on the shore. A prisoner, wearing a life-belt, brought a light line ashore. A ship's fireman swam in with a second line and the New Zealanders hauled him up the cliff with a rope made of rifle slings. A sergeant went down the rope and brought up the Italian. He died soon afterwards, his life laid down that his fellows might live. The lines brought ashore were used to drag hawsers from the ship and these were anchored to a heavy truck on the cliff top. Then a party of New Zealanders went down into the surf to seize the survivors as they hauled themselves in through the breakers. The New Zealanders walked out along the ledge as far as they could, often being engulfed by waves. The sea was bitterly cold and two-hour reliefs were necessary. Five hundred prisoners were brought ashore in this way. The wounded and other survivors were ferried in on a ship's raft. Other New Zealanders, meantime, were hoisting the rescued up the cliff face to dry land. Besides 500 prisoners,

sixty members of the crew and sixteen British officers and men were brought ashore. The Italians were demonstrably grateful at this gallant effort by those who were then their enemies.

Water is vital to life, no more so than in the desert. As the troops advanced into Cyrenaica, it was the job of the 10th Light Aid Detachment, New Zealand Ordnance Corps, to maintain water plants to supply them with water, and to service equipment of the Royal Engineers. Before the British offensive, the L.A.D. had drawn water at Burbeita and in the sand hills at Baggush. Immediately the capture of Sidi Barrani was completed, Major G. D. Pollock, commanding the L.A.D., went there to inspect the water position. His detachment followed and operated the Italian pumping plant and salt water distillation apparatus. A large pumping station had also been left practically undamaged at Bugbug, midway between Sidi Barrani and Sollum. The Australians concentrated for the battle of Bardia and the 10th L.A.D. filled and worked water wagons for Sollum. Here they operated closely with the 5th Field Park Company, and January 19, 1941, saw both at Bardia. A fortnight later they were at Tobruk, working on the large distilling plant. The battle of Derna saw the Italian retreat towards Benghazi and here one of the most important specialist assignments of the campaign devolved on the 10th L.A.D. The success of the British plan to cut across the plateau south of Benghazi depended on a quick supply of water to Msus, 500 miles south-west of Derna. There the 10th L.A.D. were to have ninety-five tons of water for the armoured division. They did it, Benghazi fell, and all Cyrenaica was soon occupied. There was no water problem in northern Cyrenaica. The work of the 10th L.A.D. in this campaign ended in February, 1941, and they followed the signallers, transport drivers and engineers back to Helwan where the Division awaited departure for Greece.

From December, 1940, the L.R.D.G. lost its fully New Zealand identity (there had been a few British officers with it from the inception, whose names have already been stated). A Scots Guards patrol was added, the New Zealand patrols being reduced to two. It began surprise raids on the Fezzan, in south-west Libya, where the Italians felt falsely secure because of the armistice with the French in West Africa. Two patrols, under Clayton and Captain M. D. D. Crighton-Stuart (commanding the Guards' patrol), left Cairo on December 27, crossed the Great Sand Sea, westwards into Libya, and then some trucks kept a pre-arranged rendezvous with Free French forces from Chad, the first place in the French empire overseas to raise the standard of De Gaulle. The combined force set out on January 8, 1941, to attack Murzuk, 1,300 miles from Cairo, reaching there on January 11. The Italians surrendered after a brief, hot engagement in which Lieutenant-Colonel D'Ornano, Free French, and Sergeant Hewson, a New Zealander, were killed, and three wounded. The enemy lost ten killed and fifteen wounded. Three Ghibli bombers, wireless equipment, parachutes, bombs, valuable equipment, and buildings, including a hangar, were destroyed. Next day Traghan, a small town thirty miles east of Murzuk, was surrounded, the headman surrendered the two Italian carabinieri who composed the police force, all arms and ammunition were removed from the fort, and the populace cheered the patrols as they left. The next stops were Umm el Araneb, which had similar police forts. These had been warned by wireless and gave the patrols a hot reception. The element of surprise not having been achieved, it was decided not to pursue the attempt at capture. On January 13 a village, with a landing ground nearby, was attacked and some damage done. Proceeding south by a route hitherto considered impossible for

vehicles, the patrols passed the Tropic of Cancer on January 13, left Libyan territory via Tummo and reached the French post at Zouar, a total distance of 1,850 miles from Cairo. The only mechanical loss was a truck, which was stripped of its serviceable parts. Zouar was left on January 21, 1941, Faya reached on January 24, and Ounianga on January 28. The patrols were now under the command of Colonel Leclerc, in charge of the Free French forces of Chad province, with whom they were to co-operate for an attack on Kufra. Clayton's patrol, acting as an advance party for the Free French column of 100 vehicles, left Ounianga on January 29, reached the Sarra well next day to find the Italians had filled it in, and likewise at the Bishara well, reached on January 31. Here an Italian plane sighted them. They went on fifteen miles to the small wadi of Gebel Sherif, taking cover in the boulders, but an aircraft signalled their position to an enemy armoured patrol of seven vehicles, one armed with a sixty-five-millimetre gun, which attacked from the rear. Three of the patrol's trucks were destroyed by gunfire, Corporal F. R. Beech (New Zealand) and two Italian prisoners killed. Trooper R. J. Moore's truck was one of those hit and the machine-guns from it covered the escape of the other seven trucks from the northern end of the wadi. Moore and three guardsmen escaped into the boulders. Preparing to counter-attack, the patrol was attacked by three Italian planes with bombs and machine-guns. Clayton's truck was captured and, with two New Zealanders, he was taken prisoner. The remaining six trucks continued south and joined Crichton-Stuart's patrol, which had come north to meet them. Both continued on to rendezvous with Colonel Leclerc near Tekro. Meantime, Moore and the three guardsmen, Moore shot through one foot and one of the others wounded in the throat, remained hidden in the hills. The Italians left without attempting to find them or remove the two Italian prisoners who had been killed. There was no food left in the charred trucks and only a gallon and a half of water in a tin. The party headed south. By the third day they were only 100 miles on their way. On the fifth day, Tighe, one of the guardsmen, could not keep up with the others who reached Sarra on the sixth day, arriving in a terrific sandstorm. Tighe reached there next day. Easton, another guardsman, collapsed on the eighth day, but Moore and the remaining guardsman, Winchester, continued on. French planes spotted them and dropped food and water. They could not find the food, and the cork had come out of the water bottle, leaving only a drop. The ground was too rough for the planes to land, but they sent a rescue party which, however, took the wrong route. On the ninth day, Winchester was all in. He rested overnight but next morning collapsed after twenty yards. Moore went on alone, giving Winchester a sip of the remaining water. He was still making steady progress. On the tenth day, the Free French force returning from Kufra overtook him. They had already picked up the three guardsmen, but Easton, who had kept going for eight days, died. Moore, without food or boots, and existing solely on sips of water which, in the concluding stages, he had returned to the bottle after moistening his mouth, had covered 210 miles in ten days. The three survivors stayed a week at the French ambulance base at Sarra, then five days at Ounianga, two at Faya, and then went on the eight-day journey to Fort Lamy, twelve degrees north of the equator, and deep in the jungle of French Equatorial Africa. They had a pleasant fortnight here. From Fort Lamy they were flown to Khartoum, and then, by Nile boat and train, reached Cairo. Moore received the D.C.M.

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

The two L.R.D.G. patrols had joined Colonel Leclerc on February 1, when he released them from further service with the Free French forces. They started eastward three days later and reached Cairo on February 9. Since leaving there on December 27, 1940, they had covered 4,500 miles of desert, their casualties were two killed (both New Zealanders), three taken prisoner (Major Clayton and two New Zealanders), while four trucks had been lost by enemy action and two by mechanical failure.

When the Italian garrison at the Jarabub oasis, supplemented by others along the wire fence of the frontier, was cut off by the British advance westward into Cyrenaica, a New Zealand L.R.D.G. patrol, under Captain Steele, guarded the western approaches, while an Australian cavalry regiment watched the northern approaches. The Italians were to be blockaded into surrender, but they were supplied from the air and Steele's patrol was relieved by the other New Zealand patrol on March 2. Soon after the Italians were attacked and defeated by an Australian force sent down from the north. As evidence of a German offensive along the coast into Cyrenaica mounted, Steele's patrol was dispatched to guard the oasis of Taizerbo, one of those outlying from the fort of Taj (Kufra), which had become the base of the L.R.D.G., arriving there on April 9. Two days before the whole of Cyrenaica, except Tobruk, was in enemy hands following the German offensive, begun in the north. To relieve the serious supply situation at Kufra, a convoy of 100 vehicles, under Captain "Bimbashi" Lonsdale, set out from Wadi Halfa on April 28, with a New Zealander as navigator and general adviser. The delivery of seventy tons of supplies was accomplished by May 13 after tremendous difficulties with most unsuitable vehicles and inexperienced native drivers. The Sudan Defence Force relieved the L.R.D.G. and the Free French force at Kufra on July 18, and the L.R.D.G. returned to its former role of long-distance reconnaissance. It is doubtful if any other force of similar size, or even much larger, accomplished so much at such little cost as the L.R.D.G. In the early days of the war its exploits thrilled New Zealanders everywhere and pointed to the mettle that was soon to manifest itself wherever their men were engaged.

GREECE

Greece was the first testing ground in battle of the Middle East Division, 2nd N.Z.E.F. as a whole. And what a test, and what an acquittal. This was a land of battles and incidents of martial heroism that centuries have not erased from a graphic place in both history and imaginative appeal. If the ghostly forms of Leonidas and his Spartan band could have lived again in Thermopylae Pass which, nearly 1,300 years ago they held, till cut down, against the forces of one of the greatest armies of that time, or any other, that of Xerxes, the Persian, they would have said: "These are men, indeed." But unlike Leonidas and his men, they lived to fight again and again, and in the end, win. The New Zealanders were pitted against overwhelming masses of men, armament and airpower. For themselves, they had little air support to begin, and later, none at all. In the mountain passes, on the vital roads and other points they held the enemy, and when all hope was gone, and their valiant Greek allies were beaten in all but courage—which, comparatively speaking, was about all these great fighters had to fight with in any case, once the German hordes descended—they fought a series of with

drawing actions in unfamiliar and difficult country, any one of which deserves a place in the history of the relentless struggle between the forces of democracy and those of oppression. They were never forced to withdraw ahead of their schedule at any time on their own front, bar one, when one battalion was overwhelmed by numbers in the Pencios Gorge. And in the end, it was armoured power and unchallenged air superiority which won the day for Germany. They did not withdraw as a beaten rabble. Tired, even exhausted, they certainly were, but they marched to their withdrawal embarkation points as soldiers and men. Reading this too brief and inadequate summary of their deeds, it may be wondered that there was a man left. Instead, it was very much the other way. To paraphrase, never, or at least rarely, had an enemy suffered so severely in losses of men and materials—bar aircraft—at the hands of so few. The New Zealanders in Greece totalled 16,532, all ranks. Their fighting general, Sir Bernard Freyberg, V.C., was the first of his Division to land in Greece, and the last to climb aboard in the planned withdrawal. Only thirteen officers and 212 other ranks were killed in action or died of wounds. Missing and prisoners of war were ninety-five officers and 1,774 other ranks, a natural result from a campaign in which the Division was first holding a long line and then, in brigades or groups, fought a series of separate battles. Further, the nature of the country and the campaign left little hope for stragglers, and a fairly large number did not reach the evacuation beaches on time. But eighty-seven per cent. of the whole Division, including thirty-four officers and 349 other ranks who had been wounded, were safely evacuated to fight again in Crete and, later, in the Western Desert. The New Zealanders will never forget their debt to the Royal Navy which evacuated 50,000 men out of the total expeditionary force of 57,757 (Imperial, Australian and New Zealand), the total at the time of the German attack. Nor will they forget the gallantry of the Greeks, with their pitiable ox-drawn transport, who had pushed the Italians back till Germany intervened, or their comrades in arms of the Imperial and Australian forces whose standards were not one whit below their own.

There were criticisms that the sending of an expeditionary force to Greece was a dangerous gamble. But, as the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Right Hon. Peter Fraser, said: "They (the people of New Zealand) will agree that we took the only course open to us and that any decision to the contrary would have involved eternal dishonour." These were brave words at the time, but true. Had the New Zealand Division played no other part than this in the war, its name would have been honoured by the verdict of true fighting men of all nations and those people of the world able to think and evaluate for themselves the deeds of friend or foe. How well chosen was the codeword used for the expeditionary force to Greece in the preliminary negotiations—LUSTRE FORCE.

"You will be fighting in a foreign land and the eyes of many nations will be upon you. The honour of the New Zealand Division is in your keeping. It could not be in better hands." This was General Freyberg's conclusion to his special order read to the New Zealanders before they embarked for Greece. This country had not begged for help. Instead, it had not only valiantly defended itself when two completely mechanised Italian armies, with full air cover, struck on two fronts on October 28, 1940, but during the winter of 1940-41 had driven the Italians well back into Albania and, without fresh opposition, might have driven them into the Adriatic Sea. But the Germans began to mass in Bulgaria and factors of morale and low mobility were against the obvious move of withdrawing to a shorter front to enable

the transfer of a large proportion of the Greek Army to meet the German threat in north-eastern Greece. Mussolini himself was in Albania to lend his moral support to a determined Italian attack over a twenty-five mile front, made on March 9, but the Greeks not only met this but gained the initiative. At least a month earlier, in the words of the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Anthony Eden, Greece "asked us to say what help we could give and the conditions under which we could give it. It was not a cry for help; it was a statement of the Greek position and a request that we should state ours." On March 2, 1941, King George II. and his Prime Minister met Mr. Eden, the Chief of the British Imperial General Staff, General Sir John Dill, and the Commander in Chief, Middle East, General Sir Archibald Wavell, in Athens. Greece was prepared to fight alone, if need be. The decision to help had, of course, already been made, and on February 17, Major-General Freyberg was told that his Division would be sent to Greece as the advance guard of an Imperial Force. At the time, the 5th Brigade Group, which was one-third of the force, was still en route from England, but as the first troops moved out of Helwan camp, the units of the 5th Brigade were already landing in Egypt. The British force moved to Greece in sections, the first consisting of British fighting troops of the 1st Armoured Brigade Group (4th Hussars, light tanks; 3rd Royal Tank Regiment, medium tanks; 2nd Royal Horse Artillery, twenty-five-pounders; Northumberland Hussars, anti-tank regiment; 3rd Cheshire Field Squadron, Royal Engineers; the Rangers, motorised infantry). They landed at Piraeus, port of Athens, on March 7. General Freyberg and his advanced divisional headquarters staff were with them; the first of the New Zealand Division to land in Greece. The 18th (Auckland) Battalion and the 6th Field Company arrived at Piraeus the next day. Most of the force reached Greece uneventfully, though a transport, carrying 6th New Zealand Infantry Brigade troops came very close to being hit by bombs. One convoy, carrying New Zealanders, was used as a decoy to draw out the Italian Fleet in the Adriatic far enough to be struck by the British. This was effectively done and the success of the action—the Battle of Matapan—made possible the later task of the Royal Navy in evacuating the army from Greece and, later, Crete. Before March 20, eleven to thirteen German divisions were ready to attack the four Greek divisions available for the defence of Thrace along the Bulgarian border. Early in April the 1st Armoured Brigade and the New Zealand Division were in the forward areas. Troops of the 6th Australian were beginning to arrive and some were already moving forward. Soon New Zealanders and Australians were to again fight together, not far from the Anzac Cove of twenty-five years before, constituting, though far short of Corps strength, the 1st Australian Corps. The name was changed to the 2nd Anzac Corps on April 12, with Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Blamey in command. The German drive into both Greece and Yugo-Slavia began on April 6. The total British expeditionary force then numbered 57,757—from the United Kingdom, 24,100. Australians, 17,125; New Zealanders, 16,532. This force was fully equipped and mobile, but outnumbered fifteen to one in infantry and handicapped by having to transport all supplies by sea or lines subjected to heavy air attack. Enemy superiority in tanks was seven to one. In the air, the R.A.F., with the problems of maintaining sufficient planes for the defence of Egypt and the Suez Canal, give air protection to the Greeks (a small detachment had been operating on the Albania front since November, 1940), provide air defence for convoys and the disembarkation of Lustre Force (the British force, so called after the codeword used in the earlier negotiations), could only muster

some eighty aircraft against 800 Germans and 300 Italian planes. The original intention was that twenty-three R.A.F. squadrons should support Lustre Force, but by April only eight were in Greece with little possibility of maintaining reinforcement of both pilots and machines. An Army co-operation squadron, which arrived after the German attack opened, seldom had more than one Hurricane in flying condition at one time. To assist Lustre Force in the main line of defence against the German attack was the Central Macedonian Army of the 12th (Macedonia) Division of six battalions, two mountain batteries and a group with seven 150-millimetre guns; the 20th (Florina) Division of six battalions, and, at the most, two field batteries and two mountain batteries, and the recently formed 19th (Larissa) Division. All were poorly equipped, without mechanical transport. On April 5, General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson assumed command of this Greek army and the British forces, under the combined title of "W" Group, or "W" Force.

A main line of defence was prepared, running from Neon Eleftherokhorion, on the Gulf of Thessalonike, north-west to the Yugo-Slav frontier, near Mount Kajmakzian. With the high mountain country of the Vermion and Olympus ranges, the position was a natural barrier to an enemy advance from Bulgaria and Thrace. Attacking columns could only penetrate along the line of roads through the passes of Edessa, Veria and Katerine. It was to be a battle for the few roads, the railway, and mountain passes through which they climbed, for the passage of modern mechanised forces. The New Zealand Division was to hold the Katerine Pass area, a position of great importance covering a railhead and landing ground. New Zealand Divisional Cavalry maintained patrols along the Aliakmon River line, north of Katerine. The 6th Brigade took over on the right of the sector; the 4th on the left. The whole of "W" Group did not, however, arrive in Greece; Rommel's initial advance into Cyrenaica had prevented the embarkation of the Polish Brigade Group and the 7th Australian Division (of Tobruk fame), while the 6th Australian Division was still in the process of arrival when the German invasion of Greece began. The result was that a line could not be formed and the New Zealand Division was spread out over an enormous front, with no continuous defence line. This meant a series of strong points on commanding positions of possible lines of attack. The 5th Brigade was astride Olympus Pass, the 23rd (Canterbury-Otago) Battalion had its right flank on the slopes of Mount Olympus and its left touching the 22nd (Wellington) Battalion, which was astride the deep gorge along which the road and river ran to form the pass. On the left, with a line running to the Mavroneri River and several thousand yards upstream on the banks, was the 28th (Maori) Battalion. The main arterial highway from Yugo-Slavia to Greece, running through the Monastir Gap, was considered as the result of the *coup d'état* when the Yugo-Slav Army deposed the Regent, Prince Paul, and his Ministers, to be the responsibility of the Yugo-Slavs, and the Greeks ceased to cover the Gap. General Wilson could not take the risk of his line being turned by a German break through Yugo-Slavia, and, by March 27, formed a detachment at Amynteion to watch the Monastir Gap. Here, the 27th New Zealand (Machine-gun) Battalion, less two companies, was stationed with the 3rd Royal Tank Regiment, and the 64th Medium Regiment, Royal Artillery. The Germans attacked both Greece and Yugo-Slavia simultaneously—on April 6. By April 9 all western Thrace was in their hands and Salonika occupied. Yugo-Slav resistance in the south collapsed, and from Monastir south the road was open to the Germans. The enemy was then in a position to threaten the rear of the Greek forces in Albania, where

they were still driving back the Italians, and the rear of the British forces, and also drive an armoured wedge between the two. So, the Amynteion detachment holding a semi-circular line north of Veve before the entrance to the Monastir Pass, Major-General Mackay, the Australian, commanded the strengthened forces covering the gap. The line was so dangerously thin that it would do no more than briefly delay an enemy advance in force. The right flank of "W" Group was adjusted, the 4th N.Z. Infantry Brigade being ordered to Servia as a pivot for any subsequent withdrawal from the north, leaving the 6th Brigade Group with its left flank unprotected. On April 9 the New Zealand Division withdrew, by order, from the Katherine area to prepared positions in the Olympus Pass and at the Platamon tunnel between the mountain and the sea. By the night of April 10, the 4th Brigade Group was in position and all troops forward of Olympus had withdrawn, bar the N.Z. Divisional Cavalry with one troop, 5th Field Regiment, and a section of New Zealand Engineers attached which had the job of completing demolitions and harassing the enemy advance without itself becoming seriously engaged. The 21st (Auckland) Battalion was holding Platamon tunnel (it had been in Athens on special duties till April 9 and witnessed the intense air attack of the night of April 7 which made the port almost useless as the result of the explosion of an ammunition ship). Two other battalions of the 5th Brigade held Olympus Pass and the 6th Brigade, after a strenuous but successful withdrawal from the Vermion line, was temporarily in a reserve position in their rear. At Pharsala, behind the lines, the 1st New Zealand General Hospital was established, with New Zealand sisters already working there. The 27th (Machine-gun) Battalion were the first New Zealanders to become engaged; on the hillsides at the entrance to the Veve Pass. Earlier, on the night of April 9, some N.Z. Divisional Cavalry had fired on a small enemy party on the banks of the Aliakmon. On the morning of April 10 enemy columns advanced along the road from Florina. British guns sent them back. Next afternoon determined attacks began. German motor-cycle machine-gun detachments were machine-gunned into the snow and following infantry joined them. A desperate battle continued, night and day. A heavy attack was made early on April 12, which was resisted till the afternoon, when the Germans, in great strength, broke through up the centre of the pass. Shelled in their positions, and with the road behind also under shell fire, the 27th Battalion was ordered to retire that night, when a general withdrawal was necessary. It came under the command of the British 1st Armoured Brigade Group to form part of the rearguard which littered the path of the advance with German dead. Before dawn on April 13 they were in position near Ptolemais, again inflicting heavy casualties before retiring south down the Florina-Kozane highway where they turned off at Grevena to act as a reserve on the left flank of the Imperial forces. On April 13 the 16th Australian Brigade Group was in new positions east of Servia, after moving from the Veria-Kozane defile, between the 4th New Zealand Brigade Group and the rest of the New Zealand Division. The 19th Australian Infantry was in position the same day, west of Servia and north of the Aliakmon, after withdrawal from the Amynteion area. Two Greek Central Macedonian Army divisions, withdrawing from the Vermion ranges to fill the gap between the Australian and the Greek Western Macedonian Army, were so smashed about by dive-bombing attacks, specially directed at their mule transport, that, with the exception of units with the 16th Australian Infantry Brigade, they ceased to be effective. Meantime, the N.Z. Divisional Cavalry Regiment

was guarding the southern bank of the Aliakmon against an enemy advance across the Macedonian Plains from Salonika and the Axios Valley.

The main road and rail bridges were blown up and the Div. Cav. Bren gun fire dispersed enemy motor-cyclists who approached the former bridge on April 12. An attack was made in force on Easter Sunday, covered by heavy artillery fire, with the object of crossing the river at three main points: by the ruins of the railway bridge and boats. Fire from the Divisional Cavalry light machine-guns made the banks thick with German dead. One bank masked defending fire once the enemy got close enough to it, and a crossing was effected. The Div. Cav. withdrew, demolishing bridges and culverts in its course, and the last of them passed through the Olympus Pass defence line on April 14, high-explosive charges closing the entrance after them. The enemy's advance into southern Greece was now blocked, from Servia to the sea, by the New Zealand positions on the Olympus-Aliakmon line. Before long, heavy fighting began on three separate fronts as enemy armoured columns found their road passage blocked. The 4th New Zealand Infantry Brigade positions on the mountain slopes overlooking Servia and Kozane were heavily attacked when dive-bombers and fighters opened the battle for Servia and the nearby Portas Pass on April 13. The Kozane road, if quickly forced, would have enabled the enemy to cut in behind the Anzac line and block the only possible withdrawal route at Elasson. The Greeks farther west were out-gunned and outnumbered and could not last much longer. So, it was decided, on April 14, to abandon the Olympus-Aliakmon line. Preparations were made to move back to Thermopylae, the pass leading from Locris into Thessaly between Mount Oeta and the Maliac Gulf. Here, in the year, 480, Leonidas, King of Sparta, with 300 Spartans, 700 Thespians, and 400 Thebans (who were said to have surrendered), fought to the end against forces of the immense army of the Persian, Xerxes, which attacked from both sides after a traitor had disclosed a secret path. The heroism and devotion of Leonidas secured him almost a unique place in the imagination not only of his own but also of succeeding times. In 480 the Thermopylae Pass was only fourteen yards wide. In 279 B.C. Brennus and his Gauls were checked for several months here by a Greek army under the Athenian Calippus. The New Zealanders were soon to show that the spirit of Leonidas was not dead.

At dawn on April 13, after two days of relentless bombing attacks and then machine-gunning by fighters, the first infantry attack was made by the enemy on Portas Pass. Unable to comprehend that any human beings could have withstood the ferocity of the air bombardment, three companies advanced against part of the line held by the 19th (Wellington) Battalion. Hardly a man returned and 178 prisoners were taken. Preceded by a fierce air attack, a strong enemy force got to within 300 yards of the 19th Battalion positions early that night. Once the planes turned away for fear of hitting their own men the 19th drove the attackers back. From one trench alone, more than 100 dead were seen. Including an afternoon attack, which made three for the day, the Germans lost 200 killed and wounded, while 217 were taken prisoners. Artillery and bomber attacks were heavier next day, but no more infantry challenged the New Zealanders.

The same day as the battle of Portas Pass, the Mount Olympus positions of the 5th New Zealand Brigade Group, which included the Maori Battalion, were attacked. Motor-cyclists attacked the 22nd (Wellington) Battalion positions astride the Pass, armoured fighting vehicles attacked the Maori Battalion front, nine being destroyed, and infantry were beaten off on the

right flank held by the 23rd (Canterbury-Otago) Battalion. The 5th New Zealand Field Regiment blew up trucks and trailers filled with Germans, firing 3,000 rounds in twenty hours continuous battling. Next day a very large force of the enemy, vehicular-carried, massed for the attack, their transport just beyond range. Heavy fighting developed. Drizzling rain and mist shrouded the wooded slopes and parties of enemy infantry were able to pass unseen between defensive positions. The Maoris had rigged cow-bells on barbed wire between the gaps to give warning of danger. Bayonets were fixed, savage tribal battle cries were heard in the mist and rain, and the steel of small parties of Maoris got to work on the penetrating enemy groups, which fled. The area was cleared by nightfall. There was the same penetration of positions on the right flank held by the 23rd (Canterbury-Otago) Battalion, in the centre and guarding the road and river, the 22nd (Wellington) Battalion was hard-pressed all day and, with the support of No. 4 Company, Machine-gun Battalion, and a battery of anti-tank guns, beat off continual heavy attacks. They attacked themselves at night, to drive back strong parties trying to penetrate by way of the river-bed.

The 5th New Zealand Infantry Brigade began to withdraw from the Olympus at dusk on April 16. The 22nd (Wellington) Battalion held the road secure till nearly midnight when a 5th New Zealand Field Regiment battery continued to keep the enemy at bay till 3 a.m. on April 17 when all organised withdrawing parties had passed. A demolition party of the 6th New Zealand Field Company blew up the pass road in seven places. All wounded and arms were brought out. The final withdrawal from all the Olympus positions began on April 17. The withdrawal of the whole 4th Brigade Group from Servia was ordered on the night of April 17-18. Without sleep for three days, the men marched ten miles to an embussing point. The 18th (Auckland) Battalion withdrew in single file in complete darkness over muddy goat tracks and along steep, slippery hillsides. Two companies lost their way. Arrival on the road marked the end of endurance and first-line transport took them the last few miles to the embussing point. The 20th (Canterbury-Otago) Battalion remained in position near Lava till all other troops had passed, when C Company formed a rearguard to assist a section of New Zealand Engineers which fired demolition charges in the pass behind the withdrawing force. The last troops of the rearguard were clear by 8 a.m. on April 18, but after being hunted by enemy planes, it was cut off near Eleutherokhorion by an enemy force, including tanks. A fight against great odds followed and three sub-sections of the 6th New Zealand Field Company were lost, but the main body fought its way out and regained the main road.

The third battle was in the Peneios Gorge where the 21st (Auckland) Battalion, a troop of field artillery from the 5th New Zealand Field Regiment, and a troop of anti-tank guns in a commanding position astride the railway line between Mount Olympus and the sea, was attacked by a full division and 400 tanks in an all-out effort to smash through quickly to Larissa, a move which would have trapped at least the greater part of the Anzac force. The attack started on the afternoon of April 14. The full-scale attack was launched on April 16. On the left flank one company of the 21st Battalion, surrounded by a full battalion of enemy infantry, fought its way out after a three-hour battle. By 10.15 a.m. this Auckland Battalion could hold out no longer and withdrew to the historic Vale of Tempe in the Peneios Gorge, ten miles to the rear. A small British reserve arrived during the night of April 16-17. The defence of the gorge was reorganised. The 2nd-2nd Australian

Battalion were allotted the ground west of the river and the village of Tempe, the New Zealanders the road and spurs leading to the river, while two batteries of the 4th New Zealand Field Regiment and one battery of the 7th New Zealand Anti-Tank Regiment also took up positions. The 2nd-3rd Australian Battalion remained in reserve. That afternoon, April 17, artillery and mortar fire of great intensity preceded an enemy attack in force. Heavy tanks broke through, encircling the positions and covering the only means of withdrawal by road, while infantry occupied a village to the rear of the Anzac positions. Despite all this the 21st (Auckland) Battalion held positions on two spurs till late afternoon and some broke through the enemy ring to reach the Larissa road. Still more reached the safety of the hill country. In the withdrawal to the Thermopylae line, only a handful of men represented the 21st Battalion and the New Zealand Artillery detachments, but many reached the coast by dangerous cross-country routes and, aided by Greek peasants and fishermen, got to Crete, some long after the evacuation of Greece was completed. The Germans paid dear for the victory of the Peneios Gorge. Waves of their infantry were wiped out. "We killed until we were sick of killing," said the defenders. "It was slaughter." The 6th New Zealand Infantry Brigade, in a new position south of Elasson, covered the withdrawal of the rest of the Anzac force from Servia and Olympus. The roads were covered by the 24th (Auckland) Battalion, the 25th (Wellington) Battalion, supported by the 26th (Canterbury-Otago) Battalion which had arrived from Servia on April 16, a troop of Australian medium artillery and an Australian Field Regiment, and a battery of the 5th New Zealand Field Regiment. The last of the convoys bound for Thermopylae passed through the 6th Brigade positions on April 18. The cavalry followed, and the 6th Brigade had the job of holding the enemy. Their first tanks advanced at noon, and with other vehicles, almost unceasingly till nightfall. Australian artillery wreaked havoc among them. One troop alone fired more than 500 rounds per gun during the afternoon. Tank attacks were smashed before they could get properly under way. Heavy tanks, trying to climb a steep track leading well to the front of the 6th Brigade positions, were caught in prepared mine traps. It was planned to withdraw with darkness, but as the 24th (Auckland) Battalion was about to move out, German light tanks advanced in mass formation. Gunners of the 7th New Zealand Anti-Tank Regiment engaged them, the attack was beaten off and by midnight the last troops had begun the long move back.

The smashing of the Larissa air field resulted in the few R.A.F. planes having to withdraw to Athens where a further withdrawal was necessitated, the bombers to Crete and the fighters to Argos in the Peloponnese. The withdrawal across the plains of Thessaly had to be undertaken with practically no air protection and on the main road, already with a capacity load of Australian traffic. On the dawn of April 18, fifty planes attacked the crammed highway and these raids continued without respite till darkness. The scene was indescribable but the Germans failed in their main object of blocking the road and smashing the bridges, and the casualties were amazingly few.

The job done by the N.Z.A.S.C. drivers was beyond praise. The men of those withdrawing Anzac convoys will never forget it. By April 19-20, with the use of the Larissa-Volos secondary road, now repaired by New Zealand and Australian engineers, the Anzac Corps had reached their positions in the Thermopylae and Brailos Passes. The New Zealand Medical Corps left no wounded behind. They were taken right from the front line; across goat

tracks over mountains; through rain and fog; in knee-deep mud; in fact, every condition that would test the courage and endurance of the bravest and best.

The new battle line, based on a spur of the Pindus mountains, was cut by two main routes to the south—the central road and the railroad pass of Brailos, and Thermopylae Pass. The Australians held Brailos; the New Zealanders were the modern Spartans of Thermopylae, consisting of the 4th, 5th and 6th Brigades, New Zealand Divisional Cavalry, with a British medium artillery regiment, 2nd Royal Horse Artillery, the 102nd Anti-Tank Artillery, Royal Artillery, some light anti-aircraft guns, as well as the New Zealand twenty-five pounders, supporting the line. Many of the New Zealand guns, in particular, two troops of the 5th Field Regiment and 7th Anti-Tank Regiment, were in front of the forward defence lines of infantry, most of the artillery being disposed for use against tanks. Enemy tanks approached from April 20 and by April 22, their artillery were openly digging in their guns on the flat east of Lamia. Other preparations continued calmly, sometimes in full view of the Anzacs, but out of range. While the Anzacs waited, there were momentous happenings. The Greek Army of the Epirus, on the other side of the dividing Pindus mountains, was finished. It was outnumbered, out-gunned and had only courage left with which to face armoured might. Withdrawing by the only possible route, a twisting mountain road through Yannina to Agrinion, its unprotected masses of primitive traffic were relentlessly battered by both Italian and German air forces. It capitulated on April 21, without reference to the Greek Commander in Chief, General Papagos, who as early as April 14 had suggested the evacuation of the British forces in order to avoid further fighting and devastation. Rear-Admiral Baillie-Grohman, who commanded *H.M.S. Ramillies* when she escorted the first echelon from New Zealand, arrived in Athens on April 17 at the head of a Joint Planning Staff formed in anticipation of evacuation. General Wavell arrived next day. The Greek Prime Minister committed suicide that day. The capitulation, which exposed the western flank of the Anzac Corps, resulted in the advance of evacuation night from April 28 to April 24. The men were informed on April 22. That night the 4th New Zealand Brigade moved, via Atalante, to Kriekouki in the mountain pass south of Thebes where it would protect the rearward move of the rest of the Anzac forces. In support it had the 2nd-3rd Australian Field Regiment, an Australian anti-tank battery, some Australian Field Ambulance and two platoons of the 27th New Zealand (Machine-gun) Battalion. The 5th New Zealand Brigade also left Thermopylae on the first stage to an embarkation point. This left the 6th New Zealand Brigade, supported by the whole of the New Zealand Divisional Artillery and two regiments of British artillery, to hold the Thermopylae line. They were subject to the most intense dive-bombing, by planes fitted with sirens which added to the indescribable din. Anti-aircraft fire was ineffective and there was no air support. The peak of the aerial bombardment was on April 24, the eve of Anzac Day. Then, in fifteen hours steady firing, the New Zealand Artillery delivered 30,000 shells into the enemy forces then engaged in building up its heavy strength. Tank attacks, light at first but increasing to good strength, were also made on the New Zealanders that day along the 5th New Zealand Field Regiment front. They were repulsed. Tank attacks were also made on the section held by the 25th (Wellington) Battalion and, under cover of scrub and rocks, a following strong force of infantry reached high ground on the left flank, causing the withdrawal of two forward platoons. These came under mortar

and shell fire from tanks and suffered heavy casualties. The artillery anti-tank guns soon had these three tanks ablaze and their crews were killed by machine-gun and rifle fire as they emerged. Other tanks advanced and three twenty-five-pounders, firing at point-blank range over open sights, dealt with them, one alone destroying seven tanks, and the other two, five tanks. An intense artillery and infantry battle continued till 9.50 p.m. when contact was broken and the planned withdrawal began. All guns and heavy equipment were destroyed and by midnight the last of the troops had passed through Molos on the way to the rear; by the dawn of Anzac Day, when the Anzacs of the last war were paying their homage at the various memorials in Australia and New Zealand, both men and vehicles were dispersed and concealed 100 miles away behind the 4th New Zealand Brigade's covering position at Kriekouki.

Orders for the immediate evacuation of the 1st New Zealand General Hospital, near Pharsala, were given on April 15 and the total of more than 400 patients was safely got away. The nurses were billeted in the village of Kephissia near Athens. They were to leave Piræus by hospital ship on April 20, but heavy air attacks caused her to leave before they embarked. Three days later they set out to entrain, but bombing had destroyed the railway station. The next decision was to embark them from Navplion, necessitating a road trip to Argos, along with a party of British and Australian nurses. They travelled all night over congested, bomb-cratered roads, crossing the Corinth Canal just before dawn. One truck, with nineteen New Zealand nurses aboard, overturned at the foot of a steep hill. All were slightly hurt or badly shaken. Enemy planes attacked the trucks at 9 a.m., the nurses sheltering in a cornfield near the road. They had a narrow escape and took cover after further attacks in the walled cemetery near Argos. At 9 p.m., they embussed for the remaining five miles of their journey to a point near the port. Then they walked a short distance, the way lit by the flames of two ships set afire by the Luftwaffe, to a Greek fishing craft which carried them to a destroyer at the harbour entrance. Their convoy was bombed and machine-gunned but Crete was reached on Anzac Day afternoon.

Six beaches were chosen for the evacuation—Raphena and Porto Rafi, north of Athens, Megara, between Athens and Corinth, and Navplion, Monemvasia and Kalamai in the Peloponnese, the northern beaches for the British and Australian units and the Peloponnese for the 4th and 6th New Zealand Brigades. The 5th New Zealand Brigade, with some non-combatant units, travelling by night, had moved to the beaches near Porto Rafi, Raphena and Marathon, while the 6th Brigade had kept the enemy occupied at Thermopylae, reaching these on the night of April 24. The Royal Navy that night, with special motor landing craft, took nearly 5,000 of the 5th New Zealand Brigade Group to waiting naval ships, and, by dawn, the convoy was well on its way to Crete. On Anzac Day night, more were evacuated from the same beaches, including most of the New Zealand Artillery. Between 700 and 800 were still ashore; 200 of them seized an auxiliary-engined Greek schooner, attempted to sail it to Crete and were picked up by a destroyer. Destroyers rescued the remainder, who were within 300 yards of enemy patrols as they lay in concealment. The withdrawal from Thermopylae was so well carried out that it was apparent that the enemy was unaware of it till daylight on Anzac Day. There followed an intense enemy aerial search, areas being bombed and machine-gunned systematically. No main positions were located. With darkness the withdrawal was resumed, and a long convoy, carrying the 6th New Zealand Brigade and attached units,

crossed the Corinth Canal and reached Hilai, thirty miles south of Corinth, by daylight. April 25 saw the enemy had a large force of airborne troops occupy the Corinth Canal. They were preceded by an hour's bombardment of an area of 50 acres between the town of Corinth and the canal and lighters swept the ground systematically with machine-gun and cannon fire. Thin waves of airborne troops were landed. The enemy tried to secure the bridge to cut off the retreat of the British forces, including the 4th New Zealand Brigade but was frustrated at the height of the airborne attack when men of No. 2 Section, 4th New Zealand Field Company, destroyed the bridge. A mixed group called *Stimulus Force* bore the full brunt of this attack. This force included a squadron of Divisional Cavalry, 2nd (Wellington) and 2nd (Moor) Battalion Grenadiers, 3 Company, 19th (Wellington) Battalion, a small detachment of the 4th Hussars, some Royal Engineers and a few guns from a British light anti-aircraft regiment. Many airborne troops were killed before reaching the ground; others in a sharp fight action before *Stimulus Force* withdrew before weight of numbers. The 4th New Zealand Brigade had them in shadow in policy of concealment. Two rifle companies from the 2nd (Canterbury-Range) Battalion were sent back to help *Stimulus Force* in the hope of saving the bridge, while another two companies took up covering positions near Argos and the 24th (Auckland) Battalion was ordered to go immediately over the mountains to Tripolis to protect the remaining road approaches to this vital centre. Both battalions were without mortar or artillery support, all guns having been abandoned at Thermopylae. Attacks by the force sent to help hold the bridge, on the well-established airborne troops were under way when news of the destruction of the bridge reached them and their intervention was of no further use. After heavy fighting they withdrew to positions covering the town of Argos and the port of Nauplia for the embarkation of 4,500 British and Australian troops. During these events the 4th New Zealand Brigade was in defensive positions north of the canal, of which the enemy had no intention till after 11 am on April 26. The 3th (Auckland), 10th (Canterbury-Range), and 19th (Wellington) Battalions were astride a road running through a narrow gorge several thousand feet above the plain in which lay Thebes. Australian artillery and anti-aircraft guns were in support. An enemy reconnaissance party came down to the line, were undisturbed and returned satisfied that the pass was undefended. Three hours later an enemy column of 100 vehicles drove towards the pass and when the rail was within artillery range, the Australians opened fire. The enemy fled and did not renew the attempt this way, turning east along a route which would bring them to the coast road to Athens. Enemy aircraft tried unsuccessfully to locate the Australian artillery positions. Airborne troops had landed at Corinth and with enemy movements threatening from the east and the rear, the Brigade faced the possibility of being cut off. Fortunately, but after much anxiety due to the impossibility of wireless communication between Brigade and Divisional Headquarters, Major Basil-Johnson, in charge of embarkation operations, was able to arrange for the 4th Brigade Group to embark at Porto Rika beach, south-east of Athens. Wireless contact was made with Armoured Brigade Headquarters which informed 4th Brigade Headquarters. The withdrawal began at 8 pm on April 26. Enemy fighter planes machine-gunned them as they moved towards a defence line established on either side of the road leading to the beach and meanwhile fired the erupting gun traps in which were bound over. After midday a defensive line was established 50 yards beyond the village of Mirogopolis across the road

leading to the beach. Sixty to 100 enemy tanks advanced down the road from Athens three hours later, to be engaged by artillery fire and take shelter in the village. No further attack came, except by air strafing. With darkness the 19th (Wellington) Battalion formed a rearguard while the others marched to the beach. Greek caïques, invasion craft, motor launches, rowing boats in tow and all manner of small craft ferried the men out to the waiting ships of the Royal Navy. All were safely aboard by 3 a.m., and en route to Crete.

In the Peloponnese enemy troops were threatening Tripolis from the coast road, after crossing the Gulf of Corinth near Patras, while other enemy columns continued on to Kalamai and to Corinth. The morning of April 27 found the 25th (Wellington) Battalion holding a road block in the mountain range pass between Miloi and Tripolis with the 24th (Auckland) Battalion guarding the remaining road approaches to the latter. The orders were to hold the positions till dark and then withdraw quickly to a dispersal area near Monemvasia beach. The day before, the 26th (Canterbury-Otago) Battalion had already set off on this journey. The 24th and 25th Battalions withdrew on the night of the 27th over 100 miles of hard, unfamiliar road. The brigade (6th) sheltered and rested under olive trees on April 28, and searching aircraft did not spot them. The first party reached the beach at 9 p.m. The first boatloads, containing thirty-seven wounded under the care of the 4th New Zealand Field Ambulance, had to return as the waiting destroyers had no accommodation for wounded. There was uncertainty about getting all the troops off that night, but at 1 a.m. on April 29, more ships and landing craft arrived and finally *H.M.S. Ajax*, which took the wounded. Zero hour for departure was 3 a.m. because of the risk of aircraft attack with the coming of dawn, but Admiral Baillie-Grohman decided to risk another hour. Barges, rowing boats, rafts and all types of craft were used and before 4 a.m., the last boatload, with Admiral Baillie-Grohman and General Freyberg aboard, reached *H.M.S. Ajax*. The last embarkation was scheduled for the night of April 28-29, at Kalamai, where there were 7,000 men, including the New Zealand reinforcements from Athens. The cruisers *Phoebe* and *Perth*, with six destroyers, arrived at 9 p.m., to find that the Germans had occupied the town and mined the harbour. The convoy later withdrew but by 11 p.m. small parties of Anzacs had driven them out. It was here that Sergeant Hinton won his V.C. This ended the planned evacuation, but it was not the end. From beaches and harbours all along the coast of Greece amazing expeditions of fishing boats, caïques, barges, scows and even rowing boats set forth and many reached friendly ports, some lacking provisions, water, and means of navigation. Sometimes they were machine-gunned by aircraft or bombed and sunk. Many travelled on foot through enemy-occupied country for long distances before finding a boat to take them to safety. A notable example was the 21st (Auckland) Battalion which suffered heavily in the Vale of Tempe and had its ranks restored beyond even the most extravagant hopes by men who found their own way out. The Navy continued to visit the beaches under cover of darkness for several nights and picked up several parties, while others were rescued at sea.

Sergeant John Daniel Hinton (20th Battalion), of Colac Bay, Southland, received the Victoria Cross for an act of outstanding courage in the Greek campaign on the night of April 28, 1941, when a column of German armoured cars entered Kalamai. This column contained several armoured cars, two-inch guns and three-inch mortars and two six-inch guns. It rapidly converged on large forces of British and New Zealand troops awaiting em-

barkation on the beach. When the order to retreat to cover was given Hinton shouted: "To hell with this; who will come with me?" He ran to within several yards of the nearest guns. The guns fired, missing him, and he hurled two hand grenades which completely wiped out the crews. He then came on with a bayonet, followed by a crowd of other New Zealanders. The German troops abandoned the first six-inch gun and retreated into two houses. Hinton smashed the windows and then the door of the first house and dealt with those inside with his bayonet. He repeated the performance in the second house and, as a result, until overwhelming German forces arrived, New Zealanders held the guns. Hinton then fell with a bullet wound in the lower abdomen and was taken prisoner. Hinton was thirty-two at the time. Born at Riverton, Southland, and the son of Mrs. Mary Hinton, he was a Public Works Department driver in Greymouth before the war, enlisting there on September 13, 1939. He left New Zealand with the First Echelon. His was the second V.C. gained by the 20th Battalion, that of Lieut. Upham being the first. His V.C. was conferred in most unusual circumstances. Letters from prisoners of war in Germany praising Hinton's courage came to London through the Red Cross and the King ordered an immediate investigation with a view to conferment of the V.C.

The German operation at Meritz to capture Greece was delivered by two German armies of thirty-two divisions, seven being panzers, supported by the bulk of the Luftwaffe. Greece signed an armistice with Germany on April 23.

CRETE

The New Zealand troops on Crete were: Headquarters, New Zealand Division, 4th Infantry Brigade: 21st (Auckland) Battalion, 20th (South Island) Battalion. 5th Infantry Brigade: 21st (Auckland) Battalion, 22nd (Wellington) Battalion, 23rd (South Island) Battalion, 28th (Maori) Battalion. New Zealand Cavalry detachment. 27th Battery, 5th Field Regiment, N.Z. Artillery and miscellaneous N.Z. Artillery personnel. 19th Army Troops Company. 7th Field Company. 5th Field Park Company (New Zealand Engineers). Miscellaneous N.Z. Engineers. Divisional Signals detachments. Five platoons of 27th (Machine-gun) Battalion. Petrol Company; Divisional Supply Command (N.Z.A.S.C.). Miscellaneous N.Z.A.S.C. personnel. 5th Field Ambulance. 6th Field Ambulance. 4th Field Hygiene Section.

What has already been stated of the value of the delay caused the enemy in the Battle for Crete has not been exaggerated but possibly underestimated. It took the Germans a month to capture Crete; a month in which every hour of delay had a hundredfold value to the Empire forces. In the attack great inroads were made on Hitler's pioneer and precious parachute forces, hundreds of planes and many airborne troops intended for Syria had to be diverted, the British forces were able to occupy Syria and crush the Axis-fostered revolt there, the Middle East was able to receive reinforcements of men and materials, and the offensive against Russia was postponed till Crete fell. This month's delay may have had the most far-reaching effects for the German onslaught that year halted only at the very gates of Leningrad and Moscow, whereas an earlier start might have carried the enemy through. Once again, it may have been a case of so many owing so much to so few. The British forces defending Crete were again almost without air support to begin, and altogether without it later. As in Greece, they did not throw in the sponge because they lacked this essential to successful

modern army campaigning. The men from Greece may have thought they had come to a haven; instead it was a bastion to be defended at all costs in a grim hour in the history of the war. The pledge to Greece had only been honoured by the withdrawal of troops from Libya, robbing Wavell of the fruits of bold tactics which might have cleaned the Italians right out of Libya that year. Wavell had intended to send a British infantry division to Crete to enable the return of Anzac troops there for re-forming in Egypt. The Navy, however, had been under such tremendous strain of resources and personnel that this was not possible, and it also faced the responsibility of preventing a sea-borne landing. It had also been Freyberg's wish that the New Zealanders go to Egypt to be re-formed. Instead, he was asked by Wavell to take command of all British forces on Crete. At his disposal were 28,500 British, Greek and Imperial troops, plus 4,000 to 5,000 unarmed Cypriots and Palestinians. The British troops comprised the Marine Naval Base Defence Organisation, the British garrison of one infantry brigade, eleven ill-equipped and untrained Greek battalions, and the troops from Greece, who were later organised into four improvised British battalions, eight weak Australian battalions, eight New Zealand battalions, under strength, and miscellaneous Australian and New Zealand specialist units. In addition, there were several thousand unarmed stragglers from Greece. The British garrison had been there since November, 1940, to secure the island as a Navy refuelling base, while that of the M.N.D.B.O., which arrived on April 22, was to improve the defences of the Navy's base, but actually, by the turn of events, became something entirely different. The available air forces of six Hurricanes, sixteen obsolete planes, and no safe aerodrome, were reduced by May 19 to three Hurricanes and three Gladiators serviceable at Herakleon (the Hurricanes had arrived two days before), and one Hurricane at Maleme. They had shot down twenty-three enemy aircraft confirmed, nine unconfirmed, and damaged eleven more. But it was clear that if they remained longer they would be overwhelmed or destroyed on the ground. So, on May 19, what were left flew to Egypt. The same day enemy air attacks on Suda Bay—the only port available—had resulted in thirteen ships lying there damaged. Despite this, the garrison had received forty-six field guns, mostly French or Italian (captured), with 300 rounds apiece, plenty of wire, light automatics, a fair supply of trench mortars, six infantry and sixteen light tanks.

The New Zealand defence sector was from the western limits of Canea and ten miles west along the coast to Maleme airfield, with a depth of one and a half to three miles, and in general, very hilly. The 5th Infantry Brigade (Brigadier Hargest), which arrived on the afternoon of Anzac Day, was in position by May 1 in the Maleme area between the Platanias River and the Tavronitis River, west of the airfield.

The 22nd New Zealand Battalion (Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew, V.C.) was responsible for the defence of Maleme airfield itself, and occupied high ground east of, and dominating, it; the 21st New Zealand Battalion occupied rising ground south of the field, and while the 22nd Battalion was to provide the static defence, the 21st and 23rd Battalions were to have a counter-attacking role. The 28th (Maori) Battalion were east of the Platanias River, to act as a brigade reserve in the event of the enemy gaining a foothold and advancing east towards Canea. The 27th Battery, New Zealand Artillery, had seventy-seven-millimetre Italian guns south-east of, and commanding, the airfield. The 4th New Zealand Infantry Brigade, which had disembarked on April 28, was, with the 1st Welsh Regiment, a mobile reserve just west

of Canea, under the command (from May 17) of Brigadier Inglis. A new brigade, the 10th Infantry, was formed on May 12 under the command of Brigadier Kippenberger, and consisted of the 20th New Zealand Battalion, 6th and 8th Greek Battalions, a composite battalion of odd New Zealand units and a detachment of three New Zealand Divisional Cavalry squadrons to be used as infantry. This brigade garrisoned the high ground in the Galatas area, the approach to Canea from the west and the Canea Valley, with the divisional cavalry detachment and the 6th Greek Battalion in the reservoir area around Lake Aghya. Seven officers and 201 other ranks of the 27th New Zealand (Machine-gun) Battalion, which landed on Crete with all their guns, were allotted to various sectors.

Tools did not arrive early and hampered defence preparations. There had been daily blitzes of Maleme airfield but the attack did not open till May 20 (Tuesday) when three flights of medium bombers dropped 100 lb. bombs round the perimeter and, nearly two hours later, at 7.50 a.m., twenty-four bombers started off the pre-invasion blitz. The air bombing attack continued in waves, with ample fighter support, for ninety minutes, which was followed by ground strafing by both bomber and fighter machines. At 9.30 a.m. Junkers 52's, flying at 500 feet above the shoulders of the hills, dropped hundreds of paratroops. Even gliders were used. Gun crews of the anti-aircraft defences, which were light, had suffered heavy casualties in the blitz, which affected their ability to deal with the transports. Few of those dropped around the airfield survived, being dispatched by anti-aircraft, machine gun and rifle fire. Those who landed were killed before they had time to become effective. The attack on the airfield thus failed, but the situation was different in the dried-up river-bed of the Tayronitis, to the west, where there was cover for the paratroops. The Germans soon concentrated their landings on this area, and the paratroops, organised and in formations, began to bring heavy fire to bear on the positions round the airfield. Those who had landed within range, however, had no chance. One wave dropped behind the lines of an engineer unit whose commander's reply to an offer of assistance was: "They'll be all dead before you can get a man here." The nominal roll of the company, found in the dead paratroop company commander's pocket, had 126 names; the engineer unit counted 112 dead. West of the airfield the position was bad by afternoon and ill-luck ruined a first-class counter-move by forty men preceded by two "T" tanks. The attackers traversed the airfield without loss and the probability appeared of re-establishing a position on the west. Then the guns of one tank jammed and the motor of the other failed. Of those infantry in support who managed to withdraw only three were unwounded. In face of heavy machine gun fire from the air, gunners continued accurate fire on enemy positions west of the field, but paratroops landed west and in front of the 4th Infantry Brigade, captured the 7th General Hospital and advanced on Galatas under cover of hospital patients they had captured. The hospital was recaptured by noon. Round Galatas and Lake Aghya the position was more serious. In this area 1,000 paratroops landed (plus 150 in the 19th Battalion area who were soon mopped up) and pushed patrols up the road towards Galatas to infiltrate 4th and 10th Brigades positions. These patrols, and the paratroops which had landed on the outskirts of Galatas, were mopped up by fighting patrols of the N.Z.A.S.C. and 19th Battalion. Paratroops dropped right on top of a troop of 3.7 howitzers held by a part of the force reserve east of Karatsos and overwhelmed the position, an 18th Battalion company attack, supported by two Bren carriers, failing to recapture it. After a

day-long battle of attack and counter-attack round Galatas the situation was in hand by nightfall. In the New Zealand sector the main enemy objective had been the Maleme airfield and the town of Canea, but so rapid was the action of the defenders that these attempts failed and, except for an isolated group which held out on Akrotiri, reinforcement was not tried. Instead support was given to those who had established themselves farther to the west in the area behind the airfield and around the prison two miles south-east of Maleme and south-west of Galatas near the lake.

When the attack opened King George II of the Hellenes was in a villa on the hills behind Canea, and on the advice of Colonel K. S. Blunt, British military attache, the King and his entourage started out at once for the south coast with an escort from 18th Battalion under Lieut. W. H. Ryan. This took two days over country not negotiable even by mules, but the coast was reached and a British destroyer took the King and his party to Egypt.

The early evening of May 20 saw the 22nd Battalion's hold on the western side of Maleme slender, but a company of the 23rd Battalion and a company of the Maori Battalion counter-attacked, mopping up several enemy parties which had penetrated. This took till nearly midnight, by which time there had been effective infiltration of the 22nd Battalion's positions west and south-west, creating the danger of being cut off from the rest of the brigade. A withdrawal was made from these positions to the high ground occupied by the 21st and 23rd Battalions, though a foothold was still maintained on the airfield and the whole area covered by artillery and machine gun fire. May 21 saw heavy air attacks on the defenders' positions, directed from the ground by those of the enemy who had established themselves. Machine guns, cannon and bombs were used to create a barrage for the advance of infantry. All this furious assault was unopposed in the air. By noon the New Zealanders were forced off the field, and not long after the first big troop carriers moved in from the sea to land on the airfield, maintaining a three-minute gap between each. Losses of planes appeared to be of no account. They kept pouring in, but instructions and orders which were captured disclosed that it was not intended that the parachute troops should fight a serious action or that the airborne troops would have to be crash-landed and then fight for their lives. In fact, a semi-official publication states that it is now known that after the defeat of the paratroops on the first day the enemy nearly gave up.

Then, on the night of May 21, came the attempt at sea-borne invasion. It was preceded by heavy air attacks on the three naval forces which were waiting in Cretan waters for just such an attempt to be made. At 11.30 p.m. Rear Admiral Glennie's force of cruisers (*Dido*, *Ajax* and *Orion*) and destroyers (*Janus*, *Kimberley*, *Hasty* and *Hereward*) sighted an enemy convoy of small steamers and caïques, escorted by torpedo boats, eighteen miles north of Canea and carrying, in addition to troops, artillery, motor cycles, cars and light tanks. By 2 a.m., the British naval forces withdrew west, leaving only two sinking wrecks ablaze in the darkness. The 4,000 sea-borne invaders had been annihilated. So, next day, May 21, the air attacks continued with greater violence, but the 28th (Maori) Battalion and the 20th Battalion were associated in a counter-attack on the airfield, while other units were to clear up infiltration in their own areas. The enemy had landed considerable reinforcements of well-armed troops who were spread in good cover among vineyards and villages to a depth of two or three miles. With bayonet charges and swift assaults the New Zealanders had accom-

plished a highlight in a desperate campaign by reaching the airfield edge at dawn on May 22, but the daylight brought with it terrific ground fire from mortars and machine guns while fighters and bombers staged their heaviest blitz. The ground so dearly won could not be held, but the enemy had suffered severe casualties. The airfield itself was littered with scores of big troop carriers and gliders which had crash-landed or been brought down by anti-aircraft fire, but the enemy was undeterred, and it was estimated that this day, May 22, he landed 12,000 additional troops. The flanks of the New Zealand positions on the hills round Maleme were subject to great pressure and the enemy was penetrating into the high country behind, dominating the road to Canea with machine guns and mortars. This created the danger of the 5th Brigade being cut off. In counter-attacks to relieve, the Maori Battalion inflicted terrific losses in olive grove fighting, but their gallant efforts were not sufficient to turn back the enemy, who came again in great strength from the south-west of Galatas. The 5th Brigade then had to withdraw to avoid being cut off. The airfield was lost and the Germans had undisputed and uninterrupted use of it henceforth.

Along the coast towards Galatas the 10th Infantry Brigade had been holding up a large body of paratroops and air-borne troops landed on May 20, out of machine gun and rifle fire, in the prison-lake area of the Canea Valley and steadily reinforced since. Here there had been fierce hand to hand fighting for the village of Galatas. This continued throughout May 20 and 21, many casualties being inflicted on the Germans and equipment captured. In the latter were signals, ground stripes and flags which were used to decoy German planes into dropping supplies. On the morning of May 22, Rear Admiral King, with a force of destroyers and cruisers, had sighted another force of caiques escorted by Italian destroyers. In a sharp attack several ships were sunk and the rest escaped under smoke cover. However, unlike the first smashing success, the Navy had this time to operate in daylight within easy range of German airfields, and in a two-hour air attack the cruisers *Fiji* and *Gloucester* and the destroyer *Greyhound* were lost. On the credit side, besides the sinking of enemy ships, another sea-borne landing attempt had been squashed. That night the 10th Brigade had to hold its position and keep the coast road clear for the 5th Brigade, which had begun to withdraw behind the Platanias River just before dawn. By 10 a.m. next day it was in its new position along the Platanias Valley, which ran south-east towards the prison-lake area in the Canea Valley. This was not accomplished without hard fighting by the 10th Brigade, specially by the Maoris in protecting the flanks of the 5th Battalion, which continued its withdrawal that night into the divisional reserve area just west of Canea and to strengthen the Galatas front. The 4th Brigade took up positions along a line between the sea and Galatas, a much depleted composite battalion and the 19th Battalion held the area from Galatas to the road, and south of the road the 19th Australian brigade took up positions between the road and the high country covering the southern flank. There was to be no respite for the men, who had been six days in action, subject to air attacks on a heavy scale for much of the time, and having lost the airfield at Maleme, aware of the heavy reinforcement of the enemy in men, light tanks, field and mountain guns, motor cycles, machine guns, mortars, supplies for all these weapons and vehicles, and other war necessities—all dropped from the air. The 10th Brigade had been hard tried round Galatas, in which N.Z. Divisional Cavalry, Petrol Company, a detachment of the composite battalion, and Greek detachments, had taken a heavy part. The

3rd Hussars with nine light tanks had been serving the various brigades in turn and without relief, giving most valuable help to the infantry. On Saturday, May 25, it was a case of organising to meet the inevitable attack while watching German air-borne troops, landed at Maleme, arriving in large numbers. A terrific mortar and air attack began on Sunday, reaching its crescendo about 4 p.m., when the infantry attacked. Line after line came at the New Zealanders through the olive groves but were beaten back, until in desperation the Germans tried dive bombing. Then the infantry came again. An 18th Battalion company on the west flank was overcome in a savage struggle, and after other units had been hard pressed a large part of the line withdrew east of Galatas. In the town itself New Zealand Divisional Cavalry and Petrol Company drivers were still maintaining their positions. Their comrades did not allow them to be cut off. Two British light tanks did a brief in and out trip up the road into Galatas, shooting up Germans and getting two of their own men wounded. They offered to repeat the sortie if the two casualties were replaced. The New Zealanders supplied these, and then supports from the 20th Battalion arrived, but the capture of Galatas was under way. Troops of the 23rd and 20th Battalions joined the 18th, fixed bayonets and advanced on either side of the tanks. They climbed back walls, stormed into houses and buildings and with blood-curdling yells rushed the Germans with bayonet and small arms fire till the dead were piled deep. The force which had been threatened with isolation was found already extricating itself. The surviving Germans quit in the face of one of the most outstanding efforts of the campaign, and it was later reported that the Germans had erected a memorial in the village to those of both sides who fell in the engagement. Had there been fresh troops to carry on with the advantage gained, the result would have been even better, but the New Zealanders were almost exhausted. Casualties had thinned the ranks, the concussion of heavy bombing affected vitality and there was the continuous strain of air attacks on roads and groves. The enemy's heavy attacks were resumed that night and the 4th Brigade withdrew through the 5th Brigade, which had reformed, and moved into a new line east of Galatas alongside the 19th Australian Brigade.

The end of the battle for Crete was now in sight, and it was only uncontested air superiority which brought victory for the enemy. Had there been air parity, or anything like it, landing of troops in such great strength would never have been possible, and those who did land would have been obliterated. The island was, however, completely out of R.A.F. fighter range, and its bomber raids on Maleme airfield, though useful, were on a very modest scale. The Navy was too battered to conduct any further offensive operations on its own account which would assist the defenders. Retimo was cut off, and the reduction of its garrison and that of Herakleon by the same methods which had taken Maleme and Galatas could not be long delayed. During the battle for Galatas the 5th Brigade had had a twelve-hour rest, and on the night of May 25-26 it relieved the 4th Brigade, which now included remnants of the 10th Brigade. The 4th Brigade re-formed south of Canae but was utterly exhausted, while one of its battalions, the 19th, was under 5th Brigade command. The enemy maintained and increased pressure on the new Canae front, now held by the 5th Brigade and the 19th Australian Brigade, and parties began to work towards the southern flank, and by nightfall on the 26th had infiltrated behind the lines and east along the hills on the southern flank. The position was critical and the line could not hold until relief arrived. Brigadier Puttick

(later to become G.O.C. and C.G.S., New Zealand Military Forces, with the rank of major-general and then lieutenant-general), who was in command of the New Zealand sector, decided to withdraw. Contact with Suda Bay had been lost. The 19th Battalion, with its reserve companies, cleared the south flank of the 5th Brigade area and the withdrawal was made to a new line—a dirt road called 42nd Street running north and south through the olive trees a mile west of Suda township. The 1st Welsh and 1st Rangers Battalions, and a detachment of Northumberland Hussars, under Major-General Weston, R.M., advanced on the morning of May 27 to hold up the enemy while the new line was established, but were outflanked by strong enemy forces, and only a few made their way back by next day. The new line appeared firm, but elsewhere the position was bad. The German positions were dominating Herakleon, and attempts to open the road to Retimo failed. At 9.30 a.m. the 5th Brigade and 19th Australian Brigade positions on 42nd Street line were heavily bombed, followed by a strong enemy infantry attack which the 19th, 23rd and 28th (Maori) Battalions and the 28th Australian Battalion drove back at bayonet point for a mile and a half. Despite heavy bombardment the line held. The 19th Australian Brigade was north of the Canea-Suda road with one of the two Commando battalions which, under Brigadier Laycock, had disembarked at Suda on May 26, on its right flank towards the bay. From north to south, the 21st, 28th (Maori), 19th and 22nd Battalions, with the 23rd Battalion in reserve behind the Maori positions, was holding 42nd Street south of the main road through the village of Khristos. The bombing and ground strafing continued almost unceasingly, and when the enemy began to work round the southern flank, despite counter-attacks, it was necessary to make another withdrawal. The 5th Brigade and the 19th Australian Brigade were ordered to withdraw to Stylos that night in order of, 19th Australian Brigade 10 o'clock, followed by 5th New Zealand Brigade headquarters, 28th (Maori) Battalion, 22nd, 19th, 21st and 23rd New Zealand Battalions in that order. Fifteen minutes before it was due to withdraw the 19th Australian Brigade was attacked but drove off the enemy, and at 10.30 p.m. the withdrawal movement began. The 23rd Battalion, forming the rearguard, had difficulty in breaking off contact with the enemy till a successful counter-attack by the 27th Australian Battalion remedied this. The withdrawal was then covered by the Commandos. Ahead was a thirty mile march, from one coast of Crete to the other, by men who had been engaged in the toughest fighting, and relentlessly attacked from the air for more than a week. The road wound its way in sweeps up to the 3,000 feet saddle of the ranges, and there was no water but in wells. At these men would wait for what seemed interminable periods to get their turn for a drink, and then aircraft attack would scatter them. All the time the Luftwaffe was dogging the withdrawal. The main withdrawal route was guarded by men of the 4th Infantry Brigade, and at Stylos the New Zealanders and Australians stood guard on the withdrawal before withdrawing through Brigadier Laycock's Commandos. Infiltrating enemy parties cut off a company of Commandos and Maoris left in position across the Pass on the Stylos road at Beritania, but the Maoris fought their way back for twenty-four miles through country where the enemy had closed in. The Maoris lost only two killed and brought back eight wounded. The 19th Australian Brigade and the 5th New Zealand Brigade withdrew from Stylos on the night of May 28, and next morning were in the Askipho Plain area. With only 160 of its original 600 left, the 23rd New Zealand Battalion held a high waterless ridge north of Askipho, while from the plain 2,000 feet

below the balance of the forces sent them water in all manner of receptacles. Motorised pursuit forces with mountain guns and mortars, with reconnaissance planes to mark the line of retreat, constantly pressed the rearguard. The main forces rested on Askipho Plain on the day of May 29 and then moved down the broad gully towards the sea. Meantime the Commando force had been driven back by the enemy advance. The final rearguard was to be the 19th Australian Brigade with a battalion of Royal Marines. The 4th and 5th New Zealand Brigades withdrew in daylight without difficulty. The last pass was guarded by the final rearguard detachment and there was a defended perimeter on the high country round Sphakia, but a small German detachment came over the hills into a big ravine to the west. Men of the 4th Infantry Brigade climbed 2,000 feet into the hills to force a retreat, and when the enemy came again next day Maoris and Australians accounted for them.

The Navy, returned to Alexandria on May 27 after raiding an airfield in the Dodecanese, found orders awaiting to evacuate the army from Crete. Admiral Cunningham decided that the main evacuation should be from Herakleon on the night of May 28-29, the garrison here being still unsubdued and delivering strong counter-attacks, with severe losses to the enemy. Rear Admiral Rawlings, with the cruisers *Orion* (flag), *Ajax* and *Dido*, and six destroyers, reached Herakleon at 11.30 p.m. on May 28 and the destroyers entered the harbour, embarked the men and transferred them to the cruisers. By 3 a.m., when the destroyers *Kimberley* and *Imperial* cleared the harbour with the entire rearguard; not one of the British force, other than wounded who could not be moved, was left behind. The evacuation from Sphakia presented considerable difficulties. The final stage of the road from Suda to Sphakia was a series of hairpin bends ending at an escarpment 500 feet high, from which point there was a steep goat track down to a 200 yards wide shingle beach. The upward climb was a two-hour trip for a fit man. The first lift from Sphakia was on the night of the 28th when the destroyers *Napier*, *Nizam*, *Kelvin* and *Khandahar*, carrying extra boats, provisions and ammunition for the men to be evacuated on subsequent nights, embarked all those available on the beach—200 walking wounded and 800 troops from Suda. From 11.30 p.m. on the night of May 29, a naval force under Rear Admiral King (naval transport *Glengyle* with three landing craft, the cruisers *Phoebe*, *Perth*, *Calcutta*, *Coventry*, and the destroyers *Jervis*, *Janus* and *Hasty*), took off several thousand Imperial troops, including many wounded. The following night most of the 4th New Zealand Infantry Brigade and the Maori Battalion were taken off on the *Napier* and *Nizam*.

The Commander in Chief, Admiral Cunningham, despite the serious losses his fleet had sustained, decided to send every available ship of his exhausted and battered fleet for a final evacuation on the night of May 31. This consisted of the cruisers *Phoebe* (Rear Admiral King) and *Abdiel*, and the destroyers *Jockel*, *Kimberley* and *Hatspur*—all that were left available. The squadron sailed at 3 a.m. on June 1 with more than 4,000 troops aboard, including the 5th Infantry Brigade and the remainder of the 4th Brigade. There were still a large number of British and Dominion troops left on the island. At Sphakia only organised military parties had been taken off, except for a brief period early on the morning of May 31. Many of the stragglers became prisoners, but a great number escaped to live in hiding, in which they were assisted by the Cretans, or to fight on in the hills. This order was posted up soon after: "Soldiers of the Royal British Army, Navy and Air Force. There are many of you still hiding in the mountains, valleys

and villages. You have to present yourself at once to the German troops. Every opposition will be completely useless. Every attempt to flee will be in vain. The coming winter will force you to leave the mountains. Only soldiers who present themselves at once will be sure of a honourable and soldierlike captivity of war. On the contrary who is met in civ clothes will be treated as a spy. The Commander of Kreta." (Note: The notice is given as in the original, including a spelling error.)

It may well have been that in thinking of the achievements of the New Zealanders in Greece and on Crete that General Freyberg's mind went back to more than twenty years before when his friend, the late Sir James Barrie, in his famous Rectorial address on Courage, given at St. Andrew's University, said: "It (courage) is the lovely virtue—the rib of Himself that God sent down to His children."

Second Lieut. Charles Hazlitt Upham, of Christchurch, was awarded the V.C. for a series of remarkable exploits (on Crete) showing outstanding leadership, tactical skill and utter indifference to danger. He commanded a forward platoon in the attack on Malemi on May 22 and fought his way forward over 3,000 yards, unsupported by any other arms and against a defence strongly organised in depth. His platoon destroyed many enemy posts, but on three occasions was temporarily held up. On the first occasion, under heavy machine-gun fire, Upham advanced to close quarters with pistol and grenades, so demoralising the occupants of the machine-gun nest that his section was able to mop up with ease. Two machine-gun posts in a house, then held up another of his sections. He went in and placed grenades through a window, destroying the crew of one gun and several others, the other gun being silenced by the fire of his section. In the third case he crawled within fifteen yards of a machine-gun post and killed gunners with a grenade. When his company withdrew from Malemi, Upham helped to carry wounded men under fire and, with another officer, rallied more men together to carry out other wounded men. In his next action he was detailed to bring in a company which was isolated. With a corporal, he went through 600 yards of enemy territory, killing two Germans on the way, and bringing the isolated company back. In the next two days his platoon was in an exposed position and Upham was wounded by shrapnel and by a bullet in a foot. When the British forces retired Upham did not cease his brave exploits. At Galatos, on May 25, his platoon was heavily engaged when troops in front gave way, and came under severe mortar and machine-gun fire. While the platoon stopped under cover of a ridge, Upham went forward, observed the enemy, and brought up a platoon when the Germans advanced. They killed more than forty Germans with fire and grenades and the rest fell back. When the platoon was ordered to retire Upham sent it back under a sergeant and then, on his own, proceeded to warn other troops they were in danger of being cut off. When he came out himself he was fired on by two Germans. He fell and shammed dead and having the use of only one arm, rested his rifle in the fork of a tree. As the Germans came forward he killed both, the second actually hitting the muzzle of his rifle as he fell. Again at Spakia on May 13, when his platoon was ordered to deal with a party of the enemy which had advanced up a ravine towards force headquarters Upham, though exhausted, climbed a steep hill, placed his men in position on a slope overlooking the ravine and then went to the top himself with a Bren gun and two riflemen. By clever tactics he induced the enemy party to expose itself and then at 500 yards' range, shot twenty-two and caused the rest to disperse in panic. During the whole of the operations he

suffered from dysentery, could eat only little and was wounded and bruised. Upham was then thirty-three. Upham was educated at Waihi preparatory school, Christ's College and Canterbury Agricultural College. He then did mustering and shepherding work on high-country stations to gain farming experience and later joined the Valuation Department. His father belonged to an old Christchurch legal firm. Upham left New Zealand, as sergeant, with the advance guard of the First Echelon and was commissioned in Egypt.

Sergeant Alfred Clive Hulme, of Nelson (formerly Dunedin), was awarded the V.C. for conspicuous service at Malemi, Galatos, Suda Bay and Stylos between May 20 and May 28, 1941. A married man with two children he was a farmer by occupation and left New Zealand with the Second Echelon. On the ground overlooking Malemi aerodrome on May 20 and 21, he personally led parties of his men and destroyed enemy organised parties which had established themselves in front and were bringing to bear heavy rifle, machine-gun and mortar fire on the defences. He personally dealt with many snipers in this area. He was continually going out alone, or with a few men, destroying snipers. On May 22, 23 and 24, 150 enemy dead were counted in this area. In the attack on Galatos village he went forward alone against an enemy party strongly entrenched in a school, threw hand grenades into it and so disorganised the defence that a counter-attack succeeded. At Suda Bay on May 27 he stalked and killed in turn five snipers who had worked into a position on a hillside overlooking his battalion. He continued similar successful work throughout the day. At Stylos, on May 28, when heavy enemy mortar fire was bombing every important ridge held by his battalion rearguard troops, he went forward on his own initiative, killed the mortar crew of four and put the gun out of action. From there he worked forward and killed three snipers who were worrying the rearguard. This made his score of enemy snipers, thirty-three stalked and shot. While stalking another he was severely wounded and was ordered to the rear. However, despite his wound, he directed traffic under fire and organised stragglers into section groups. Hulme was one of three soldier brothers from Nelson, the others being Corporal H. C. Hulme, killed in action, and Private G. B. Hulme. His father is a draughtsman in the Lands and Survey Department, New Plymouth. Hulme was a man of great physique. I remember on a bush and mountain warfare course on his return to New Zealand, how he and the late Captain Cyril Pepper, M.C., carried great loads over steep, rough country at a pace others of the party could not match.

SECOND LIBYAN CAMPAIGN

Before proceeding with an account of the New Zealand Division's part in the second Libyan campaign, a brief summary must be given of the general background. As already indicated, the demand for Imperial and Dominion troops for Greece prevented the complete clearance of the enemy from North Africa early in 1941. Then the Luftwaffe appeared, on February 12, harbinging of the German land forces to follow later the same month. Assisted by Italian units, the Germans attacking in March were at the Egyptian frontier in a fortnight. Tobruk was also attacked, possibly at the expense of greater success elsewhere, but the 9th Australian Division, with British tanks, held firm. Rommel's forces crossed the frontier on April 26, captured Halfaya Pass from a light British force, attacked Tobruk again

on May 1 and was repulsed, tank losses being particularly heavy. The British attacked unsuccessfully on June 15; the enemy occupied July and August in repairing damaged armour, laying minefields and constructing defences from Halfaya to Sidi Omar. The Regia Aeronautica attacked Egypt with about as much success as the Italians met with on the ground. Meantime British forces in Egypt were increasing, American equipment was coming to hand in great quantities, the Germans had attacked Russia and British forces had occupied Syria. Maddalena, Siwa and Giarabub were re-occupied, and in September Rommel attacked again but failed, first, because Tobruk held out, and second, while his tanks were refuelling, R.A.F. light bombers caught them and inflicted heavy toll. So he decided to deal with Tobruk first before engaging in any other widescale attack. By November almost the entire enemy North African army was in north-east Cyrenaica, consisting of the Afrika Corps (90th Light Division, 15th and 21st Armoured Divisions), one armoured, two motorised and four infantry divisions from the remnants of Graziani's Imperial army. The infantry was stiffened with Germans, and the whole force of much better morale. Four of the Italian divisions were investing Tobruk. The total enemy forces in Cyrenaica were estimated at 110,000 men, 380 medium tanks, 1,140 field and anti-tank guns with an airforce, mainly Italian (but including some German dive bombers and fighters), and slightly inferior to the R.A.F. numerically. The Eighth Army numbered 127,000 (81,000 United Kingdom, 19,000 New Zealand, 17,400 South Africa, 10,200 India), 120 light tanks, 520 cruiser tanks, 200 infantry tanks, 850 medium field and anti-tank guns, 500 aircraft. The New Zealand Division, the 4th Indian Division and the 1st Army Tank Brigade comprised the 13th Corps of the Eighth Army. It was an offensive army. The 30th Corps (7th Armoured Division of two armoured brigades and the 7th Support Group of infantry and other arms, 22nd Armoured Brigade, 22nd Guards Brigade, 1st South African Division) was to destroy the enemy armour as its first objective. Then it was to relieve Tobruk in conjunction with the garrison, then the 70th Division, 32nd Army Tank Brigade and Polish Carpathian Brigade. The 13th Corps was to cut off the frontier forts, drive west to link with the 30th Corps and clear the approaches to Tobruk. The Oases Group, a composite force operating independently, was to move from Giarabub in the far south to Jalo, deep in the enemy's rear, misleading the opposition as to the direction of the main thrust by starting a day before any other formation, and then threaten the enemy's rear communications. This was briefly the general set-up.

The New Zealanders had been reorganised and re-equipped after Greece and Crete. They returned to the desert in September, 1941. By November they were ready. On November 11, 1941, the Division moved forward in stages and assembled in the desert at Bir el Kanalis, where the coming campaign was explained. November 14 was a day of rest, the 15th saw a forty-five miles forward move in daylight and the 16th to 19th an advance by night without lights of twenty-five to thirty miles. The 169-mile long Italian frontier barbed-wire barrier was reached that night, November 19, and a 300-yard breach created to allow of the passage of the Division. The 30th Corps meanwhile was in battle positions astride the Trigh el Abd and the 1st South Africa Division in the El Cuase area. On the 19th the 22nd Armoured Brigade made contact, knocking out forty-five tanks of the Italian 132nd Ariete Division and taking 300 prisoners. This was in the Bir el Gubi area and near Bir du Meliha, sixty miles east, sixty enemy tanks withdrew north from the 4th Armoured Brigade. At Sidi Rezegh British

armoured forces destroyed forty-four enemy tanks out of a strong force, which withdrew, and took several hundred prisoners. The landing ground was captured, along with nineteen aircraft and personnel. The New Zealanders started to move north on November 19, were delayed by minor engagements, and stayed on the Trigh el Abd till November 21. The Divisional Cavalry and the 5th Brigade Group (Brigadier Hargest) were in the van, one squadron of cavalry capturing Sidi Azeiz after a short engagement, without loss. Forty-eight Italians, including an officer caught in his bath, six Germans, and some material were taken. On November 22, a column of carriers and anti-tank guns from the 22nd Battalion reached the Bardia defences outer wire and took eleven prisoners before heavy fire caused a withdrawal. On the night of November 22 the Capuzzo-Bardia pipeline, telephone wires and cable were cut by a column from the 23rd (South Island) Battalion, and next morning, with infantry tanks, the battalion took Capuzzo, with 60 German and 140 Italian prisoners, at no loss to themselves. This resulted in the loss of the main German telephone exchange in the frontier area. By early morning of November 22 the 4th Group (Brigadier L. M. Inglis) was through Sidi Azeiz and on top of the escarpment. An enemy encampment was surprised and the occupants fled, to be engaged by the 20th (South Island) Battalion which took 150 prisoners and transport. The cutting of the Tobruk-Bardia road by the 4th Brigade Group had driven a wedge between the enemy forces near the frontier and those to the west. There were further successes next day when the 28th (Maori) Battalion captured Sollum barracks and the 23rd Battalion took Musaid. With British tanks in support, the Maoris, with bayonets fixed, but using largely grenades and mortars, pressed on despite heavy fire, taking 250 prisoners in the barracks for the loss of twenty killed and thirty-two wounded. Substantial equipment was also part of the booty.

This, of course is purely that part of the attack in which the New Zealanders were concerned, for they were but a part of the whole. Elsewhere there was a great armoured battle for the possession of Sidi Rezegh which, with the El Duda-Belhamed ridge, formed a causeway between the Tobruk garrison and the attackers, as well as overlooking main enemy lines of communication west and furnishing observation positions over the forces investing Tobruk. November 22 was a day of fierce tank battles and the 4th Armoured Brigade suffered a severe reverse at night, and the 7th Support Group, after sustaining heavy casualties and being outnumbered, had to withdraw in face of attacks from two directions. At this stage the task of the New Zealand Division was to mask Bardia and clear the country along the coast, north of the Tobruk-Musaid-Capuzzo-Bardia area. Meantime, the 6th Brigade Group (Brigadier Barrowclough) was approaching the battle area near Tobruk and was ordered to take Point 175—approximately half way between Bir el Chleta and Belhamed and thirty miles south-east of Tobruk—and then gain touch with the 7th Armoured Brigade and the 5th South Africa Brigade at Sidi Rezegh. An enemy column attempted to break through the tail of the brigade group at dawn, but New Zealand gunners with twenty-five-pounders on the southern escarpment opened fire, the enemy transport withdrew and was engaged by anti-tank guns, and then the 25th (Wellington) Battalion halted the column with machine-gun and rifle fire. The German column, which was part of the Afrika Corps headquarters, surrendered, and among its documents was the German code list for the day. This was Sunday, November 23. Point 175 was attacked at noon, the 25th Battalion and a squadron of Valentines in the van. The tanks

got too far ahead of the infantry, met strong anti-tank fire, and only four reached the rallying point. Without tank support the infantry ran into heavy opposition, which included entrenched tanks used as machine-gun pill-boxes, but reached the objective. A counter-attack, with tank support, pushed them back 100 yards, but they came again, gained the objective and, with the support of two companies of 24th (Auckland) Battalion, held on under heavy fire. The casualties were heavy. The 26th (South Island) Battalion had meantime pushed south-west and joined the 5th South African Brigade, which, however, later that afternoon was heavily attacked by 100 tanks and motor-borne infantry. The South African Brigade was over-run and then the enemy turned on the 26th Battalion which was occupying lower ground. New Zealand gunners used their twenty-five-pounders with open sights against enemy transport to great effect on both vehicles and infantry. The attack was held but the battalion was still in an isolated position on the New Zealand southern flank. The battalion disengaged in the darkness, with few casualties, and closed on the main body of the brigade group. Success on Point 175 had been dearly bought, and it was the forerunner to many grim close-fighting encounters to clear the way to Tobruk. The 24th and 25th Battalions consolidated their positions there on November 24, and the 4th Brigade was advancing along the ground north of the escarpment containing the 6th Brigade. With C Squadron, Divisional Artillery, and a 44th Army Tank Battalion squadron, it had advanced to attack Gambut airfield on November 23, closed in on this position by nightfall, and, at noon next day, was in possession and on the move again, west, to link up with the 6th Brigade. Divisional Headquarters moved up with the 20th and 21st Battalions to Bir el Chleta late on November 23, the former, with Valentines in support, capturing an enemy lodgment with prisoners and equipment, and then joining the rest of the 4th Brigade in line with the 6th Brigade on Point 175. Plans were made to press on the attack, by bayonet, at dawn on November 25. Led by a squadron of Divisional Cavalry and tanks, the 4th Brigade moved north and by 7 a.m. had taken Zaafran. The 6th Brigade 24th Battalion, advancing along the edge of the escarpment, met fierce opposition in ravines, in a blockhouse on the escarpment, and in wadis along the edge. With the help of the 26th Battalion, the blockhouse was taken and the 26th reached the edge of Sidi Rezegh airfield.

The situation which now faced the New Zealanders was not enviable, but they were the men who had the grit to overcome it. The prime necessity was a junction with the Tobruk garrison, but between the New Zealanders and Tobruk were seven or eight German battalions, including some from the 15th and 21st Armoured Divisions, and two Italian Bersaglieri battalions, with 120 field guns and at least 100 anti-tank guns between them. These enemy forces were in the Sidi Rezegh-Belhamed area. The New Zealand Division was limited to sixty rounds per gun for its twenty-five-pounders, other supplies were short and there was the embarrassment of hundreds of wounded and 1,000 German prisoners. The orders were for the 18th and 20th Battalions, 4th Brigade, to capture Belhamed, the 24th and 25th Battalions, 6th Brigade, to take Sidi Rezegh, and the 21st and 26th Battalions to go through to Ed Duba, where, to coincide with the attack, the Tobruk garrison was to break out and meet the New Zealanders. The attack was to be at night, with bayonet, and Valentine tanks in support. The 4th Brigade, on the right, attacked at 9 p.m. (November 25), with the 18th and 20th Battalions. There were four and a half miles to go, and with two-thirds of the distance covered, heavy machine-gun and mortar fire were met.

Undeterred, the battalions pushed on and in sharp, fiery rushes, had the whole position by midnight. Tanks advancing at dawn to support the success were blasted back by eighty-eight-millimetre fire, leaving the infantry on the bare coverless terrain, a feature of Belhamed ridge, and exposed to heavy fire on all sides. Heavy counter-attacks were made and held, not without heavy loss, and the tanks, which had already suffered, could give no support. The R.A.F. was asked for urgent support and, with fighter-escorted Blenheims and then Marylands, attacked the enemy south of Belhamed. The 6th Brigade attack on Sidi Rezegh was made at 11 p.m., the 24th and 25th Battalions advancing in face of strong opposition to a point on the escarpment 1,000 yards east of Sidi Rezegh. In desperate night fighting, both sides sustained heavy casualties. The 21st and 26th Battalions moved up to continue the advance, but morning saw the 24th and 25th Battalions in a very exposed position, while the 26th Battalion was also strongly opposed. The 21st Battalion, after moving up in the darkness, passed through the enemy lines and, with daylight, came under fire from all directions. Extricating itself through defiles on the only route up the escarpment it was severely battered. One company only reached 24th Battalion headquarters, the others being widely dispersed. Some later reached brigade headquarters and were reorganised as a brigade reserve. There had now been hard, continuous action for several days, casualties had been heavy and there was no let-up from shelling and machine-gunning. Either the enemy must be cleared from the edge of the escarpment and from the wadis below or the 6th Brigade must withdraw from its position. Another night bayonet action against superior numbers was undertaken by the weary troops. That same afternoon, November 26, the news came that the Tobruk garrison had made a sortie from the bulge in the perimeter, which they made on November 22, and were in possession of Ed Duba. The 19th Battalion and 44th Royal Tank Regiment made a night march to open the door to Tobruk. Starting at 10 p.m., this move had a demoralising effect on the enemy, who lost heavily, being confused by the noise of the unseen vehicles and then frightened by silent bayonet fighters. The battalion had no casualties whatever, and a junction was made at Ed Duba at 1 a.m., the 19th Battalion taking up a position alongside an Essex battalion. Meantime, the 6th Brigade troops, with magnificent dash and determination, bayoneted their way through in a bloody engagement with both German and Italian Bersaglieri infantry, had the position won that night, and, at daylight, cleaned out the remaining pockets of resistance. Sidi Rezegh had been won by brave men at heavy cost. This gave the New Zealanders possession of the two lower of the three escarpments which stepped back from Tobruk; the 4th Brigade on high ground from Zaafran to Belhamed and across the road towards El Adem, to link up with the Tobruk garrison at Ed Duba and the 6th Brigade on the high ground of Point 175 and Sidi Rezegh on the second escarpment. The enemy artillery in the wadis, guided by observation from the third and most southerly escarpment which gave good view of the New Zealand positions, was still able to bring fire to bear.

The New Zealanders' success with the bayonet round Sidi Rezegh, Belhamed and Ed Duba, when they proved their moral and physical superiority over numerically superior enemy infantry forces, was linked with Rommel's decision to make a break to the Egyptian frontier. By taking his armoured forces away for four vital days, beginning November 24, for an excursion into Egypt to attack the British lines of communication, he had left the infantry without tank support. As the enemy tanks were moving east from

Ed Duba-Sidi Rezegh-Belhamed, the New Zealand Division, but a few miles north, was advancing on Tobruk. The Italian 132nd Ariete Division failed dismally in an attempt to dislodge the 4th Indian Division from Sidi Omar, but the German 15th and 21st Armoured Divisions, linking up in a drive towards Bardia on November 26, created the situation whereby 5th New Zealand Brigade headquarters, with Brigadier Hargest, thirty-seven officers, and 650 men were taken prisoner. Before noon that day 3,000 enemy vehicles began to move into Bardia between the 22nd Battalion at Menastir and brigade headquarters at Sidi Azeiz. At 7.10 a.m. next day forty tanks, armoured troop-carriers, some field guns, mortars and machine-gun-mounted motor-cycle detachments, attacked brigade headquarters which had only four twenty-five-pounders, three Bofors anti-aircraft guns and portee anti-tank guns. Rommel's force now had complete charge of the Bardia sector, and on the same afternoon the 23rd Battalion at Capuzzo was attacked, the enemy getting to within 300 yards of battalion headquarters before a bayonet attack drove them back. The transport part of the 28th (Maori) Battalion at Capuzzo, with only small arms, was attacked by a motorised infantry battalion that night, with tank and mortar support, the defenders having to surrender in face of this overwhelming opposition. At Menastir, the 22nd Battalion was in difficulties. A heavy assault was launched, but ceased at dark. Next morning, November 28, 100 enemy vehicles conveyed troops with mortars to a ridge 3,000 yards east of battalion headquarters and a heavy attack seemed imminent, but, fortunately, the enemy force was just a cover for an enemy column moving south-west from Bardia. The battalion was now out of touch with the rest of the brigade, ammunition and supplies were low and the task of preventing enemy movement to and from Bardia impossible. It moved south after dark to the 4th Indian Division. Nonetheless, the determined stand of the 5th Brigade battalions had been their salvation, and Rommel, getting urgent appeals for help from the German commander of positional infantry in the Tobruk sector, General Boettcher, did not continue his attacks. Actually, Boettcher had been bluffed by a weak squadron of infantry which, moving from flank to flank, created the impression of a big armoured force. The enemy armour now began to return to the Tobruk sector, the 22nd Armoured Brigade on the south flank of New Zealand divisional headquarters repulsing a heavy attack by tanks and lorried infantry on the afternoon of November 27. Next day a similar attack was repeated to the left rear of divisional headquarters, the ensuing tank battle moved south, to leave the New Zealand flank open, and motorised infantry approached and occupied the main dressing-station.

November 28 brought a great stroke of luck. That morning the 21st Battalion's intelligence officers, on a reconnaissance, captured the commander of the 21st Armoured Division, Major-General Ravenstein, whose staff car had approached the battalion's position under the impression that Point 175 was held by the Germans. His marked maps and official documents contained the German order of battle and clearly outlined their plans. These were for attacks with every available tank on Zaafran and Belhamed, the northern flank of the corridor to Tobruk, Sidi Rezegh and Ed Duba and the corridor positions held by the British 70th Division. The full armoured division was to be engaged. The situation in the Sidi Rezegh sector was grave. The 6th Brigade's battalions were considerably reduced; the 24th Battalion was at negligible fighting strength and the others were down to under normal company establishment. Lorried infantry attacked the 24th and 26th Battalion positions soon after noon that day, artillery pinned them

to the ground, but did not dislodge them. This meant that the 6th Brigade had the enemy close in on the west, south and east, but the success of the 4th Brigade took care of the north. There was constant shelling over the whole divisional area and every indication of a pending full-scale enemy attack, and the front was re-arranged as compactly as possible to meet it. General Freyberg reported a most difficult situation, supplies low, and that Sidi Rezegh could not be held if the 1st South African Brigade did not arrive. Early next morning there was a tense moment as 300 vehicles, including tanks, moved straight towards the New Zealand positions. Enemy shell fire soon showed that this was a friendly column, and then Colonel Clifton, of the 30th Corps, and formerly commanding the New Zealand engineers, was seen with his head and shoulders through the hatch of the roof of a war-marked staff car. With the Afrika Corps closing in on both sides he had led this supply convoy, with water, food and ammunition, to the relief of Sidi Rezegh. This was but one of many great efforts by the Army Service Corps during the desert campaign.

November 22 saw the panzers in position to attack the New Zealand Division and smash the corridor to Tobruk. The Tobruk force itself was attacked several times that morning but won out. Enemy pressure was maintained from the east on the New Zealand positions, and a tank attack from the north was repelled by the 4th Brigade which, from the knowledge in Von Ravenstein's papers, had anticipated it. The R.A.F. was giving solid support with fighter-escorted day bombers. The afternoon saw *acomiers* attack under way. The 21st Battalion, or what was left of it, had already beaten off two attacks when a German trick caught them. Tanks, with British colours, turrets open and crews waving "greetings" approached, and the New Zealanders thought they were South Africans. When the tanks were right in among the defenders down went the turrets and the guns opened fire. There was practically no fight, there were no reserves to counter-attack and the enemy had Point 175 with its observation advantages on the New Zealanders' rear. As night approached, the enemy was moving in from all sides. The situation for the New Zealand Division was desperate though not so bad elsewhere, British armoured formations south having fought successful actions and the 1st South African Brigade advancing to reach Sidi Rezegh that night. The Corps order was to keep the corridor to Tobruk open at all costs. Touch had been established with the South Africans. Next morning saw a glorious opportunity and an equally good result for the New Zealand Artillery under Brigadier Miles when the Italian Ariete Division was concentrated—a perfect target—on the escarpment. The gunners got stuck into it and it fled in haste and confusion, leaving blazing trucks and two crippled tanks behind. The artillery successes were not one-sided. With 105-millimetre guns the enemy had greater range and one twenty-five-pounder battery had seven guns knocked out. On the credit side, including the dispersal of the Ariete Division, two tanks and an ammunition dump of Point 175 were blown up and infantry, forming for attacks east and west, were dispersed. The afternoon of November 30 saw the New Zealanders heavily outnumbered in men and tanks, and a full-scale enemy attack pending. The 6th Brigade, for instance, was reduced to these battalion strengths: Four officers and 159 other ranks in the fighting companies, carrier, anti-aircraft and mortar platoons of the 24th Battalion; ten officers and 235 other ranks as fighting troops of the 25th Battalion; ten officers and 260 other ranks in the 26th Battalion; one officer and ninety-one other ranks in the 21st Battalion. The attack began at 4 p.m. with fifty-one tanks

advancing from a mile and a half off the 24th Battalion and artillery in position on the escarpment south-west of the 26th Battalion. Large bodies of infantry were also being deployed. There was soon general fighting on the whole of the 6th Brigade front, with the advancing tanks, having the advantage of the sun behind them and in the eyes of the gunners, able to close in successfully. The 26th Battalion lost its last anti-tank gun by 5.10 p.m., and their line was broken. At the same time the whole of the 24th Battalion was overrun. The Sidi Rezegh position was lost to overwhelming force. Tanks advanced on the 8th Field Company under cover of darkness but retired on being engaged, while the 25th Battalion withstood attacks the same night from the south and from Point 175.

The capture of Sidi Rezegh made the position of the New Zealand Division really grave. The 21st, 24th and 26th Battalions were just remnants of survivors and headquarters units. The artillery was practically intact but within machine-gun range of the Sidi Rezegh escarpment and would have to shift before next day (December 1). The 8th Field Company and 25th Battalion, 6th Brigade, were in position on the escarpment but weak in strength and open to attack from three sides by greatly superior forces. The composite armoured brigade in the vicinity, formed from the 4th and 22nd Armoured Brigades, was too fully occupied with the vital tasks of patrolling the Tobruk corridor and protecting the flank of the 1st South African Brigade in its advance to Point 175 to help. That night all secret papers, surplus transport and personnel were sent to Tobruk, and early on December 1 Brigadier Miles brought a message from Corps Headquarters at Tobruk that the corridor must be held. The South Africans had been held up at Point 175. So, the 4th Brigade and the remnants of the 6th Brigade re-grouped but were still under direct observation. The enemy attacked before dawn, the 19th Battalion beating off a tank attack at dawn. Shortly after 7 a.m., tanks and infantry attacked north from Sidi Rezegh on to the 6th Brigade's advanced dressing station, the 6th Field Regiment gun positions and divisional headquarters on the south-east slopes of Belhamed. Some disabled tanks at brigade headquarters were used as static artillery until they ran out of ammunition. Vehicles in the brigade lines and on Belhamed spur were set afire and the resultant smoke spoiled artillery observation. Divisional battle headquarters had to retreat fast to near the 4th Brigade headquarters at Zaafran, following tank fire. Brigadier Miles was wounded and taken prisoner. On Belhamed the 20th Battalion was up against it. The two-pounder anti-tank guns on that front were engaged at short range knocking out eleven of fifty attacking tanks. The remaining infantry tanks could not go forward because of heavy fire, and soon after 7.30 a.m. the unfinished message came from regimental headquarters that "We are being overwhelmed." Belhamed was gone and a wedge driven in the Tobruk corridor. The 18th Battalion, though under heavy fire, had been able to withdraw under heavy fire and reformed on the north edge of Belhamed spur, in contact with the 2-1 Australian Battalion on the right, while two companies of 19th Battalion were on Ed Duba under command of an Essex battalion, and there was a composite battery of New Zealand artillerymen with four each of twenty-five-pounders, seventy-five-millimetre and 100-millimetre in the Tobruk perimeter.

The enemy attack towards Zaafran was not pursued and a heavy tank and infantry attack was made on the 6th Brigade remnants in the Sidi Rezegh area. It seemed certain that brigade headquarters would be overpowered, when a large force of British tanks swept down the escarpment from the

east, the surprise so affecting the enemy that many of his troops surrendered. Brigadier Barrowclough urged an immediate attack, but the British commander's orders were to cover a withdrawal and not get involved in action because of the heavy tank losses the British had already suffered. The guns of Point 175 made the withdrawal a hot one and what remained of the 6th Brigade when it reached Zaafran took up a position on the eastern flank. The New Zealand forces at Zaafran that afternoon numbered 3,500 men and 700 vehicles, ready to fight but not strong enough to attack. A tank attack was made by the enemy with the setting sun behind them, but field artillery, anti-tank and infantry tank fire drove it off while British armoured units also made an opportune intervention. It was decided to attempt to break out in the direction of Bir Bu Deheua, the vehicles of the two brigades and divisional battle headquarters formed up at 5.30 p.m. and by dark, with a 6th Brigade and infantry tanks rearguard, moved off. Bir Gibni, well south, was reached early next morning. General Freyberg reported on this phase of the operations: "So ended the New Zealand part of the battle to keep the Tobruk corridor open. However, this battle in the Western Desert was not primarily a battle to hold positions, but a battle to destroy the Germans. I believe we went some distance towards achieving this in our attacks at Sidi Rezegh, Belhamed and Ed Duba. I think the German Afrika Corps will bear me out in this."

By the capture of Sidi Rezegh and Belhamed, Rommel had Tobruk again encircled, and on the night of December 1 attacked the Tobruk perimeter. Heavy fighting followed at Ed Duba on December 2, 3 and 4, with the enemy getting a foothold in the final attack on the 4th, only to be repelled by a counter attack by infantry and tanks. New Zealand troops were still in the battle; the 18th Battalion on the northern edge of Belhamed spur, two companies of the 19th under command of an Essex Battalion on Ed Duba and artillerymen forming a composite battery. The 5th Brigade had moved back to Menastir ridge to block the enemy's access to Bardia, and its 28th (Maori) Battalion, on December 3, took devastating toll of a mobile enemy column of twelve vehicles on December 3, its own loss being only one killed and five wounded. The enemy was by now displaying some uncertainty. "Jock" columns, called after Brigadier Jock Campbell, V.C. (died in car accident in March, 1942) were operating tellingly against his supply lines, often occupying whole enemy divisions with resultant lessening of strength from the main battle. These columns consisted of a battery, an infantry detachment, a few anti-tank guns and some armoured cars with lavish transport. On December 2, Rommel took advantage of bad weather to draw in his infantry and transport towards the coast and the coast road. His concentrations in the Sidi Rezegh area were heavily bombed on December 3 and the force containing Bir el Gubi were attacked in the rear by an Indian brigade and the 4th Armoured Brigade on December 4, and driven north-west. Other enemy columns were broken up almost simultaneously, at the same time heavy attacks on El Duda were repulsed or neutralised and Rommel forced to abandon everything east of a line running west of Bir el Gubi to south of El Adem. This meant that on December 5, the corridor was open again and Tobruk relieved. Patrols from the garrison regained intact all guns lost on December 2 and 700 New Zealanders left behind by the enemy in the divisional field dressing station were rescued by 30th Corps patrols. Contact was made on December 7 with the 2nd South African Division advancing along the Bardia-Tobruk road, Tobruk forces occupied Ed Adem on December 9 and the enemy was in full retreat

toward Gazala. The enemy fought costly rearguard actions before reaching a line stretching south-west from Gazala on which he fought for five days. The 30th Corps had the job of dislodging the enemy from the Gazala box. Early on December 11, the 5th New Zealand Brigade (Brigadier Wilder) advanced from Bu Amud to Acroma, the 23rd Battalion, along the main Derna road, supported by Royal Horse Artillery fire, capturing Mengar el Hosci ridge and taking 497 prisoners. Taking Sidi Mgherreb, the Maori Battalion captured 1,123 Italians for their own loss of only five killed and eleven wounded. Both were strong positions. The Maoris took theirs by advancing under heavy fire to within one hundred yards of the enemy position, debussing and making a bayonet charge over the ridge. The Polish brigade came into line alongside the New Zealanders on December 14 and two of its battalions and the Maori Battalion carried the high country around Carmuset er Regem and parts of the escarpment overlooking Gazala. Here was a union of soldiers of two armies which knew how to use the bayonet and their efforts badly strained the enemy line which was being harried on the flank by armoured columns. Like the thief in the night the Italians departed on December 15, abandoning much equipment and guns.

The attack on Bardia was opened on December 15, with two squadrons of the Divisional Cavalry Regiment (which remained under command of the 3rd South African Brigade when the 5th Brigade moved west from the frontier to the Tobruk area) patrolling west and north-west of the defences to report enemy movements. The South Africans attacked north and south along the coast while a holding attack was staged in the centre. The first attack got no further than inside the outer defences so a new assault was staged on December 30. The Divisional Cavalry made a display of armoured fighting in the wadis north, heavy artillery fire and aerial bombing was carried out during the next two days, and on New Year's night the South Africans attacked. The enemy surrendered next day, 8,000 prisoners, including a German general, were taken and 800 New Zealanders were released from captivity in Bardia. They had been there five weeks, many of them from 5th Brigade headquarters. Officer prisoners, including Brigadier Hargest, had been evacuated by submarine and ship.

Sollum and Halfaya fell ten days later to the South Africans who, at a cost of 500 casualties, took 14,000 prisoners, including 4,000 Germans. The South Africans were helped in this action by the Free French and the 1st Army Tank Brigade. Bad weather and lack of petrol reduced 8th Army operations around this time to little more than patrolling and Rommel used the lull to collect and reorganise his forces. His position at Agedabia was untenable and he retired, returned to El Agheila on January 6, to meet reinforcements which had reached Tripoli. These and other convoys arriving the same month brought enough German troops and equipment to make good his losses and provide him with a new Italian armoured division (133rd Littorio). Further, the 60th (Sabrata) Italian Division was on its way by land. The first British supply convoy arrived on January 7, too late to strengthen the pursuit. Rommel was now in a very strong position with his left flank on the sea east of Ma'aten Bescer, with good water. This position was covered by salt marshes and heavily mined roads. South-west it ran along the hills fringing the north bank of the Wadi el Faregh, turning south at Ma'aten Giofer to cover the road to the Marada oasis. The right flank country was most difficult and close behind was a good airfield, later known as Marble Arch. Rommel made his first move forward on January 21 in what turned out to be his strike for Suez and the Battle for Egypt.

The campaign which closed with the fall of Halfaya was indecisive. Both contestants were in a position to prepare to strike again. Heavy losses in men and equipment had, however, been inflicted on the enemy who, none-the less, extricated 35,000 men, 200 field guns, 120 anti-tank guns and 40 tanks. The Eighth Army casualties were 16,006, including 2,000 killed and 400 died of wounds, and 7,132 of these came from the United Kingdom, 4,594 from New Zealand, 3,536 from South Africa, and 744 from the Indian Division.

General Freyberg summed up the results of the campaign thus: "The test for troops is whether they can take it and fight back. For the first time in this war the odds were about even and we had a chance to 'fight back.' We know now that we can both 'take it' and 'fight back.' Nobody, I hope, doubted it. This is the acid test of war and it is a test the Germans have yet to pass through. An interesting phase has been reached in the war for history seems to be repeating itself. The last war was an artillery war. Then, as now, the Germans had a long start and during the earlier years they hammered us unmercifully. Later on, when we had the guns and ammunition, the Germans became the receivers and they sought cover underground like rabbits. They could not 'take it.' This time it is a tank war in which they have a big lead in the equipment race. But the time is coming when the tide will turn. When it does, the Germans will have to show that they can 'take it.' The experience of this campaign makes me feel certain they can't."

One of the extraordinary features of the campaign, which demonstrated its fluctuating fortunes, occurred on the medical side. The main dressing station of the New Zealand Division, formed six miles west of Bir el Chleta by the three field ambulances and the 4th Field Hygiene Section and Mobile Surgical Unit, was entered by mobile enemy columns on several occasions as the battle raged about the approaches to Tobruk. On the afternoon of November 26, General Rommel paid it a visit, bringing with him twenty-two badly wounded Germans and taking away less serious cases. On the morning of November 28, General Freyberg was a visitor. For nine days onward from that night the dressing station was in enemy hands. This was a trying period. For four days water was rationed to a pint daily per head for all purposes and on December 5, there were only thirty gallons left. Many patients already had swollen tongues and parched lips. A day or so more would have killed them. The battle for the approaches to Tobruk turned in British favour just in time to bring relief. On the night of December 5 the merchant ship, *Chadinka*, with 400 Imperial, Australian, South African and New Zealand wounded (ninety-seven) aboard, and prisoners, including General von Ravenstein, was torpedoed by an aircraft soon after leaving Tobruk for Alexandria. It sank in three and a half minutes. Most of the New Zealanders were stretcher cases; in the aft hold between decks. Those below deck—mostly prisoners and seriously wounded—had little chance of escape. There were, however, some remarkable escapes when exploding boilers caused an upward surge of water to thrust some men to the surface. Ships in the convoy, despite continued air attack, carried out rescue work for two hours.

SOJOURN IN SYRIA

The New Zealand Division suffered severely at Sidi Rezegh and went to Syria to reorganise and, as events proved, to fit itself to face and successfully accomplish a task as severe as any it had yet tackled. It was not all rest. The 4th and 5th Brigade (plus 1st Greek Brigade, under command) occupied positions across the plains of Al Beqa, from the slopes of the Lebanon across the valley to the far slopes of the Ante Lebanons. These were the defences of the Djedeide Fortress, a part of the defensive system of Syria and Palestine, prepared against a German break through the Caucasus or a cut through Turkey. A similar fortress on the Mediterranean slopes of the Lebanons, manned by Australians and British and French units, guarded the far slopes of the Ante Lebanons and the Damascus-Beirut Road. The line which the New Zealand Division was to hold was intended to deny to the enemy the use of all major arteries of communication from the north to southern Syria. The 6th Brigade was based on Aleppo. Its task was to delay, by the demolition of all lines of communication from Turkey, any attack long enough to cover the withdrawal of base installations from the Aleppo area. It would, in such an eventuality, have subsequently fallen back on the Djedeide Fortress. The New Zealanders did many and varied non-military jobs like raiding bandit villages for stolen arms, distributing flour to poor peasants and, through medical officers, serving the local population. In the 9th Army Ski School, 9,000 feet up in the Lebanon mountains, a number were trained in snow and mountain warfare. Before the move to the Western Desert battalion exercises had been carried out on the plains and in the mountains and brigade manoeuvres on the plains of northern and eastern Syria. This was training to use the mobility of the Division to strike the enemy in the open.

THE BATTLE FOR EGYPT

It is appropriate here to briefly review the events leading up to the New Zealanders' return to the desert. Following the enemy's retreat from Agedabia to a strong position behind the salt marshes at Agheila, there was a lull to January 21, 1942, when he made a forward move described by official communiques as a "reconnaissance in force." Finding the El Agheila-Agedabia road lightly held by a 200th Guards' Brigade column, he pushed through and seized Saunu and Antelat on January 22. The 4th Indian Division, striking south from the Benghazi area towards Antelat was cut in two and the 7th Brigade isolated in Benghazi. By a magnificent feat of arms, the 7th Brigade, forming itself into three columns, burst through and joined the armour at Mekili, taking prisoners en route. They lost much equipment, however. A further general retreat to the main line of resistance chosen was the only course, and it was arrived at on February 4. The 1st South African Brigade, with the Poles and French, held Gazala and the country to the south. Between them and Trigh el Abd was the armour. The 150th Brigade was at Bir Hacheim and the 4th Indian Division in reserve at Acroma, where its 5th and 11th Brigades had arrived after gallant rearguard actions by the Camerons and 5th Mahratta Light Infantry. By February 14, Rommel had gathered a striking force, but Kittyhawk fighters in a single action deprived him of his air support by wiping out twenty-five to thirty

dive-bombers. He moved forward on February 15 but did not press the attack. So ended General Auchinleck's offensive. There was a lull till May 21 but for a considerable operation on March 21 when several columns carried out raids near and far to distract the enemy's attention from a vital convoy passing through to Malta. A race began for superiority in quality and quantity of supplies with the advantage to Rommel who had only to get men and supplies across the Mediterranean to Benghazi or Tripoli to be able to wheel them up to the front. On the British side, every man and piece of equipment had to be sent 12,000 miles by sea round the Cape. The Germans had better tanks (Mark III.) and anti-tank guns (eighty-eight millimetre, originally designed as an anti-aircraft weapon). Supplies were also needed from the sources of production to meet the Japanese offensive then in full blast. Rommel attacked on May 21 in the knowledge of his superiority in supplies. He chose Knightsbridge, the key to the Gazala position and the pivot of the whole line from Sidi Muftah to Bir Hacheim. He failed. The Ariete Division lost forty-eight tanks in an attack on Bir Hacheim and the 3rd Indian Motor Brigade got fifty tanks of the enemy's main column while attacks in the direction of Acroma, on El Adem, Ed Duda and Sidi Rezegh, were met and driven back. Besides, the R.A.F. considerably harried his transport. There was a great armoured battle in the Knightsbridge area for four days from May 28 when Rommel tried to extricate his armour from isolation east of the British lines. The Grant tank was proving itself the best match so far for the Mark III. Much enemy transport was immobilised for lack of petrol and a French column from Bir Hacheim destroyed thirty tanks thus held up. However, the gaps Rommel made in the British minefields, one near Trigh el Abd and the other near the Trigh Capuzzo, were still open. By June 21, the gaps had become wider and the 150th Brigade, holding Sidi Muftah ridge, was attacked from several sides for thirty-six hours, finally being overwhelmed. This created a ten-mile-wide gap through the British lines. Rommel called up his entire reserves and made another bid for victory. The French garrison at Bir Hacheim held magnificently against attacks by the full 101st (Trieste) Division, parts of the 17th and 27th Divisions and fifty tanks. The 7th Motorised Brigade and other forces operating in the enemy's rear, assisted this result. On June 3, the 1st Royal Horse Artillery, near Tamar, knocked out seventeen tanks, and during the three critical days, the R.A.F. destroyed thirty dive-bombers. The Commander of the Eighth Army, General Ritchie, finding that the enemy's forces were becoming more tied up and Rommel farther than ever from being able to resume the advance on Tobruk, attacked the German bulge north and east simultaneously on June 4-5-6, but with unhappy results. Four regiments of artillery were lost and the Highland Light Infantry and 10th Baluch Regiment fought to the last man. It was a defensive victory for Rommel. Bir Hacheim was heavily attacked on June 6, 7 and 8 and from June 9 supplies had to be dropped by air. During the night of June 10-11, physical exhaustion of the garrison and lack of supplies caused its withdrawal. A vanguard of 2,000 evacuated east without interference but the rearguard was intercepted and 1,000 of them fought their way through to safety. This was the turning point, marking the failure of the Eighth Army's counter-offensive and the loss of the initiative. The enemy at once united his forces, moved north to Acroma and cut the Eighth Army in two. On the night of June 13-14 the Gazala divisions were ordered to withdraw. This was a fatal period for the British armour which lost heavily in trying to fight tank-to-tank battles on ground where the heavier and more

powerfully equipped German tanks and anti-tank guns told. Knightsbridge had to be evacuated on June 14 but the gallant 200th Guards' Brigade got everything out but two guns. Other isolated boxes were lost in succession. Tobruk fell on the morning of June 21. An order to fight their way out, if they could, and, if not, resist to the last, did not reach all units and about 25,000 men laid down their arms. This was a large part of the Eighth Army's infantry effectives and remaining tanks. It was decided to fight a rearguard action from Matruh and after it became clear that this could not be held, to stand at El Alamein where the Qattara Depression would protect the left flank and the sea the right. The skeleton of the prepared positions had been constructed in the summer. General Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, took over the conduct of the battle from General Ritchie, on June 25.

The call back to the Western Desert, received in Syria on June 14, 1942, was not altogether a surprise to the New Zealand Division. The men knew that the Eighth Army was being sorely tried. So began, on June 16, the great procession of convoys through Syria, Palestine, the desert of Sinai, over the Suez Canal and into Egypt, all with elaborate secrecy that gave the awaiting enemy no hint that a formidable adversary was soon again to cross his path, and to some purpose. On June 16, Headquarters, New Zealand Division, left Baalbek and the 5th Brigade, Laboue. On June 17, the 4th Brigade left El Aine and the 28th Maori Battalion left Arsaf for Egypt. Next day the 6th Brigade left Aleppo, and on June 19, the Advance Party, New Zealand Division, and 28th Maori Battalion arrived at Mersa Matruh. The 6th Brigade arrived at Amiriya on June 24. Tobruk fell on June 21, one of the most severe blows the Empire had sustained since Singapore. The division was then moving west along the main desert road, nearing the end of an outstanding dash of 900 miles in five days. The Eighth Army was forced to fall back on delaying the enemy at the frontier by harassing tactics while the main body withdrew to Mersa Matruh. Here the New Zealanders were on familiar ground, actively engaged in preparations on the old Matruh line first prepared in 1940. The defences were the Matruh Box and a minefield stretching south-west. On the morning of June 24 the enemy crossed into Egypt before there was time to reorganise the Matruh Line and a delaying action to cover the Eighth Army's retreat to a line between Alamein and the Qattara Depression. That day the 4th and 5th Brigades were transferred from the Matruh Box to a mobile role. The job of the Division, with other formations of the 13th Corps, was to hold up the enemy advance south of Matruh without allowing itself to be trapped. Screening forces were to make flank attacks west. All this was to enable the bulk of the Army to form on the Alamein line. Soon followed the attack on Minqar Quaim. Rommel, by June 26, had concentrated his main forces in the centre of the Matruh positions; his German divisions were eighteen miles south-east of Matruh village, his Italian armour east and west of the Matruh-Siwa track, and his Italian infantry on the coast road west of Matruh. On June 27, while the Italians closed in from the west, the Germans continued to bypass Matruh and collected in the Minqar Quaim area, where they were well placed to strike north and take some of the British forces in the rear. This they tried on June 28.

The New Zealand Division had moved out of Matruh on June 25 and next day took up a defensive position on the main southern escarpment at Minqar Quaim. Advanced enemy elements penetrated the minefields on the Siwa Road and moved on Minqar Quaim. A heavy artillery duel ensued on

June 27, with simultaneous attacks from south and north—five in all. Here the enemy received its first surprise when it found itself up against a fresh division, with seventy-two guns. That afternoon a shell splinter got General Freyberg in the neck and he handed over the command to Brigadier L. M. Inglis (4th Brigade). Strong attacks were made that night from the south, south-east and south-west by tanks of the 21st Panzer Division, with support from the 90th Light Division, who had had earlier and bitter experience of the New Zealanders' fighting qualities. These attacks failed, helped by splendid work from the anti-tank gunners using six-pounders for the first time—many received only the day before—and the appearance of tanks of the British 1st Armoured Division from the west. The position, however, was desperate. The withdrawal route to the east was blocked, with the enemy enveloping the positions from the north and south, with tanks in the latter. The only hope was a successful full-scale night attack; allotted to the 4th Brigade. The objective was the clearance of a wide lane to let the rest of the division move east. A narrow front was selected for a clean sweep by bayonet. No artillery support was available as the field regiments were down to thirty rounds a gun. The 5th Brigade was isolated from its transport by enemy fighting vehicles and had to move on foot to the Divisional Group area, there to be carried by its own fighting vehicles, and a few from the 4th Brigade, and artillery and Reserve Group vehicles. The Group and the 5th Brigade were ready to move by 11.30 p.m., but the 4th Brigade's attack was delayed until 1.15 a.m. on June 28, the Maori Battalion (assigned to protect the flanks on the right rear) having missed its way to the assembly position. The 20th (South Island) Battalion was to protect the flanks on the left rear, and the 19th (Wellington) Battalion, with a company of the Essex Regiment, had the all-important job of clearing a narrow neck of high ground to let the transport through. For 1,000 yards the assaulting battalions moved forward in close formation and to within sight of the enemy transport. The whole Brigade broke into a simultaneous, spontaneous run, the air filled with the tumult of war cries and shouting, with the moonlight showing up deadly bayonets. Next the enemy fired with all at his command and in the process revealed his machine-gun posts by tracer bullets. Firing rapidly from hip level, the New Zealanders went into these posts with bayonets. In a wadi the 20th Battalion engaged in some of the fiercest fighting and were helped by the 19th Battalion which had cleared the high ground. The enemy was disorganised and unwilling to fight it out with the bayonet. Many died in clusters around gun positions or in their trenches. Lorries full were destroyed trying to escape. Following the infantry advance hundreds of trucks swept through in close night formation, cleared the gap, and were followed by the brigade infantry and Maoris who reorganised and embussed without much trouble. A mile and a half on, enemy fire was directed on the convoy but was silenced by a fusillade from every vehicle. The remainder of the force had begun their withdrawal while the 4th Brigade attack was still in progress, and ran right into a German tank bay. The element of surprise caused the enemy fire to be wild but the column charged through and over opposing troops for a mile and a half of the initial eastward swing and, the tanks cleared, enemy fire almost ceased. Next morning the columns which had been surrounded the night before were free and ready to fight again. However strenuous the break-through, it had more a tonic effect than a wearying one. So severe were the casualties inflicted by the New Zealanders in the break-out that the lorry-borne infan-

try of a German division had to be replaced by Italians. Caught in trenches and trucks the Germans were killed by the hundreds.

In the words of the interim official survey: "... the delaying action at Minqar Quaim was an important factor in slowing down the momentum of the enemy's advance at this dangerous stage in the Battle for Egypt. The enemy spearhead, comprising the 21st Panzer Division and the 90th Light Division had suffered heavy casualties in abortive attacks, and in the night attack losses among his infantry were particularly heavy. The enemy was temporarily disorganised, thus giving the Eighth Army much-needed extra time to organise at Alamein. It was not until July 1 that the enemy was in a position to launch a full-scale attack." The publication *The Eighth Army*, prepared for the War Office by the Ministry of Information, described the New Zealanders' effort as a magnificent feat of arms. It is only proper to mention here that great help was given by the Bays who reached the front after re-equipping in time to render essential service, while three Indian Brigades—the Essex and 10th Baluch Regiments and 6th Rajputana Rifles—fought their way back with wonderful gallantry through four enemy divisions.

Kommel pressed on furiously all through June 29 and 30 with the object of attacking before the Eighth Army could settle down after its long and difficult retreat, and reinforcements could arrive. He arrived in front of the El Alamein positions early on the afternoon of June 30. By this time, when the New Zealand Division was assembled on the Alamein line, the defences consisted of a loosely connected system of defended localities with three strongpoints—Alamein in the north, Bab el Qattara, centre, and Nagb Abu Dweis south and bordering the impassable Qattara Depression. The 6th Brigade occupied the Kaponga Box (fortress) at Bab el Qattara on June 27, while the 4th and 5th Brigades were fighting at Minqar Quaim. Columns of these brigades began to arrive there on June 29, the Division reforming east of the fortress. The 6th Brigade held the fortress while mobile columns from the rest of the Division repulsed enemy attempts to infiltrate the sector. The fortress defenders and mobile columns were harassed by dive-bombers with fighter cover. The Alamein fortress was held by the 1st South African Division. This was attacked on July 1 and 2. Units of the Ariete (Italian) Armoured Division attacked in the south on July 3, but were met by a mobile column of artillery of the 4th Field Regiment, a battery of the 5th Field Regiment and the 20th Battalion. The guns got many enemy vehicles and in rifle, machine-gun and bayonet attacks, the infantry scored heavily. The enemy withdrew in rout, leaving forty-four field guns, two tanks, 300 prisoners, trucks and medical supplies. Pressure was thus relieved on the southern sector and the enemy deprived of an important part of the artillery needed for any offensive thrust. From July 4 the enemy was clearly on the defensive. He had spent three days trying to break through from the dent he had made in the line south-east of Alamein and on July 4 he lost twenty tanks and 600 exhausted troops surrendered readily. His main forces were withdrawn, although a strong position was held on the western end of Ruweisat Ridge. At this stage the initiative passed to the Eighth Army. The 5th Infantry Brigade (Brigadier Kippenberger) inflicted heavy casualties on the Italian Pavia Division in an attack on El Mreir Depression on the night of July 4-5 but the full 30th Corps plan, of which this attack formed part, did not eventuate. On July 5 the 4th Brigade moved south and west of the Qattara Box and eventually took up a position facing north in a large shallow depression west of the 5th Brigade's position on the southern end of

El Mreir Depression. The Qattara Box, from which the 6th Brigade had moved on July 3, was re-occupied. The Division was now in position for the northward thrust which was part of General Auchinleck's plan for the 13th Corps (New Zealand Division, 5th Indian Division and 7th Motor Brigade) to counter-attack the enemy's main forces in the north. However, the Corps attack did not eventuate. A New Zealand column's dash round the enemy's position to Fuka airfield resulted in the destruction of forty planes on the ground for only seven casualties. Then the enemy moved and began to out-flank the salient from the south. A withdrawal was made from here on the night of July 7, on orders from Corps headquarters. The line in the south was stabilised by the New Zealanders consolidating their positions on a sector facing south and west from Deir el Munassib in the south to Alam Nayil in the north. The British 7th Motor Brigade patrolled the flank to check the Germans in the Himeiwat area, and the 5th Indian Division moved up to relieve the 1st Armoured Division on the eastern end of Ruweisat Ridge. On July 10, the 9th Australian Division, supported by 1st South African Division infantry and tanks, captured the Tel el Eisa mounds close to Alamein and held their gains despite heavy counter-attacks.

Now the Eighth Army had the shortest communication lines in its history while the enemy had to supply an army with land lines of communication 600 miles long and his ship and barge bases of Tobruk and Mersa Matruh subjected to ever-increasing air raids. The five hundredth enemy plane was shot down in the desert since the winter campaign opened on November 18, 1941.

Ruweisat Ridge, most important of a series of low ridges rising to a plateau south of Alam Nayil—the surface of which was broken by steep-sided depressions with outer rock clusters used by both sides as tank harbours—and valuable for artillery fire by direct observation, was the Division's next objective. With the 5th Indian Division, it attacked on the night of July 14 to clear the way for the armour to cross the ridge, or move round its western end to exploit any infantry success and withal, deny its use to the enemy for observation. In absolute darkness, the 23rd (South Island) Battalion made first contact and from midnight there was almost continuous fighting. The infantry had successfully occupied the ridge by morning though the greater part of the 22nd Battalion's rifle companies had been overrun at dawn by tanks of the 8th German Tank Regiment which they had missed altogether in the dark. The Indians, on the New Zealanders' right, were up against hard-held objective until a 21st Battalion Company cleared out the enemy while on their way to rejoin the battalion after overshooting their own objective. They handed over 500 prisoners to the Indians. The ridge could not be held, largely owing to the impossibility of digging in on rocky ground and the inability of supporting heavier weapons to give full support because of enemy activity south and west. The ridge was held under heavy shell and mortar fire on July 15, the 5th Brigade beat off counter-attacks from the north but the main counter-attack on the 4th Brigade from the west succeeded, their position being overrun. The infantry climbed on to tanks to toss grenades inside, but lacking tank support themselves, their gallantry was no match for armour. The 19th, and 20th Battalions lost heavily. During the night of July 15-16 a withdrawal was ordered and the troops re-grouped two miles south of the ridge. The day of July 16 saw the 1st Armoured Division destroy twenty-five enemy tanks in the north while the Australians made fresh attacks from their salient. Knowing the enemy weakness in tanks and his shortage of reliable infantry, a whole front general

attack was made on the night of July 21-22, the New Zealanders and Indians carrying out the main thrust in the central sector to cut the opposing forces in half. The New Zealanders had to capture the eastern tongue of the El Mreir Depression. At 8.45 p.m. on July 21, the Divisional Artillery began heavy supporting fire for the advance of the 6th Brigade, with the R.A.F. bombing El Mreir on the left of the objective. Gun positions were cleared with the bayonet by the 24th (Auckland) and 26th (South Island) Battalions and tanks and vehicles were attacked with stick bombs and grenades. Concentrated enemy artillery fire accounted for many of the anti-tank guns which came forward in support. Heavy fire held down the forward battalions which had reached their objectives. At dawn enemy tanks came from the El Mreir Depression, the supporting armour for the New Zealanders did not get up and again there was the experience of the first battle for Ruweisat Ridge, and tremendous gallantry. Remnants of the 24th and 25th (Wellington) Battalions escaped in confusion and the 26th Battalion avoided being overrun by withdrawing south-east on to the 5th Brigade. When the enemy armour did not press on, but in fact withdrew slightly, the 26th Battalion occupied positions on the south-eastern lip of the El Mreir Depression, affording important observation points on Ruweisat Ridge. Current dispatches from world correspondents at the front gave the highest praise to the New Zealanders for their part in General Auchinleck's swift thrust in the central sector. Alan Moorehead of the *Daily Express* said: "The New Zealanders, by common consent, are among the finest fighting men in the Middle East. Their anti-tank gunners didn't budge. When one gunlayer died, the man who shoved the shell into place took his job. After two years of knowing some of those New Zealand gunners I find it an intense grief to say they are dead." A. G. Clifford, of the *Daily Mail*, wrote: "The New Zealanders fought with stupendous gallantry." J. H. Lessing, war correspondent of the South African Press Association, said: "It was a shock to Rommel to find himself up against a force, the bravery and skill of whose soldiers are unsurpassed in the world. They came unheralded, immediately set to the task and lashed out in full fury at the enemy. Once again they suffered casualties but that has ever urged on the New Zealanders to throw in an even greater effort. They never want publicity. All they are concerned about is to do the job allotted to them, no matter how difficult it may be, or what sacrifices may be entailed. That is why the New Zealanders have won the admiration of the world and, not least, of their enemies." Australian, South African and British troops launched another major attack on the night of July 26, with the New Zealand Division carrying out movements to harass the enemy round El Mreir. The supporting armour could not get through and the infantry withdrew. Both sides were now temporarily beyond the capability of launching a major attack, or at least a decisive one.

The sacrifice made by the New Zealanders during this bitter July is indicated by the Division's casualties—4,000 out of a total of 750 officers and 12,500 other ranks of the 8th Army.

Captain C. H. Upham, of Christchurch, was awarded a Bar to his V.C. won in Crete as the result of outstanding gallantry and leadership at El Ruweisat Ridge on the night of July 14-15, 1943. This was only the third occasion on which such an honour had been gained. The first Bar to a V.C. was awarded during the South African War and the second during World War I, to British medical officers, so Upham was the first combatant to receive it. He commanded a company of New Zealanders during operations which culminated in the attack on El Ruweisat Ridge. Despite being twice

wounded, once when crossing open ground under fire, and the second time when he completely destroyed a truckload of Germans with grenades. Upham insisted on taking part in the final assault. When communications with forward troops broke down Upham went out armed with a Spandau gun and after several sharp encounters with machine-gun posts he succeeded in bringing back the required information. Just before dawn the reserve battalion of which his company formed part was ordered forward and encountered heavy machine-gun and tank fire when it had almost reached its objective. Upham unhesitatingly led his men in a determined attack on the two nearest strongpoints on the left flank and in spite of fierce enemy resistance and heavy casualties on both sides the objective was captured. In the engagement Upham personally destroyed a German tank and several machine-guns and though wounded in the elbow by a machine-gun bullet which broke an arm, he went on to a forward position and brought back some of his men who had been isolated. He continued to dominate the situation until his men had beaten off a violent enemy counter-attack and consolidated the vital position they had won under his inspiring leadership. Exhausted by pain from his wound and weak from loss of blood, Upham was removed to the R.A.P. but immediately his wound was dressed he returned to his men, staying with them all day under heavy fire until he was severely wounded and being now unable to move, he fell into the hands of the enemy when they overran his position, then held only by the six survivors of his company and himself. Upham was freed when Germany was overrun and returned to New Zealand on September 2, 1945.

It was at Ruweisat that Sergeant Keith Elliott, then twenty-six, of Mangamaire, near Pahiatua, won the Victoria Cross, the recommendation being made by the Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, General Sir Henry Alexander. At dawn on July 15, Elliott's battalion (22nd Wellington) was attacked by tanks on three flanks. Under heavy fire Elliott led his platoon to the cover of a ridge, being wounded in the chest while doing so. He re-formed his men and led them to a dominating ridge 500 yards off where they came under heavy fire again. He located enemy machine-gun posts on his front and right flank and while one section attacked the latter, he led seven men in a bayonet charge across 500 yards of open ground, under heavy fire, capturing four machine-gun posts and an anti-tank gun, killing a number of the enemy and taking fifty prisoners. A machine-gun post on his left flank opened fire. He charged this single-handed, captured it, killed several of the enemy and took fifteen prisoners. In these two assaults he sustained three wounds in the back and legs. Badly wounded, Elliott refused to leave his men till he had re-formed them, handed over his prisoners, now 130, and arranged for his men to rejoin the battalion. His action resulted in nineteen men, only survivors of B company of the 22nd Battalion, capturing and destroying five machine-guns, one anti-tank gun, killing a great number of the enemy and capturing 130. Elliott sustained only one other casualty besides himself among his men and brought this man back to the nearest dressing station. Previously he had been slightly wounded in June, 1941; a prisoner of war in Bardia from December, 1941, until January, 1942; wounded again on July 15 (in the heroic episode described) and discharged from hospital eleven days later. Elliott, a farmer, was one of a family of eight, and educated at Lytton Street School and the Agricultural High School (Feilding). His V.C. was the first decoration his battalion, which Lieut.-Col. L. W. Andrew, a Great War V.C., commanded for a time, had won. In March, 1946, it was announced that Elliott was to enter the Anglican ministry.

A period of stalemate set in on the Alamein line. The troops were able to watch many aerial dogfights over their positions and observe the growing strength of the Allied air force. Millions of flies and mosquitoes, which made no distinction between friend and foe, tried men almost more than is even imaginable by those who did not endure these plagues. The anti-aircraft gunners were very active and did well. Wiring and mine-laying in depth was carried out by both sides, patrols went out at night, and artillery duels began at dawn to cease when sunshine and dust made targets indistinct, and resume with late afternoon and night. Food was dull at first till improved organisation brought fresh vegetables and fruit. Water was at the rate of one bottle a day and then one gallon to each man for drinking, washing and cooking; a little more occasionally to make a decent bath possible. Lieutenant-General Freyberg had made a remarkably quick recovery from his wound and returned to resume his command on August 10, taking over temporary command of the 13th Corps on August 11 following the death of Lieutenant-General W. H. E. (Strafer) Gott whose transport plane was shot down en route to Cairo by enemy fighters. General Sir Harold Alexander became Commander-in-Chief, Middle East Forces, and the new 8th Army Commander, Lieutenant-General Bernard L. Montgomery visited the sector for the first time. In its comment on General Alexander's appointment the publication, *The Eighth Army*, previously referred to, stated: "One of the most difficult tasks in the world is to act upon the conviction that one leader should give way to another but that conviction had been reached. There was no lack of appreciation or indeed of admiration for the way in which General Auchinleck had averted imminent disaster. But it seemed possible that in the more or less haphazard distribution of commands which is always forced upon the enormously expanded edition of Britain's small army in time of war, the best man had not been found for this place."

The Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, was a visitor on August 20. He talked to New Zealanders representative of all units of the line, many wearing decorations won on Ruweisat Ridge. Speaking to these men Mr. Churchill paid the Division this tribute: "You have played a magnificent, a notable, even a decisive part in stemming a great retreat which would have been most detrimental to the cause of the United Nations."

It was known that the enemy was preparing to resume the offensive quickly to prevent the Eighth Army becoming too effectively organised and reinforced. General Montgomery made it his first job to ward off this expected blow. He sent out this memorable Order of the Day to the whole of the Eighth Army: "The enemy is now attempting to break through our positions in order to reach Cairo, Suez and Alexandria and to drive us from Egypt. The Eighth Army bars the way. It carries a great responsibility and the whole future of the war will depend on how we carry out our task. We will fight the enemy where we now stand. *There will be no withdrawal and no surrender. Every officer and man must continue to do his duty as long as he has breath in his body.* If each one of us does his duty we cannot fail. The opportunity will then occur to take the offensive ourselves and to destroy once and for all the enemy forces now in Egypt. Into the battle then, and with stout hearts and with the determination to do our duty. And may God give us the victory."

Field-Marshal Rommel also had ideas. On August 30 he issued the following Special Order of the Day: "Today the Army, strengthened by new divisions, is moving into the attack for the final annihilation of the enemy."

Rommel's tactics were a repetition of those which succeeded at Gazala. His striking force consisted of practically the whole of his armour (about 580 tanks), the best of his infantry, between 3,000 and 4,000 lorries, and great numbers of guns. The objective was to pierce the Eighth Army's position in the south, strike north behind its lines, destroy or drive off its armour, and then crush the isolated infantry. If he did not reach the coast at the first rush, he would lure the Army into a counter-attack and smash it with his heavy artillery. Shortly before midnight on June 30 the West Yorkshires of the 5th Indian Division, with an Essex battalion, repelled an infantry and artillery attack on Ruweisat Ridge and the South Africans did likewise in the Deir el Shein area. These were only diversionary attacks. Already strong forces were lifting the minefields round Himeiwat. By noon on August 31, the enemy got through the outer minefields. The 4th Light Brigade accounted for twenty-four tanks, the 22nd and 23rd Armoured Brigades for forty-one, and elements of the 7th Armoured Division for thirty more. Air co-operation cost the enemy fifteen planes to three R.A.F. losses. Rommel was now in difficulties. The terrain was unsuitable for wide manoeuvre and he could not disperse his forces. The R.A.F. bombed continuously and twenty-five pounders did damaging work on forces massed solidly between Himeiwat and Bare Ridge. Many of the tanks got bogged in soft patches of sand, requiring extra demands on petrol to extricate them and lorries similarly became caught. Expected petrol supplies had been sunk on the way and September 1 saw heavy bombing and shelling of enemy tanks, lorries and petrol-carriers; approximately 3,000 in all. The enemy fell back during the night of September 2-3 to Deir el Ragil behind a protective screen of guns. During all this the New Zealand Division had been holding the southern sector of the main defences on the high ground north of Deir el Munassib. The twenty-five-pounders with British medium artillery attached to the Division sent thousands of shells into the enemy columns. Two highly successful raids on a large scale were carried out on the first two nights of Rommel's offensive to simulate an attack, but the real opportunity came on the night of September 3. The enemy was still clinging on to some of the ground taken when he came round Himeiwat. The Division was in a box facing west (6th Brigade), south (132nd British Brigade under command) and east (5th Brigade), with the enemy in all three directions. South, the Trieste Division was relieving the German 90th Light Division which had suffered a terrific bombardment and most were in position along the northern edge of Deir el Munassib when the attack was made by the 5th Brigade and a brigade of the 44th Division to clear the Deir el Muhafid Depression. It was a night attack unsupported in the early stages by artillery. An ammunition lorry caught fire going over some rising ground and the attacking troops were silhouetted against the blaze, resulting in casualties. By midnight there was fierce hand-to-hand fighting and a three-hour desperate battle raged. The left-hand battalions of the 5th Brigade reached their objective at the western end of Deir el Muhafid Depression and inflicted heavy casualties on the Trieste Division and Panzer Grenadiers, 90th Light Division, taking 100 prisoners. The 26th Battalion, on the right, drove the Italians out of advanced positions, but the centre advance was held up by intense mortar and machine-gun fire. The Maori Battalion was thus left in an exposed salient and withdrawn under smoke cover that morning (September 4). The forces in the centre were re-grouped and a new line established. Four enemy counter-attacks that day failed. A large body of infantry, with fifteen Italian tanks, failed in one afternoon attack against 5th Brigade positions, and another

attack later by tanks, armoured cars and infantry was soon dispersed by artillery fire. Attempts to rush the 6th Brigade positions further west failed. Meantime, the 10th and 7th Armoured Divisions were slowly driving the enemy back towards the outer minefields. He went in good order but suffered heavily and on September 5, in contrast to the boasting Special Order of the Day of August 30, Rommel announced in his official communique that he had intended only a "reconnaissance in force." So much for Rommel's last bid for Alexandria. He had lost fifty-three tanks, apart from the many damaged and got away for repair. Lack of petrol was ascribed as the main reason for the failure but General Freyberg gave a second main reason. This was that Blitz tactics had caused the enemy infantry and artillery to lose the power of independent offensive action; they had become "tank followers" and had "lost their old skill in handling their personal weapons." The Eighth Army had lost about 100 tanks, including thirty Grants, but the repair service was so good and reinforcements so considerable that a fortnight later 860 tanks were in running order, including 180 Grants and 108 Shermans, the latter a new tank directed to the Middle East by President Roosevelt after the fall of Tobruk. There were also more than 500 twenty-five-pounders and 400 six-pounders among the artillery. By September 7, the enemy appeared to have completed his withdrawal and his forward positions followed the line of Deir el Angar-Deir el Munassib-Himeiwat. Then the Eighth Army began to pile up strength for its offensive.

This did not begin with a major flare-up. In the middle of September, sea-borne landing parties, assisted by raiding parties, attacked Tobruk, Mersa Matruh, Barce airfield (where much damage was done) and Jalo. Thanks to Allied air superiority, in the first three weeks of October, three-quarters of the Axis sea transports were lost, and between October 10 and 23, twenty-seven ships were sunk or badly damaged. Battalions of the Queen's Royal Regiment fought a sharp action against Deir el Munassib on September 30, on October 5, a Royal Sussex company wiped out an enemy post on Ruweisat Ridge, and on the night of October 6, the Greek Brigade fought a successful patrol action. On October 20, the Allied air forces began what was to be a decisive battle. These attacks reached their zenith of destructiveness on October 23 with advanced air bases, lines of communication, gun positions and transport concentrations getting the full blast. The Navy shelled dumps and communications at Mersa Matruh—the stage was set for the breaking of the Afrika Korps. The enemy's strength was estimated at 108,000 men and 600 tanks; that of the Eighth Army at 174,000 men with armoured artillery and air superiority. It was to be an infantry break-through, for although a few armoured units were to be well up with the infantry for local exploitations, the bulk of the tanks would be behind, ready to go through when the infantry and guns had cleared a way. By October 23 two good passages had been cleared through the minefields in the Bir Qusur el Atosh and Bir el Magtuq area. Here the main attack was to be delivered. Collected in the north were the 30th Corps (9th Australian Division, 51st Highland Division, 1st South African Division, 4th Indian Division, and supporting artillery, making 14 brigades, one armoured brigade, and 800 guns). South of this was the 13th Corps (including an armoured division, 50th Northumbrian Division, including a Greek brigade, 44th Home Counties Division, making seven infantry brigades and two armoured brigades plus a French flying column). The 10th Corps (two armoured divisions), intended to be, and in fact, the big surprise of the battle, was coming up behind the 30th Corps. The 5th and 6th New Zealand Brigades and the 9th Armoured

Brigade were in the offing as a separate formation. [The New Zealand Division was to come under the command of the 30th Corps for the first attack and then revert to the 10th Corps which comprised two British armoured divisions and the New Zealand Division; the 4th Brigade had gone back to Maadi to reorganise as an armoured brigade.] Behind the enemy front, held by mixed German and Italian infantry, were the 15th Panzer Division in the northern sector and the 21st Panzer Division in the southern, while the 90th Light Division was engaged in coast protection at Ghazal. Italian divisions were wedged in between these German forces.

The task of the 30th Corps was to make the necessary gaps in the northern defences. From September 10, the New Zealand Division was withdrawn from the central sector of the Alamein position and after four days' leave began to train intensively for the break-through. For its double role, first of taking part in the initial offensive to make a gap in the defences and next to exploit the break-through, it was organised with the 5th and 6th Brigades and the British 9th Armoured Brigade, under command. A full-scale rehearsal with tank and artillery support was carried out on September 26. General Montgomery visited the Division during this intensive training and on September 30 spent twelve hours with the New Zealanders. He spoke to almost the full fighting force in the field, telling them that the Eighth Army was made up of men from all parts of the Empire, all of them hard fighting men and none better than the New Zealanders.

Zero hour was 9.40 p.m. (21.40 hours) on October 20 when the great barrage of 800 guns opened up. For fifteen minutes the fire was concentrated on the enemy artillery, with twenty guns fired for every one of the enemy's. In the northern sector there was one gun to every twenty-three yards. Twenty minutes later the infantry advanced. The main blow was delivered in the north where patrols had already cleared two gaps in the minefields. Three infantry divisions—51st Highland, 1st South African, and 2nd New Zealand—poured through the southern gap with two armoured brigades in close support and the 10th Armoured Division following on behind. With the artillery barrage thundering ahead, the infantry moved forward to their objectives on Miteirya Ridge on a two-brigade front to be met with mortar and machine-gun fire. The New Zealand sappers blew a path through the enemy wire. Engineers close on the trail of the infantry defined the tracks through the minefields by hanging battery-fed electric lights on standards, and then lanterns. The 5th Brigade was on the right and the 6th on the left. The 23rd Battalion attacked the first objective right and the 24th Battalion, that on the left, with the 28th Maori Battalion following to mop up strong-points passed by forward battalions. The 21st and 22nd Battalions on the right and the 25th and 26th on the left leap-frogged through the 23rd, 24th, and 28th Battalions to press forward fanwise to attack the final ridge. Strong-points were taken with the bayonet. By 7 a.m. on October 24, Miteirya Ridge was taken. Great progress had been made on the Corps' six-mile front but the 10th Armoured Division on the New Zealand sector encountered much bombing and suffered through long-range artillery fire. It had not got far enough forward before daylight to make a sally. The situation was similar on the whole front; infantry penetration up to 7,000 yards but still not far enough to pierce the enemy's deep defences. That day the enemy counter-attacked all along the front. Artillery and supporting tank fire broke up attacks by armour and infantry on the right of the New Zealand sector. Soon after dawn on October 25, the 8th Armoured Brigade got through and established touch with the 1st Armoured Division. The 7th Motorised

Brigade followed and linked its armour with the 51st Division. Later the lorried infantry attached to the 10th Armoured Division took over the Miteirya position, thus freeing the 8th and 9th Armoured Brigades and the 5th New Zealand Brigade for possible exploitation.

Up to 6 p.m. on October 25, the Eighth Army had taken more than 1,400 prisoners, half of them German. On the night of October 25-26, the 26th Australian Brigade attacked from the salient and by dawn secured a line running west-north-west from Tel el Eisa for three miles. Simultaneously, the 51st Division widened the salient to the south by taking two points from German parachutists. Farther south the 69th Infantry Brigade carried part of the Deir el Munassib Depression and the next night the strongly-defended Kidney Ridge was carried by the 7th Motorised Brigade. On October 27, the 20th and 26th Australian Brigades attacked again, reaching Bir Menei Abu Afash. It was now clear that victory could not be secured without a further more general and carefully prepared attack. So far prisoners totalled more than 3,000, a large proportion of enemy tanks and anti-tank guns had been knocked out and some useful advances made. Against this, the enemy had been able to seal off penetrations with a screen of artillery, making it a foolhardy enterprise to attempt to dash the armour. The 10th Corps, including the New Zealanders, had been re-grouped behind the line. October 27 onwards saw the British Command organising a fresh, powerful—and successful—blow in which the New Zealanders were to play a great part. The absolute necessity was to force a breach in the German defences at all costs. For the purpose, a composite force was formed under General Freyberg, and consisting of the 5th and 6th New Zealand Brigades, the 151st Infantry Brigade (the 6th, 8th, and 9th Durham Light Infantry), an infantry brigade from the 51st Division, the New Zealand Divisional Cavalry, an armoured brigade with the 31st New Zealand Anti-Tank Battery, the 23rd Armoured Brigade supported by the 121st Field Regiment with self-propelled guns, the 168th L.A.A. Battery, and the 29th Field Park Squadron, three Regiments of New Zealand Field Artillery with a New Zealand Anti-Tank and L.A.A. Regiment, four companies of New Zealand Engineers and one of Sappers of the 51st Division. Attached to the British Infantry Brigades were two British anti-tank batteries and three machine-gun companies. This was a mighty force and it was to have the support of the greatest artillery concentration yet organised in Africa, the planning of which was done by New Zealanders. Pending the attack the Australians kept the enemy occupied on the right flank of the offensive. On the night of October 30, after repulsing two daylight attacks, they carried their line north of the coastal railway, supported by United Kingdom tanks and their own and New Zealand Division Artillery. Their 24th Brigade also advanced and the tip of their salient nearly reached the sea. The terrific barrage already referred to opened up at 1 a.m. on November 2. One hundred and fifty thousand rounds were fired on a 4,000-yards front in four and a half hours. By 5.30 a.m., the brigade on the left had advanced three miles and were reorganising on their final objective. The 151st Brigade was through by 6 a.m. New Zealand sappers worked with British infantry lifting mines and marking lanes through which tanks and guns could advance in close support. By 6 a.m. both New Zealand Brigades were on their final objective and consolidating. In a bayonet assault the Maori Battalion cleared an enemy pocket on the right flank and linked up with the Australians. New Zealand tanks fought back enemy tanks and strong anti-tank and artillery fire to clear the way for the great armoured force to follow. The 9th Armoured Brigade passed through an hour before

dawn to fight a fierce, gallant battle which, though it cost its three regiments crippling losses, broke the enemy gun line. The 3rd Hussars had twelve tanks left, the Warwickshire Yeomanry seven, and the Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry none, but the enemy had lost 71 more tanks and his gun line was destroyed. In moving his two armoured divisions to counter-attack the enemy lost twenty-five more tanks to the 2nd Armoured Brigade alone. A special effort by the Luftwaffe saw seven Stukas go down to American and R.A.F. fighters without loss, while the rest dropped their bombs on their own troops. That day, November 3, the enemy resistance was clearly broken and the coast road from Ghazal to Fuka was crammed with his retreating vehicles. On November 4-5 the Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry made a most spectacular raid, destroying 200 vehicles and destroying or capturing at least thirty guns of thirty-millimetre bore or greater, for a loss of seven armoured cars, three lorries, three men killed and twelve wounded. Early on the morning of November 4, the 10th Corps, including the New Zealanders, began the chase, the 13th Corps in the south advancing at the same time. The remnants of the Afrika Korps and parts of the 101st and 102nd Italian Motorised Divisions were in full retreat and five Italian infantry divisions were left behind to surrender in droves. The 10th Corps alone by this time had knocked out 253 tanks and 222 guns. The 8th Armoured Brigade caught the retreating enemy on the coast road, outflanking them in a hollow south of the road and railway. With point-blank fire, they destroyed fifty-four German tanks, a great number of lorries and took 1,000 prisoners, all without loss. General Ritta von Thoma, commander of the Afrika Korps, was captured by a British officer, Captain Grant Singer, 10th Hussars. Von Thoma was in a Mark III tank making a personal reconnaissance towards El Aqqar. General Freyberg's force was reorganised for mobile operations (plus the 4th Light Armoured Brigade), moving forward on November 4. On the way to the first objective—the escarpment south of Fuka—it destroyed eight German tanks and took prisoner the G.O.C., Trento Division. The enemy tried to make a stand on the Fuka escarpment but the 7th and 1st Armoured Divisions broke their rearguard on November 6. Then torrential rain fell and the New Zealand Division was, like others, bogged. The enemy, using the main road, was not held up and gained a precious day. The New Zealanders resumed on November 8. The 6th Brigade moved in to garrison Mersa Matruh and the rest pushed on to occupy Sidi Barrani on November 9. When the 4th Light Armoured Brigade, screening the advance, reported that Halfaya Pass was held, 110 men of the 21st Battalion, without mortar or artillery support, made a surprise night attack. They took 612 German and Italian prisoners for the loss of two men. Next day the 4th Light Armoured Brigade completely cleared the Pass and all organised resistance by the enemy in Egypt was ended. It was a good omen that November 11, the anniversary of the Armistice in the Great War, should have been regarded as the date of the final expulsion of the enemy from Egypt. Capuzzo, Sollum, Bardia and Sidi Azeiz were not defended and British forces continued the chase. The New Zealand Division remained south of Bardia to rest and refit; the same place where almost a year before they had assembled in the campaign to relieve Tobruk. "What changes had taken place in those twelve months," states *The Battle for Egypt* (published by the Army Board, prepared by the Official Archivist, 2nd N.Z.E.F., and produced by Archives Section, Army Headquarters). "Tobruk was relieved and Rommel driven back to Agheila. He came back, defeated the Eighth Army at Bir Hacheim and Gazala and swept on over the frontier into Egypt to within

sixty miles of Alexandria. There, at Alamein, after bitter fighting, the tide turned again and ebbed rapidly west. The Battle for Egypt was won."

General Montgomery, in a special message on November 12, said there were no German or Italian soldiers left on Egyptian territory, except as prisoners, and the Eighth Army had advanced 300 miles in six weeks, destroying in the process "as effective fighting formations" four German and eight Italian Divisions.

In connection with the Battle of Alamein, it is interesting here to interpose some facts concerning the great barrage laid down on the night of the attack on Miteirya Ridge. There were 815 twenty-five pounders alone, which in twenty-four hours fired 1,000 rounds each, or 15,000 tons in a single action. Each of these rounds cost £3/7/- sterling landed in Alexandria, a total of £2,750,000 sterling or almost £3,500,000 in New Zealand currency.

ON TO TUNIS

"This time, having reached Benghazi and beyond," said General Montgomery, "we shall not come back." The enemy had completed his retreat to El Agheila by November 27. Hitler ordered Rommel on December 1 to hold this very strong position to the last man, but three weeks later this order was cancelled. The reason was shipping. In the first fourteen days of September, submarines and aircraft destroyed a third of all shipping sent to Bizerta and four-fifths of that for Tripoli. This made it essential for the enemy to concentrate in North Africa where his armies could be supplied by a less vulnerable route. The delay in retreating gave the Allied forces time to adjust their supply problems and have air forces installed on advanced landing grounds. So when the enemy retreat did resume on December 13, land and air forces were poised to harass to the fullest extent. Completely trained and equipped as a self-contained formation, able to operate without roads or supply lines, it was the job of the New Zealand Division to outflank the Agheila line. Consisting of two New Zealand lorry-borne infantry brigades, a British armoured brigade with Sherman tanks, a group of British medium artillery, the Divisional Artillery of three field regiments, an anti-tank and an anti-aircraft regiment, the Divisional Cavalry in light tanks, and a machine-gun battalion, the New Zealanders were the most powerful division in the Eighth Army. When the division was ordered to execute the famous left hook, it was at Bardia refitting, 350 miles from the front. The country over which this manoeuvre had to be carried out was thought impassable but L.R.D.G. and special patrols considered that if bulldozers were used to bridge a succession of wadis, the Division would get through. A start was made early on December 4 and 356 miles of desert crossed in three days to an assembly area near Agheila, east of the Agheila positions. Scenes of Sidi Rezegh, Belhamed, Bir Hacheim and Gazala were passed, with their desolation of battle litter. Then the move continued to the assembly area, occupying four days. The British 4th Light Armoured Brigade, with armoured cars and light tanks, and the Royal Scots Greys, with Sherman tanks, joined the Division for the left hook. From December 12, a wireless silence was imposed, travelling speed fixed to prevent dust-raising which would attract enemy reconnaissance air detection, and stronger fighter patrols arranged to cover the approach. The 250-mile left hook began on December 13, soon after daylight, and by dusk, the Division was south of

the enemy outposts. Led by the 4th Light Armoured Brigade, the resumption of the advance next day was arduous and long over difficult and broken country. A halt was not called till 11 p.m. The move was resumed before daylight on December 15 to get in behind the Agheila defences. Early that day, with wireless silence off, armoured cars ahead reported enemy positions and minor vehicular movements. By afternoon these had increased considerably. The 6th Infantry Brigade Group moved north at night, over very bad country, to block the coast road and captured an enemy position on high ground south of the road with the bayonet. The artillery got to work on the coast road. The Division was now in the position of having cut off the enemy's rearguard, including the remains of his 15th Armoured Division and a mass of lorries, and the armour with infantry of the 44th and 51st Divisions were pressing as hard on his heels as minefields permitted. However, the success hoped for did not eventuate. Bad going and darkness made deployment difficult and the thrust line on which the Division had travelled was found to be further west than planned. There was a gap of ten miles between the 5th and 6th Infantry Brigade Groups which could only be efficiently bridged in daylight when the guns could be deployed to command the road and the 4th Light Armoured Brigade freed to operate as a mobile striking force on the southern flank. There was not time to complete this arrangement because German tanks began to move through the gap early on the morning of December 16. The Division was weak in heavy tanks but sharp engagements were fought by tanks and artillery over open sights against the German armour. The enemy did not stay to fight but charged through the New Zealand Division's screen, most of them getting away, but losing six tanks, twelve guns and thirty machine-guns and a number of trucks. An enemy rearguard was holding Noflia and it was planned to outflank this position next day, December 17. The 4th Light Armoured Brigade and Sherman tanks of the Royal Scots Greys engaged the enemy armour south of Noflia that morning and by noon the Divisional Artillery was in action. The 5th Infantry Brigade moved north to cut the road but were held up by a strong enemy position. A night advance was made and the road mined and also harassed by artillery but the enemy cleared out before daylight on December 18, leaving four tanks and five anti-tank guns, plus 250 prisoners. Rommel reached Buerat on December 26 and stayed there until January 14. This gave the 8th Army time to organise its supply lines over several hundred more miles of difficult and practically waterless country and to clear mines, 2,000 of which were lifted from the Marble Arch airfield alone. The New Zealand Division rested on the coast near Noflia where Christmas was spent. Meantime, another left hook role was planned. Again it was over difficult country with need of bulldozers to clear a path over particularly sticky patches. The 5th Infantry Brigade cleared stones from the desert near the Wadi Tamet to make a temporary airfield; an effort well rewarded when Spitfire squadrons of the Desert Air Force used the field from which to drive back enemy dive-bombers and strafing fighters which had been making the forward area uncomfortable. The Division's role in the next step was an outflanking one and it had this time a full regiment of Royal Scots Greys with Sherman tanks. The 8th Army advance was to be on a three-division front—the 51st Highland Division on the coastal sector, with the 7th British Armoured Division and the New Zealand Division following the land route on the open left flank. These forces comprised the 30th Corps. Behind, in reserve, was the 22nd Armoured Brigade.

The Division moved up to the Wadi Tamet on January 12. The advance began late on the afternoon of January 14, continued that night, laid up next day and went on in the afternoon to reach the prearranged position on the Bu Ngem track that night. At dawn next day the columns opened out in desert formation and the forward armoured cars came under fire. The enemy gun line kept the 7th Armoured Division behind a ridge but the 51st Division was in contact. The Division, using the Royal Scots Greys and the 4th Field Regiment, moved round the south flank to relieve the 7th Armoured Division from its stalemate. The Royal Scots Greys' Shermans busted the enemy screen and threatened the whole flank. The Division was now set to complete the left hook next morning but the enemy got out. The 51st Division continued to press and the enemy withdrew west. Infantry of the 51st occupied Misurata on January 18 and Homs on January 20, and proceeded along the coast. The 7th Armoured Division and the New Zealand Division cut across the desert in a wide outflanking drive. In hard fighting in the Um Raml hills, the Royal Scots Greys had fairly heavy casualties. The week was unimportant from a fighting viewpoint. There was contact with the enemy at Beni Ulid, an oasis, but he withdrew. Crossing the Gebel Garian by its narrow, winding road which had been blown up, the Stukas were active in dive-bombing but the engineers did their usual good job and by moving all night, the Division was into the plains by January 22. French forces from the Chad territory under General Leclerc contacted the British at Garian on January 24. These French had formed a base in the Fezzan at Gatrun and had advanced north to Sebka by January 8, taking 500 prisoners, eighteen tanks and some guns. After January 24 they joined up with General Giraud's force of camelry and together, these forces, which had effected the first junction since June, 1940, of Frenchmen who had escaped and those who had been liberated from the Axis yoke, took Gadarmes on January 28.

The 51st Division was completing its long advance along the coast road and the 7th Armoured Division near Tarhuna was focussing on Castel Benito airfield while the New Zealanders closed in from the south. South of Azizia on January 22, the enemy shelled the New Zealanders from high ground behind the village, the fire was returned, but by next morning the enemy had moved on. All endeavours to hold up the occupation of Tripoli had ceased by January 22 when the 11th Hussars were the first to enter, closely followed by the 3rd Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment (both elements of the 7th Armoured Division). Soon after, at 5 a.m. on January 23, the New Zealand Division, from the south, and the 51st Division from the east, entered Tripoli simultaneously.

This is an appropriate juncture to review the achievements of the 8th Army. Within three and a half months of a shattering defeat, it had turned the tables into even more decisive victory. In three months it had advanced 1,400 miles over shocking terrain, inflicted 75,000 casualties on the enemy, destroyed his armies and an empire. Mr. Churchill addressed the troops in Tripoli on February 3, with these words: "In the words of the old hymn, you have 'nightly pitched your moving tents a day's march nearer home.' The achievements of the 8th Army will gleam and glow in the annals of history. The days of your victories are by no means at an end."

The New Zealand Division was now camped twelve miles outside Tripoli, midst rows of olive and blossom-laden almond trees, with dugouts in soft soil, and plenty of fresh, clear artesian water. The 28th (Maori) Battalion beat Divisional Signals in the final of the Rugby competition which was

started at Bardia and continued while resting at Nofilia. On February 4, Mr. Churchill inspected the New Zealanders and addressed them in these words: "All are filled with pride for the Desert Army; all are full of gratitude to the people of New Zealand who have sent this splendid Division to win fame and honours across the oceans. By an immortal victory—the Battle of Egypt—the Axis Powers who had fondly hoped and loudly boasted they would take Egypt and the Nile Valley, found their armies broken and shattered. Since then, by a march unexampled in history for speed and for the force of its advance, you have driven the enemy before you, until now the would-be conqueror of Egypt is endeavouring to pass himself off as the deliverer of Tunisia. These events will live long in the annals of war and will be studied minutely by other generations than our own. These feats of arms entitle the army of the desert to feel a deep-founded sense of comfort and pride, based on valiant duty faithfully done." The Division, led by General Freyberg, with the Royal Scots Greys (who had been part of the Division in the advance to Tripoli) leading the parade, then marched past. With Mr. Churchill on the dais were General Sir Alan Brooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Sir Harold Alexander, Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, and General Bernard Montgomery, Commander of the 8th Army. A march past in review order of tanks, guns and limbers, Bren-carriers and transport followed.

Though the Division remained in its bivouac areas round Tripoli all February, 1943, there was more work ahead, the next task allotted being an attack round the flank of the Mareth Line across the Tunisian frontier. Here formations of the 8th Army were already facing the defences to keep the Afrika Korps busy and relieve some pressure on the United States forces in the Gafsa area where the enemy had counter-attacked. The 2nd United States Corps, under General Patton, was driven back by Rommel's thrust through the Katterine Pass while the British 1st Army was held in the north. Rommel, however, had to withdraw and began to concentrate his armour on the Mareth Line, threatening 8th Army forces facing him there. Reinforcements were required at once, the New Zealand Division received its orders on March 1 and within forty-eight hours was dug-in, 180 miles by single road from its Tripoli bivouacs, ready to defend its part of the 8th Army Line. The Mareth Line was no hastily chosen position, picked for unimproved natural features. It was a formidable prepared position, the work of French military engineers as a defence for Tunisia against any Italian attack. It stretched from Zarat on the Gulf of Gabes to Ben Khradache on the Matmata hills. It was a series of fortifications in depth, including permanent anti-tank obstacles and concrete emplacements, and served by military roads permitting quick movement of reserves from one point to another. North, it was protected by an inhospitable coast line, and south, by rough, difficult country. The French in constructing this line considered it their African Maginot. Rommel still had plenty of fight in him and prepared to attack from the base the Mareth Line presented. His forces were the 90th Light and 164th Infantry Divisions, the 15th, 21st and 10th Panzer Divisions, with some Italian infantry for holding the Mareth defences as a base. He was estimated to have 200 tanks, including the latest Mark VI, with eighty-eight-millimetre guns.

The attack began on the morning of March 6 during heavy mist, when artillery opened fire, and was directed on the high ground north of the main road between Medinine and Mareth. With a clearance of visibility three tank and infantry columns were seen advancing; south-east from Mareth.

from the Toujane defile east towards Metameur, and from the Hallouf defile towards the high ground north-west of Metameur. The attack developed on the Maori Battalion section of the front. It diverted enemy tanks into a wadi where anti-tank six-pounder guns of a British regiment destroyed five, artillery breaking up the following infantry. The most southerly thrust came at the junction between the 201st Guards Brigade and the 5th Infantry Brigade. Concentrated artillery fire broke up another attack on the New Zealand sector that afternoon. All along the 8th Army front the strong anti-tank gun line with massed artillery support won the day and the attack failed with the loss of fifty knocked-out tanks. Rommel withdrew his forces to the Mareth defences during the night. The plan to take the Mareth Line was not upset by this costly enemy attack. The New Zealand Division's outflanking movement [combined with the general frontal attack] meant an eighty-miles desert move to a point south. The country was difficult and unfamiliar and unsuited for such a movement involving night moves by 27,000 men, 6,000 vehicles, tanks and guns. Further it was expected, but this was to be offset by quick movement and sudden violent attack. The Division, for this role consisted of a force known as the New Zealand Corps—2nd New Zealand Division, 8th (British) Armoured Brigade, 1st Battalion Buffs, King's Dragoon Guards, British medium, field and anti-tank regiments, and the French under General Leclerc. The whole force was self-contained with eleven days' food, water and ammunition and petrol for 350 miles. The secret move to the assembly area began on March 11; back to Ben Gardane, thence south to the assembly point, thirty miles south-west of the hill village of Fom Tatahouine. The assembly occupied six days. A move was made on the night of March 19 to the line reached by the French. Next day the New Zealand Corps advanced in bad going and minefields and no further progress could be made after dark. A halt was made that night within range of the Djebel Tebaga. The advance continued next day and armoured cars of the King's Dragoon Guards and Divisional cavalry light tanks made contact with the enemy that afternoon. By night, the Corps was facing the enemy positions covering the Tebaga Gap. Enemy bombers were active. The enemy position was astride the Kebili-Gabes road close to where it runs through a narrow valley between Djebel Tebaga and the mountain country forming the right flank of the Mareth Line. The enemy defences were on the same line as an ancient wall built by the Romans to close the six-mile gap against the Barbarians. A successful attack was initiated at 10 p.m. by the 25th and 26th Battalions. Engineers cleared gaps in the minefields for the 3rd Royal Tank Regiment's Shermans and 1,500 Italian prisoners were taken. Point 201 was captured and enemy attacks by infantry of the 21st Panzer Division (which had arrived too late to relieve the Italians), supported by tanks and heavy artillery, failed. The 8th Army had meantime attacked north between the road and the sea, and on March 21, had a bridgehead over the Wadi Zigzaou, in front of the enemy's main positions. This bridgehead was lost to a heavy enemy counter-attack on March 22-23. Here the success of the New Zealand Corps assumed great importance for General Montgomery switched his main attack there. The 10th Corps, with the 1st Armoured Division (of which a New Zealander, Lieut.-Colonel J. E. F. Vogel, O.B.E., of Lower Hutt, was assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster-General), made a three-day move to join the New Zealanders. Troublesome eighty-eight-millimetre guns on the left flank were disposed of by a brilliant attack on March 24 by the 3rd Royal Tank Regiment and the Nottinghamshire Yeomanry, with R.A.F. and massed artillery support. Valuable artillery

observation points were also gained. It was planned to capture a vital hill feature on the right flank to deny the enemy observation of the concentration for the attack, follow this with an all-out attack by the New Zealand Division to force a gap, and then let the 1st Armoured Division through to capture El Hamma. The 21st Battalion took the hill feature in a moonlight bayonet attack in the early moonlit morning of March 26. The enemy was reinforcing the gap with the 21st Panzer Division joining the 164th Infantry Division and the 15th Panzer Division had also begun a move to the Mareth Line. That afternoon the R.A.F. Spitfires, Kitty-bombers and Hurricanes swept over in what General Freyberg said was the greatest close air support given in the desert. The 23rd, 28th (Maori) and 24th Battalions were then ready to attack, with the 25th Battalion on high left flank ground waiting to move with other assaulting battalions. Two hundred field and medium guns opened up at 4 p.m. on a 5,000-yards front and 150 tanks of the 8th Armoured Brigade (which had been camouflaged in the wadis behind Point 201), and three infantry battalions advanced under a natural cover provided by dust storms blowing in the faces of the enemy. Three squadrons of Crusader tanks, Shermans, carriers, infantry and sappers on foot followed and behind them, 150 tanks of the 1st Armoured Division with motorised infantry in nine columns of lorries. General Freyberg said: "It was a most awe-inspiring spectacle of modern warfare." The final objective was 6,000 yards off and by nightfall nearly all enemy resistance had been overcome, bloody fighting at close quarters having occurred in clearing the objectives and high ground on the flanks. On the important high ground, Point 209, the Maoris fought a desperate struggle with a Panzer Grenadiers' battalion.

Here Second-Lieutenant Moana mui-a-Kiwa Ngarimu won the V.C. His task was to take a feature forward of Point 209 held in strength. He led his men straight up the hill in face of intense mortar and machine-gun fire and was first on the crest, wiping out two machine-gun posts. The enemy rallied and Ngarimu ordered his men to engage them man for man. He killed seven himself. Twice wounded, by a bullet in the shoulder and then shrapnel in a leg, he would not quit though urged by his company and battalion commanders to do so. With his men, Ngarimu repelled furious attacks, including heavy machine-gun fire. By morning only he and two unwounded men remained and reinforcements were sent up. Then the enemy again counter-attacked. Ngarimu was killed, defiant unto death with his sub-machine-gun at his hip. The foothold he and his men established enabled the Maoris finally to gain possession of the feature and force the remnants of the Grenadier battalion, with their commanding officer, to surrender. That same night, March 26-27, the 24th Battalion succeeded on the left flank, taking many prisoners and the final phase of the thrust of the 1st Armoured Division through the gap was carried out before the flanks were completely cleared. That night they were at the outskirts of El Hamma where an enemy gun line held them up next morning. All resistance in the Tebaga Gap ceased on March 27. The capture of Tebaga Gap resulted in heavy enemy losses in killed and prisoners (5,000 to 6,000), forty tanks and many guns, transport and much equipment were also taken. The Mareth Line could not be held and the enemy evacuated it on the night of March 27-28.

The Afrika Korps now took up a defensive position on high ground overlooking the Wadi Akarit, with the 1st British Armoured Division and the 2nd New Zealand Division close on them. This was a last effort to prevent the 8th Army joining forces with the 2nd United States Corps advancing from Gafsa in the west. The Germans were in badly depleted tank strength;

about fifty to the 21st and 15th Panzer Divisions with the Italians, stiffened by some of the 90th Light Division, holding the line. Manpower and armoured weakness was balanced to some extent by the natural strength of the line: the sea on one side and impassable salt marshes on the other. On April 6 the 50th Northumbrian, 51st (Highland) and 4th Indian Divisions made a frontal assault, and established a bridgehead after heavy infantry fighting. Through this the New Zealand Divisional Cavalry and the King's Dragoon Guards, light tanks of the New Zealand Divisional Cavalry and heavy tanks of the 8th Armoured Brigade, followed. The retreating enemy was harassed on a wide scale once there was room to open out, and considerable numbers were cut off. The commander of the Italian Saharan Corps, General Mannerini, with his complete staff, and the remnants of his force, were among those taken. The junction of the British from the east and United States forces from the west was effected on April 7 when British armoured cars met United States troops advancing on Maknassy. British and New Zealand troops occupied Sfax and Sousse on April 9 and 12 respectively. Tunis was the next and final goal but the forces of von Arnim and Messe (Rommel's successor) were well disposed on all important positions of the formidable mountain chain north of Sousse which was a natural barrier to Tunis from the south and west. Heavy reinforcements had been made available to the enemy. He was faced by the 2nd United States Corps in the north, British 1st Army, General Giraud's French Army and, in the south, the 8th Army. The enemy had positions in great depth opposite the 8th Army at Enfidaville, extending from the forward line at the base of steep hills to positions on spurs and peaks behind, commanding the flat plain across which any attack would have to be made. The British forces were under General Alexander and the entire force under General Eisenhower. There was powerful support from the other services.

The 8th Army opened the Allied offensive at midnight on April 19 with the New Zealand Division on the coastal sector and the 4th Indian Division on the left. The 6th Infantry Brigade on the right and the 5th Infantry Brigade on the left attacked with their objectives the Takrouna feature—a rocky crag surmounted by a village—and the long spur east of it. The 6th Brigade made good progress, troops of the German 90th Light Division not defending Enfidaville village. The reverse applied on the 5th Brigade side, the Takrouna feature having been turned into a fortress bastion of the Enfidaville line. There was no harder fighting in the whole campaign. Every commanding officer of the brigade was wounded and communications broke down. It was a night of confused fighting, but a small party from the 23rd Battalion, and the 28th (Maori) Battalion, using the initiative which has always distinguished the New Zealand fighter, scaled the steep heights against the enemy holding out in a group of stone buildings. It was often, according to an official description, a case of hand over hand, with some strength held back for the final dash when they reached the top. This they did, charged the strong point and took it. A 21st Battalion platoon reinforced them in the morning, April 20. Heavy shell and mortar fire failed to dislodge them and a counter-attack from the enemy occupying the rest of the village on the lower slopes to the north, was beaten off. The excellent Army publication, *The Diamond Track*, describes the next episode graphically in these words: "Then, in the moonlight, bitter fighting for the possession of the whole feature began at close quarters. Everything was thrown into it: grenades, automatics, bayonets and rifle butts. Bodies were seen hurtling over the brink of the cliff to the flat hundreds of feet below. Next morning

an enemy pocket was found lodged in one of the houses on the pinnacle. It was finally sniped by a twenty-five-pounder gun directed from an observation post almost next door to the enemy post. Lower down, west of Takrouna, the enemy held on grimly but the position was battered by our artillery all day on April 21 and that evening parties from the 21st Battalion and the 28th (Maori) Battalion stormed the village, taking the remnants of the garrison prisoner. Two field guns, ten smaller pieces, seventy-two machine-guns and 732 prisoners were captured." The same night the 6th Brigade linked up with the 5th Brigade and on the nights of April 24 and 25, with 8th Armoured Brigade tanks in support, captured several more features. The hill country was now so difficult that front-line positions of the New Zealanders had to be served by mules. The 1st New Zealand Mule Pack Company was formed, operated by Army Service Corps personnel and some infantry who had Mounted Rifles Brigade experience in the New Zealand Territorial Force. Meantime, the 1st Army's thrust, commenced on April 23, had gradually pushed the enemy line back but despite severe losses the main line of resistance was nowhere broken. Because the country of the 1st Army front was more favourable, General Alexander regrouped his forces and during May 1-5, the Allies massed for an all-out attack here. The 7th Armoured Division, 4th Indian Division and a brigade of Guards were switched from the 8th Army to the 1st Army. The plan was now to attack with two infantry and two armoured divisions, simultaneous attacks by United States forces in the extreme north, and the French in the south, to assist this main assault. The New Zealand Division was to support the French advance towards Pont du Fahs. The main attack was launched along the axis of the Medjez-Tunis road at dawn on May 6. The enemy defences collapsed, Tunis was occupied and British armour swept round the base of Cape Bon Peninsula before the enemy could regroup. New Zealand Artillery had supported the French in their attack and the 5th Brigade made three night advances. A company of the Maori Battalion was surrounded. It fought its way out, counter-attacked next morning and took the position and seventy-five German prisoners. On the New Zealand front, the enemy's infantry was in a precarious position. General Graf von Sponeck, 90th Light Division, through a prisoner emissary, was informed that further resistance would be useless. He refused to surrender but was captured next day in a 6th British Armoured Division attack on his headquarters. On May 18 Marshal Messe wirelessed that German and Italian emissaries wished to discuss terms with the 8th Army. The reply was that only unconditional surrender was acceptable and if this was not forthcoming, there would be an immediate attack. Marshal Messe, with his complete staff, surrendered unconditionally to General Freyberg on May 13. He insisted on surrendering to a representative of the 8th Army and no one else. With him came General Liebenstein, 164th German Division. No attempt was made at evacuation by the Italian Navy which was faced with the presence of Royal Navy ships in the Gulf of Tunis, and continuous sweeps of Allied bombers.

The fall of the Tunis bridgehead resulted in 200,000 prisoners and tanks, guns, other weapons and equipment appropriate to such a large number of men. The New Zealand Division returned to its base at Maadi, Egypt, 2,000 miles away, for rest and refit. Nearly 6,000 of those with more than three years' service returned to New Zealand as the first furlough draft. After approximately eight months in New Zealand approximately one-third returned to the Division. When the furlough system was replaced by that

of a return for good, as circumstances permitted, of long-service personnel, those who went back again returned home, minus the number who had meantime fallen.

ITALY

Nothing has been written so far of the soldier's reaction to warfare. Here, I take the liberty of reproducing such an impression from the letter of a friend, written from Italy, and reaching New Zealand not long before he was killed in action. The writer was J. R. O'Shaughnessy, D Coy., 23rd Battalion, and dated January 20, 1944. It was published in *The Bedean* bulletin, a war-time production of the St. Bede's College Old Boys' Association, and reads:—

"He had known what it meant to huddle in a slit trench, hour after hour, day and night, listening to the shivering shriek of shells from his big guns, passing high above. He had listened for their crash, glad they were killing not his wounded, bloody, weary or dying mates all about him, but their enemies and his. Too, he had known fear. He had been so scared he could hardly open his mouth. Yet, with a laugh on their lips, he had seen brave men die with courage and no fear in their dimming eyes. He had come to know that to live is good but that it is worthwhile to die for a cause that is just. Above all, he had come to know that most men are brave in the courage God gives them in their hour of trial. This, though, is not a story of courage. Rather, it is a story of a furnace. Beneath him, the ground shivered and shook. Behind, mad giants hammered on vast doors of brass. Ferocious, tearing belches as from some stomach of steel signalled the opening of the covering barrage of his artillery. For what had seemed hours, he had lain shivering in the bitter, cold mud of an Italian olive grove, waiting for the signal to attack. Now it had come. At once, the enemy guns spoke. Together, three shells burst out in front. Another burst close. His eyes filled with dirt. The reek of cordite was in his nostrils, in his throat. His nerves, stretched and frayed from the long wait, were taut. Damn this war, he thought. Quickly he was on his feet moving forward with his mates.

"Slow and soft, a rustle of air and high up in the moonlit sky Something passed. The whimpering wings of death for someone. Going well over, one of ours, he judged. On he went. Shell after shell in hundreds were bursting to the front, to the rear and all about. He stopped and stiffened. Wheeeeeeee! I'm shaking, he told himself. I'm afraid. Such thoughts occur even to the bravest. Damn those gunners and their barrage. Whoof...whoof...whoof! Shells landed near. He flung himself to the ground. Concussion blasted him where he lay. Flying fragments of steel shrieked past his head. Stones and mud rained noisily on his helmet, plastered his sweat-dripping cheeks. Alongside, someone spluttered, then gurgled, and spun around and died where he fell. There and then as he lay, he prayed. God that I may live. Only that, O Lord God of Battles; let me live. Once more he was on his feet and moving forward with the line. On and on he plodded, ankle-deep in mud that clogged and sucked at his every step. Fear gripped his heart and even more than the mud, made lead of his feet, of his pack and of the Tommy-gun in his sweating grip. God, how he wanted to hide behind a tree and stay there! On and on he went. Whoof...whoof...whoof!

Again they came. Their heavy stuff, he decided. Damn, O damn. Adding to the bedlam came the quick chatter of the automatics and the machine-guns and presently the objective seemed near. The road and the railway had been crossed. Soon this hell would end. On all sides, his mates were yelling, loud meaningless yells, but—comforting. Tight-gripped for the final dash, bayonets glinted under a moon made murky by shell smoke. Lights of myriads of tracer-bullets wove fantastic patterns of red, white and green. Parachute flares, in ghostly fashion, dropped slowly from above.

"The objective, a farmhouse, stood hidden, smothered in clouds of leaping mud, stone and smoke, clouds that quivered and throbbed and out of whose convulsed and boiling midst came gleams and flickers and stabs of wicked, vivid light. Men were in the middle of that! He, too, had yet to go into the middle of it. Right into it. It was not human, he told himself. But on he went. He was running now. A bullet pinged on his helmet; another nicked a hand and blood spurted unnoticed. Flares lit up the mud that was the battlefield; olive-tree branches, snapped by shell fire, flew madly in all directions. He could see the enemy in front quite clearly now. They were retreating. Soon came his success signal—'Objective gained.' All that night, all next day, he huddled in the little hole in the ground he had dug for himself, whilst snow fell feet deep, to remain like a great blanket. Cold was biting at his feet, at his legs, at his hands as he dug in deeper. Shells were landing still, out in front, on both sides and to the rear. His ears throbbed in the infernal crashing. Almost, the cold had taken the feeling out of him. At last he dropped into the hole, pulling a damp blanket about himself and closed his eyes to sleep. Shivering, he could not recall when last he had been dry; he knew only that he would remember always every moment of the iciness of those long weary hours and that a hot meal would be a miracle. Soon, he was up and stamping his feet; the effort shot stabs of pain through every bone. Then came the planes.

"Like swift grey ghosts they swooped from the low snow-laden clouds. They were nearly overhead. For a second, he wanted to run, to race madly away. They were diving now and he threw himself into the mud and the snow. There was ice under his stomach. Swiftly he drove his head further into the mud; then with excited hands grabbed at his helmet to force it even tighter into his head. He waited—a split second. Then it came. Foul with gas, a shrieking whirlwind that was a bomb, surrounded him, then passed. All about him darted jagged lumps of white-hot metal. Then silence. He opened his eyes. He lived. God, yes, he lived! He had known the only joy of battle—the silent satisfaction a man feels under fire—that he can take it. With that, he knew, too, though he did not know why, that God had been good and had spared him. He knew, also, that no man can be quite the same again; that war makes most men gentler and humble."

Until an accurate survey of the campaign is completed or available to any who may desire to work on it, there can be no better account than that given by the General Officer Commanding, Lieutenant General Freyberg, V.C. His first dispatch on the operations in Italy dealt with the Division's part in the Sangro River battle and read as follows:—

"The Second New Zealand Division rejoined the 8th Army in November, 1943, and has just taken part in the offensive which forced a crossing of the Sangro and broke through the enemy's winter line. In conditions completely different from those we were used to in North Africa, your division carried out a most difficult operation in a way which showed that the veterans of the desert and men who had not seen action before have become a well-

balanced fighting formation, excellently equipped and trained for this campaign in Europe. The preliminary fighting in the advance to the Sangro River was carried out across difficult country in very bad weather by an Indian brigade under our command, supported by New Zealand tanks, and artillery. Fighting rearguard actions to which the German army is now well accustomed, the division contested each river valley and hilltop village through which the Italian roads wend their way.

"Not only had the enemy rearguards to be dislodged, but demolitions on a grand scale had to be bridged; in some places vehicles were winched through one by one till firm ground was reached. Trucks slipped and got bogged in a sea of mud, and at times it seemed impossible that such a large mass of transport would be cleared. Neither the weather nor the enemy rearguard, however, stopped the advance, and our whole force with all its transport, tanks, and guns was brought forward over the narrow mountain roads.

"The enemy resistance stiffened at the approaches to the Sangro River, British and Indian Infantry of the Indian Infantry Brigade, supported by tanks of our 19th Armoured Regiment and by our artillery, carried out a most gallant attack. They crossed the upper reaches of the river and captured the high ground from which the enemy had been able to observe our movements and bring down artillery fire.

"South of the Sangro River our Fifth and Sixth Infantry Brigades, under Brigadiers Kippenberger and Parkinson, deployed for the next phase in the battle. Then heavy rain fell again, brought the river to flood level, and delayed our attack. Quite apart from the weather, the operation was most difficult as the wide river bed is dominated by all the heights of the north shore. The plan was to carry out a night attack and the troops were waiting ready for the river to fall. On November 26 the weather improved, Battle exchanges opened along the 8th Army front on the night of the 27th, with the New Zealand Division on the left flank. Moving forward in pitch dark, our infantry crossed the river with the aid of ropes, formed up on the north bank at two in the morning, and assaulted the heights. This attack by the Fifth and Sixth Brigades, under an artillery barrage on a front of 6,000 yards was brilliantly carried out. The enemy was driven from all our objectives, leaving many dead and over 300 prisoners behind. In the river bed itself, the engineers worked all night and next day under intense shell fire, making tracks through and building bridges to get supporting arms and tanks across to secure the bridgehead. Till the bridges were completed only a few tanks could be got across owing to mud and quicksands, but before the enemy recovered from the initial surprise artillery was brought forward and the infantry again advanced.

"A daylight infantry attack on high ground took the enemy by surprise and Castelfrentano was occupied. By the capture of this hill town on the highest ridge overlooking the Sangro River both the 5th and 6th Brigades established themselves astride Kesselring's much-vaunted winter line.

"There can be no doubt that the enemy intended to hold his defensive system covering the line of the River Sangro. It was very strong, consisting of deep reinforced trenches and dug-outs and complete communication trench system and electrically lit living quarters, and the whole system was covered by extensive minefields and barbed wire. The men who stormed it would look back with satisfaction from this fortress of hills and skilfully planned defences and realise what they had achieved.

"While the New Zealand Division collected along the high ground, other formations advanced on the coastal sector. Supported by powerful Allied air forces, the 8th Army broke through the German line on a wide front."

General Freyberg quoted the following letter he had received from the 8th Army commander, General L. Montgomery, referring to the part played by the New Zealand Division in the battle:—

"I would like to congratulate the New Zealand Division on the splendid achievement of the last few days. Since the division came into the battle line of the 8th Army after a long absence it has been faced with forces of Nature and by a determined enemy in strongly prepared positions. The division has dealt with the forces of Nature and with the enemy in a manner that is beyond all praise. The part played by New Zealand troops in the battle of Sangro should make all those in the home country very proud of their soldiers serving in Italy. Please tell your officers and men how pleased I am with what they have done. Further tasks lie ahead, but having smashed through the enemy's winter line we are now well placed to tackle the enemy in the open. Good luck to you all."

"In earlier cables I reported to you that we had temporarily become a New Zealand Corps under the Fifth American Army for operations with the Fourth Indian Division, a British division and British and American armour and guns under the command. As stated in an earlier message to you, when our role was assigned to us we had no illusions about the difficulties of the task ahead. I indicated then: 'We are undoubtedly facing one of the most difficult operations of all our battles.' The Cassino position is a formidable one, and not for the first time in history it has barred the way to armies advancing into the Liri Valley, which leads to Rome. Cassino, once a substantial stone town, lies at the foot of Monastery Hill, which rises sheerly out of the plain not unlike the rock of Gibraltar in steepness and height. The road and railway to Rome pass through Cassino. The narrow plain over which we had to advance was flooded, wired and mined, and the entire defensive system was covered by the small but swift-flowing Rapido River. From the vantage point of the monastery the enemy could watch and bring down fire on every movement on the roads or in the open country in the plain below. This natural fortress of the enemy's Gustav Line held up the American advance earlier in the year, and it was from the American Corps that we took over, after coming across from the 8th Army front.

"As we drove forward we saw the ideal defensive country from which the American, British and French troops of the 5th Army had driven the enemy after months of heavy and most gallant fighting. At Cassino they attacked again and again, gaining important peaks to the north and a foothold in the northern edge of the town itself. These were the positions we took over, the 4th Indian Division moving into the mountains to the north, while the 2nd New Zealand Division occupied the northern outskirts of Cassino. Since the middle of February, 1944, we have maintained pressure on the Cassino front. The enemy has been attacked from the air and bombarded by artillery, and has been forced to employ his reserves to meet the threat of a break-through. He put in the first available troops to hold Cassino and the heights above it, but on February 15 the Benedictine Monastery was destroyed by heavy air bombardment, a step which was forced on us because, in spite of enemy protests to the contrary, it was being used as an observatory for military purposes. Prior to the main attack on Cassino itself the Fourth Indian Division fought a battle on steep, rocky slopes to the north of the monastery. They gained ground on Point 593 and have

held it ever since, in spite of enemy counter-attacks and very difficult conditions. The enemy had prepared their position in advance and their firing points blasted into rock had to be stormed at night with hand-grenade and bayonet. On February 17 and 18 the 28th Maori Battalion carried out operations across the Rapido River south of the town. A bridgehead was won and the engineers were within an ace of getting demolitions repaired and bridges through after magnificent work but dawn came an hour too soon. By daylight the enemy could pick out their targets from Monastery Hill and further work was impossible under continuous fire. Supporting arms could not be got up and our bridgehead was driven back by an enemy tank attack. Meanwhile, plans were made for a full-scale attack supported by very heavy air and artillery bombardments. This was to be followed by an infantry assault which, if fully successful, would make a break for the armour into the valley beyond. The attack on Cassino and Monastery Hill by the Second New Zealand Division and the Fourth Indian Division, dependent as it was upon tank and air support, required firm going for the tanks and clear visibility for the bombers. This meant weeks of patient waiting, since weather conditions in February and March in Italy leave much to be desired. At last, on March 15, it seemed the weather was right and the attack was launched. Before dawn that morning the New Zealand troops on the northern outskirts of Cassino were withdrawn, and at 8.30 a terrific air attack began. For the first time heavy bombers of the strategic air force as well as medium and light bombers took part in a close air-support programme of unprecedented height.

"From an observation post I watched already battered Cassino reduced to rubble. Squadron after squadron of Fortresses, Liberators, Mitchells and Maudsers of the American Air Force came in with short intervals between the groups to allow the huge clouds of dust and smoke to clear. Flashes of flame from bursting bombs leaped from the buildings and from the slopes above the town, and explosions reverberated through the hills and shook the ground under our feet. No enemy aircraft appeared during the attack. Enemy A.A. guns were neutralised by artillery, and none fired after 10.30. At 12 o'clock precisely, the last flight of medium bombers planted their bombs with impressive accuracy. Twelve o'clock was zero hour. Heavy Allied artillery (under our C.C.R.A., Brigadier C. E. Weir) opened fire and the infantry attacked. Your division (under Major-General Parkinson) had the task of storming Cassino. During the air attack there had been no artillery fire on Cassino, as the dust and smoke would have obscured the target for the aircraft, but at zero hour between 500 and 600 guns of all calibres opened on the corps front a bombardment heavier than at Alamein. Behind a creeping barrage the infantry, engineers and tanks advanced into Cassino from the north. The approach was a bottleneck restricted by massive mountains on the west and by the Rapido River in the east. Only one battalion could be deployed at a time, a factor which was a great handicap to our operations. The positions we had withdrawn from were occupied without trouble. Our first objective, Castle Hill, a steep miniature of the monastery feature just north of the town, was stormed and captured by the 25th Battalion, and the 26th Battalion followed by the 19th Armoured Regiment attacked Cassino itself.

"At first our attack met with little opposition and casualties were very light. Prisoners taken were stunned and reported heavy casualties from the bombing. The town was completely wrecked and the whole area was covered with wide and deep craters, up to 60 feet across, which could not



A party from the Maori Battalion which fought in Greece giving a haka for the King of Greece at a New Zealand camp.



New Zealand ski troops in Syria lined up preparatory to an exercise.



Olympus Pass in Greece, with a New Zealand camp in the foreground. This conveys an idea of the country in which this campaign was fought.



The Prime Minister, Right Hon. Peter Fraser, among New Zealand troops at the Gezira Sporting Club in Cairo.

be crossed by armour. In some places where the bombs had missed buildings or had not penetrated the reinforced base there were sniper and enemy posts which were holding out. On the western edge of the town enemy positions blasted into the base of the hill remained intact. From positions south of Monastery Hill enemy flame-throwers and trench-mortars came into action. Heavy artillery, bombers and fighter bombers engaged the enemy mortar areas and continued to attack in depth the enemy positions on Monastery Hill and in areas in the valley beyond. By evening good progress had been made and the stage was set for the next vital phase of the attack. This was to take advantage of the enemy disorganisation. During moonlight Cassino was to be mopped up by the New Zealand battalions, and troops from the Fourth Indian Division were to take over Castle Hill from our 25th Battalion and then attack Monastery Hill. American and New Zealand engineers were to put a bridge over the Rapido on the main Rome road and clear the routes forward to bring the tanks through the town.

"Up to this moment, the operations had developed as planned. At nightfall, however, the weather broke and torrential rain fell throughout the night. Visibility was poor and the moon made little or no difference. It was an impossibility to keep control in the pitch dark, and progress in Cassino was slow.

"When the Fourth Indian Division moved, the town of Cassino had not been cleared. As a result, they could not deploy on the precipitous slopes of Monastery Hill, and there was inevitable delay and loss of cohesion. In these conditions the achievement of the Gurkha Battalion in capturing 'Hangman's Hill,' the point just below the monastery, before dawn was a magnificent one, but they were too thin on the ground to attack Monastery Hill. The engineers' task of making the routes and bridging the gaps was also greatly hampered and slowed down by conditions. Owing to the low-lying nature of the ground, craters were full of water and mud and bridges had to be built across the gaps. In spite of all the difficulties, however, the engineers built steel bridges over the Rapido River before dawn.

"On the morning of the 16th Monastery Hill was still in enemy hands and Cassino had not been cleared. Indeed, the enemy had had the opportunity during the night to clear away debris and reorganise a number of strong-points. It was clear that the hope of obtaining full advantage of the surprise attack and breaking through with the armour had gone and that further progress would be slow. Cassino had to be cleared so that the New Zealand Division could link up with the Indian Division on Hangman's Hill. At first light the New Zealand Infantry of the Sixth Brigade with tank support went on with the attack.

"Apart from isolated posts, the main enemy resistance was in concrete defences in the south-west corner of the town known as Continental Hotel, and at points at the foot of Castle Hill blasted into the face of the hill, where the enemy resisted fiercely. It was against these points that the New Zealand infantry concentrated during the following days. Close up behind the infantry the engineers built bridges and with bulldozers and hand labour gradually cleared routes through. On the 16th tanks of the 19th Armoured Regiment were brought into the town and that morning our 26th Battalion, supported by a squadron of tanks, swung south and made an important advance, capturing the Cassino railway station after fierce fighting. Enemy tanks and anti-tank guns attempted to intervene but were dealt with by our tanks and artillery.

"From now on Cassino became the scene of most bitter fighting and our battalions of the Fifth Brigade (under Brigadier Burrows) joined the Sixth

Brigade (under Brigadier Bonifant) in battle for the strong-points. Our infantry, closely supported by our tanks, fought forward from one heap of rubble to another and dug out snipers in ones and twos. Walls of houses in the west of the town where the enemy held out were literally blown down in sections by our tanks. On the 17th, 180 prisoners were taken from two strongpoints but the enemy still held the western edge of the town securely and was able to supply and reinforce it by night. For a week, under cover of smoke by day and in waning moonlight by night, the battle went on. By day and night the town was shelled and mortared by the enemy, while our own guns were continuously in action masking enemy observation points on Monastery Hill with smoke and breaking up enemy formations and shelling his gun areas.

"While your division fought in Cassino, the British and Indian troops of the Fourth Indian Division fought back counter-attacks in the hills. We were forced off Point 165, but Castle Hill was firmly held by infantry from Essex and Kent. The garrison had already repulsed five counter-attacks made against it. The Gurkhas on Hangman's Hill and a company of our 24th Battalion on Points 146 and 202 became isolated but held on with great determination. They were supplied by air by American dive-bombers and fighter-bombers, which dropped ammunition, water and food in parachute containers with remarkable accuracy on to such difficult targets. Full success of our operation depended on our ability to clear Cassino and link up with these isolated garrisons so that the attack could go on to take the monastery. This could not be accomplished and eventually the isolated troops had to be withdrawn by night. In an attack against an enemy position such as this the operation always divides itself into three phases: the break-in battle, the encounter battle, and the break-out. Our plan was to reduce the second phase to a minimum by the violence of the air initial blow, but the blitz bombing proved a double-edged weapon and produced obstacles which made speedy deployment of our armour impossible. At Alamein and in the battle of Mareth just one year ago the third phase was reached after several days' heavy fighting and decisive battles were won.

"At Cassino the strong defence held and we have not reached the third phase. We have, however, broken into his main defensive system and in the fierce battles which ensued we have caused the enemy heavy casualties. We have won and now hold part of our objective. We have a bridgehead over the main Rapido River, and we hold Castle Hill, the bulk of the town, and the railway station.

"In this battle we have been fighting in the Fifth American Army. I would like to record here our pride in doing so and our deep appreciation of the help and co-operation we had had from General Mark Clark, his staff, and all the formations with which we have served.

"May I quote from a letter I have just received from our army commander: 'Undiscouraged by the hardships of unfavourable weather and extremely difficult terrain, and in the face of a desperate and stubborn enemy, your command has fought with outstanding valour and determination. The fine spirit of co-operation and team-work displayed by your corps, and by other components of the 5th Army, has shown the enemy clearly that the Allies are truly United Nations, and as such will fight together to final victory.'

"Many gallant exploits have been performed by British, American, Indian and New Zealand troops who fought over those steep hills and in the town.

Units and individuals cannot be mentioned in this report, but some will be recognised when awards are announced."

Reporting to the Prime Minister, Right Hon. Peter Fraser, on the part played by the Division in the next phase—Cassino to Florence—General Freyberg stated:—

"Except for two of the armoured regiments," the report continues, "your Division did not take part in the May offensive of the Fifth and the Eighth Armies which broke the Gustav and Adolf Hitler Lines. Early in April regrouping of the armies was carried out and we handed over our hard-won gains at Cassino to other formations and took over a sector in the north in the lower slopes of the Apennines which French troops had captured earlier in the year. This mountain front gave little scope for offensive action, except for active patrolling at night. During the day all movement ceased, because the high peaks gave both sides excellent observation of each other's positions and approach routes. Our job was to keep as many troops as possible occupied; this I think we did, in company with British, Canadian, and South African Brigades, which were under our command. Your Division was on the right of the Polish Corps when the main battle opened; we were in close touch with those Corps and our artillery supported them. Their attack against Stoney Peaks, north of Cassino, and the assault by British divisions across the Rapido River, south of the town, were carried out with the greatest gallantry and skill, and after bitter fighting Cassino and the Monastery were outflanked and captured. The gains won by your Division in the Battle of Cassino during March proved of great value in these operations. In the outflanking movement which cut route six our 19th Armoured Regiment supported the British infantry, and during a further advance the 18th Armoured Regiment played a distinguished part in the operation which broke the Adolf Hitler Line and drove the enemy back down the road to Rome.

"Hard fighting along the whole front finally broke through Kesselring's defences and forced him to withdraw. From our mountain sector we also advanced. Infantry and tanks never lost contact, and enemy rearguards were driven in one after another. Demolitions were repaired and mines cleared and our whole force deployed in the plain north of Atina. Moving north again, the enemy was driven into the high country north of Sora. Rome fell on June 5. The campaign to capture the Italian capital was long and hard, but in the end a great victory was won, the enemy losing large numbers of prisoners and much equipment. Driven from ideal defensive country, the Germans have suffered a severe defeat both to their arms and to their prestige.

"After the fall of Rome the Allies pressed on their advance and in two months the enemy has been driven back north of the Arno River. For security reasons the part played by the Second New Zealand Division in these subsidiary encounters did not receive any public notice until after the operations were over. Your force has actually been in action on two sectors of the 8th Army's front, first in the battle for Arezzo, then in the attack to drive the enemy north of the main high ground.

"After a fortnight's rest and training south of Rome the Division was called forward to rejoin the 8th Army in the line. On the night of July 8 the Division began moving. The columns passed through the outskirts of Rome and northwards to an assembly area not far from Hannibal's battlefield at Lake Trasimeno. By July 13 the 6th Infantry Brigade (under Brigadier Burrows) had taken over its sector of the line. The country

facing them overlooked our positions, and this Lignano feature had to be taken to cover the flank of a British armoured division and a Guards brigade on our left, which was to drive through to Arezzo. On the night of July 14 the 6th Brigade attacked under artillery bombardment. The 26th Battalion had already occupied the high ground on the right. The 24th Battalion went forward in the centre, and the 25th Battalion attacked Lignano peak itself. The attack was a complete success, and by daybreak Lignano was firmly in our hands. While the infantry consolidated, armoured cars of Divisional Cavalry Regiment and Engineers pushed up the road on the enemy flank. Meanwhile, on our left the British attack went in and made good progress. The enemy did not counter-attack, and that night withdrew from Arezzo, and our advance north was resumed. The enemy continued to offer stubborn resistance wherever the nature of the country favoured defence, and on July 21 your Division was switched on another sector further west on the left of the 6th South African Division, who had reached this area in their advance from south of Rome. Our role was to take a narrow front and drive a wedge through to the Arno River south-west of Florence. Florence itself is not a military objective, as the city lies in a valley dominated from north and south, but the object of the operations was to clear the enemy from the last high ground before his so-called Gothic Line is reached.

"The Division took over its new sector on July 21, and next day, 5th Brigade (Brigadier Stewart) advanced, supported by tanks of the Armoured Brigade and covered by our artillery. For the next four days the 5th Brigade pushed the enemy gradually back in stiff fighting. As soon as an enemy position was taken by tanks and infantry attacking together, the tanks went on until they reached the next inevitable demolition, mined and covered by anti-tank guns and heavily armoured Tiger tanks armed with eighty-eight-millimetre guns. These enemy rearguards had to be driven back by artillery and infantry, while the engineers built bridges or bulldozed tracks round the demolitions. Action followed action. At every point where the enemy could fight a rearguard action he held on grimly. The 6th Brigade (under Brigadier Burrows) and the 4th Armoured Brigade (under Brigadier Inglis) came into the line with 5th Brigade, and for a fortnight the battle went on as the enemy tried hard to prevent a wedge being driven into his line south of the Arno River. He deployed all his available reserves and faced our advance with regiments of 4th Parachute Division and 29th Panzer Grenadier Division. He kept our positions under constant shellfire. He counter-attacked our gains with infantry and tanks. In putting in counter-attacks the enemy had to expose his forces not only to our infantry and support weapons but also to the thousands of shells of our artillery (under our C.R.A., Brigadier Parkinson). The battlefield itself as well as reports from prisoners testify to the heavy losses the enemy suffered. In these operations our full strength was to deploy all our artillery, then attack and drive the enemy from his organised defences. This forced the enemy to hold unprepared rearguard positions on successive ridges with his infantry. We then hammered him with the full weight of our artillery, tanks, and close support aircraft. We had 150 field and medium guns for these operations capable of firing over 40,000 shells a day. Altogether the softening-up process proved very successful, and we eliminated a large number of the enemy.

"On July 26 the 5th Brigade were held up short of Casciano, a town which was on a spur dominating Route Two, the main road to Florence. That afternoon Casciano was dive-bombed by the R.A.F. and the next morning it was occupied after slight opposition. The attack put us in a much stronger

position and from the Tower of Casciano Florence was clearly visible ten miles to the north. Further west the 6th Brigade and tanks advanced by day, won a bridgehead over the Pesa River and captured the village of Cerbaia. The tanks were unable to cross at Cerbaia but armoured cars of the Divisional Cavalry reconnoitred other crossings of the river and the tanks were got across ready to meet enemy counter-attacks. The same day infantry and tanks of the 4th Armoured Brigade began to move through Casciano. Heavy fighting ensued. The 6th Brigade advanced on the night of July 27 and captured the high ground beyond Cerbaia. This success caused violent enemy reaction as the whole enemy position south of Florence was threatened. Strong counter-attacks were launched against the 6th Brigade one after another, and we were forced to yield ground. Heavy counter-attacks continued throughout the 28th, the Germans throwing in their best troops supported by Tiger tanks. Communications were cut and for a long time the situation was obscure. Then messages came through from one company that they were holding firmly and then from another asking for more ammunition.

"We were now in a most difficult situation as the village of San Michele, situated on a ridge on our left flank, dominated our new positions, and before any further progress could be made it was necessary to capture and occupy the village. An engagement was staged on the night of the 28th when the village was taken by a frontal attack. On the 29th plans were made to attack again as soon as guns could be deployed forward of Casciano Ridge. It was another day of heavy shell-fire and activity along the whole front. That evening the enemy launched a strong surprise attack on San Michele with tanks and infantry rushed up in lorries. They came in so quickly that they got into Michele before defensive activity from the guns could be brought down. Again the fog of war descended over the town. Then enemy tanks were reported coming through south of San Michele but their infantry were repulsed. We sent fresh tanks and infantry into counter-attacks in the early hours of the morning and San Michele was cleared of the enemy. When our counter-attacks closed on San Michele they found our infantry holding on in demolished buildings just as the enemy parachute troops did at Cassino. This dogged defence prevented the enemy infantry from getting possession of the village, although enemy Tiger tanks had possession of the street of the town and had smashed buildings. But there our infantry had a strong-point and they could not clear the area, and without infantry support they had to withdraw when darkness came. This most gallant defence of San Michele discouraged any further counter-attacks and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. Owing to the hilly nature of the country and the winding roads it was not possible to advance to any great depth. Instead, each brigade had to push forward on a narrow front along three ridges in separate though co-ordinated attacks. On July 29 and 30 limited advances were made, and on the night of the 30th the 5th Brigade attacked again to take the last high ground in front of Florence. This attack made excellent progress, and on the following night, July 31, the Maori Battalion and tanks got close to the top ridge. They held on there during August 1, and that night all three brigades again attacked. The 4th Brigade in the centre and the 6th Brigade on the left gained their objectives, but the 5th Brigade were themselves counter-attacked in strength before their attack commenced and no progress was made. During August 2 our advanced positions held and that night the 5th Brigade also reached the top of the hill, the last dominating feature overlooking Florence. During August 3

tanks of the 4th Armoured Brigade fanned in and drove in the last enemy rearguards, who withdrew over the Arno and engaged in blowing bridges behind them. In this final series of attacks infantry of the 5th Brigade and tanks of the 4th Armoured never gave the enemy any rest and in skilfully executed attacks a wedge was driven right through to the river.

"Whilst we attacked down the Axis main road the Indian and South African Divisions on our left and right respectively had progressed along the edge of our wedge, working through very difficult country and driving in enemy rearguards in their path. The South Africans and ourselves converged on the main road in close stages, and the South African tanks and infantry were the first to reach the outskirts of Florence. Kesselring's forces now occupy the portion of Florence north of the River Arno. They have blown all the bridges over the River Arno (except Ponte Vecchio) and to-day (August 10) appear prepared to fight in spite of their own declaration that Florence was an open city. During this fight your Division has played a notable and gallant part in the 8th Army's advance. I have just received the following message from General Kirkman, commander of the 13th Corps, which pays tribute to our troops: 'Now that we have entered Florence I should like to say how much the 13th Corps owe to the Second New Zealand Division during its recent fighting. In the battles for Arezzo and Florence your troops, as always, fought magnificently, and gave us the extra punch that was necessary to eject the enemy from his chosen positions in the very difficult country south of the River Arno. The Second New Zealand Division has undoubtedly inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and I congratulate all ranks on their great success.' I have received the following message from General Sir Oliver Leese: 'I must write thanking your Division for their great achievement in gaining the high ground before Florence, to which our recent success is so largely due. The spirit and endurance in their gallant attack against determined opposition, their steadfastness under repeated counter-attacks and heavy shell and mortar fire, were beyond praise. This is more noteworthy after their hard fight earlier before Arezzo. Recent feats of the New Zealanders will have added to the pride which their people at home feel in the Division and to the laurels it had already won in Greece, Crete, and in the African campaign. My best thanks to you, to your staff and brigade commanders, and all my best wishes.'

"We have now been fighting hard for nearly four years. Notwithstanding this, your Division continues to carry out the missions assigned to them. They never falter or fail to capture an objective or to hold a position once gained. Their conduct in these operations, as always, has been well up to the standard that is expected of them. We have moved to a relatively quiet sector which will give us time to absorb our reinforcements. All goes well here in Italy and the men have recovered from the strain that these operations have imposed on them."

The Prime Minister, Right Hon. Peter Fraser, received this message from the Commander of the Eighth Army, Lieutenant-General Sir Oliver Leese: "The Army had advanced in two main phases, from Cassino to Rome—seventy-five miles—and then from Rome to Florence—145 miles. Only by seeing the country, as you did, can one form an idea of the magnitude of our troops' achievements in this advance against picked German formations holding positions long prepared. Throughout, the part of the New Zealand Division has been as prominent as its reputation and quality deserved. Bernard Freyberg has been, as always, a tower of strength, lion-hearted, bold and determined—an inspiration to every man in the Division. Their first

task was the difficult and unaccustomed one of a holding role in the mountains, under the Tenth Corps. This led to the follow-up through the Atina Valley, in even harsher country, on our left flank. In July, under the Thirteenth Corps, they had a hard task culminating in their well-planned onslaught on Arezzo. They played a valuable part in seizing this position, vital to our further advance. Next they had much hill fighting under heavy shell and mortar fire, and withstood fierce counter-attacks. Finally they succeeded by determined assaults in forcing the Germans off the high ground which dominates the town. Throughout the advance on Florence their drive and steadfastness were noteworthy, and their final attack was the decisive factor in our success. I have said enough to show how grateful we all are to General Freyberg, his staff and the New Zealand Division, whose name in the Eighth Army never stood higher than today. Their people at home may justly be as proud of their part in this campaign as they were of their previous exploits in Greece, Crete and in the African campaign."

"The New Zealanders, most of whom volunteered for service in Europe from a sense of adventure, are trained and led by General Freyberg and are dangerous opponents. They are specialists in night fighting, they fight over a wide front and their method of attack resembles the German method. The New Zealanders have learnt to follow up closely under the heavy artillery barrages they use. By this means they are able to take their opponents off their guard and gain their objectives without heavy losses. They are also capable in difficult country of fighting without tank support."—From a captured intelligence summary of the 278th German Division in Italy.

An Army Order issued by the President of the Council of the Ministry of War in the French Government at Paris on November 19, 1919, in respect of the 1st N.Z.E.F., stated: "Major-General Sir Andrew Russell has led this splendid Division to many victories . . . its exploits have not been equalled and its reputation was such that on the arrival of the Division on the Somme battlefield during the critical days of March, 1918, the flight of the inhabitants immediately ceased. The Division covered itself with fresh glory during the battles of the Ancre, at the Sambre, at Puesvez au Mont, Bapaume, Crevecoeur, and Le Quesnoy." This Order was read before a great gathering in Paris of thousands of young recruits who had joined the colours and were assembled to take the oath of military service to the Republic. It is reproduced here, after the preceding tribute to men of the 2nd N.Z.E.F. in the 1939-45 war, to illustrate the quality of New Zealand troops in both conflicts.

After Florence the Division rested a fortnight in the Siena area. Then, with the rest of the 8th Army, the Division was transferred to the Adriatic sector. They remained in the Jesi area for a fortnight and then moved up towards the front. The 22nd Motor Battalion and tanks of one of the armoured regiments supported the Greek Brigade which was under the command of 2nd New Zealand Division for the attack on Rimini. After the capture of Rimini the New Zealanders went on to establish a bridgehead at the Fiumicino River, about 10 miles beyond Rimini. At this stage the Division was commanded by Major-General C. E. Weir, in the absence of General Freyberg who had been injured in an aircraft accident. The weather was against any further movement for the time being and the Division had a month's rest in the Matelica area. General Freyberg returned while it was here. In October, 1944, the Division again took its place in the 8th Army's drive towards Bologna and saw some sharp fighting in clearing

the enemy from the east bank of the River Lamone, on the outskirts of Faenza. Our forward infantry and armoured elements supported by artillery went into the Lamone line in the worst possible conditions which continued for several days. After a let-up in the weather, when it was considered the ground would provide reasonable going for tanks, an action which was entirely successful was undertaken to clean out the German elements on the New Zealanders' side of the Lamone River and establish our line completely on the east bank. This operation, though comparatively small—it was done by one company of Wellington infantry (22nd Motor Battalion) and one squadron of the 18th Armoured Regiment—was in its way a model of co-operation between tanks and infantry. Unfortunately rain fell during the preceding night, so that when the infantry and tanks set off an hour after daylight on November 30, very near to enemy-held houses, the going was anything but good. As the New Zealanders moved along the muddy roads and across the fields and vineyards, it was not long before they were engaged by vicious Spandau fire from the houses where the Germans were on the alert for the attack they knew must come sooner or later. Mortars were also crashing round the New Zealanders, but, manoeuvring with great difficulty over the soft wet ground, the tanks worked their way into position and fired point blank into the houses. Throughout the day there was heavy fighting. In addition to opposition from the houses the New Zealanders had to move through heavy fire from all the German support weapons as well as minefields cunningly laid to trap both tanks and men. One unfortunate incident involving the death of one infantryman and the wounding of four others occurred when a German running in to surrender caught his foot on the trip wire of a mine which exploded near a group of New Zealanders. The German himself was uninjured. The day's advance was about 1,200 yards over extremely difficult country and against stubborn opposition, and substantial progress was made towards the completion of the task with light casualties. Mopping-up and consolidation occupied the next day and that night such of the enemy who had not been killed or captured withdrew to positions on the far side of the river. Beyond exchanges of shell and mortar fire and occasional sniping there was practically no activity for the next few days in the New Zealand sector. Exploiting a bridgehead established across the Lamone (by the 46th British Division, then commanded by Major-General Weir) the Division on the night of December 14 put in an attack with the object of outflanking the German strongpoint at Faenza and thus loosening the entire enemy hold on the country between the Lamone and the next river barrier, the Senio. Though the attack did not begin till nearly midnight, by noon the next day our troops were established a good 2,000 yards beyond their starting point and more than 200 prisoners had been taken. The Germans shelled the area before the attack with leaflets outlining the reasons why the New Zealanders should decline to fight (the usual stuff about the New Zealanders always being put in when the going was tough and suggesting they should go home to defend their own country against the Japanese). These, as usual, raised little more than a laugh because it was hard fighting all the time that the New Zealanders had encountered right from the time they started. They knew when they started the attack that they were pitted against the 90th Panzer Grenadier Division, successor of the celebrated 90th Light Division they so often fought in the desert and eventually captured in Tunisia. The New Zealanders had been nineteen months waiting to meet the reformed 90th Light. One regiment of the 90th Panzer Grenadiers was completely wiped out in the attack,

THE SECOND N.Z.E.F.

180 German dead being counted in the Celle area. The Germans put in three counter-attacks but the New Zealand infantry wiped them out. The next day Faenza fell, and the New Zealanders cleared the town after bitter street fighting. Their opponents in Faenza itself were German suicide squads left behind to resist to the last. The real climax to the bitter struggle for the town was fought on a ridge to the south-west. The New Zealanders advanced another three and a half miles along the main road and in the process gave the 90th Panzer Grenadiers another thrashing. Nearly 300 of them were captured. Forward infantry and armoured elements dealing with machine-gun posts and opposition from tanks forged steadily on to the eastern bank of the Senio. Some German resistance came from the railway embankment, but the immediate object of the two-day attack had been achieved. A captured German officer stated that the New Zealanders' success in the initial night attack was due in a large measure to the way our advancing infantry kept right up under the artillery barrage and were on the defending troops while they were still shaken by the concussion of the bursting shells. After this a static period followed of patrolling and the assumption of a defensive position because snow and heavy rain prevented offensive operations.

THE FINAL PHASE

The magnificent achievements of the Second New Zealand Division and the important part their successes played in the final operations which brought about the utter defeat of the Germans in the Italian theatre of war were reviewed in detail by Lieutenant General Freyberg, in a report to the Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones. Throughout the campaign Sir Bernard's despatches were invaluable in keeping the people of the Dominion informed of the activities of the Division. Five major battles were fought and won decisively by the New Zealanders against the cream of the German Army, and in the process three enemy divisions were destroyed. General Freyberg paid a generous tribute to his officers and men, of whom he said: "No men could have done more than they have done. No commander has been served as I have been during these difficult five and a half years.

"As I reported to the War Cabinet, the New Zealand forces have taken a very full part throughout this final stage of the war here in Italy. I now send the following account of these important operations," General Freyberg says in his report. "After a short period of training in the area near Matelica, the division went back into the line on April 18 to take part in the final battles, the object of which was to destroy the German Tenth and Fourteenth Armies in the broad, open Po Valley, force a crossing of the River Po, and then, among other plans, to push north-east and join up with Marshal Tito's forces in the vicinity of Trieste. In this offensive the Allied armies faced many difficulties. The country, with its many mountains, rivers, canals and ditches, favoured defence. The Allied and German armies were about an even match in numbers. The enemy had twenty-five divisions in Italy, eighteen of which were lined up opposite the Eighth and Fifth Armies. These included some of the Wehrmacht's best and most experienced formation troops, which had obtained, in the Italian fighting, a very high degree of skill and a stratagem of defensive fighting which Field-Marshal Kesselring promptly fostered to the utmost. They included one parachute division, our

opponents in Cassino, the Fourth Parachute Division, whose units led the attack on Crete, 90th Panzer Grenadier Division, the successor to the 90th Light Division we defeated and captured in North Africa, the 26th Panzer and 29th Panzer Grenadier Divisions, while the infantry were well tried and confident. These troops were the cream of the German Army. They had under command Tiger and Panther tanks, as well as other armour. As against these forces we had fewer but larger divisions. The balance, however, was weighed heavily in our favour as regards equipment, air support, artillery and tanks.

"During the winter months the best use had been made by the enemy of the country and by the spring the positions to be attacked were formidable. I believe the flanks of the enemy line were secure. The northern flank rested on marshy inundated areas on the Adriatic, while to the south the line lay along the Apennines. The only possible area suitable for offensive action was on the flat ground in between, which had few roads and was crossed by seven formidable river barriers, beginning with the Senio and ending with the Adige. These rivers had no junctions left and particularly in the case of the first four were heavily defended, mined and wired. The rivers themselves, owing to the peculiar formation of flood banks, were from a tactical point of view almost ideal for infantry defensive positions. The flood banks were in many cases thirty feet high, tapering from a base of one hundred feet thick up to a flat apex ten feet wide. Further, stopbanks were only 120 feet apart and the enemy was dug in tightly on both banks. When the near bank was attacked you were shot at from the trenches on the far side. Between the banks themselves were mines and wire. The enemy slit trenches on these flood banks were most difficult artillery targets. The water gap itself, although only forty feet wide, was ten feet deep between the canalised, perpendicular banks fifteen feet deep dropping almost vertically down to the water's edge. Altogether, the position was a most difficult one to capture. Field-Marshal Alexander's plan was to attack in the flat country in the centre, thereby drawing off the enemy brigade from the mountains and the marshes, and when this had been achieved to push between the marshes through the narrow Argenta gap on the northern flank. When all enemy reserves had been drawn off from the mountains the final blow was to be struck by the Fifth American Army attacking through the hills towards Bologna. The under-lying intention behind the whole plan was to defeat the German forces in their existing defences so that further enemy resistance on the big obstacles of the Po and Adige rivers would not be possible.

"Your division, a part of the Fifth British Corps, was given the role of slogging across the rivers in the centre and fighting hard battles to carry out the job of smashing as much of the German army as possible, drawing off enemy reserves and thereby weakening the flanks so that other formations could push through. It is a fair statement to say that during these operations the New Zealand Division, which had grouped with it nine British artillery regiments, carried out its part most thoroughly. The enemy fought right through without respite from D Day to the final phase at Trieste. In the process your division destroyed three German divisions—the Fourth Parachute Division, the 98th and the 278th Divisions. In all these operations we were most ably supported by the 12th Lancers, the 42nd British medium artillery regiment and later on by Brigadier Barker's 43rd Gurkha Brigade. In the original plan it had never been intended that our thrust should break the enemy line. It was assumed that the main break-through would occur to the north through the marshland of Argenta on April 29. So successful,

however, were operations of the Second New Zealand Division and the troops on our immediate flanks that five rivers south of the Po and the Adige were crossed more quickly than was estimated, and the operations which started as subsidiary ones finished up by smashing the enemy line and enabling the New Zealand Division to break through to Venice. We are, as I start writing this cablegram, across the rivers Piave, Tagliamento and Isonzo and we move forward tomorrow toward the capture of Trieste. We have joined up with the forces of Marshal Tito.

"In all your division fought five major battles against the pick of the German Army. These battles were those of the Rivers Senio, Santerno, Sillaro, Gaiana and Idice. The plan of attack on each of these obstacles was not merely to secure a crossing on which to drive the enemy back, but to destroy his forces. In this way alone could his divisions be broken and prevented from reforming a line further back. Our policy has been, as always, to hit the enemy a tremendous blow with every available offensive weapon—often with from 250 to 300 guns and 400 to 500 planes, supported by 150 tanks. During the four hours of bombardment supporting each of the main battles our guns fired up to a quarter of a million rounds. These terrific bombardments enabled the infantry to advance and crush the enemy on our front and then to push through the gap we had made to the next defended river line. We always attacked at night on a broad front, with two brigades forward and one brigade in reserve. Later, to ease the hard-worked New Zealand Division infantry, we were given the 43rd Gurkha lorried infantry brigade. This enabled us to carry on delivering blow after blow by relieving the forward brigades after each operation.

"It was battles such as these which paved the way to victory. On the Senio and the Santerno we smashed completely the 98th Division. On the Sillaro we broke the back of the 278th Division. On the Gaiana and the Idice we paid off the final of our old scores with the 4th Parachute Division and part of the 1st Parachute Division. The 4th Parachute Division, fully confident that they could hold the rivers where less fanatic divisions had failed, dug themselves in on the west stopbank of the Gaiana. The bombardment on the parachute division was the heaviest of the war, estimated at 100 rounds for every man holding the river line, and in support of this bombardment our flame-throwing tanks attacked the line of the stopbank with flames. It was little wonder that our success was complete. On the Idice, the next obstacle, we were not faced with organised resistance and were able to rush the river banks without difficulty. The destruction of the enemy division against us was a big factor in smashing the Germans here in Italy. No division that opposed us could stand up to the methods employed. During the early stages of the offensive the fighting was bitter. We captured between 2,000 and 3,000 infantry, all part of Germany's finest fighting infantry. The enemy was well beaten and could put up only half-hearted resistance on the formidable river barriers of the Po and the Adige. These were crossed with the greatest skill in assault boats and bridged with folding boat equipment for our light transport, and forty-ton rafts for our tanks and heavy artillery. In this way 150 heavy tanks and 5,000 vehicles and guns of the division were passed over and we were able to commence a successful advance to Padua and beyond.

"The opinions I have expressed as to the importance of our contribution are borne out to a great extent by others, and I quote a cablegram from the Army Commander and a charming letter I received today from the commander of the gallant Second Polish Corps who fought upon our left flank.

"My heartiest congratulations on reaching Trieste. To have led the advance of the Eighth Army from the River Senio to the Alps is a magnificent achievement for your troops."

"My dear general, on behalf of all officers and men of the Second Polish Corps I feel that I must write to express to you our unbounded admiration of your truly magnificent achievements since the offensive against the River Senio. The Polish soldier knows well that his own successes were to a very considerable degree dependent upon the brilliant actions which were fought on his right. Since that period, during which we had the honour of attacking alongside your troops, your incomparable fighting qualities have been still more evidenced by the speed of your advance against the toughest troops which the enemy could muster, and these qualities have aroused a feeling of respect, admiration and comradeship which will live in our memories throughout the years of peace. May I say, too, how deeply grateful we are for the help which you have given to our people. The sympathy which you have shown will never be forgotten by the Polish fighting soldiers. Yours very sincerely, Z. Bohusz-Szyszko."

"It is fair to add that the speed of our advance was only possible because of the engineering work of our divisional engineers under the command of Colonel F. M. Hanson, whose work was of a very high order," General Freyberg continued. "Once the crust of enemy resistance was broken just south of Padua, we carried out the advance through Padua itself on to the River Piave, including the capture of Venice. In two successive days' moves we had advanced 80 miles, capturing many thousands of prisoners. As the bridges over the River Po had all been destroyed some months back by our own air forces, a halt of twenty-four hours became necessary to bridge the gap and the division took advantage of this to do maintenance, service tanks, and gather up and evacuate the huge number of enemy prisoners who were by now becoming an embarrassment. The last stages of our advance to join up with Marshal Tito's forces showed the division again in its traditional rôle—a 'left hook' carried out magnificently. I wish you could have seen the triumphal move of this highly-trained force along the coast over the Piave and Isonzo in places fighting hard and as opposition broke down moving long distances through towns and villages full of cheering and happy people with all our vehicles, tanks and guns garlanded with flowers. The last part of the advance was a sustained attack to free Trieste. It will always be a proud moment for the New Zealand Division that we were able to be of assistance to the Yugoslav Army in helping to free Trieste. I cannot say how many German prisoners were taken during the move from the Po. I can only estimate the numbers at between 30,000 and 40,000. Our casualties, I am glad to say, have not been unduly heavy for the scope of the operations."

"No tribute I can pay does justice to the individuals whose work has contributed to our great successes. A successful commander depends in battle upon his subordinates. No praise can be sufficiently high for our commanders and staff. I wish especially to mention Brigadier Parkinson, commanding the Sixth New Zealand Infantry Brigade, Brigadier I. L. Bonifant, commanding the Fifth New Zealand Infantry Brigade, and Brigadier W. G. Gentry, commanding the newly-formed Ninth New Zealand Infantry Brigade, which distinguished itself so greatly during the battle of the Gaiana River and the advance to Trieste. Outstanding work has been done by Colonel Hanson, commanding the Divisional Engineers, and by Colonel Campbell, commanding the Fourth New Zealand Armoured Brigade. The work of Brigadier R. C. Queree, commanding the Divisional Artillery, during the five battles from the Senio to Gaiana and beyond has been well up to that high standard which has

always been the characteristic of New Zealand artillery. The work of the Army Service Corps under Brigadier Crump in keeping us fed and maintained over difficult obstacles and long lines of communication has been up to the highest traditions of desert days. On my own staff Colonels Gilbert, Elliott and Cook and Major Cox, the intelligence officer, have been of the greatest assistance and help. Their work has been of a high order. But it is not of these senior officers, good as they have been, that one thinks most after battles such as we have been through. No division, no matter how good the commander and staff may be, could achieve such results during the last year of heavy fighting unless the rank and file of the force were of the highest class. Our New Zealand troops have gone into these battles day after day and night after night with a quiet steady determination and a spirit which I have not seen equalled elsewhere in my experience of warfare. In the New Zealander you have qualities of heart and mind that place him high among men. It is to resolute courage in our junior officers and men that this division owes its fighting record. No men could have done more than they have done. Never daunted, always calm, no matter how great the odds against them have been. No commander has been served as I have been during these difficult five and a half years. I have been the most fortunate and privileged of commanders to have led such a division."

The Ninth Brigade referred to resulted from a reorganisation in February-March, 1945. The 27th Machine-gun Battalion and Divisional Cavalry were converted to infantry and, with the 22nd Motor Battalion, formed the new 9th Brigade. This made the Division one of three infantry brigades and one armoured brigade.

New Zealand units were first into Trieste at the end of the Italian campaign. Lieutenant-Colonel H. V. Donald, D.S.O., M.C., leading the 22nd (Wellington) Battalion, was first there, and received the surrender of the German garrison. He was followed by Lieutenant Colonel V. J. Tanner, D.S.O., commanding the Divisional Cavalry. The Wellington Battalion after the defeats in Greece and Crete fought its way across the desert and up through Italy to Trieste. This battalion began as an infantry unit, and was with the Fifth Brigade at El Alamein, then it became a motor battalion and continued in this form till after Rimini, when it reverted to infantry. In its battles at the approaches to Florence, where the first Tiger tank was captured in complete running order, with its full crew, the battalion won six or eight decorations within four days. Later in the campaign stiff battles were fought at the Senio River, and when the German line broke there the Wellington Battalion took the lead and swift advances were made. Once the battalion travelled eighty-seven miles in a day.

On November 22, 1945, the sixth anniversary of his appointment, Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Freyberg, V.C., K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., LL.D., D.C.L., relinquished command of the 2nd N.Z.E.F. and handed over to Major-General W. G. Stevens. The Prime Minister, Right Hon. P. Fraser, in a tribute, said: "General Freyberg has led the Second New Zealand Division from its inception and throughout its history he has shared with his men in its splendid feats of courage, endurance and victorious achievement. Thanks and praise to its commander are inseparable from our pride in the Second New Zealand Division. The magnificent record of our fighting men must always be associated with their leader. In Greece and Crete, in the battles of the African campaigns, at Mizar Quaim, at El Alamein, and in the famous 'left hook' at El Hamma, he and his men continually enhanced their great reputation, and so it was right through the Italian campaign, on the

Sangro, at Cassino, and the Senio River, till our division finally reached Trieste. The men of our division, which under General Freyberg became as honoured by our Allies as it was feared and respected by our foes, will always be proud of the service and success to which he led them as the spearhead of the 8th Army. Though in the darkest days the division had to undertake desperate enterprises, General Freyberg's responsibility for the lives of his men always weighed most heavily with him. There were times when he invoked his right, which had been assured by the Government in New Zealand, to refuse to take part in ventures in which he considered the cost would outweigh the gain. Of constant importance, too, was his determination that the division would always be provided with the highest possible standard of equipment and the fullest armoured support. It was the emphasis he laid on equipment that gave the division that extraordinary mobility which enabled it to deliver the very effective series of Freyberg 'left hooks' from El Alamein to the Mareth Line. His care of his men out of the line during times of rest was no less thorough."

Lieutenant-General Freyberg was appointed to succeed Air Marshal Sir Cyril Newall as Governor-General of New Zealand.

THE ENGINEERS

For lack of information at my disposal it is not possible to deal separately with the achievements of specialised units of the 2nd N.Z.E.F. There is to hand, however, an official news story concerning the engineers, which opens with this statement by Lieutenant-General Sir John Harding, Corps Commander, late in the Italian campaign: "I am satisfied that the New Zealand Engineers are the best in the world." The story, taken up from this stage by the official correspondent, continues: "Earlier stories have told what the Engineers did to earn this very high praise, and since the campaign ended it has been possible to collect stories of outstanding individual efforts. All our sappers are good. They are a great team, without a weak link, and these stories not only record individual acts of bravery, but epitomise what all went through. The New Zealanders were the only engineers to accomplish the building of a Bailey bridge under assault conditions, and their speedy work throughout was largely due to intensive preparation. Much credit for developing the low-level bridging technique goes to Captain N. J. H. Harris (Wellington) who also set a great example to his men on the Santerno River when he went out in daylight under fire and cleared mines to the top of a stop-bank, and then, under Spandau fire, cleared the stop-bank to speed up the bulldozing. One of the outstanding leaders throughout was Major Charles Clark (Dunedin) whose contempt of heavy enemy fire set a great example. Before the crossing of the Senio he worked in mine-fields under heavy mortaring, laying out a cross-country track from the road to the sites of two bridges that he built. Under shelling and mortar and small arms fire he built a bridge over the Santerno and two over the Sillaro. A North Islander, Second Lieutenant Sidney J. Matthews, attached to the infantry for sapper reconnaissance and mine-clearing, won the unbounded admiration of the infantrymen on the Adige, when in daylight he called for someone to row him across the river to test the depths. Reaching the bank, and knowing he was under enemy observation, he calmly waded to the far bank where he came under mortar fire. The result of his report was that the assault across

the river was made sooner than had been planned and the Division was able to maintain unceasing pressure on the retreating enemy. Previously, Lieut. Matthews had spent many hours in the darkness, clearing mines and demolition charges, under fire after crossing the Senio. Captain Albert A. Keller (New Plymouth) was enjoying his first night's rest for nine days when he was called out at 3.30 a.m. to reconnoitre a route to the Gaiana. The Germans were fighting desperately, and it was vitally necessary to take support arms to and across the river. Calmly walking through the intense shell and mortar fire he mapped out the route. When he came under small arms fire at close range, he went back to guide up tanks which cleaned up the German pocket. Then he stood in the open, directing the bulldozers until the route was made and the Gaiana crossing was completed. After this, at the Fissatone canal, also under heavy shelling and small arms fire, he built a crossing. Twenty minutes before the job was completed he was seriously wounded, but sat giving directions and encouraging the men until the tanks started to cross. From Senio to Trieste, Captain G. S. Menzies (Napier) made forward reconnaissances, cleared mines, and placed several bridges in position under fire. One night three of his bulldozers were blown up by mines, but under heavy fire and without infantry support the bridge was completed. There were many instances of unspectacular acts of cold courage, like that of Lance-Sergeant E. A. Sinclair (Richmond, Nelson), who worked through hours of darkness under intense fire which caused many casualties to the men with him, and cleared a road of thick minefields. Much of the engineering work was unspectacular, dangerous work in the darkness and in dangerous places, and it is impossible to record more than a few acts of gallantry. Typical of sapper coolness was a fine job done by Corporal S. A. Crook (Christchurch) who was in charge of the unloading and proper stacking of materials to build a bridge across the Sillaro. Trucks had to be unloaded at a place which was under persistent mortar and machine-gun fire, which became heavier as the work proceeded, but the forty-year-old corporal kept his small party working steadily, and directed them from the top of the stop-bank to such good effect that the bridging party was enabled to do a fast job. Then there was the amazing coolness of Sapper R. A. J. Hooper (Christchurch) who spent three hours under shell and mortar fire picking his way back and forth through minefields and carrying explosives across the Senio to blast a gap through the far stopbank. The Division has no more gallant soldiers than the bulldozer operators, who often started work on the near stopbank before darkness, and though their noisy machines frequently drew enemy fire, kept stolidly working on. And no commanding officer set a better example to his men than Major George K. Armstrong, M.C. (Dunedin) who kept his bulldozers up with the forward troops throughout the campaign. On the Senio, the Santerno, the Sillaro, and the Gaiana he moved round the bridge sites under heavy fire, keeping the work going steadily, and on the Senio he guided a bulldozer blade with an electric torch during one difficult task. At the Lugo Canal he crawled forward under short-range small-arms fire and reconnoitred a crossing. A bulldozer driven by Corporal A. M. Read (Tauwhare, Hamilton) exploded three mines on the Senio, but he kept going. He was badly bruised when the bulldozer was blown up by an anti-tank mine, but took charge of a replacement machine and completed the job. On the Gaiana, he took the place of a bulldozer driver who was wounded, and completed three crossings under machine-gun and shell fire. All one afternoon and until daylight next day Sapper I. Strahl (Kaikoura) operated a bulldozer under harassing fire. He had almost filled

one crater when a shell landed in it a few feet in front of the machine and blew most of the earth out. So he started over again and filled in that crater. In later operations he bulldozed crossings across three canals under heavy fire. Sapper T. G. McIntosh (Mount Roskill) also worked from early afternoon to morning next day under heavy fire on the Sillaro. His machine was twice knocked out, but he made immediate repairs and completed his job. While the enemy was laying down accurate fire on demolitions on a main road near the Quaderno canal, Lance-Corporal M. R. Blacktopp, filled craters and moved on to the crossing work, where a shell blast blew the bulldozer off the road. He repaired it, and had just completed the job when the machine was knocked out. Corporal Charles Henry Anderton, attached to the 20th Armoured Regiment, suffered shock when his armoured bulldozer was blown up by mines at the Senio, but he took over a replacement machine and finished the job. At the Gaiana he went forward unsupported under enemy fire, and cut a track for flame-throwers to lead infantry into the attack, and at the Quaderno, when a heavy gun, at close range, knocked out an ordinary bulldozer and seriously wounded the operator, he completed the job.

FAREWELL

Lieutenant-General Freyberg, at a gathering given in his honour at Divisional Headquarters, Trieste, late in July, 1945, gave the first announcement that the Division was moving from the European theatre. The 8th Army commander, Lieutenant-General Sir Richard McCreery, in his reply to the toast proposed in his honour, paid his tribute to the New Zealand Division in these words:—

"I consider your achievements are without parallel in this war. We fully appreciate the fact—and I speak for the whole 8th Army—that your force is much more than a division. It is an expeditionary force, and in operations during the past few years it has often been called the New Zealand Corps. We also appreciate that your forces played a much longer part than the 8th Army itself. We are always inclined to think of recent events and forget how in the first two years of the war such a great amount was done when Britain was fighting alone on such slender resources. Some historic campaigns you took part in, such as Greece, had a tremendous effect, and without the assistance you gave the Greeks, Russia might well have gone under in the summer of 1941 and we might have had another Napoleonic war lasting twenty years.

"You have played a unique part against the German army, and I consider that your achievements have been of tremendous importance. You have been the spearhead of many big operations the 8th Army has carried out. Your unique part is due to certain qualities your Division has always had. You have got that fighting spirit which is the basic thing a soldier must have in war. You have got endurance, and you will die if necessary for your country. You have always shown great initiative and a high standard of individual enterprise and skill."

Credit for much of the Division's success must go to the gunners, sappers and supply columns, said General McCreery, as all these had a high level of efficiency and the will to get things done. In the latest offensive in Italy New Zealand sappers had always got troops across the most difficult obstacles

before anyone else could have done so. "You got away with a great record. This is an appropriate time for me to say good-bye, because this is the end of the 8th Army. Shortly the 8th Army will officially disappear, and we will become the headquarters of the British troops in Austria. This end of the 8th Army is the result of victory."

The Division ceased operations in the European theatre in July, 1945, and handed over to occupation troops. During the last week of this month it moved from Trieste nearly 500 miles south to an area in central Italy around Lake Trasimeno near where it had fought a year ago.

In five and a half years New Zealand Army hospitals overseas admitted and treated 120,000 men and women—wounded, injured in accidents, or sick. The New Zealand general hospitals in the Middle East were shifted no fewer than fifteen times, often hundreds of miles, and each move occupying approximately six weeks.

The first New Zealand soldier killed in this war was Private G. R. Osborn, Western Desert, September 13, 1940—the result of a thermos bomb.

At VE Day the strength of the New Zealand Military Forces, including the WAAC's, was: Overseas, 39,374; in New Zealand, 16,000. This table shows the relative monthly army strength from June, 1945, to March, 1946:

	Overseas.	In New Zealand.
June	39,317	15,975
July	37,312	15,619
August	34,700	11,029
September	26,118	9,809
October	24,759	8,892
November	23,759	8,401
December	20,494	8,091
March	4,742	10,000

By March 31, only a small rear party and graves units remained in the Middle East. The Army strength in New Zealand was then 6,268, excluding about 4,000 J Force reinforcements. The grand total of men in the Armed Forces at March 31 was approximately 24,000 (Navy, 3,697; Air Force, 6,317; Army, 14,000), of whom 6,786 were overseas (of these, 428 were with the R.N.Z.N., 1,351 with the R.N.Z.A.F., including Japan, and 4,742 with the Army, including 4,007 in Japan).

Awards and decorations to the 2nd N.Z.E.F., announced by March 31, 1946, totalled 3,792, as follows:—

	Middle East	Pacific	Total
Operational			
V.C.	5	—	5
Bar to V.C.	1	—	1
D.S.O.	104	7	111
Bar to D.S.O.	18	1	19
M.C.	241	11	252
Bar to M.C.	13	—	13
D.C.M.	102	5	107
Bar to D.C.M.	1	—	1
M.M.	579	9	588
Bar to M.M.	4	—	4
Mentioned in Dispatches	2,097	151	2,248
Non-Operational			
K.C.B.	1	—	1
C.B.	5	1	6
K.B.E.	1	—	1

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

C.B.E.	25	3	28
O.B.E.	77	6	83
M.B.E.	130	12	142
B.E.M.	64	6	70
Royal Red Cross	25	2	27
George Medal	1	—	1
	3,494	214	3,708

Foreign Awards

American Silver Star	2	3	5
American Bronze Star	10	3	13
American Legion of Merit (Degree of Legionnaire)	—	3	3
American Legion of Merit (Degree of Officer)	—	10	10
American Legion of Merit (Degree of Commander)	2	2	4
Soviet Medal for Valour	1	—	1
Greek Order of Silver Phoenix Cross	3	—	3
Greek Order of Phoenix, Grand Commander	1	—	1
Greek Order of King George I. Silver Cross	2	—	2
Greek Medal for Outstanding Service	7	—	7
Greek Military Cross	12	—	12
Greek Bronze Medal of King George I. with Sword	17	—	17
Greek Silver Medal of King George I. with Sword	4	—	4
Greek Gold Medal of King George I. with Sword	2	—	2
Totals	63	21	84
Grand Totals	3,557	235	3,792

By April 30, additional awards announced were: K.C.B., 1; C.B., 4; K.B.E., 2; C.B.E., 6; O.B.E., 28; M.B.E., 56; B.E.M., 38.

The 1st N.Z.E.F. gained 3,746 honours and awards, including 11 V.C.'s, 135 D.S.O.'s (plus eight with Bar), 506 M.C.'s (plus 25 with Bar), 389 D.C.M.'s (plus four with Bar), 2,006 M.M.'s (plus 62 with Bar).

THE MAORI BATTALION

The Maori Battalion, because of their splendid fighting spirit and their expression at the cost of life and limb of loyalty to their country, deserves a special mention.

Two days after the outbreak of war, a request from the four Maori Members of Parliament that the Maori race should again be permitted to volunteer for military service as a racial unit was made in the House of Representatives. On September 18 there was a further request from the Maori people for the establishment of a Maori Unit for active service. On October 4, the Government announced its decision to

form a Rifle Battalion from members of the Maori race for service as combatant troops in or beyond New Zealand. Command of battalion given to Major G. Dittmer, O.B.E., M.C., N.Z.S.C. Up to the end of October, 1939, 859 Maoris had registered for enlistment. On November 25 eleven officers and 135 other ranks reported at Trentham for preliminary training at the Army School as prospective officers and N.C.O.'s. The appointments were not confirmed until the end of January, 1940. The Battalion went into camp at Palmerston North on January 26, 1940, and on May 1, 1940, thirty-nine officers and 642 other ranks, under Lieutenant-Colonel Dittmer sailed as part of the Second Echelon. As part of the echelon the battalion on June 16 was anchored in the Clyde off Greenock. They were accommodated successively in several camps, Evshott, then Doddington, Eastling, Wichling and Stalisfield Green (in companies), and Farnham, Lower Bourne, in the Aldershot Command. On January 7, 1941, the Battalion as part of the Second Echelon sailed for the Middle East from Liverpool, arrived at Port Tewfik on March 3 and went into camp at Helwan. It left Helwan on the first stage of the trip to Greece on March 18 and reached Piræus on March 27. On April 15-16 the first contact was made with the enemy at Petras Pass, Mount Olympus; a successful withdrawal was effected.

On April 24 and 25 the Battalion was evacuated from Greece on the *Glengyle* and disembarked the same afternoon at Suda Bay, Crete. The airborne invasion of Crete began on May 20. The Battalion was engaged on May 22 in a counter-attack against Maleme aerodrome with the 20th Battalion, but did not reach the objective. On May 27 came the historic bayonet charge at Suda Bay against the enemy, who had quietly closed in on the Battalion while resting; about 100 Germans were killed, and the rest put to flight. On May 30-31 most of the Battalion was evacuated from Crete and the rearguard evacuated the next night. The Battalion took part in the Libyan campaign and in the period, November 23 to December 23, 1941, took Sollum Barracks in a morning attack (here Dittmer was wounded). Two hundred and forty-seven prisoners were taken. On November 26 in an action at Fort Musaid of the "B" Company (men of the Arawa Tribe) against a column of motorised tanks and infantry, possibly led by Rommel, the Battalion killed seventy-six of the enemy and took seven prisoners. On December 3, 1941, the Battalion ambushed an enemy column on the main Bardia-Tobruk road at Menastir, inflicting heavy casualties—250 killed, 146 prisoners of war. Maori casualties: Two killed, five wounded. On December 11, there was another historic action at Sidi Magreb, near Acroma, when 1,123 Italian prisoners were captured by two companies—"A" Company (Ngāpuhi of North Auckland) and "B" Company (Arawas). The Maoris took Gazala at the point of the bayonet on December 14. On December 23, with the end of the 1941 Libyan campaign for the Battalion, it moved to Syria. On June 17, 1942, the journey to Egypt from Syria began. On June 27-28, 1942, the Battalion bayoneted their way through the enemy at the historic break-through at Minqar Quaim. October 23 saw the Battalion's first action in Montgomery's break-through at Alamein—Miteiriya Ridge action—the Battalion mopping up.

On November 2 it took an important part in the final break-through, and provided a firm base while other Units of the 8th Army broke through. Next day the pursuit battle to Tunisia began. March 6, 1943, saw the historic one-day Battle of Medenine, where the Maori Battalion threw back an attack by the whole of the 10th Panzer Division, knocking out five enemy tanks and taking eighteen prisoners. On March 26-27 in the Point 209 Battle in the El

Hamma Gap, for twenty-four hours the Battalion fought a whole German Battalion of the Panzer Grenadier Regiment toe to toe, man for man. In the end the whole German garrison surrendered, including the commanding officer, who stated that the whole of his Battalion had been annihilated by the Maoris. Those who were not killed were either wounded or taken prisoner; 231 Germans were taken prisoner. Maori Casualties—twenty-two killed, seventy-six wounded. For this action the Maori Battalion was awarded every decoration possible from Second-Lieutenant Ngarimu's Victoria Cross to the Military Medal (one V.C., one D.S.O., one M.C., one D.C.M., seven M.M.). The Battalion took part in the historic Takrouna Battle on March 19-21. For it the highlights of the Italian campaign (December, 1943–May, 1945) were Cassino, Sora, Florence, Rimini, Faenza, Senio River, and Trieste.

The total embarkations (exclusive of Maori personnel who enlisted with pakeha units), were 3,543. The total casualties (comprising killed, wounded, prisoners of war and missing), were 2,595. The total killed was thirty-three officers and 585 other ranks, and wounded, 103 officers and 1,607 other ranks. These figures are for the whole of the 1939-45 war.

Decorations won by the Battalion were: Victoria Cross, 1; Distinguished Service Order, 6; Military Cross, 17; Bar to Military Cross, 3; Distinguished Conduct Medal, 12; Military Medal, 50; Mentioned in Dispatches, 45.

The Maori Battalion had a total of ten commanding officers, six of whom were members of the Maori race. They were:—

Lieutenant-Colonel G. Dittmer, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., in command throughout England, Greece, Crete. Wounded at Sollum in 1941 Libyan campaign. It can be said that it was Lieutenant-Colonel Dittmer who was chiefly responsible for moulding the Maori Battalion into the fine fighting machine that it eventually proved itself.

Lieutenant-Colonel H. G. Dyer assumed command after Lieutenant-Colonel Dittmer was wounded and commanded the Battalion with distinction throughout the remainder of the 1941 Libyan campaign. Relinquished command while the Battalion was in Syria.

Major (Temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) E. T. W. Love. The first Maori to command the Battalion. He took it over in Syria after Lieutenant-Colonel Dyer and returned with it to the Western Desert in the middle of June, 1942, and ably led the Battalion in the break-through at Abu Betta. He was killed in action on the El Alamein front on July 12, 1942. Mentioned in dispatches.

Lieutenant-Colonel F. Baker, D.S.O. He succeeded Lieutenant-Colonel Love on July 13, 1942. He gave distinguished service in Greece and Crete, where he was wounded. He ably led the Battalion in its opening moves at El Alamein, but was wounded on the night of the final break-through, November 2, 1942, and was later invalided to New Zealand and later became Director of Rehabilitation.

Lieutenant-Colonel C. M. Bennett, D.S.O. Major I. A. Hart, second in command, took over from Lieutenant-Colonel Baker, but was himself wounded the same day (later died) and the command passed to Lieutenant-Colonel Bennett. During his command the Maori Battalion fought some of its heaviest battles during the pursuit from Alamein to Tunisia, particularly at Tebaga in the El Hamma Gap (where Second-Lieutenant Ngarimu won his V.C.) and at Takrouna, where he was severely wounded and invalided to New Zealand.

Major (Temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) K. A. Keiha, M.C. took over when Lieutenant-Colonel Bennett was wounded and led the Battalion in the

closing stages of the Tunisian battle, after which he brought it back to Egypt.

Lieutenant-Colonel M. C. Fairbrother, D.S.O., O.B.E., took over from Major Keiha just prior to leaving Egypt for Italy and led the Battalion in its first action in Italy near Orsogna. He relinquished command towards the end of December, 1943, and returned to New Zealand on furlough.

Lieutenant-Colonel R. R. T. Russell Young, D.S.O. He held the longest active command from December, 1943, to November, 1944, and led the Battalion with great distinction throughout most of its battles in Italy—at Cassino, during the pursuit through Mount Belvedere, Attina and Sora and at Florence and Rimini. He relinquished the command on being due for New Zealand furlough leave.

Lieutenant-Colonel A. Awatere, D.S.O., M.C. He took over from Lieutenant-Colonel Young in November, 1944, and commanded until cessation of hostilities in May, 1945. Led Battalion at Faenza, Senio River and the follow-up to Trieste. Awarded M.C. while Company Commander at El Hamma battle in Tunisia and D.S.O. in Italy.

Major (Temporary Lieutenant-Colonel) J. C. Henare. He took over from Lieutenant-Colonel Awatere after the cessation of hostilities in Italy and during the occupation of Trieste. He retained the command and returned to New Zealand with the Maori Battalion.

As an example of Maori fighting spirit the Tuahiwi pa, North Canterbury, may be cited. Of sixty-five males between seven and seventy years, forty-five went overseas—in one case grandfather and grandson—and eight were in the home forces. One company of Maoris went in the New Zealand Brigade to Japan.

Of the 700 Maoris in the South Island who were of military age, 250 served overseas (other South Island Maoris joined up in the North Island) and 500 South Island Maoris enlisted for military service, representing one out of every six of the total South Island Maori population.

THE ARMY IN THE PACIFIC

"I desire to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the people of New Zealand for the magnificent co-operation extended me in the discharge of my responsibility in our common cause. The 3rd New Zealand Division has acquitted itself with utmost gallantry in the Pacific battles in which it has engaged the enemy and thereby contributed greatly to the success of our campaigns in the South-west Pacific area. Your air forces in their support of ground operations and attacks on Rabaul and enemy positions in Bougainville have equally commanded my admiration and high commendation. From our association I shall ever hold the New Zealand people in deep affection and I pray that God will further their country's cause in the future as He has so obviously blessed her arms in the past."

—General Macarthur on relinquishing command over that part of the South-west Pacific area lying south of the Philippines.

The Third New Zealand Division have not the magnificent fighting record of the Second Division (Middle East) but that was merely a matter of lack of opportunity and, in fact, good fortune for the people of New Zealand. Had the Japanese push not been arrested, then the Third Division would have had to play a mighty part in protecting their own country from the dangers of invasion. Drawn from the same good stuff as the men of the Second Division, they would have acquitted themselves equally well and certainly, in the operations they did undertake, they performed with skill, success and gallantry. For most there was the strain of sub-tropical conditions and monotony, unrelieved by the fortune their brothers of the Second Division had in seeing such ancient centres of civilisation as Greece, Rome and so on. There were many, however, who served in both Divisions. Above all, in traversing their achievements, it is essential to bear in mind that the soldier's job is to go where he is put; he does not choose his own field of warfare.

It is a notable fact that the first expeditionary force of this war left New Zealand three days before war was declared on Germany; a detachment known as No. 1 Platoon, of two officers and thirty-one other ranks, who left in *H.M.S. Leander* on August 30, 1939, to defend the Fanning Island cable station and remained there until United States troops took over in May, 1942.

"B" Force left for Fiji on October 28, 1940; a total of 949 officers and men in the *Rangitira* escorted by *H.M.S. Monowai*. This was the first section of what

later became the 8th Brigade Group. It had been recommended as far back as November, 1938, by the Chiefs of Staff that the Fiji Defence Force be increased to a brigade, coast artillery installed, airfields constructed and reinforcements trained in New Zealand. The 18th Army Troops Company had begun camp construction in September, 1940; the first site at Samambula, five miles from Suva, and the second at Namaka, in the western area, and both inside the defence zones on Viti Levu. It is worth recalling that in 1919 Earl Jellicoe reported to the British Admiralty that "it is impossible to consider the question of naval strategy in the Pacific without taking account of Suva harbour. This harbour holds a position of great strategic importance with reference to New Zealand and Australia. It should, therefore, be strongly fortified and held." The 8th Brigade Group of 3,053, all ranks, was in occupation by the end of November, 1940—the 29th Battalion and attached services at Samambula and the 30th Battalion, and attached services, at Namaka, 150 miles apart. Camp construction was a priority at first and later succeeded by defence measures, all carried out under tropical conditions to which the troops were totally unused. A four point seven inch battery was installed at Delaimbilo on the opposite side of the harbour. In time this activity gave place to route marching and tough tactical exercises over undulating country covered with thick shrubs and grasses, and along muddy mangrove swamps of highly unpleasant flavour. Fiji boasted a composite force of the three services by mid-January, 1941—the 8th Brigade, a small force of de Havillands and a Moth (for training), and a naval officer for the control of shipping through the group. Fijians made keen but imaginative coast-watchers and the situation demanded that even the most fantastic reports be fully investigated. This placed a particularly heavy strain on the air force. The worst hurricane for twenty-one years struck Fiji on the morning of February 20, 1941, when the registering mechanism recorded 110 miles an hour at 11.15 a.m. It then broke, but the fury of the hurricane increased. Big trees were broken clean off, Indian houses and shacks smashed, and telephone and power lines went down. All this was to the accompaniment of rain which was given stinging force by the power of the hurricane. Three ships sheltering at Suva were driven on mud banks in the harbour. Namaka was severely flooded, and at Samambula, six camp buildings wrecked, and others damaged, including a large workshop. Two aircraft, which represented half the R.N.Z.A.F. in the Pacific at that time, were wrecked on Nausori airfield. That night a store hut in Samambula caught afire and equipment valued at £1,725 was lost. An A.S.C. convoy was trapped by fast-rising rivers while moving by the northern coast road from Namaka to Suva and had a difficult ordeal. Other parties on the south coast road were marooned. In all this, no troops were injured. April saw torrential rain, sometimes as much as two inches an hour, and a total of forty inches by April 23. Next month the 29th and 30th Battalions changed territory. The original scheme provided for six months in Fiji and then relief, preparatory to going to the Middle East. The first such relief arrived on May 23 and 29 in the *Rangatira* escorted by the *Achilles*. Wireless operators, with soldiers, sailed in *H.M.F.S. Viti* on July 19, 1941, to establish coast-watching stations in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, military intelligence in London and Washington urgently needing advice of Japanese activities in these waters. Two soldiers accompanied one wireless operator to each of the eleven islands; the other operators went to larger islands where there were missionaries or British officials. The soldiers who went were Private R. C. Burns, A. R. Hall, D. R. Beatson, F. H. Walker, W. A. R. Parker, C. A. Kilpin,

NEW ZEALAND AT WAR

D. H. Howe, R. Jones, L. B. Speedy, J. M. Menzies, B. Were, J. T. Cooper, A. Love, C. E. Corin, C. W. Rayner, R. M. McKenzie, J. H. Nicol, R. J. Hitchon, R. A. Ellis, C. J. Owen, M. Menzies and L. E. H. Muller. Privates Speedy, Howe, Hitchon, Kilpin, Nicol, Parker, R. M. McKenzie, Jones, Ellis and Owen were killed by the Japanese when Allied warships shelled the northern islands in preparation for an attack on Tarawa. By August, the second relief had been completed in Fiji. Tremendous defence works, involving arduous labour in tropical conditions, were constructed, including great tunnels for ammunition and R.N.Z.A.F. petrol.

It so happened when the news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour came through, that 8th Brigade troops were, in the course of training, occupying defence positions in preparation to repel an imaginary attack from the sea. Fourteen hundred Public Works men, known as the Civil Construction Unit, arrived from New Zealand to construct a large airfield at Nandi and the R.N.Z.A.F. was strengthened by five Hudsons and later, many more. United States ships and aircraft called, the former including nine ships with troops bound for the Philippines and Malaya. Brigadier W. H. Cunningham, C.B.E., D.S.O., officer commanding the Fiji Defences, was promoted Major-General and General Officer Commanding Fiji Forces, and more men and material arrived from New Zealand to bring the force up to divisional strength. Brigadier L. G. Goss took over the 8th Brigade, pending the arrival of Brigadier R. A. Row, D.S.O., and Brigadier L. Potter commanded the new 14th Brigade. The strength of the R.N.Z.A.F. was increased and there were naval minesweepers and patrol boats. Existing occupied zones were extended and defence lines strengthened. The 14th Brigade (30th, 35th and 37th Battalions) was stationed in the western area, the 8th Brigade (34th, 36th and 1st Fiji Battalions) in the neighbourhood of Suva, while the 29th Battalion (Divisional reserve, instead of the original 34th) took over the defence of the aerodrome and the Rewa River bridgehead. The 14th Brigade's area covered 1,000 square miles. The first three Liberators to arrive in Fiji touched down on the new airfield on January 23. Many more followed, there were constant calls from aircraft coming to and from the Philippines, Malaya, Australia and New Zealand, then the 47th United States Pursuit Squadron in Airacobras came, and Catalina flying-boats for patrol and rescue work. Two hundred mines sealed dangerous openings through the reefs. Shore watchers one January afternoon saw *H.M.S. Monowai* attacked by an enemy submarine soon after clearing Suva harbour to convoy ships returning to New Zealand. The *Monowai* was not damaged. Major-General Cunningham returned to New Zealand in March, 1942, as the result of sickness and after a period of great responsibility and achievement despite it. Major-General O. H. Mead, C.B.E., D.S.O., succeeded him on March 9. Guerrilla troops, recruited from native villages, and led by New Zealand officers and n.c.o.'s were organised in April to harass the enemy in the event of a successful attack on Fiji. From them grew the Fijian commandos whose later exploits in the Solomons made them famous as jungle fighters. Brigadier F. L. Hunt, temporarily commanding the 8th Brigade in Brigadier Row's absence, was able to prove that in rough country a band of these guerrillas could hold up the advance of a battalion. In May, 1942, 1,700 officers and men, mainly for artillery and anti-aircraft units, reached Fiji. The heavy work on defences, roads and concrete gun emplacements continued, but with more modern equipment than picks and shovels which did most of the early construction, and fewer troops were required. Early in June advance parties of the 37th American Division reached Fiji and

on June 10, the United States transports, *President Coolidge* and *Santa Lucia*, brought 5,700 officers and men under Major-General R. S. Beightler. According to *Pacific Story* (the concise official survey which covers the period beginning with the departure of B Force for Fiji in 1940 and ending in the New Hebrides in 1943, the work of Captain O. A. Gillespie, M.M.), when General Mead went aboard to welcome General Beightler, the United States sentry on the gangway remained comfortably leaning against the deck rail with one leg coiled round his rifle, and smoking a pipe! Later that month another 3,200 United States troops arrived. The first of the Third Division to leave were the 29th, 30th, and 35th Battalions and the patients and staff of the Tamavua hospital; this was June 29. The rest of the Division left on July 3 and 20, except the 36th and 37th Battalions. Operational command was handed over to General Beightler at 6 a.m. on July 18 and the Third Division's job in Fiji was over.

It is not yet known how much New Zealand owes to the presence of the Third Division in Fiji at the most critical period in the country's war history. That may not be told until, if ever, relevant Japanese documents are in Allied hands. Suffice to say that under conditions of great hardship, working for a considerable time with pick and shovel, these men not only built their own camps and elaborate, efficient defences, but they trained to a pitch where it would have required an overwhelming force to better them. They made history in that it was the first time in the British Empire a Crown colony was garrisoned by troops from one of the self-governing Dominions.

General Mead was lost when the aircraft in which he was travelling disappeared in a tropical storm off Tonga on July 25. No trace of the aircraft or the occupants was found.

The last of the Third Division reached New Zealand on August 14, 1942, and were quartered in the Auckland district. Major-General H. E. Barrowclough, D.S.O. and Bar, M.C., had been appointed commanding officer two days before. He had already served in the Great War and with the Second Division in Greece and the Middle East. The Division was now in an Army reserve role. Jungle fighting was prominent in the syllabus of training and in October, exercises were held in a large area of the Waikato. The 36th Battalion, with attached units, went to Norfolk Island, and later that month, the 34th Battalion was detached for duty in Tonga, where it stayed until relieved by the 6th Battalion, Canterbury Regiment, and then rejoined the Division in New Caledonia. In the Waikato exercises, "the Battle of the Kaimai Ranges" was fought in country resembling that of New Guinea, with aircraft co-operation. These were realistic operations in mud-and-slush bush country, and provided a severe test for what lay ahead. The first flight of the Division moved to Noumea in November, where a base was to be established for operations in the Solomons, disembarking on November 11, 1942. There were further moves that month and in December, the largest being of 7,000 troops in the United States transport, *West Point*. Anti-aircraft units assumed static defence roles at Ouatoni and Plaine des Gaiacs airfields and the heavy artillery on Ile Nou. A third brigade was added (the 15th, under Brigadier Goss). The 8th Brigade had the central sector with headquarters in the Nopoui Valley, the 14th Brigade occupied the northern sector with headquarters on the Taom River and the 15th Brigade (1st Scottish Battalion and 1st Ruahines) occupied the southern sector with headquarters at Nemeara on the road leading to Houailou. When the 43rd United States Division moved north into the combat zone, the 8th Brigade then took over the evacuated area farther south at Bouloupari. Headquarters of the New

Zealand Expeditionary Force in the Pacific and Base Units were established at Bourail, a small town, with a small sub-base at Noumea. General Barrowclough assumed operational command on December 17. Strenuous training followed, particularly in bush and jungle warfare. Full-scale brigade manoeuvres followed. The Division was built up to a strength of 17,800, all ranks, with the 34th Battalion back from Tonga in March. Every possible preparation was made for any tasks ahead. Officers went to areas where the United States forces were already engaged with the Japanese and equipment and men were tested in the most severe jungle conditions. Nothing was left to chance and every conceivable situation envisaged. The 15th Brigade was disbanded in July after unsuccessful negotiations to secure another battalion to bring it, and the Division, up to full establishment. Two heavy artillery units were also broken up, the 33rd Heavy Regiment at Ile Nou, and the 28th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, which was on aerodrome defence. Training in amphibious operations was begun; boarding and disembarking by means of clambering up or down nets from or to small landing craft, loading and unloading supplies and equipment by manpower, and assault landing exercises. Then the order came to move to Guadalcanal, with a week spent by certain units at Vila (on the island of Efate in the south of the New Hebrides group) in final training. The 14th Brigade went first, then Divisional units, and next the 8th Brigade. Towards the end of August the first combat units of the Division left Vila for Guadalcanal. The 14th Brigade disembarked there on August 27, 1943. Divisional troops and units on September 2 and the 8th Brigade on September 14. Guadalcanal was then the principal forward United States base for actions progressing 200 miles away north in the New Georgia group. Japanese bombers from Vila, on Kolombangara, and other enemy-held airfields farther north were still bombing the base. Fourteenth Brigade units established a record in clearing a troopship of men and cargo—which the 8th Brigade then equalled—and a letter of praise from United States General Harmon referred to "their high state of moral discipline and training." The first task of the Division—that of clearing Vella Lavella—fell to the 14th Brigade (Brigadier L. Potter). The Japanese were then holding an area in Paraso Bay on the north-east coast of the island, and Mundi Mundi on the west coast. Approximately 3,700 troops of the Division, who travelled north in a convoy of six LST's (landing ship, tanks), six APD's (army personnel destroyers) and six LCI's (landing craft, infantry), made the first landing on Vella Lavella on September 18, when General Barrowclough became Commanding General Northern Landing Force. United States troops were then holding between 500 and 700 Japanese along the northern area of the island, with the latter's headquarters at Timbala Bay. The plan was to use two combat teams (35th Battalion on left flank and 37th Battalion on right flank) in a pincer movement, trapping the enemy when the two effected a meeting. The 35th Battalion had established beach-heads at Mundi Mundi River, north-east coast, and the 37th Battalion at Paraso Bay, north coast, by September 21, with Brigadier Potter's headquarters at Matu Soroto. The United States troops withdrew along with their Fijian scouts, as the New Zealanders took over. The way was so difficult that when in contact with the enemy progress was only 300 to 600 yards a day, and a company front no more than 100 yds. No man moved after dark. Native guides moved with the patrols and their ability saved many lives. They were able to sniff out Japanese! There were frequent night raids on bivouac areas, twenty Zeros and twenty-five dive-bombers accounting for five killed and fifteen wounded at advanced brigade

headquarters, Matu Soroto, on September 25. The official survey *Guadalcanal to Nissan*, records: "A day to day account of this slow, searching progress would simply become a repetition of jungle-suited men, bearded and muddy, inching forward among trees and vines, squelching through mud and mangrove swamps, their eyes tired and strained by gazing into the mottled wall of greens and browns and occasional blobs of sunlight which confronted them, their nerves sharp and taut to the noise of every snapping twig. Occasionally bursts of machine-gun fire from cunningly concealed nests among the splaying roots or the crack of a sniper's rifle revealed the enemy, for only noises disclosed his position. Then a sharp engagement followed as a nest of Japanese was eradicated before the patrols moved out. If hand grenades were used, they could be thrown only with the greatest care for they frequently bounced back from vine and branch. Torrential rain hampered all movement and made observation difficult, adding to the trials of the artillery, a battery of which covered the advance of each battalion. Food supplied could be transported only by men slithering and sliding along the sodden tracks from dumps established on the beaches."

A 37th Battalion patrol reached Tambama by September 27, capturing a large barge while one section surrounded the crew of fourteen and annihilated them. Another action by a 35th Battalion patrol that day, after the main body had fought its way to Marquana Bay, showed just what stuff was in the Third Division. This patrol, taking up a position to cut off the retreat of the Japanese after the final assault, was surrounded. They were well outnumbered but without food or water, and with little equipment, they held the enemy off for nearly a week in a perimeter only twenty yards by 30 yards. On September 30, Lieutenant J. S. Albon and two men penetrated the enemy net and went for help. Lieutenant J. W. Beaumont, who remained in charge, decided they must make for the beach 1,000 yards off. There were six wounded to evacuate for whom stretchers were made from vines and branches. Private R. J. Fitzgerald, himself wounded, led the party of injured while the others covered their escape. Fifty-one men reached the beach and formed a perimeter from where they were rescued on the night of October 1. The rescue was in itself worthy of any battlefield. A reconnaissance party barge picked up the men's signals and moved in until the barge touched bottom. Lieutenant M. M. Ormsby and Sergeant W. O. McGhie started to swim ashore with a line but Ormsby was shot dead. McGhie succeeded and three men were hauled back to the barge. Then another barge with Lieutenant D. G. Graham arrived and an attempt was made to get another line ashore. Second Lieutenant C. D. Griffiths, Warrant Officer R. A. Roche, Privates S. Hislop and W. M. Pratt were killed and later, Private Fitzgerald, who has been mentioned before. Only night rescue was then possible and this was effected with a rubber boat and a native canoe. The whole action saw forty Japanese killed and many wounded for a loss of six killed and eight wounded, none of the latter being abandoned. Food accidentally dropped by enemy parachute had helped to keep the men alive. Water was obtained by scooping holes in the mud but most of it was kept for the wounded. Padre C. G. Falloon helped to bring in from the reef those who fell in the rescue operations. At Warambari Bay, Private A. McCullough, of the 37th Battalion, though wounded in both hands and a leg, threw back an enemy grenade where it came from before it had time to explode and endanger the lives of his companions and himself. Private R. Armour swam out to sea round the enemy's flanks at Timbala Bay to deliver important messages to headquarters. These were brave acts, but typical.

The enemy was forced back into an area between Warambari and Maruana Bays and while the 35th and 37th Battalions prepared for a final assault on the night of October 6, they were evacuated by barges to waiting destroyers. Three American destroyers attacked and sank many of the barges. The result of the campaign was 200 Japanese killed and possession of Vella Lavella. Patrols found the adjacent islands of Gizo and Ganongga evacuated. The New Zealanders' losses were one man killed for each wounded. The difficulties of the operation are too many to detail but they were so tough as to deserve the highest commendation. For instance, the density of the jungle required taking artillery round the coast by barge and landing the pieces on suitable beaches. Each had to be hauled ashore over rough coral. Once it took three days to get a battery ashore and emplaced over broken coral and tree roots. While the jungle fighting was in progress regular reinforcements were arriving at Guadalcanal. On October 1, dive-bombers attacked several landing craft at Rurui beach, two being hit and one destroyed in a few minutes for the loss of fifty-two men, including fifteen of the 209th Light Anti-Aircraft Battery which was protecting the landing craft during unloading. Several enemy aircraft were shot down. By October 25 there were 17,000 New Zealanders and American on Vella Lavella, then the most advanced Solomons base. The next step was the capture of the Treasury Islands, seventy-three miles north. The 8th Brigade (Brigadier Row) rehearsed the attack on Florida Island, facing Guadalcanal. The Treasuries were urgently needed for the establishment of a Radar station to assist in the Americans' assault on Bougainville. This was to be the first opposed landing by New Zealand troops since Gallipoli, and Row, an officer of great drive and initiative, thoroughly prepared his men for it. There were two islands in the group, Mono and Stirling, and their harbour, Blanco. A naval bombardment preceded the actual landing by 7,700 New Zealanders and Americans on the dawn of October 27 and the troops went ashore two minutes after this bombardment ceased; at 6.26 a.m. The 34th Battalion landed on Stirling unopposed, but the 29th and 36th Battalions were met by fierce fire which was soon silenced. In one strongpoint the garrison went "dead" only to emerge and take advancing troops in the rear. The immediate beaches were clear by 10.30 a.m. when the enemy had retired to higher country from where he directed mortar, mountain gun and machine-gun fire on to the beaches. On the left flank the 36th Battalion cleared all opposition and by afternoon both battalions had formed a perimeter far into the jungle. Snipers were active that night but were cleared out next day. Enemy aircraft dropped thirty to forty bombs on the 29th Battalion area, one plane being shot down by the 208th L.A.A. Battery. The third day saw the enemy retire to high country in the middle of the island. It was a matter of moment in this campaign that it marked the first occasion on which the R.N.Z.A.F. gave fighter cover for New Zealand ground troops landing. The artillery surmounted the same difficulties which had been met with on Vella Lavella. From October 31, patrols began to sweep the island and ferret out nests of Japanese hiding in the interior. Two companies operating in patrols, cleared the country between Falamai and Malai, killing thirty-five for one killed and four wounded. By November 15, 217 Japanese dead had been accounted for on the Treasuries, plus several prisoners, without unduly heavy losses. While the Treasury landings had been in progress, a small force under Major G. W. Logan landed on the northern coast of Mono at Soanotalu to establish a radar station. "Loganforce" consisted of a company of the 34th Battalion, machine-gun section, radar personnel and

American Seabees. The landing was unopposed, but as Japanese elsewhere on the island were pushed back by patrols, they tried to break through "Loganforce" perimeter on the night of November 1 and seize landing craft on the beach. Forty Japanese were killed that night and many wounded, but they tried against next evening without success. Patrols then mopped them up. Once the island was free of opposition great constructional activity followed. A 7,000-foot airstrip was built on Stirling and by the end of December it was in daily use. Gradually there arose another base to assist the Allied thrust north. Both brigades now assumed garrison duty. Brigadier Row reached the retiring age and was succeeded by Brigadier L. G. Goss. Odd Japanese were still being collected on Mono. The most unusual find recorded in the official interim survey was the one who, in a New Zealand uniform, had attended picture screenings and concerts and was finally "crowned" with a Colman lamp when caught attempting to steal from a cookhouse. Japanese planes made severe raids on Stirling airstrip in January, wrecking several aircraft on the ground and killing or injuring some United States personnel. The next stage was the seizure of Green Islands at dawn on February 15, 1944. The main island was Nissan. The islands were only four degrees below the equator, north-west of Bougainville and 135 miles from Rabaul. This marked the end of the Solomons campaign, completing the Allied ring round New Britain and New Ireland. Airfields were also vitally needed there for attacks on New Britain and New Ireland, and by heavier aircraft, on Truk and the Carolines. This turned out to be a model landing and Admiral Halsey reported: "From conception to completion I consider that the Green Island project was a remarkably fine operation."

Rear-Admiral T. S. Wilkinson commanded the amphibious operations and General Barrowclough, all land forces, New Zealand and United States. A reconnaissance in strength on Nissan was carried out on the night of January 30-31 by 300 officers and men of the 30th Battalion under Lieutenant-Colonel F. C. Cornwell, to secure accurate information of Jap. strength, land-beaches, likely airstrip areas, and a motor torpedo boat base. Ten artillery, A.S.C. and engineer officers, and twenty-five United States specialists from Admiral Wilkinson's headquarters, were in the party. Lieutenant P. O'Dowd, died of wounds, was the only casualty. The results of the reconnaissance were most valuable to the coming operation. The landing was made without opposition, though enemy planes were over Nissan for the first night but never again. It was found that an unknown number of Japanese had taken refuge on Sirot, an island at the lagoon entrance. This island was cleared by B Company, 30th Battalion. Twenty Japanese were killed. On February 20, the 14th Brigade Carrier Platoon was attacked. Tanks came up and then the No. 14 and 15 platoons of D Company, 30th Battalion, and in a final assault, victory was won. Fifty-one dead Japanese were found among roots and coral; one blew himself up with a grenade rather than be taken prisoner. Ten more were destroyed later. On February 23, C and D Companies and a mortar platoon and machine-gun section of the 35th Battalion cleared the island of Sau, killing fourteen Japanese. This was the last organised resistance. Constructional work had been proceeding all the time, including two airfields, a fighter strip and a bomber strip. Three million dollars worth of equipment was used by the United States construction battalions. On March 6, sixteen R.N.Z.A.F. planes landed on Nissan en route to attack Rabaul. By the end of the month Liberators were bombing Truk from there. On one occasion there were 200 planes on an area which two months before had

been dense tropical vegetation. Considerable roading and other improvements were also carried out, and two saw-mills were operating. At midnight on May 29-30 incoming United States units took over the command of the Green Islands and of Mono and Stirling. The Third Division moved back, in sections, to New Caledonia and thence to New Zealand. Some thousands went to essential industries; the rest to mobilisation camps to await their departure to other theatres of war. The Division ceased to exist from October 20, 1944.

The two official interim surveys tell the full story of the Third Division which fully lived up to the traditions set in 1914-18 by the first Anzacs and, wherever it was engaged, left a record of courage, efficiency and accomplishment.

On June 19, 1945, at the R.S.A. Dominion conference, the acting Prime Minister, Mr. Nash, announced that the Government had in mind plans to prepare a small land force for the Pacific.

In the House of Representatives on the night of August 3, 1945, a resolution was put by the Prime Minister, Right Hon. Peter Fraser, and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. S. G. Holland, reaffirming the country's pledges to continue its efforts till final victory; to this end and in accordance with British and New Zealand military advice, it being agreed that New Zealand make such military contributions as were within the capacity of its remaining manpower resources, having due regard to the responsibility to produce foodstuffs and other materials for the Allied forces in the Pacific and the people of Britain and Europe. Mr. Fraser said that as the defeat of Germany became more imminent the future of the Division had become more important. Mr. Churchill had assumed, from New Zealand's many declarations, that it would remain right through. Mr. Churchill had cabled what it was contemplated doing and assuming New Zealand would want to remain an integral part of the fighting forces until Japan was defeated. Mr. Fraser said he had consulted the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke, in London, asking what force which New Zealand could afford would be reasonable and useful, as the Division could not be maintained at full strength and naval, air and production commitments also kept up. General Freyberg had expressed misgiving about a reduction to a two-brigade force. Field Marshal Brooke's view was that this could be used effectively but was the smallest unit which could retain its identity. Then Mr. Churchill advised that a British Commonwealth Force was contemplated, Mr. Attlee subsequently confirming this. The United Kingdom and Australia had decided to be represented in the Commonwealth Force; he expected Canada and South Africa also. New Zealand could not be out of it and live up to its pledges. There were approximately 21,000 men of military eligibility whose places could not yet be filled, said Mr. Fraser. Of these 9,927 were single men (among them 5,929 on farms, 570 in sawmilling and afforestation, 128 in building and construction, 932 in transport and communications, 32 in heat, light and power, 113 in Government departments (including many on scientific work such as radar). Manpower requirements were serious; otherwise these single men would not be reserved from service. The married men among the reserved total numbered 11,944.

The Minister of Finance, Hon. Walter Nash, said that men and women mobilised for full-time service at December, 1944, were 101,000, or 6.15 per cent. of the total population (this percentage was much higher earlier in the war); Australia, 626,000, or 8.95 per cent.; Canada, 757,000, or 6.68 per cent.;

THE ARMY IN THE PACIFIC

United Kingdom, 10.40 per cent. There were 12,000 men in the Middle East consisting of the 11th to 15th reinforcements, that it was planned to use, if necessary, against Japan.

The plan for a two-brigade division against Japan did not materialise owing to the enemy's surrender. On September 27, the Prime Minister, Hon. P. Fraser, announced that New Zealand's representation in the British occupational force would be a balanced brigade group and a fighter squadron plus the continued attachment of New Zealand ships to the British Pacific Fleet. The 13th, 14th and 15th reinforcements would go to Japan. The commitment for a land force would be limited to an initial six months and any extension would depend on the number of volunteers for the reliefs.

The New Zealand Army Brigade group for the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (United Kingdom, Indian, Australian and New Zealand troops plus air personnel) arrived at Kure, Japan, on March 19, 1946, from Italy, being preceded by the advance party which had left Naples on January 24, 1946. The Commander-in-Chief of the entire Force was Lieut.-General J. Northcott, of the Australian Military Forces (later Lieut.-General H. C. H. Robertson), with Air Commodore F. M. Bladin, R.A.A.F., as his Chief of Staff. The B.C.O.F., a land component, was organised as a corps. The New Zealand Brigade (9th) commanded by Brigadier K. L. Stewart was made up almost exclusively of single men of the last reinforcement to leave New Zealand for the Middle East—the 13th, 14th and 15th Reinforcements, plus certain officers and key personnel from earlier reinforcement drafts. The air component of the B.C.O.F. comprised squadrons drawn from the R.A.F., R.A.A.F., R.N.Z.A.F. and Royal Indian Air Force. It included No. 14 (Corsair) Squadron, R.N.Z.A.F., under Squadron Leader de Willimoff, which reached Kure on March 24, 1946, in the light carrier *Glory*. The naval component was a squadron of the British Pacific Fleet which included ships of the Royal Navy, Royal Australian Navy and the Royal Indian Navy. The New Zealand Brigade comprised approximately 4,000 men, including a company of Maoris. Recruiting for volunteers for a relief force started in New Zealand on February 1, 1946, though many applications were received before this. The first relief was due to leave New Zealand for Japan early in June, 1946. Enlistment was for a period of eighteen months.

Enlistments by April, 1946, were sufficient to provide for the first relief. The N.Z. Brigade (9) was located initially in the Yamaguchi Prefecture (headquarters and 22nd Bn. at Chofu, 6th General Hospital and Div. Cav. on the island of Eta Jima, and other units in Yamaguchi city area). The B.C.O.F. was then located in Yamaguchi, Shimani and Hiroshima Prefectures, the last-named including the city of Hiroshima, devastated by the first atom bomb dropped on Japan, the city port and naval base of Kure, and Fukuyama. On the retirement of Brigadier Conway, Brigadier Stewart returned from Japan to become Adjutant-General, and Colonel D. T. Maxwell assumed command of the Brigade (9th).

The Medal for Merit, a civilian award instituted by George Washington in 1782, and awarded by the United States Government only in most exceptional circumstances, was bestowed on the Rev. A. W. Silvester, a New Zealand Methodist missionary in the Solomons, in April, 1946. The citation, signed by President Truman, stated that the Medal was bestowed for "exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service at Vella Lavella from August 12 to September 5, 1943." Mr. Silvester's dispatch of friendly natives to bring ashore in canoes an American reconnaissance party enabled preparations which greatly assisted subsequent

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landing operations. He accompanied patrols on many dangerous missions and rescued, at risk of his own life, 30 stranded American airmen. Without his assistance the Vella Lavella operations would have been longer and more costly, said Mr. Truman. Other awards to New Zealanders at the same time were:—Silver Star, Rev. Paul C. Serget, chaplain, Hamilton. Bronze Star, Rev. H. A. Mitchell, Captains A. K. Kelly and Thomas Harger.

Major F. G. L. Holland, O.B.E., formerly of Wanganui, was awarded the George Medal for outstanding work on Tarawa Island early in 1942, when he remained hidden with a secret radio and gave valuable information of Japanese activities to the authorities in Fiji. After the Japanese left, when he had given up all hope of rescue, he sighted a lifeboat from a torpedoed vessel. In it were some survivors. After a 300-mile journey over the open sea, he made port safely. A companion on Tarawa Island with Major Holland, Lieutenant Morgan, of the Australian forces, was killed by the Japanese. He was awarded the George Medal posthumously.

NEW ZEALAND—PACIFIC SPRINGBOARD

Though it is not part of the Third Division history it is appropriate to briefly mention here how New Zealand was the springboard for the American offensive action which eventually led to Japan itself. First Wellington and then Auckland, with Marines and Army troops respectively, provided the accommodation, training grounds and exercise beaches for tens of thousands of Americans who went on to engage in bloody but successful actions in the Pacific. It was from the port of Wellington on July 22, 1942, that the largest convoy of ships (in numbers) since the Main Body of October, 1914 (ten transports with two cruiser escorts) sailed for the Guadalcanal operation. This convoy was twelve transports, five escorting cruisers and seven escorting destroyers. In actual transports (sixteen) the convoy of November 1, 1943, for the Tarawa operations, was bigger, but the number of escorts (six destroyers) was less. The presence of the Marines and Army and the location of their main camps in the Wellington and Auckland districts are familiar history. But the coast beaches saw some realistic landing exercises on a scale hitherto unknown in New Zealand, and knew the grating of landing craft and the crunch of military boots. The places where those same boots were planned to tread have special significance for New Zealand as the first where the Japanese were given a definite setback and where, for the first time in the 1939-45 war, that American amphibious troops (marines) and Army personnel fought on British territory. The Solomons held the sites of likely air and sea bases which, in the New Zealand winter of 1942, offered the Japanese the prospect of establishing themselves to attack both New Zealand and Australia and of cutting off both from the American seaboard. Similarly, for the United States forces, they were a series of steps for a northward advance, providing also the opportunity of harassing an enemy of inferior economic power. That was why the United States forces came to New Zealand as the nearest suitable base from which to launch a counter-offensive. By January, 1942, the Japanese naval units had established bases in the Bismarek Archipelago and the northern Solomons. April saw the enemy move to Tulagi, across from Guadalcanal, off which the Coral Sea Battle was fought a month later. That battle was a setback to Japanese plans for an immediate attack on New Zealand or Australia, but it could not of itself prevent a slower advance by the enemy on either country. Some-



New Zealanders about to march past Field Marshal Montgomery at a saluting base in Tripoli.



Part of the ruins of Cassino monastery in Italy, the scene of desperate fighting. Three New Zealanders are shown here.



New Zealand girls in an Empire Day parade through Cairo en route to Divine Service in Kasv el Nil barracks.



The Author, K. R. HANCOCK.



An Australian soldier bearing a wooden cross to place on his mate's grave at Bougainville.

thing had to be done about this; hence the United States operations by land, sea and air in the Solomons which would have started much earlier or even forestalled the Japanese altogether in this war but for the necessary time occupied in repairing and making good the Pearl Harbour losses and building-up Allied forces in the South-west Pacific. Early July saw the menace to the New Hebrides (a condominium of British and French Administration, 1,300 miles from New Zealand) and New Caledonia increased by Japanese landings on Guadalcanal and a start on the construction of Henderson airfield. A month before a majority of the countering forces had already assembled in Wellington harbour, from which they departed on July 22, to rendezvous with other forces preparatory to the re-conquest of the Solomons.

The transports of the convoy of July 22 were the *McCauley* (flagship), *Neville*, *Heywood*, *Hunter Liggett*, *G. F. Elliott*, *American Legion*, *Libra*, *Barnett*, *Fuller*, *Alchiba*, *Bellatrix* and *Formalante*. These conveyed the Marines, their supplies and equipment. The escorts were the Australian cruisers *Australia*, *Canberra* and *Hobart*, the United States cruisers *Chicago* and *Salt Lake City*, and the United States destroyers *Patterson*, *Bluc*, *Jarvis*, *Ralph Talbot*, *Selfridge*, *Henley* and *Mugford*. They proceeded to Koro Island in the Fiji Group for further exercises and then rendezvoused with a battleship, two aircraft carriers, some cruisers and destroyers and also other transports which had come direct from the United States. The landings on Tulagi and Guadalcanal were made on August 7-8 and six months later—February 8, 1943—the Japanese had completely withdrawn from the central and southern Solomons. There was little resistance to the initial landings on Guadalcanal but bloody fighting followed around the airfield and such places as Bloody Knoll and the Tenaru River, the latter once literally flowing with blood. Tulagi—the pre-war seat of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate Administration—was a tougher proposition. Only three Japanese surrendered here. Many entrenched in caves were buried alive in them. There was also considerable slaughter on the adjoining island of Kavo. The 600 labour corps Japanese captured in the initial landing on Guadalcanal comprised the first prisoners of war to come to New Zealand and be accommodated at Featherston.

On the night of August 9 the Japanese made a surprise attack on the screening force of cruisers and the *Vincennes*, *Quincy* and *Astoria* (which had joined the convoy at a rendezvous after it left Koro Island vicinity) were lost and *H.M.A.S. Canberra* was damaged and subsequently sunk. The destroyer *Jarvis* was damaged by an aircraft torpedo and subsequently lost while on passage for repairs. The destroyers *Patterson*, *Ralph Talbot* and *Mugford* (which had left from Wellington) were damaged but subsequently repaired. The U.S. cruisers lost lie in the Sealark Channel between Florida and Guadalcanal Islands. It has been well-named "Iron-Bottom Bay" for here rest the remains of at least sixty ships—war, transport and supply—and most of them Japanese. The *Canberra* itself lies not far away off Tulagi. At low tide today towards Cape Esperance can be seen the remains of a large Japanese submarine and a two-man submersible. Other burnt-out hulks are on the beach at Guadalcanal where they were run in to unload and were sunk by United States aircraft. The No. 3 Bomber-Reconnaissance Squadron R.N.Z.A.F. was active from Guadalcanal from November 24 and played a full part in the successful campaign in this area. The second big convoy to leave Wellington was on November 1, 1943. It was part of the force which ultimately attacked Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands. Sixteen transports and six escorting United States destroyers left Wellington on this occasion. Two of the transports had been in the Solomons convoy on July 22, 1942—the

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Bellatrix and the *Hayward*. The landings at Tarawa were on November 20-24, 1943. The heavy cruiser *Chicago* was lost later in the Solomons campaign.

PACIFIC AND THE HOME BACKGROUND

The intention of the Japanese to invade New Zealand was indicated by the discovery of excellent maps and charts of the Dominion in Japanese Field Headquarters in Southern Bougainville. Arrows on the maps indicated that the west coast of the North Island was selected for the projected landings.

Rabaul was the key base in this plan. After consolidating there, and occupying the Solomons, New Caledonia would have been next on the list, followed by New Zealand, Fiji, and possibly Samoa and the islands surrounding it. At the same time Australia was to be attacked. That, at any rate, appeared to be the plan, and there was much evidence in support of this, including Japanese documents and statements. The neutralization of Rabaul is of particular significance for New Zealand, because New Zealand naval, army and air force units were all engaged at various times as part of the forces devoted to this task. New Zealand fought with all branches of the American Services, and was associated with the Australians at Bougainville. Rabaul was neutralized almost entirely by air power. This air power was based on airfields wrested from the enemy by land forces and supported by naval units, but Rabaul was never attacked directly either by land or naval forces. Rabaul was built by the Japanese to become a base even more powerful than Truk. When Allied reconnaissance teams went into Rabaul immediately after the surrender, they found a mighty underground arsenal, with long tunnels stacked high with equipment and supplies, and almost everything necessary for further large-scale offensives down the Pacific to New Zealand. Among the items discovered were over 10,000 tons of provisions held as battle rations; nearly 3,000 tons of clothing; 590 pieces of artillery; 1,750,000 shells; nearly 330,000 grenades; 56,000 anti-tank bombs, and over 11,000,000 rounds of rifle ammunition. The total weight of ammunition was given as 31,000 tons. There were many more interesting items on the list—19,000 bombs, over 1,000 trucks, 87 tanks, 70 tractors and 200 cars; tens of thousands of drums of petrol, oil and grease; over 100 anti-aircraft guns. At various times there were large numbers of aircraft. At the surrender, the Japanese Army had approximately 80,000 troops in the Solomons-Bismarck area. The strength of the Japanese Navy was nearly as formidable as that of the Army. They had 46,000 men in the same area, heavily armed with automatic weapons, for which they had at Rabaul alone nearly 20,000,000 rounds of ammunition. In various navy dumps in the Rabaul area they had stored nearly 200,000 grenades of various types, 16,000 bombs and hundreds of torpedoes, depth charges and mines. They possessed many anti-aircraft guns, 25,000 drums of petrol and oil, 20 tanks, 900 vehicles, and thousands of tons of food, clothing and other supplies. If this quantity of equipment and supplies was still there when the Japanese surrendered, the total taken into Rabaul must have been staggering. This was reflected in shipping movements. During the latter half of 1942 and early in 1943 the shipping in Rabaul averaged between 250,000 and 300,00 tons a month. To protect this the Japanese moved in something like forty squadrons. The army also had something like 300 aircraft in the area, and it is estimated

that altogether the Japanese flew into Rabaul over 1,000 aircraft. At the zenith of its power Rabaul was a mighty fortress and a formidable base for future operations. To neutralise it the Allies had first to establish land bases at convenient distances, and American and New Zealand forces went leapfrogging up the Solomons chain to Green Island. Meantime the air pounding of Rabaul had begun (October, 1943). With bases established at Torokina and Piva (Bougainville), Green Island, and New Guinea, Allied aircraft knocked out Japanese air opposition, smashed airfields and installations, blasted dumps and killed hundreds of enemy troops. Rabaul became little better than a gigantic prison compound—though always with dangerous possibilities if the Allies had suffered a disaster elsewhere. New Zealand aircraft played a prominent part in these operations and near the end of the campaign were almost solely responsible for the air "cap" over Rabaul airfields. While all this was going on heavy land fighting took place on Bougainville, where the Japanese made a desperate bid (in March, 1944) to drive the American and New Zealand forces into the sea. The attempt failed. Later in the year (November, 1944) Australian troops took over from the Americans, and began to enlarge the perimeter area. They were hard at work securing Bougainville when Japan surrendered. Rabaul was thus neutralised by air power—air power secured by naval and army forces. It constituted a major threat to the south Pacific and to New Zealand.

The background to New Zealand's war effort in the Pacific shows that the country's military advisers (who, however, could not raise forces or order equipment, if available, on their own initiative) were ready for eventualities, though not specifically naming Japan, long before Pearl Harbour (December 8, 1941). The extent of preparedness may not be widely appreciated, though when the showdown came there were difficult periods for a country already committed to a substantial contribution to the European war and now having to implement preparations to defend its own shores and strengthen its forces in the Pacific. Back in April, 1939, the Government's representatives at the Pacific defence conference agreed that New Zealand would shoulder certain commitments in the Pacific. One was the defence of Fanning Island with its important cable station; the other that a force would be made available for the defence of Fiji in event of that being necessary. It was also decided to increase the Territorial Force to 16,000 (later to 30,000). It was appreciated by the Chiefs of Staff in July, 1940, that the international situation was such that some action would have to be taken. So, on November 6, 1940, troops numbering 3,000 went to Fiji. It was a small force but capable of rapid expansion, as did occur. It was also decided at the same time to garrison Tonga. The first detachment of a small force went to Fanning Island on August 30, 1939, and second and third detachments followed in February and September, 1940. Fiji had a blackout from June, 1941, until November 10, when a brown-out was substituted on the representations of the Governor. The military authorities pressed for a repositioning and a partial blackout was ordered in Suva on December 4. Responsibility for the defence of Fiji was taken in November, 1941, and in December the garrison was a two-brigade one, soon increased and assuming divisional status on January 6, 1942. The United States assumed this responsibility in May, and implemented it in July. Shortly after the New Zealand Division returned to New Zealand to be subsequently employed in the South Pacific. Within New Zealand the fixed defences (coast artillery) were at comparatively low strength in 1939—under thirty guns—but by mid-1942, when the Japanese threat was greatest, the number of guns manned had

increased threefold, mostly round Auckland and Wellington and, to a lesser degree, Lyttelton. The maximum was long-distance six-inch guns which though outranged by eight-inch cruisers, had sufficient range to deter such a warship from coming in too close, or for that matter shelling accurately. When Japan struck there were only four anti-aircraft guns in the country—two at Auckland and two at Wellington. It was decided these would be more useful on the perimeter and they were sent to the Pacific. More came at the end of 1941 and were also sent away. From early in 1942 onward large numbers of light and heavy anti-aircraft guns came in and were mounted; they continued to arrive after the threat had eased and many were not placed at all. The strength of anti-aircraft personnel went from almost nil in 1938 to between 3,500 and 4,000, including more than 500 members of the N.Z.W.A.A.C. Nearly 200 A.A. guns were mounted, plus fifty searchlights, and 120 guns had been sent to the Pacific. With artillery pieces generally the number of all sorts here from 1939 to the end of 1941 was approximately 160—from six-pounders up to six-inch—but by March, 1944, the total was roughly 2,500, of which most had arrived in 1942. As far back as 1936 requisitions were placed by New Zealand with the War Office for heavier artillery capable of engaging an eight-inch-gun cruiser. Such demands were then being made that it was only in 1945 that the final equipment for operating such heavy weapons—the piece alone weighs nearly thirty tons—was to hand, and in course of installation. The requisitions, which were placed between 1936 and 1938, did not mean that the New Zealand Army was anticipating war; merely that it was known from authoritative sources that Germany and Japan were building eight-in.-gun cruisers, and it was necessary to have artillery capable of engaging them. Other demands had to have preference over those of New Zealand. The result was that during the entire war period there was no coastal artillery in the country capable of engaging an eight-inch-gun cruiser. A Wellington battery fired what is believed to be the first shot by coastal artillery in this war—a warning shot at the British ship, *City of Delhi*, which did not obey the Navy instruction to stop for identification. This was so early in the war that the ship's captain may not have known it had started. When war broke out the artillery strength in Wellington (whose case was similar to that of other centres) was 150 Territorials who had been training under the peace-time system, and the armament was six-inch and four-inch guns and twelve-pounders. The guns were sited to protect the harbour entrance, act as counter-bombardment artillery against light cruisers of equal or less shelling range, and deal with light offensive craft like surfaced submarines or motor-torpedo boats. A number of additional guns of the types mentioned were received, including six-inch naval guns, which were used to fill up the gaps, mainly the outer limits of Cook Strait. It was not till 1943 that the major items of the heavier guns requisitioned in 1936-38 arrived. These were non-effective without the hydraulic and pumping equipment, fire-control equipment, including radar to be sited on coastal vantage points, the plotting tables for the batteries themselves, and other items.

The latest type of anti-motor torpedo-boat guns, ordered in 1938, and capable of rapid fire to counter fast-moving surface craft or submarines awash, were in place in Wellington's coast defences in 1943.

To give an idea of the need for guns in the early stages of the war, a piece first mounted at the Otago Heads during the Russian scare of the 1880's was requisitioned for coast defence and tested with one of its original shells, with a fresh charge. This gun was also mounted during the 1914-18

war. After that it was sold for £5 but its seven-ton weight prevented the new owner removing it to dismantle for bronze and brass. So it stayed in store, greased, and was ready for action in 1939. The man who bought it for £5 never returned.

On the transport side, the Army had sixty-nine vehicles on charge in 1939; nearly 20,000 by the second half of 1942. Between late 1939 and May, 1945, the number received by the Army was 30,407. In the different classes the totals were 60 tanks in 1941 and 517 by the end of 1942. In the same period armoured fighting vehicles increased from 179 to 1,122, including 560 Local Pattern 11's built in New Zealand; trucks, from nearly 2,800 to nearly 11,000; motor-cycles, from 1,500 to 5,400. On the manpower side, the Chiefs of Staff were called on for a major decision when Japan entered the war. It was contended that Germany was the more dangerous enemy and the best maximum force which would do most good towards assisting her defeat should be maintained in the European theatre. Australia, with the Japanese closer, looked at it differently. It was not many months before she was bombed, small parties of Japanese landed in her north and north-west territories, a suburb of Sydney was shelled and midget submarines attacked Sydney Harbour. She withdrew her Division from the Middle East and was able to use it effectively in Japanese-held territories close to Australia. The New Zealand decision was bold, but events proved it right.

By June, 1941, nearly 25,000 men of the Territorial Force had completed the then-required training of three months continuous in camp and were doing fortnightly evening parades out of camp. In addition there were about 10,000 in the National Military Reserve, largely men of the 1914-18 war. By December, 1941, the number of men the Army had under training was 52,000, plus 10,000 2nd N.Z.E.F. Early in 1942 the Territorial Force was completely mobilised for war training (the National Military Reserve being incorporated) and camps were established all over the country. Large numbers of the Territorials lived for the first months under very rough conditions but censorship forbade mention of this, ruling that any story be confined to stating how adaptable they were. The total Army strength in June, 1942, was 81,523, plus 8,500 2nd N.Z.E.F. reinforcements in training. There were three home defence divisions—the 1st (Northern), 4th (Central), and 5th (South Island). The first two were not quite up to divisional strength. The 4th was under Major-General N. W. McD. Weir, C.G.S., New Zealand Forces, from January 1, 1946. These were the men who, assisted by a Home Guard force of more than 100,000 would have had to defend the country against invasion. They were not battle-tested but neither was the 2nd N.Z.E.F., except a few who had served in 1914-18, when it went into action in Greece. The Territorial Force, however, was fit, it had fair equipment—some more than others because of distribution where it was thought to be most needed—and they would have been fighting in defence of and on their own land. By June, 1942, as compared with two months before, the equipment position was much better. At December, 1942, the home strength was 56,000, plus 3,200 overseas reinforcements; June, 1943, 27,500, plus 11,000 reinforcements; December, 1943, 18,000 and 6,000 overseas personnel which included those on furlough; June, 1944, 12,000, plus 2,800 men for overseas and including some on furlough; December, 1944, 11,000 and 5,700 overseas reinforcements, including replacement drafts; May, 1945, 9,200, plus 4,300 for overseas; September, 1945, 10,000 with many in process of demobilisation. The peak N.Z.W.A.A.C. strength was 3,744 in August, 1943, and at September, 1945, approximately 1,500.

THE HOME FRONT

THE HOME GUARD

The Home Guard, dating its commencement from when its establishment was approved by War Cabinet on August 2, 1940, might well be described as the cheapest force in the world. For a good part of its history, when other considerations prevented it being adequately equipped, its costs to the public was negligible. Its origin was not purely official. Rather, it began when the will of a free people to defend themselves with whatever means came to hand manifested itself in a number of voluntary units formed in several districts soon after war began. These units armed themselves with shotguns, sporting rifles, and any other lethal weapons members possessed or could borrow. Like the official and huge Home Guard organisation which followed, and absorbed these early unofficial units, they were prepared to give effect to those memorable words of Mr. Churchill, after Dunkirk: "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills, we shall never surrender . . ." Much said and written about the Home Guard during the war dealt with its deficiencies—which were not of spirit and courage—and ignored its achievements. The latter could be concisely described thus: (1) The building-up of morale; (2) the demonstration to the people generally and to the world at large to hold the country at all costs; (3) the value of training to men who subsequently entered the Territorial Force or the 2nd N.Z.E.F.; (4) the worth to all concerned of rubbing shoulders with other citizens with whom they had previously—though they might have been near neighbours—little or no social contact. In over-emphasising deficiencies sight was frequently lost of the self-reliance shown in the improvisation of weapons. It was often said in the early stages that the Army did not want the Home Guard. The plain fact of the matter was that for a period serious problems of the equipment and general training and servicing of a large, rapidly formed regular force were a tremendous burden for the Army to carry without shouldering responsibility for a large part-time army which, at the time, it could neither equip nor train. It was in the face of such difficulties that the Home Guard showed its mettle. There were certainly growlings and grumbings; there never has been an army of any sort, where, lacking positive action, it was not the individual soldier's privilege to grouse. The equipment difficulty may be gauged when it is recalled that many units made wooden replicas of rifles with which to practice small arms drill. Jam-tin bombs and Molotov cock-tails were made by all units and workable flame-throwers were also made. Apart from the unofficial units which were formed soon after war began, the Government received thousands of offers of service from persons whose circumstances of physical condition, age or employment prevented them join-

ing or being accepted for the armed forces. The Government then decided to establish, with the aid of local authorities, a voluntary and unpaid Home Guard to train in the evenings and at week-ends in preparation for co-operation with the regular army in the event of invasion or some such war emergency. Later the object of the Guard was more precisely defined as being to "augment local defences by providing for static defence of localities, the protection of vulnerable and key points, and to give timely notice of enemy movements to superior military organisations." As Director-General, the Government appointed Major-General R. Young, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., who commanded the 2nd New Zealand Infantry Brigade in France and who was General Officer Commanding the New Zealand Forces until he retired in 1931. He brought to the Home Guard not only wide, practical military experience, both as a soldier and administrator, but what was really important to a civilian army, leadership without unnecessary "red tape." His recompense for this position was not that of an army brigadier, though he held this rank as Director-General. It could be more fittingly described as an "honorarium." At New Year, 1941, the Home Guard had grown to a force of 81,000; by June, 1941, 101,000 were attested. By December, 1942, every guardsman had battledress and boots, but, for most of the time before this the "uniform" was an armband or the old service uniform of the Territorial Force with its mass of brass buttons to clean. Overseas demands for battledress, which took preference over the Territorial Force and that in turn over the Home Guard, delayed the issue to the latter. Meantime thousands of civilian suits and pairs of footwear had got a good knocking about on parade ground and in riverbeds, scrub and gullies on manoeuvres. The value of the solid manual work—navvying—done for the country by the Home Guard can be described almost as incalculable; certainly in terms of its value at a time of emergency. They constructed defence works at all the vulnerable beaches round the coasts of New Zealand, built tank traps and rifle ranges and, free of cost to the nation but for materials, did many other absolutely essential defensive works. Their labour enabled "regulars" to be kept reasonably free for straightout training. The appointment of leaders in the Home Guard was a source of criticism, not infrequently well founded. These appointments were made on the recommendation of local committees and those so appointed, while they had proved themselves invaluable as organisers, sometimes did not have the requisite military background for field leadership. The Army took over the Home Guard on August 1, 1941, and Home Guard commissions were then granted. The criticism referred to was being gradually met by changes at the time the Home Guard went into a reserve role in July, 1943, but the problem could not be solved by wholesale retirements or demotions. After Japan entered the war permanent staffs were appointed for each battalion and New Zealand was divided into thirty-three zones. Each zone had a regular commander for all Territorial Force and Home Guard units in the particular zone, for the operational control and training of which he was responsible. This brought about closer working co-operation between the two forces and created a worthwhile mutual understanding. Home Guard personnel were never paid, except when attending courses. Thousands did these and came through well. The courses not only brought to light fresh talent for higher rank but revealed deficiencies in some already holding it. The Home Guard had many reverses and disappointments, but not once did it fall down on the job. The fortunes of war—good as far as the safety of this country was concerned—were such that it was not put to the acid test.

Consequently, in common with the Territorial Force, there was always a tendency, specially by some people who did nothing, to under-estimate its value. But in perspective, now that the danger which threatened New Zealand at one stage is fully known, there should be no under-estimation of the value of a Home Guard force of more than 100,000 men, prepared, of their own free will, to cast back an invader into the sea, with bare hands alone if necessary. Major-General Young, back in well-earned retirement at Tasman Beach, Otaki, did more for the Guard than many of its members appreciate. As a former G.O.C., New Zealand Forces, he knew the run of the ropes at Army Headquarters. That was always to the Guard's benefit. He never swanked around in uniform. His original policy was no uniform-wearing until every one of his Guardsmen had a uniform. And when they did, he stuck to "civvies." Maybe, dealing with Army leaders who had once been his subordinates, he thought he would get better results without the trappings which call for so much formality. It is worthwhile introducing here his favourite anecdote. While inspecting front-line troops in France during the last war he noticed a man who appeared either very old—for a soldier—or who had been prematurely aged by his experiences. He had this man shifted back to a base job. A few days later he came across him and asked if he liked his new duties better. He did. Then Major-General Young asked his age. "Sixty, sir," was the reply. The General then asked him how he came to be at the war. His story was that he was a widower with an only daughter of whom he was very fond. She became engaged to a young man who enlisted. The daughter was so upset that he agreed to give a false age, join up and look after the girl's affianced. General Young then told him this was a fine gesture. But how was the young man getting on? The old soldier replied: "Well, sir, it was like this: he was a very good cornetist and they kept him at home in the camp band!"

The peak strength of the Home Guard was 123,242.

THE STORY OF THE FURLOUGH DRAFTS

The incidents connected with the refusal of several hundred men of the first and second furlough drafts, 2nd N.Z.E.F., to return to active service in the Middle East were, on the military side, the most unfortunate and regrettable of the war period in New Zealand. They resulted in 542 men being dismissed from His Majesty's defence forces with accompanying penalties attaching to such action which were removed late in 1945. However, 1,287 men did return to the Middle East, of whom many fell or were wounded in the Cassino battle and subsequently in the Italian campaign. Their effort is an anonymous part of the outstanding history of the 2nd N.Z.E.F.

This briefly is the story: On July 12, 1943, 5,239 men of the first furlough draft arrived in New Zealand and 115 in October. It had been made clear to them in the Middle East and on disembarkation here that they were to return on expiration of the furlough, then fixed at three months. It was necessary for shipping reasons, though some of those who refused to return considered the motive political and associated with a desire not to send them back before the September General Election, to extend the furlough. The last extension was announced on November 26, 1943. In October, War Cabinet made certain decisions regarding the men. Briefly these were that

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Maoris, married men with one or more children, and those forty-one or over should not return. The remainder were to be medically examined and only fit men re-embarked. To those was available the right of appeal to the Armed Forces Appeal Boards on the usual grounds of undue personal hardship. The Army, to safeguard the retention of specialists whose services were urgently required, had the final approval of appeal boards' decisions. The upshot was that 1,656 were due to return overseas. They were ordered to return to mobilization camps on January 5, 1944. Meantime many had taken civil employment, married, and in common with those already married, were expecting additions to their families.

Up till then there had been no open signs of any trouble though during the General Election campaign references were made to the men and questions asked concerning their position as against that of single fit men who had not served and were retained in essential occupations. These references and questions probably had their influence in the subsequent course of events. On December 29, 1943, ninety men of the first furlough draft met in Hamilton and decided to report to their area office on January 5, but to refuse to proceed to camp and request that they be placed on leave without pay until every single grade one man in New Zealand had served in the forces. "Every man once before we volunteers are conscripted back to camp," said the duplicated circular they sent by various means to as many others of the draft as they could contact throughout New Zealand. They decided to parade on January 5 and had a letter expressing their views to the Area Officer. When the train taking Auckland men to Trentham stopped at Frankton Junction, furlough men from the Hamilton area patrolled the station and persuaded others to leave the train. In general, large numbers failed to report at all camps specified for their reception, except Waiouru which was the Armoured Brigade camp. On embarkation day, January 12, 1944, 680 men sailed and thirty had left previously. The balance were mainly either in camp, but refusing to embark, or were absent without leave. Exceptions were those granted compassionate leave, or sick. Steps were taken to round up absentees and all but nineteen were returned to camp. A large number were dealt with jointly at general court-martial. These were those in camp but refusing to embark. Those who returned voluntarily or otherwise were dealt with individually, either for absence without leave or desertion. Those court-martialled were found guilty and sentenced to ninety days' detention. Those who were absent had each been telegraphed ordering them to report by January 8 or be considered absentees without leave. The Adjutant-General, Brigadier A. E. Conway, O.B.E., confirmed the findings and sentences but ordered that sentences be suspended and the men placed under open arrest but not guarded or picketed. They were to carry out normal duties but not ordered to perform unpleasant fatigues, no force was to be used to compel men to re-embark, and every situation arising was to be met with tact, discretion and good temper. There were different situations at the various camps—Trentham, Linton, Papakura, Burnham and Waiouru, the last-mentioned giving no trouble. There were 225 men at Trentham sentenced to ninety days' detention. They took proceedings in the Supreme Court and the case was removed by consent to the Court of Appeal (the Chief Justice, Sir Michael Myers, their Honours Messrs. Justices Blair, Kennedy, Callan and Northcroft). The charge on which they had been convicted was "deserting His Majesty's service in that they, after having been warned to proceed on service overseas, with intent to avoid so proceeding, collectively failed to parade for embarkation with the returning furlough draft when ordered to

do so, thereby avoiding proceeding on service overseas." The appellants asked for a writ of *certiorari* to quash the convictions on the ground that the charge as set out disclosed no offence in law and accordingly the court-martial had no jurisdiction to try them on it. The Court held that the charge did not constitute the offence of desertion and that accordingly the court-martial had no jurisdiction. It ordered that the convictions be quashed. Mr. G. G. Watson and Mr. G. C. Kent appeared for appellants; Mr. W. H. Cunningham and Mr. H. R. Biss for the Crown. The judgment stated that the men might have been charged with insubordination and possibly other offences under the Army Act, even perhaps mutiny.

Though no official information is obtainable on the point there is a distinct possibility that a charge of mutiny was not preferred in the first instance out of consideration for the men and for the good name of the Forces. As a result of the Court's decision men who did not appeal but whose cases were similar and who had been tried in groups had their convictions removed. Leave was reserved to appeal to the Privy Council as it was considered the judgment had wide implications. This appeal was not made but still could be. The men who returned to camp individually were tried separately, each represented by an officer who was a barrister. Most were found guilty of desertion, some of absence without leave, others acquitted. The Court of Appeal hearing was on March 22, 23 and 24 and the judgment on April 5, 1944. Meantime, on February 10, 1944, 1,906 men of the second furlough draft had arrived in New Zealand.

Of the various camps the situation at Linton was the most serious. Here the men refused to give their names, attend parades, and went in and out as they pleased. They became known as the mutineers and thirty-seven were charged with mutiny and remanded for a taking of a summary of evidence (similar to Magistrates' Court procedure in indictable offences to decide if there is a case for the higher court). None appeared, however, and the summaries were taken in their absence but the charges not proceed with. The real trouble had started there on February 11, 1944, when twenty-five other ranks apprehended by the civil police were returned to camp. On April 4, 187 men from Trentham came to Wellington by train to stage a march on Parliament. The main gates of the railway station were closed on them, so they crossed the lines, formed up in Waterloo Quay, and marched through the streets. They carried banners inscribed with such slogans as "We fight for 1,000 furlough men." They reached Parliament at 3 p.m.

On January 7, 1944, the Minister of Defence, Hon. F. Jones, the Minister of Rehabilitation, Major C. F. Skinner, M.C., the Minister of Armed Forces, Hon. W. Perry, M.L.C., and the deputy Chief of the General Staff, Brigadier Gentry, had visited the men at Trentham and Linton to endeavour to persuade them to return. As a result of these visits it was decided that men whose wives were pregnant would not be required to return overseas until after the confinements. To meet a complaint that the medical boardings had been perfunctory it was also decided to grant re-boardings on request. At Papakura, a large number of men had not returned to camp by the eve of embarkation but of those who did nearly 100 per cent. embarked without trouble.

At Burnham seventy-seven in camp refused to parade for embarkation. The men there staged a sit-down strike for some weeks. The ring-leader was a sergeant-major who was reduced to the ranks. He was taken to Christchurch under arrest and hearing of this, the men concerned gathered at camp headquarters on February 22 to demand his return. They threatened

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otherwise to smash the camp buildings. They demanded transport to visit Christchurch to interview their counsel, Mr. W. R. Lascelles, and the District Commandant. As the situation looked ugly it was decided, to avoid trouble by granting them transport under regular A.S.C. drivers. Their cry was: "We want —" (the ring-leader) and they threatened direct action. This man had actually been removed to Godley Head coast artillery depot. The men were driven to Christchurch and the A.S.C. drivers instructed to return them direct to Burnham. The Superintendent of Police and twelve constables arrived at District Headquarters and were advised that any movement of trucks except under the A.S.C. drivers would be unlawful conversion and to act accordingly. By this time all traffic in Hereford Street was blocked by the men and by onlookers who appeared sympathetic. Mr. Lascelles persuaded the men to go to the nearby Y.M.C.A. hall to discuss the situation. It was finally agreed that the ring-leader should not be removed from the South Island and that two men from each camp should have the opportunity of stating the case of their fellows to War Cabinet. This deputation met War Cabinet from 10 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. on February 26, without interruption. War Cabinet refused the claim to be allowed to remain and be replaced by grade one men in industry. The Burnham ring-leader and some others then decided to return overseas. An offer was made to the men to expunge their convictions from the records and permit five per cent., by selection or ballot, to remain in essential industry, their places to be filled by grade one men. This offer was unacceptable.

The position by March 31, 1944, the second furlough draft now being concerned as well, was that at Trentham and Papakura the men continued to obey orders though the majority would not embark. At Linton a majority remained mutinous. At Burnham, after the meeting with War Cabinet, there were two groups. One, under the former ring-leader, was for returning overseas and twenty men under two sergeants were opposed. Pending their dismissal from the service it was intimated to the men by Good Friday, April 7, 1944, that the authorities were prepared to disperse them to their home areas and that day 178 left camp. On June 20, 1944, by Gazette, 432 men were dismissed from the forces for misconduct and insubordination, and, on July 26, 110 more. The names of thirteen were subsequently removed from the list of those dismissed.

There was no doubt that the fact of the men remaining in New Zealand for longer than was originally stipulated (whether this was due to shipping or other reasons), the public discussion of their position, the fact of many taking jobs, settling down to home life again in the case of already-married men, or marrying in the case of those single on return, and the knowledge of a large number of single grade one men being retained in industry, all aggravated, or even brought about the regrettable circumstances which arose. The Army authorities throughout acted with commendable restraint and tact. On the political side, there was much indecision, though the position was admittedly difficult. The penalties attaching to dismissal from the forces were loss of mufti allowance (£25), discharge privilege leave, deferred pay (1/- daily for each day overseas), appointment or reappointment to the civil service, rehabilitation benefit and gratuity (not then fixed but later set at 2/6 a day for overseas and eightpence a day in New Zealand). First, the mufti allowance privilege was restored, then the deferred pay and finally, on victory over Japan, all other privileges. None of the second furlough draft cases was tried by court-martial. Each case was investigated individu-

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ally by a committee of officers and the soldier concerned had full opportunity of showing why he should not be dismissed from the service.

No officers were concerned in any of the incidents.

A motion to admit the dismissed men to the N.Z.R.S.A. met with a mixed reception at the 1944 Dominion conference and it was decided to defer the matter until more men of the 2nd N.Z.E.F. were back from overseas. The 1945 Dominion conference decided to admit them. These figures show how the men of the first and second furlough drafts were disposed of: Appeals approved, 366; elected to remain, 706; down-graded, 2,815; embarked, 918 (680, 148 and four small parties); dismissed from the forces, 432; refused to return but down-graded, 115. Second furlough draft: Down-graded, 1,126; elected to remain, 162; appeals allowed, 103; embarked, 369; dismissed, 110. Of the first furlough draft 1,656 were due to return overseas, and of the small October, 1943, draft, ten. A total of 1,287 returned, many never to come back.

There was no further trouble of the furlough drafts' type as subsequent returns from overseas (excluding the normal sick and wounded drafts) were of men permanently relieved according to their length of service.

THE COST OF THE WAR

The total war expenditure, September 3, 1939, to March 31, 1945, was £507,000,000 and £105,400,000 was provided in the Budget for the year to end March 31, 1946. The end of the war saw a revised Budget in which the Estimates were amended to the approximate date when demobilisation would have been completed (reckoned at March, 1946). The Budget provided for an expenditure of £139,249,000 (which included two new items in gratuities, £18,000,000 and deferred pay, £5,000,000). Including unexpended balances, the cost at March 31, 1946, would have been £646,249,000. The cost per head on the basis of the population when war broke out (1,632,000) was therefore £396 and allowing for the considerable number in the forces, just over £430. Up to June 30, 1945, the war had cost Australia £2,111,000,000 or £284 per head compared with £658 in the United States and £445 in Great Britain, calculated to June 1, 1945. The Australian Federal Budget leaped from £93,000,000 in 1938-39 to £610,000,000 in 1944-45. Australia raised her war expenditure as follows: From taxes, £724,000,000; from Treasury bills, £343,000,000. The total national debt due to the war exceeds £1,098,000,000 of a total national debt of more than £2,500,000,000, or £186 per head.

New Zealand's peak war expenditure was in the financial year 1943-44, when war costs, including debt payments, totalled £152,000,000. A summary of the War Expenses Account to March 31, 1945, showed: Receipts—War loans raised £258,200,000 (less repayments from War Expenses Account, £27,706,000); war taxation, £173,597,000; transfers from Consolidated Fund, £26,586,000; reciprocal aid, £83,837,000; disposal of surplus assets, £3,479,000; miscellaneous receipts, £6,901,000; total, £524,914,000.

Expenditure.—War and other stores, £165,135,000; pay and allowances, £140,968,000; accommodation, food and clothing, £31,629,000; land, buildings and ships, £31,233,000; repairs, maintenance and rent, £6,159,000; medical services, £2,587,000; educational services, £162,000; transport, £18,558,000; miscellaneous non-effective services, £2,981,000; miscellaneous effective services, £14,773,000.

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Total expenditure by Army, Navy and Air, £414,485,000; ancillary, £32,491,000; reciprocal aid, reverse lend-lease, £58,174,000; rehabilitation, £1,862,000; total expenditure, £507,012,000.

Balances on hand, £17,902,000—to make £524,914,000.

Of this total expenditure only 43 per cent, then remained outstanding in the form of war loans, as, after allowing for redemptions from other sources, there was left an increase in the public debt on account of war of £218,750,000. Lend-lease assistance from the United States of America totalled nearly £84,000,000, as against reciprocal aid, which New Zealand had supplied to their forces totalling over £58,000,000, without taking into account the fact that, in general, New Zealand's price-level was substantially less than that at which lend-lease goods had been supplied to her. With the exception of £18,000,000, the whole of the increase (£218,750,000) in war debt was due for repayment in New Zealand.

The total public debt late in 1945 was £603,238,000, of which two-thirds was held in New Zealand. The position was that £199,102,978 of the debt was held in London, £861,300 in Australia, and in New Zealand £356,274,133 (long-term) and £47,000,000 (floating). The average per head of population in relation to public debt was £355 (approx.). The Australian average is about the same.

Separating the 1939-45 War Debt from the total Public Debt (which totalled over £603,000,000), the position was that £199,800,000 was domiciled in New Zealand and £19,000,000 in London. The War Debt for this war rose from £3,100,000 in 1940 to £13,600,000 (1941); £43,200,000 (1942); £126,000,000 (1943); £188,300,000 (1944); £218,800,000 (1945). Between 1936 and 1945 the ordinary Public Debt rose from £322,200,000 to £384,200,000 but the amount included in this total and domiciled in London was reduced from £198,400,000 to £180,000,000 and that domiciled in Australia from £1,600,000 to £900,000. The overall increase was caused by a rise of that domiciled in New Zealand from £122,200,000 in 1936 to £203,500,000 in 1945 (the 1939 figure was £146,200,000 and 1940, £161,200,000), while that domiciled in London remained almost stationary from 1936 to 1940 (£197,200,000) after which it was progressively reduced.

A summary of the position given by the Prime Minister late in 1945 was that in the six years of war the total revenue raised by the Government, excluding lend-lease and mutual aid, was £780,000,000. Taxation supplied £471,000,000 or 60 per cent. of the total. Loans amounted to £260,000,000. Of the net borrowing only £3,000,000 came from overseas, for, though a debt of £18,000,000 was incurred to the United Kingdom Government under the Memorandum of Security Agreement, it was almost entirely offset by the repayment of £16,000,000 of pre-war debt. Arrangements were made early in 1946 to pay the £18,000,000 and interest. This meant that all war costs incurred overseas had been met out of loan revenue and taxation within New Zealand and all loans still unpaid were due within New Zealand.

On March 31, 1920, the direct costs of the 1914-18 war, that is excluding such charges as interest and sinking funds on War Loans which then as now were met from the Consolidated Fund, were recorded as £76,000,000. The total war expenditure was £234,400,000.

Direct taxation for the financial year ended March 31, 1945, was £65/5/10 per head of population, of which £27/9/- per head went to the Consolidated Fund, £8/11/4 to Social Security, and £29/5/6 to war purposes. Taxation rose on the following scale during the period 1939-45, the amounts to the Consolidated Fund, Social Security and War Purposes being given respec-

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tively in parentheses:—Financial year ended March 31, 1939: £23/9/2 (£20/1/-; £3/8/2: nil). 1940: £27/5/2 (£20/1/9; £5/16/8; £1/6/9). 1941: £37/10/3 (£21/6/5; £6/11/4; £9/12/6). 1942: £41/16/2 (£21/11/4; £6/15/9; £13/9/1). 1943: £53/12/4 (£22/1/4; £7/8/8; £24/2/4). 1944: £61/11/7 (£25/13/2; £8/3/5; £27/15/-). Australians, in 1943-44 paid £44/13/7 per head, compared with £20/13/6 in 1938-40. New Zealand taxation in 1945 was unaltered.

For the period 1939-45, war materials and equipment accounted for £105,019,676 of the total imports (£438,409,663). Peak years were 1943, £46,784,158 (total, £95,242,330), and 1944, £30,020,474 (£86,686,531).

By March 31, 1946, £25,488,625 had been authorised for rehabilitation (re-establishment in civil life of former service personnel), of which £18,294,166 was as loans for houses, farms, businesses, furniture, etc. Loans are recoverable, according to the security and the borrowers' health and fortune, but not the many millions which "went up in smoke" and the lives forfeited.

NATIONAL SERVICE

"National Service" was something which touched the lives of practically everybody of military and or working age. Under the scope of the National Service Department came the ballots, appeals, direction to essential industries, permission or refusal to leave employment and so on. The war effort up till December, 1941, when Japan entered the war, consisted of the provision and maintenance of the 2nd New Zealand Division overseas; provision of a substantial Territorial Force in New Zealand, involving part-time service only; provision and training of Naval and Air Force personnel for home and overseas; maintenance of ancillary organisations such as the National Military Reserve (formed in May, 1939) the Home Guard, the Emergency Reserve Corps, and the Women's War Service Auxiliary, none of which necessitated withdrawal from industry; the development of war industries, including the provision of increasing quantities of foodstuffs, uniforms, boots, equipment, etc. Before the outbreak of war a Departmental Manpower Committee had already considered the conservation of manpower and its redistribution to meet war conditions. It evolved a "Schedule of Important Occupations." Enlistment for the Armed Services was voluntary until June 18, 1940, and it was to implement this policy that the National Service Department, as such, was brought into existence. The ages then regarded as suitable for military service were nineteen to forty-five for home service and twenty-one to forty for overseas. All resident persons from sixteen onwards were regarded as one class and designated the General Reserve. This was divided into three parts: Unmarried men, aged nineteen to forty-five, forming the First Division; married men, including those with children, aged nineteen to forty-five, designated the Second Division; the remaining sections or Third Division. Maoris, aliens, naturalised British subjects (later included), members of overseas forces and men discharged from overseas service as medically unfit were excluded from the First and Second Divisions. To define marital status, marriages entered into on or after May 1, 1940, were not recognised until there was issue. In August, 1940, the enrolment of all men in the First Division was directed by Proclamation. In May, 1941, following a War Cabinet decision, to utilise eighteen-year-old youths in the Territorial Force, these were ordered to register. The enrolment of the Second Division was authorised in June, 1941, and in March,

1942, naturalised British subjects were brought within the scope of the First and Second Divisions. There were approximately 400,000 registration forms, the total male population at the outbreak of the war being 828,000. The first ballot (Territorial) contained 16,000 names and calling-up notices were delivered on October 2, 1940. A second Territorial ballot of 33,717 men was issued on November 6, 1940, and a ballot for overseas service (14,000 names) on December 4, 1940. The first two ballots were on fixed district quotas, for men from nineteen to forty-five, but the third was on a Dominion basis and restricted to those twenty-one to forty. A fourth ballot (overseas, 19,000 names) was gazetted on March 4, 1941. Up to then volunteers and men previously drawn for Territorial service, were excluded from the pool from which Territorial ballots were drawn. After the second overseas ballot, however, they were included in the pool from which overseas ballots were drawn. This withdrew many Territorials for overseas service and disrupted this organisation. In drawing further men for Territorial service priority was given to those ineligible for overseas. Those in the nineteen-year-old and forty-one to forty-five-year-old classes were segregated and all called up for service in the fifth and sixth ballots gazetted on March 26 and April 29, 1941. A further 19,000 men for overseas were drawn in the seventh ballot on May 7, 1941, while the whole of the remaining 23,825 single men aged twenty-one to forty were called in the ninth ballot on August 6, 1941. The eighteen-year-olds were called for Territorial service in one block in the eighth ballot on June 24, 1941, with the inflow of young men and other "seep-ages" in two small ballots, the tenth and eleventh, on August 19 and October 8, 1941, respectively. December, 1941, marked the end of a phase. All single men, twenty-one to forty, had been called up for overseas service, and those aged eighteen to forty-five for Territorial service (a proportion subsequently for overseas). Apart from those coming of age, the calling-up of single men was now complete. Volunteering for certain classes had continued while balloting was in progress—Maoris, who had never been subject to compulsion; Air Force and Naval volunteers who were excluded from the ballot on being attested; married men with not more than three children who were (for a time) accepted as Territorial volunteers while single men were being drawn for compulsory service. Armed Forces Appeal Boards were set up to deal with appeals from overseas service (and all appeals on conscientious grounds) and manpower committees to deal with Territorial appeals and appeals regarding the service of volunteers. Of the fit single men called for overseas, forty-five per cent. were affected by appeals. Of these sixty-two per cent. were granted indefinite postponements at the first hearing and a further seventeen per cent., temporary postponement. The greatest proportion of men postponed from outset came from the farming, coal-mining, saw-milling, butter and cheese, freezing, tannery, engineering, railways and shipping industries, police and clergy. When the first ballot came 64,000 volunteers were serving with the Army (including Territorial Force).

To unify the many offers of voluntary service it was decided on August 2, 1940, to establish the Emergency Reserve Corps consisting of the Home Guard, Emergency Precautions Services, Women's War Service Auxiliary and such other organisations as might later be included (the Emergency Fire Service in February, 1941). The Home Guard was established on a voluntary basis under the aegis of local authorities with Major-General Robert Young, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., a former Officer Commanding the New Zealand Military Forces, as Dominion commander. By the impressment of privately owned .303 rifles in May, 1941, 18,000 of these passed to the Home

Guard. Finance was a difficulty for local authorities. This was met in March, 1941, by the Government accepting responsibility for district and area headquarters' administrative expenses and capitation grants to individual units on a basis of two shillings an active member at the end of 1940, plus one shilling a quarter per active member.

The E.P.S. was organised into supply, transport, works, medical, law and order, communications, works, fire, accommodation and evacuation, finance and publicity units. The E.P.S., by the Government's decision to regard it as part of the precautions necessary for home defence, was placed under the administration of the National Service Department in August, 1940. The E.P.S. eventually reached a peak strength of 160,000. The W.W.S.A. was organised to co-ordinate the work of existing organisations, to compile a register of women willing to undertake national service, and to advise and assist in all matters relating to the utilisation of women in the war effort. It had training courses and groups covering physical drill, transport, bicycle corps, emergency hospital workers, canteen workers, signalling corps, clerical workers, land group, mothers' helpers and sewing and knitting groups. A uniform, with cap and tie, was made available through Government subsidy at a cost of £1.

During the first nine months of the war, and prior to the inception of the National Service Department, 60,000 men had volunteered for service in the Armed Forces. Of these 29,000 had actually been posted to camp, 17,000 were medically unfit, and under 3,000 held back because of their occupations. The rest awaited examination or posting to camp. Within the ensuing eighteen months, following the establishment of the Department, more than one-third of a million men, comprising the whole of the male civilian population of military age, had been registered for national service; twelve ballots had been held and every available single man called up; 77,040 had been called for Territorial service and 80,509 for overseas, including 34,494 previously included in Territorial ballots; most had been medically examined and fell into these categories: 54 per cent. Grade I, fit for service anywhere; 11.5 per cent. Grade II, fit for active service in New Zealand; 10.2 per cent. deferred or found temporarily unfit; 16.2 per cent. fit only for sedentary or similar work in the Army; 8.1 per cent. permanently unfit. The proportion of balloted single men placed in Grade I. fell rapidly with the advance in age from 73 per cent. at age 19 to 24 per cent. at age 43 while the proportions in Grades III. and IV. combined rose from nine per cent. at age 19 to 54 per cent. at age 43. Of the 123,055 single men called up for service, 34 per cent. had been affected by appeals, this including 45 per cent. of the Grade I. men. Of the latter, 62 per cent. had been indefinitely postponed and 17 per cent. temporarily. Or, from another angle, 27 per cent. of all Grade I. men included in the ballots were granted indefinite postponements. By the end of 1941, by protection afforded to the continuity of essential industrial activities, more than 15,000 men had been held back from the forces, exclusive of those whose appeals were not yet heard. Japan's entry into the war saw the principle of compulsory universal service introduced into the Emergency Reserve Corps, including the Home Guard. The Territorial Force was mobilised on a full-time basis and a rapid succession of ballots was necessary. A considerable part of this force and of the National Military Reserve (a force largely of returned soldiers of 1914-18 who showed early appreciation of the war situation and acted accordingly), was mobilised full-time after the Christmas 1941-New Year 1942 break. This resulted in 7,000 men being affected by appeals of whom 54 per cent. were withheld from mobilisation, including 14

per cent. temporarily deferred and 11 per cent. adjourned for later review. During 1942, 160,004 men were called for service, most of them married. The priority of calling up married men was decided as: Those without children as a class; the rest (with children), by age-classes, commencing from the youngest classes, irrespective of the number of children. The advantage of this was stated to be that younger men were more easily trained, fitter and subject to lower sickness rates on service while the older men, who would be called last, were the more skilled and experienced in industry and able to train replacements. The whole class of married men without children was called up in January, 1942, and all the remaining married men to age 45 in a series of ballots which included the inflow of eighteen-year-olds and the "seepage" into classes already called up. The medical examination of married men disclosed two prominent features—their fitness, as with single men, decreased rapidly with age; married men of a given age were, on the average, fitter than single men of like age. There were fewer conscientious objectors among married men than with single. The later ballots showed reducing yields—No. 14, 65 per cent. Grade I., 41 per cent. yielded to forces (others postponed); No. 15, 57 and 34 per cent. respectively; No. 16, 53 and 27 per cent. respectively; No. 17, 48 and 22 per cent.; No. 18, 44 and 18 per cent. From 400,000 men of military age when the war began, and since attaining that age, 160,000 had now been withdrawn from civilian life but 240,000 remained.

The total of men of military age (eighteen to forty-five, with those under twenty-one or turned forty-one not eligible for overseas) was 355,000. Up to April 22, 1940, the total registrations of volunteers was 60,925, of whom 42,447 were passed fit. The Maori registrations, which were on a voluntary basis throughout the war, totalled 15,744 to May 31, 1945, for both home and overseas service. After volunteering was succeeded by the ballot system 306,798 men were called up. Of these 110,510 of various medical grades were available for service either at home or overseas, according to their category and subject to the usual rights of appeal. They included the youths who reached military age at intervals during the war. At May 31, 1945, 76,356 men had embarked for the Middle East and 30,165 returned; 40,964 for the Pacific and 40,003 returned; 784 for the United Kingdom and 629 returned. The grand total at May 31, 1945, was 118,014 embarked and 70,797 returned. The Pacific total includes men who served at one or more places there, returned to New Zealand and re-embarked for the same theatre.

Industrial mobilisation followed Japan's entry into the war. Broadly the measures restricted the outflow of labour from essential work, registered, interviewed and directed persons into essential work, restricted the inflow into non-essential work, allowed for consultations with major industries and the collection of statistical data for future guidance. Compulsory enrolment in the Emergency Reserve Corps of all male British subjects between eighteen and sixty-five, not in the armed forces or Home Guard, was directed on January 22, 1942. More than 70,000 men were enrolled for Home Guard service of whom 31,000 were actually called for service in the Guard after considering factors of health, availability for training and service, and effect on E.P.S. units. February, 1942, saw the decision that future ballots should be for "general" service—overseas or New Zealand, as required—but with the embarkation age still twenty-one to forty. All appeal tribunals were merged and reorganised as Armed Forces Appeal Boards.

Woman-power for the land was first organised under the W.W.S.A. in the form of a Women's Land Corps but this scheme was remodelled in

September, 1942, as the Women's Land Service with a complete set of working apparel and dress uniform and better pay. By March, 1943, the membership exceeded 600, and a year later had reached 1,879. Its peak was 2,008 in October, 1944. It was disbanded on April 30, 1946.

The Government spent £700,000 on air-raid shelters, paying a seventy-five per cent. subsidy for public shelters (local bodies paying the balance) and fifty per cent. for business shelters (local authorities and the building owners each paying twenty-five per cent.). Equipment made available free of cost included 250,000 civilian respirators, 6,000 steel helmets, 270,000 armlets, 3,000,000 feet of hose, 31,000 bucket and stirrup pumps, 100 air raid sirens, 6,500 service respirators and so on. The total E.P.S. personnel was estimated at over 150,000.

By the end of September, 1942, more than 90,000 men were equipped and undergoing continuous training in the Territorial Force, and other fully mobilised units of the Army in New Zealand, reinforceable at short notice by a Home Guard of almost equal strength, a National Military Reserve of many thousands, and two large bodies of United States troops then training in New Zealand. In all, 164,000 persons had been withdrawn from industry and transferred to the armed forces at home and overseas, while more than 250,000 others were serving part-time in civil defence, the Home Guard and other auxiliary services. By now New Zealand had given up to the forces a quarter of her whole male population aged fourteen to sixty-four, or ten per cent. of her entire population. On top of this came tremendous demands for food, timber and other requirements for the United States forces now forming a great chain of island bases. Already more than seventy various Regulations, Orders and Proclamations authorised and governed (or had at some time) the functions of the National Service Department.

Industrial measures included provision against firing or resigning in essential occupations without permission of a district manpower officer, reductions in wages, absenteeism, and failure to work plant to full capacity. By the end of 1942, the coverage of these provisions affected 230,000 workers. By March 31, 1943, of 62,000 applications to terminate employment, 8,400 (fourteen per cent.) were declined, twenty-two per cent. transferred to another employer in the same industry, fifty per cent. transferred to an employer in another essential industry, five per cent. to an employer in a non-essential industry, twenty-two per cent. lost to industry through ill-health, retirement and marriage (women). Against 61,000 decisions made by March 31, 1943, only 1,160 appeals (or two per cent. of the total directions) were made. Manpower registrations totalled 184,000 men (including 69,000 unfit men aged eighteen to forty-five), and 110,000 women. There had been 25,013 directions given to men and 5,766 to women, 3,261 being later withdrawn and 1,079 appeals lodged almost equally by employers and employees (twenty-three per cent. withdrawn, thirty-three per cent. upheld, forty-four per cent. dismissed). To the same date (March 31, 1943), 12,000 applications were made to engage labour in non-essential industries, 867 being refused and 359 directed to essential work. Only two appeals were made. There had been 7,564 complaints of absenteeism, 1,427 of these decided not to be well founded, 5,109 warnings issued, and 424 fines imposed. Women workers account for 2,736 of the complaints.

Early in 1943, War Cabinet decided to substantially reduce the home defence forces, and an allocation was made of the available men to the overseas army, the Air Force and industry. Key statistics at the end of 1943 showed: Total population (1943), 1,639,000; forces serving overseas, 70,000;

war casualties, deaths 6,000, missing 1,000, prisoners 7,000; in the forces in New Zealand, 70,000; total withdrawn from industry, 154,000, including 8,000 women. The strength of the mobilised forces at September, 1939, the end of 1940 (first Libyan advance), November, 1941 (prior to entry of Japan), September, 1942 (peak mobilisation in New Zealand), end 1943, were, in order of Navy, Army and Air Force respectively: 1,000, 1,000, 1,000 (3,000); 3,000, 37,000, 9,000 (49,000); 5,000, 60,000, 15,000 (80,000); 6,000, 125,000, 26,000 (157,000); 9,000, 80,000, 40,000 (129,000). Mobilisation had risen from 0.2 of the total population and 0.5 of the male population between fifteen and sixty-four at September, 1939, to 10 per cent. and 29.5 per cent. at September, 1942, and then 8.4 per cent. and 24.7 per cent. at the end of 1943. The labour force at the outbreak of war was 520,000 males and 180,000 females. The natural normal increase to 1943 was 21,000. Additional numbers made available by war mobilisation was 67,000 (51,000 females). The net number withdrawn to the forces after allowing for releases back to industry was 154,000. The result was a labour force of 634,000 (228,000 females) at the end of 1943. Classes balloted and the degree of protection of industry by appeal boards and manpower committees were statistically shown as: 1939-40, volunteers, 10 per cent. of fit men held from service; 1941, single men by ballot, 27 per cent.; 1942, married without children, 35 per cent.; 1942, married without children, 35 per cent.; 1942, married with children (aged 18 to 31), 41 per cent.; 1942, married, with children (32 to 40), 54 per cent. By March, 31, 1944, 71,338 males and 19,120 females had been directed into essential work, 15,809 applications for termination of employment had been refused, 17,757 warnings issued in respect of absenteeism, 2,589 fines imposed for absenteeism, three per cent. of appeals lodged against decisions and directions. Category A men held in industry at the end of 1943 totalled 10,391 single men and 28,623 married. Farming accounted for 4,634 and 7,298 respectively, mines and sawmills, 1,106 and 2,118, transport and communication, 1,397 and 5,283, others (including police, clergy, students), 1,223 and 2,601, and the balance in building and construction, food processing, metal industries and power, commerce and finance (155 and 1,602), other secondary industries. As against 10,391 fit single men held in industry, more than 75,000 single men had joined the forces since the outbreak of war.

The National Service figures at February, 1945, showed that 12,868 category A single men between twenty-one and thirty-five were held on appeal in industry, of whom 8,118 were employed on farms. The number had been reduced to 9,827 by the end of April (5,929 on farms). With all category A men (single, married with up to two children and under thirty-six), there were then 21,771 held on appeal, 10,210 being employed in the farming industry.

One criticism which might be levelled in respect of single men retained was that some years of war might well be considered sufficient time to train replacements for even the most skilled industries, taking into account the efficient manner in which the Army and Air Force were able to train trades personnel in less than half this time. It was estimated that by the end of 1943 the farming industry had contributed 20,000 men to the forces, or about one-eighth of its pre-war labour force. The seasonal labour problem in 1943-44 was met by releases from the Army of the maximum number of farm workers before the peak of the season; a drive for Women's Land Service recruits which increased the total from 972 in October, 1943, to 1,879 in March, 1944; the use of students, teachers and senior pupils during vacations in freezing works, dairy factories, wool stores and on farms; compulsory

directions of men returned in groups from overseas garrisons and men selected for short-term Territorial service; the Army harvesting scheme which utilised Army equipment and organisation. A limited number of men were withdrawn from the Pacific, after reference to Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt and the Combined Chiefs of Staff in London and Washington, for food production in New Zealand. Finally the whole 3rd Division was withdrawn and men either made available for industry or transferred to the 2nd Division for service in the Middle East. In 1944-45 the problems were not so acute as formerly. The ballot system continued but was largely an automatic process confined to those coming of military age, or becoming available for other reasons.

The year 1944 saw serious problems. Butterfat production had fallen steadily since 1941 and now there was a decline in meat output from works. Defence and other essential projects could not be completed on schedule, the engineering, footwear, clothing and foodstuffs industries were behind in output, and there were increasing demands for food for Great Britain, the United States forces and the necessity to prepare for meeting European relief demands. These problems were all of labour. The demand for industrial manpower could not be met and the Middle East Division (35,000), Air Force in Pacific and elsewhere (13,000), and Navy in all theatres (10,000), and the 3rd Army Division, Pacific (18,000) all maintained at strength. It was decided to repatriate the bulk of the 3rd Division and place them in industry. Between April and November, 1944, some 9,500 volunteered for essential work, were repatriated and directed. The return of the 3rd Division helped industry to discharge its added responsibilities. In September, 1944, it was decided also to continue to reinforce the Middle East Division until the end of the European war, and to return to New Zealand men with three or more years' service. In November that year, excluding coal-miners, seamen, ministers of religion and police, there were 27,000 category A men held on appeal, and a policy of reviewing these cases resulted in 5,000 men being released to the Forces by March, 1945.

The estimated progressive totals of men medically examined for service for five years, each to March 31, were: 1941, 135,000; 1942, 205,000; 1943, 332,000; 1944, 342,000; 1945, 350,000. The women's total was cumulatively 5,500 for the N.Z.W.A.A.C.; 7,900 for the W.A.A.F.; 1,400 for the W.R.N.S. Of all men and women examined (364,500), 70,000 were volunteers. The intake of men by each Service at March 31 of the respective years in order of Army, Air Force and Navy respectively was as follows: 1941, 99,000—10,000—4,000; 1942, 115,000—25,000—5,000; 1943, 147,000—38,000—7,000; 1944, 153,000—45,000—10,000; 1945, 156,000—50,000—12,000. The net intake of men for the same years was 113,000—145,000—192,000—208,000—218,000. In total strength the Army always outstripped the other two Services. At peak mobilisation, September, 1942, the comparative strengths were: Army, 172,000; Air Force, 24,000; Navy, 6,000. Thereafter Army strength receded to be 53,000 at March 31, 1946; the Air Force expanded to 42,000 by May, 1944, and declined to 36,000 at March 31, 1945; the Navy rose to 10,000.

By March, 1945, 169,000 directions to persons had been issued by manpower officers, of which only 4,900 or 2.9 per cent. were appealed against and 40.8 of these altered by industrial manpower committees. At March 31, 1945, there were 40,159 males and 10,312 females working under manpower directions in the more important industrial groups. The males included 8,853 in farming, 3,392 in sawmilling and mining, 12,288 in food processing, 9,858 in

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building and allied trades, 5,768 in transport and communications. Of the women 4,030 were in clothing factories or mills, 2,774 in hospitals, 1,670 in hotels and restaurants, 1,412 in food-processing and 426 in transport and communications.

Category A men successfully appealed for were bound by directions until June 29, 1946, when the last declarations of essentiality were due for withdrawal. After March 31, 1946, only declarations of essentiality covering freezing works, coal mining, sawmilling and forestry were still in force.

From the outset of the war to March 31, 1945, 89,000 men were released from the Armed Forces to industry. The greatest number of men withdrawn from industry at one time was 170,000 in September, 1942.

A total of 5,117 appeals on the ground of conscientious objection had been made by March 31, 1945. Of these, 944 were withdrawn or struck out, mainly because the appellant was grade four. There were 1,096 of the remainder adjourned *sine die* on the ground of public interest or otherwise, leaving 3,077 appeals dealt with on conscientious objection after other grounds were disposed of. Of these 3,077, 606 or 19.7 per cent. were allowed; 1,226 or 39.8 per cent. dismissed subject to non-combatant service; 1,245 or 40.5 per cent. dismissed outright. There were then 608 in detention camps, forty-five in jail; sixty-four gone to the Armed Forces of their own volition; nine temporarily released for medical and nine for special reasons; three transferred to mental hospitals; nineteen escapees at large; sixteen discharged as medically unfit; three discharged for other reasons; three dead. In addition thirteen went into the Army after serving their initial prison sentences. The capital expenditure on detention camps to March, 1944, was £99,302 and operational expenditure £219,504. Of the National Service Department staff at March 31, 1945, 132 were on the staff of detention camps. These camps had cost £92,767 for the financial year 1944-45 and £133,245 for the previous year. For 1944-45 defaulters had performed work valued at £50,976 which was offset against the £92,767.

Appeal boards' practice so varied that the percentage allowed by one was 14 per cent. and by another 33 per cent.

The special tribunal dealing with the forfeiture of pay by successful objectors (above that earned by an Army private) dealt with 572 cases and made orders for an appropriation of income which yielded an aggregate of £5,547 a year to the Social Security Fund. There was 87 contributing under £20 a year; 53, between £20 and £40; 22 between £40 and £60; 15 between £60 and £80; five between £80 and £100; five between £100 and £150; one between £150 and £200. The average yield per order was £11/2/-. Of the 572 who came before these special tribunals 273 were single, 137 married without children; 162 married with children. Of twelve classes of industry in which they were engaged the largest was farming, 121.

INDUSTRIAL FRONT.

New Zealand made a tremendous contribution, considering its resources, to the equipment and food requirements of its own and Allied forces. More than 5,000,000 military garments and 1,000,000 pair of military boots were made. Biscuit factories, in a three-year contract, turned out 47,000 tons of biscuits for the services. It was estimated that by July 31, 1945, New Zealand radio and allied manufacturers would have completed £4,000,000 worth

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of equipment, most of it for British and United States forces. The bulk was made and designed by New Zealanders at a cost in many cases lower than English or United States figures. Munitions and other stores were supplied to the Eastern Supply Group. To the end of April, 1945, in this field alone, New Zealand shipped for the British Ministry of Supply nearly £10,000,000 worth of equipment, transferred to the War Office £8,520,761 in supplies found surplus to New Zealand's overseas service requirements, and had £2,500,000 of supplies in these categories awaiting shipment. Through the Eastern Group Supply Council New Zealand equipment found its way to the United Kingdom, Italy, North Africa, Russia, India, China, Russia. A summary of New Zealand's contributions to the Eastern Group Supply organisation, to the end of April, 1945, showed 1,448,147 packages shipped of a total weight of 60,609 tons and value of £18,453,161. Among the supplies from New Zealand factories were 135,003,698 rounds of .303 ammunition; 3,385,716 hand grenades; 5,170 military transmitter-receiver wireless sets.

The magnitude of work performed under Lend Lease (£83,846,000) is shown in the section devoted to the cost of the war.

In addition to the purely military contribution, New Zealand shipped to Britain 1,800,000 tons of meat, 685,000 tons of butter, and 625,000 tons of cheese, and 5,400,000 bales of wool were appraised for shipment to Britain. In addition, New Zealand supplied £39,500,000 worth of foodstuffs to the United States. At the same time factories manufactured large quantities of clothing, munitions, and equipment, and supplied the civilian market with essential commodities which could no longer be obtained from overseas. The value of factory production rose from £114,447,000 in 1938-39 to £174,500,000 in 1943-44. Up to the end of 1944 American forces had been supplied with 132,000 tons of meat, 17,000 tons of butter, 6,000 tons of cheese, 16,000 tons of canned and dehydrated vegetables, 78,000 tons of fresh vegetables. A total of 46,000 tons of biscuits had also been exported up to then.

A great effort was made by the primary producers. These figures show respectively the average output for the first five years of war with that for the five pre-war years in parentheses: Butterfat, 191,500 tons average yearly (189,900), sixth-year estimate, 193,000. Wool, 148,000 tons average (134,000), sixth-year estimate, 166,000 on a greasy basis, a record. Vegetables, 160,000 tons average for the third, four and fifth years (80,000). Meat, 526,000 tons (470,000 tons average for three pre-war years). Grass seed, 83,820 cwt. average exported (61,520). Wheat, oats, maize, peas, potatoes, increased acreage of 57,600 during first five years of war. All this was accomplished despite labour and materials (including fertilisers) difficulties. The farmers' income for seven years from 1937 averaged £71,800,000 annually against £47,700,000 in the period, 1928-35. This looked most favourable on paper but account must be taken of the greater costs, decreased purchasing power, increased prices paid by British Government and, in respect of the 1928-35 figure, the low slump prices.

Foodstuffs supplied to United States forces in the Pacific made up the major part of New Zealand's contribution to reverse Lend-Lease aid. It was estimated that up to the end of July, 1945, New Zealand had provided goods and services to the value of more than £70,000,000. These included foodstuffs, equipment and supplies, repairs and services, camps, warehouses, hospitals, other buildings and ships built in New Zealand. Foodstuffs accounted for £38,000,000 of the total, reflecting the step-up in production since 1942. The weight of food supplied was nearly 1,000,000,000 pounds or the equivalent of sixty Liberty ships, each carrying 7,500 tons. That meant

more than one fully loaded ship a month since July, 1942. New Zealand sent to the Pacific a quarter of its vegetables and apples, a seventh of its meat, and a twelfth of its dairy produce. Yet neither New Zealand troops nor civilians went short. Vegetable production was doubled and canning and allied industries expanded eighteen times. Before the war New Zealand imported vegetables more often than it exported them. When the demand came production was unequal to it because many market gardeners or their employees were already in the forces. Stimulus to household growing to ease the demands on commercial production was given by the Dig for Victory campaigns. The acreage of State Vegetable Projects was doubled and commercial gardening areas greatly increased. The total area planted in vegetables was increased between 1942 and 1945 by forty-two per cent. The output of canned vegetables rose from 1,612,000 pounds in 1938 to 29,086,000 in 1942-43 and up till the end of April, 1945, there had been sent to the Pacific, 21,000 tons of canned vegetables, 1,500 tons of dehydrated vegetables, 52,400 tons of potatoes and 47,500 tons of other fresh vegetables. The output of canned fruits in 1938 was 3,576,000 pounds; in 1943, 4,293,000 pounds. Dehydration played a big part. An officer of the Internal Marketing Division visited the United States in 1943 to study dehydration and freezing plants and valuable research and experimental work was done by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in which Mr. L. W. Tiller was, prominently associated. United States machinery was acquired under Lend-Lease and much plant was also made available in New Zealand. By the end of April, 1945, 17,700 tons of apples and pears had been supplied to the Pacific. Butter and meat were considerable items. The whole Pacific needs in butter were met by rationing in New Zealand, and without reducing the quantity sent to the United Kingdom. Rationing freed one-third of our butter—about 1,500,000 pounds a month. The total supplied under reverse Lease-Lend to April 30, 1945, was 21,350 tons. Cheese totalled 7,850 tons. Meat was the largest single item. It accounted for more than £17,000,000 of the £38,000,000 for foodstuffs. Figures to April 30, 1945, showed these quantities: Bacon and ham, 21,300 tons; frozen meat, 108,300 tons; canned meat, 30,100 tons. Sugar and tea accounted for £1,033,508 and £226,959, and other items for £3,386,028. Figures at March 31, 1945, showed other items of Lend-Lease as follows: Equipment and supplies, £N.Z. 9,700,000; repairs and services, £9,400,000; camps, £2,000,000; warehouses, £2,000,000; hospitals, £2,100,000; buildings, £2,560,000; shipbuilding, £2,000,000. Total, £29,760,000.

Including the estimated 1945 linen flax crop New Zealand supplied to the British Ministry of Supply for the spinning of cordage, threads, yarns, etc., for urgent war purposes, 6,770 tons of linen fibre and 3,531 tons of tow of a total value of £1,807,787.

These figures give a cross-section of manufacturing effort. In six years of war, manufacturing industry made in quantity 60,000 separate munition items, including an almost head-to-toe service for New Zealand and Allied servicemen which resulted in more than 15,000,000 garments being manufactured. Woollen mills turned out miles of woollen cloth for uniforms, about 1,000,000 pairs of blankets, and military footwear production, mainly from locally tanned hides, was more than 3,000,000 pairs. Manufacturing engineers fulfilled for the Munitions Controller over £12,000,000 worth of war contracts, producing approximately 5,000,000 grenades, 300,000,000 rounds of ammunition, 1,000,000 mortars, 70,000 aircraft practice bombs, 40,000 chemical land mines, 1,500 Charlton automatic rifles, 10,000 Sten guns, 20,000 anti-tank mines, 10,000 sub-storage petrol tanks, and tens of thousands

of many other types of munitions. For Army requirements alone the motor-body building industry produced 11,703 bodies. Food production was tremendous. The Imperial Government was supplied with nearly 50,000 tons of biscuits, over 15,000 tons of oatmeal, and canned sausages, meat paste, pickles, canned meat and vegetable ration, chocolate emergency ration, jellies, malted milk, dried yeast and eating chocolate, totalling some 70,000 tons. These figures are exclusive of over 40,000,000 lbs. of canned meat, 16,000,000 lbs. of evaporated milk, 13,000,000 lbs. of canned vegetables and so on supplied to United States forces in the Pacific. Considerable mechanical work was done for the United States forces. In June, 1945, Lieut.-Col. L. W. Mickerson, U.S.M.C., stated that the ability to do sensible reclamation work in New Zealand had permitted the return to combat of equipment unavailable from new sources and not repairable from existing sources. The work was superior and unequalled. "In two and a half years we have handled supplies valued at 75,000,000 dollars, our reclamation from junk to completely rebuilt products has averaged 600,000 dollars a month. The average cost in reclamation, including overhead, is 25 per cent. of U.S. value. Our percentage of reclamation has been high; waste almost nil. Our work has been accomplished by commercial contract and in our shops; we can only view the results with amazement. The quality of work performed by apprentice-trained artisans for the U.S.M.C. has been of superior quality and unequalled anywhere else."

Between January, 1940, and March, 1945, inclusive, there were 482 industrial disputes involving 797 firms and 93,366 workers, with a resultant loss of 197,142 working days and £249,871 in wages. Many disputes were trivial, and brief. The Government's apparent policy of considering it paramount to keep the wheels of industry moving in wartime was probably best. It led, however, in respect of the Waikato mines dispute, to a break-up of the Coalition War Administration, the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. S. G. Holland and his colleagues, bar the late Right Hon. J. G. Coates and the Hon. Adam Hamilton, withdrawing.

Critics of the Government laid much of the blame for industrial trouble at its door. However, other countries of the Allied Nations had their similar disturbances. Harsh measures would have only led to worse and not assisted the war effort a scrap. The unions were exercising industrially part of the freedom for which the fighting men were battling overseas. Fortunately the fighting men kept their minds and efforts on the main objective and took no time off to ventilate such grievances as they may have felt on occasions.

Salaries and wages increased from £112,800,000 in 1939-40 to £175,900,000 in 1943-44; the income of other individuals from £52,600,000 to £59,800,000; social security benefits from £3,600,000 to £15,700,000; company income from £23,600,000 to £40,900,000. At March 31, 1945, the National Savings accounts, of 500,000 persons aggregated £31,000,000. Post Office Savings Banks' deposits were up £53,000,000 and those of trustee savings banks, £9,000,000.

Great demands were made on the clothing industry, not only the New Zealand Forces but other Commonwealth troops being supplied. These figures show the total production from the outbreak of war to December 31, 1944, the production in the year of greatest output being given in parentheses: Blouses and jackets, 1,437,141 (427,536 in 1942); trousers, 1,843,708 (480,765 in 1943); great coats, 530,704 (160,369 in 1942); sox (pairs), 4,709,322 (1,410,214 in 1941); underwear (garments), 2,840,783 (859,456 in 1941); jerseys and pullovers, 747,855 (206,016 in 1942); shirts, 1,037,611.

Nearly 500 vessels, totalling in value about £3,750,000, were constructed in New Zealand during the war. They included minesweepers, "Fairmile" patrol boats, oil barges, tugs, small special purpose boats and wooden barges. An immense amount of repair work was also carried out in New Zealand on merchant ships, New Zealand naval vessels, and a larger number of American transports and other ships. The war shipbuilding programme, including some ships which were being completed when the war ended, was as follows:—

For Royal New Zealand Navy: Composite minesweepers, 4; steel minesweepers, 9; "Fairmile" patrol boats, 12; oil barge (non-propelled), 1. For R.N.Z.A.F.: Refuelling barges, crash launches, flare path dinghies, etc., 27. For the United States authorities: Steel tugs, 30; wooden tugs, 50; powered lighters, 22; barges, wood, completed, 100; amphibian trailers (steel), 100; wherries, wood, 60. For the Eastern Group Supply Council: Wooden tugs, 24. For the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific: Patrol boats, 5.

Immediately after war broke out the Government decided that New Zealand should build its own minesweepers and that the ships should be of a size and type that would be useful after the war in commerce. Vessels of the trawler class are greatly favoured by the Admiralty for minesweeping purposes.

The situation regarding the supply of such materials as steel plates sections, plates, engine forgings, pumps, and generating sets, compasses, and other apparatus not made in New Zealand became particularly difficult. Attention was naturally directed to kauri planking as an alternative to steel plates. Trees large enough had to be located, and new roads and bridges had in some cases to be built to reach them. To conserve the large trees hardwood was imported for the keels, which required lengths not less than seventy feet. For hull planking and deadwoods, etc., about 40,000 feet of kauri was necessary for each ship. As a kauri tree gives only about 35 per cent. of timber of ship-building quality a considerable number of trees had to be felled. By the use of timber for planking about fifty tons of steel per ship was saved. In vessels laid up because they were beyond economical repair were engines and boilers which could be made serviceable for a few years at least at a reasonable cost. From one twin-screw vessel two engines and two boilers were obtained for two of the minesweepers, and from a single-screw ship, the whole of the propelling machinery, including auxiliary machinery, was obtained. The bottleneck in the supply of imported hull materials and of engine and boiler material was thus temporarily overcome.

The situation regarding supplies for the steel minesweepers was at times most acute. Steel did not arrive in the order in which it was required to be erected.

The keels were laid in March, 1941, and the three vessels were launched in August and September of that year. The first was completed in February, 1942, and the other two were in commission less than four months later. This was quite creditable in view of the delays arising out of lack of materials. A considerable delay was also due to a change, made three months after construction had commenced, from contact to magnetic minesweeping. Our shipbuilders were quite unfamiliar with magnetic minesweeping gear, the electrical apparatus was intricate, and its installation could not be unduly hurried. The original building programme provided for fourteen completely new minesweepers. At Auckland and Wellington very little special preparatory work on the building sites was necessary. At Port

Chalmers, "the Clyde of New Zealand," however, where ten minesweepers were to be constructed, the work was planned on modern lines for mass production. A section at Boiler Point was cleared and within twenty-four hours of the announcement of the allocation a contract was let for the erection of the necessary buildings and plant on this site, costing about £75,000.

Twelve "Fairmile" patrol boats were built in New Zealand for the Royal New Zealand Navy from drawings and specifications supplied by the Fairmile Marine Company of Surrey, England.

These boats are 112 feet long overall; they have a speed of about eighteen and three-quarter knots, and their loaded displacement is eighty tons. They can keep the sea in any weather. All the components for the hulls except those built of timber were imported from the Fairmile Company. The kauri was made available by the State Forest Service. About 14,000 feet of timber was used in each ship. The contracts for the twelve vessels were let at the end of 1941 to shipbuilding firms in Auckland. Foundation members were laid in January, 1942. The work progressed most satisfactorily and by September, 1943, all the twelve boats had been completed. Notwithstanding the novelty of their construction the boats were completed in an average of 35,000 man-hours per boat, whereas the time given by the Fairmile Company was 40,700 hours, excluding the time required for electrical work.

At this stage our American allies inquired as to the possibility of assisting in their requirements of tow boats, tugs and powered lighters for the Pacific. The Minister of Supply, Hon. D. G. Sullivan, directed Sir (then Mr.) James Fletcher as Controller of Shipbuilding to so organise the industry that orders for over 100 vessels could be executed for United States purposes. This necessitated the construction of one shipyard for wooden ships at the site of the Auckland foreshore. Another yard was built at Mechanics Bay for steel vessels.

The total number of American ships repaired in various New Zealand shipyards from January, 1943, to November, 1945, was 1,089 (Auckland, 763; Wellington, 239; Dunedin, 45; Napier, 27; Lyttelton, 15).

To the United States Marine Corps, New Zealand supplied equipment valued at 19,000,000 dollars (£6,000,000). This contribution was made possible in three different ways. First, the availability of apprentice and skilled workers. Secondly, the co-operation of commercial and industrial interests. Thirdly, the support of Dominion officials. For instance, the Third Field Depot of the United States Marine Corps purchased in New Zealand, under Lend-Lease, approximately 1,400 pieces of motor transport. The U.S.M.C. also took full advantage of the existing automotive repair facilities in this country and by February, 1945, 150 units per month were being built by the Third Field Depot, 100 of which came out of local shops.

NEW ZEALAND AND THE ATOMIC BOMB

New Zealand may claim some part in the atomic bomb discovery. The fundamental source of atomic energy is released by the artificial disintegration or fission of the atom; generally known as the splitting of the atom. It was the late Lord Rutherford's brilliant researches which established the nuclear nature of the atom. Late in the nineteenth century and early in this he studied the uranium rays [uranium is the source of energy in the atomic

bomb] which he was able to show to be, not light, but a new force. His demonstration of the breaking down of thorium was the beginning of his discovery of the transmutation of the elements. With another, he discovered that radio-activity was an atomic phenomenon. His brilliant researches on the ultimate constitution of matter placed him in the front rank of the world's physicists. He was the first to count the alpha particles projected from radium and to give convincing proof of the atomic theory of matter. For his work on radio-activity he received many honours from scientific societies, the Nobel prize for chemistry in 1908, knighted in 1914, created O.M. in 1925, and elevated to the peerage in 1931, when he took the name of his birthplace, Nelson, New Zealand. He was born in 1871 and in 1894 won a scholarship to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he worked under Sir J. J. Thomson, who discovered electrons, the tiniest unit in the world. New Zealand scientists made some contribution to the development of the atomic bomb. Early in 1944, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir John Anderson, asked, if New Zealand could release some of her best brains for the project. Dr. E. Marsden, secretary of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, who was then in Britain, suggested five of his best physicists and engineers. Marsden had early and intimate association with Lord Rutherford of Nelson in his epoch-making research into atomic structure. New Zealand seconded at first five and then two more men for the work, all well-trained in electronics for work on atomic power and explosives. They worked in North America and were Messrs. C. N. Watson-Munro, director of the department's radio development laboratory (leader); K. D. George, M.Sc., scientific liaison officer in Washington; W. W. Young, B.E., engineer, department's defence development section, Christchurch; R. M. Williams, M.A., and G. Page, B.Sc., both physicists, department's radio development laboratory (the first five); G. J. Ferguson, B.Sc., and A. E. Allan, B.E. Four men also went to the United Kingdom to work on jet propulsion development: Messrs. N. A. MacKay, B.E., A. A. McCutchan, B.E., P. J. Hambleton, B.E., and G. A. Hookings, B.Sc. Uranium, the source of energy in the atomic bomb, was found in certain New Zealand granites and other rocks and sands. Extensive searches were made for two years prior to the first war use of the bomb and showed that the concentrates found contained small concentrations of a new uranium mineral known as uranothorite, which contains 11.5 per cent. of uranium and 60 per cent. of thorium. Old-fashioned methods of mining recovery would not make the uranium in New Zealand economically practicable. The most modern mining methods were considered necessary to economic recovery, preferably where uranium could be recovered in conjunction with gold and other rare metal contents. The thorium in uranothorite was also considered a possible source of atomic power. The most promising localities for uranothorite were in the oldest rock formations on the West Coast of the South Island and uranium was also found in certain monosite sands thought to contain thorium only. The best results were obtained from the alluvial gravel and the sands on the West Coast of the South Island. This alluvial gravel was tested, and it was clear that a fair amount of uranium was scattered throughout the West Coast, particularly in the black sand deposits. A fairly high percentage was also to be found in the dredge tailings. There are on the West Coast hundreds of other alluvial deposits containing both gold and uranium, with good promise for the recovery of uranium ore, particularly Harihari and Gillespie's Beach. In January and February, 1946, geologists travelling in the *New Golden Hind* explored the Southland fiords for possible sources of radio-active materials

used in the production of atomic energy. A party also explored between Lake Manapouri and the fiords. All sources, existing or prospective, were by special legislation placed under State control.

New Zealand played an early part in the development of radar. Back in 1924, Dr. M. A. F. Barnett, who later became Director of Meteorological Services and held the same position during the war with the R.N.Z.A.F. with the rank of wing commander, carried out experiments with Sir Edward Appleton in the United Kingdom. Using a broadcasting station for investigations into the upper layers of the atmosphere, the two men discovered that waves sent out were being reflected and picked up again. By accident an aircraft crossed the path, waves were deflected from it, and in this way radar was born. The wartime Governor-General of New Zealand, Air Marshal Sir Cyril L. Newall, when a member of the Air Ministry in Britain, was responsible for the decision to develop the new discovery. When war appeared inevitable in 1939 the Dominions were given the secrets of radar. New Zealand at once sent Dr. E. Marsden, civil service head of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, to England to collect the secret information and key parts for the sets. War broke out while he was there but he brought back the plans and in a comparatively short time, New Zealand had radar stations in operation and supplied surplus equipment to the British Eastern Fleet. New Zealand was a pioneer in the use of radar for weather forecasting, meteorological balloons being followed up to forty miles by radar and valuable weather forecast data obtained.

A radio proximity fuse used in anti-aircraft shells that helped beat the flying bomb and saved the British fleets in the Far East from serious loss when the Japanese threw in suicide bombers, was conceived by Mr. W. A. S. Butement, a technical officer of the Ministry of Supply. Mr. Butement was born in Masterton, and was the eldest son of Dr. William Butement. Mr. Butement later designed the C.H.L. radar sets. Shells inserted with radio proximity fuses burst on the shell coming within a certain distance of the target. The increased number of flying bombs destroyed in 1944 before reaching their targets was attributed in part to the use of these fuses.

Experiments with radio-controlled boats, artificial flying conditions in classrooms for the instruction of air crews and smoke screens to conceal the Arapuni hydro-electric works from air attack were carried out in Auckland during the war by the technical development committee set up by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. The Royal New Zealand Air Force asked the committee to devise some means to simulate identical flying conditions in a classroom. To do this actual noises inside modern aeroplanes were recorded on a steel tape. Those noises were re-produced in special cubicles to give the trainees the full noise effects. Motion pictures filmed from aeroplanes were also used in the cubicles to give the sensations of flying and also to teach the pilots a sense of recognition. It was found with this new training that a man who could combat the disadvantages created artificially had a ninety per cent. chance of succeeding once he was tested in the air. The Auckland idea was used in Canada and Britain.

A radio-controlled boat was also constructed. This could be started up, steered and its speed regulated as desired at the push of a button by radio control. A smoke screen to conceal the boat could even be sent up and in response to other signals the boat would lay mines or depth charges. Loaded with a warhead of explosive the boat could be directed against ships or shore installations as an offensive weapon. These boats later took on a new role as target boats for artillery practice and were used at Auckland,

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Wellington and Christchurch by the coastal batteries. Experiments in Auckland also led to the development of tanks and aircraft which could be controlled successfully by radio. Power aeroplane models, with a wingspread of eighteen feet, were controlled by radio during the experiments.

WOMEN'S WAR SERVICE AUXILIARY

No account of the war effort would be complete without mention of the Women's War Service Auxiliary which had at its peak a strength of 75,000 and, through its organisation, enlisted 6,000 women into the Armed Forces. The W.W.S.A. was under the control of the National Service Department and its functions were: The provision of a national organisation of women and girls; the co-ordination and direction of women's effort to avoid overlapping; the compilation of a voluntary register of woman-power; the promotion of activities and training facilities for women unable to obtain these in other organisations. The W.W.S.A. directed voluntary work in service camps, organised women helpers for such efforts as loan appeals and recruits for the services and Women's Land Army, assistance with patriotic appeals, street collections, etc. The W.W.S.A. trained land groups to grow vegetables in plots loaned for the duration, the crops being given to service clubs and the families of men overseas and, in some cases, sold for patriotic purposes; provided voluntary helpers to do clerical and typing duties for the Home Guard, E.P.S. and Army; helped to staff dry canteens at military camps, clubs and hostels with voluntary workers; manning mobile canteens and visiting outlying posts; hospital groups did visiting hospital work, training as aides in kitchens and laundries; obstetrical voluntary aides gave 1,600 hours of work at Government maternity hospitals (the W.W.S.A. No. 1 Nursing Group—obstetric voluntary aides—was the only one of its kind); sewing and knitting groups made garments from homespun wool for servicemen, particularly those in minesweepers; signal groups worked with the Home Guard on manoeuvres and the E.P.S. on exercises; numbers assisted in delivering posters for patriotic, loan and similar appeals and staffed waste paper depots; obtained labour for flaxmills near Gore; organised and undertook the making of camouflage nets; did voluntary work at canning factories and picked market garden crops; trained groups of transport workers, 600 women passing an examination set by the Automotive Engineers' Institute, on October 23, 1941. A majority of these transport workers enlisted in the Army. Most of the work was done by women after their daily work or at week-ends. In all over 8,000 women served in the Armed Forces, including a total of 639 with the N.Z. Army Nursing Service. At March 31, 1945, 5,834 females were in the forces (including 874 overseas). Army, 2,008 (701 Middle East, 16 Pacific); Air Force, 2,541 (67 Pacific); Navy, 501 (all in New Zealand).

DEFENCE CONSTRUCTION

The outbreak of war in September, 1939, found New Zealand's defence construction programme under way. Already seventy buildings of a total floor area of 795,750 square feet were in course of erection, and within

items of Public Works Department construction plant valued at more than £500,000 were sent to the Middle East, India, the Far East, Fiji and the Pacific generally. Most of it was lost to the department, though substantial purchases of surplus equipment in the Pacific were made after the war.

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS AND DEFAULTERS

The conscientious objectors and defaulters—unless it is within the power of man to search into the conscience of his fellows, it is hard to tell which is which—came in for considerable criticism. The vocal and printed expenditure on some, for and against, was wasted and might have been better expended in other directions. But there were others who, at the peak of their immaturity, were influenced by older men who subsequently deserted them. This reversal of attitude was not peculiar to the secular world. It showed itself even in some Churches which encouraged pacifism. After a life-time opposition to conscription the Labour Government on June 18, 1940, introduced conscription. No voice was reported as raised against it in the House or the Legislative Council though both contained a number who had been doughty opponents of conscription. Provision was made for appeals by conscientious objectors. The regulations provided that conscientious appeals should only be allowed where an appeal board was satisfied that the appellant held a sincere belief that it was wrong to engage in warfare in any circumstances. There were all manner of objectors—some against bearing arms against a particular nation (mostly persons of Italian descent); others against fighting in a particular theatre of war (those who considered it their duty to defend New Zealand only within this country or its immediate environs; a belief fostered by a political minority which should have known better); some who saw no justification for this war; again others who had strong Communistic beliefs and opposed war until Russia was attacked by Germany and became an Ally (most of this class then changed their minds); some Irish objectors; and other odds and ends. There was quite a number of religious objectors opposed to fighting but willing to do non-combatant service such as in the Medical Corps. One of the peculiar contradictions of the regulations, or their working procedure, was that conscientious objectors also appealed for on the grounds of public interest (essentiality) had such appeals disposed of first. If they succeeded, their personal conscientious appeals were not heard. Where objectors were found medically unfit for service their appeals were not heard. Here, therefore, were two classes of conscientious objectors, the sincerity of whose beliefs was not tested, but who suffered none of the opprobrium attaching either to their successful fellow objectors or those who failed and were classed as defaulters. Those fit for service could be dealt with in three ways—their appeals allowed, in which event they might be called on to perform alternative service under civil control; their appeals dismissed subject to non-combatant service in the armed forces; their appeals dismissed outright with the requirement to perform combatant duties in the ordinary way. Late in 1941 special one-man tribunals were set up to deal with successful objectors. Their function was to ensure that these men were in no better position financially than a private in the Army, allowing for the fact that the latter was clothed, fed, housed and had free medical attention, etc., and also to ensure they were employed in civilian work in conformity with the public interest. This proviso did not apply to

objectors held under other appeals, or unfit objectors whose appeals were not heard. The sittings of appeal boards and of the tribunals were public. In October, 1941, defaulters' detention camps were established to house objectors whose appeals were dismissed outright, those who did not appeal or who, having been given the option of non-combatant service, would not take it.

Before proceeding further on this subject, it is fitting to review the general background of pacifism or conscientious objection in New Zealand. In 1925-35 particularly, the country had the current spate of books which opposed war, some of them written by ex-soldiers or men and women embittered by their experiences; others based on political, commercial or other unidealistic considerations concerned with warfare. Among certain denominations it became the accepted thing to preach pacifism, citing always the teachings of the gentle Nazarene. From the soap box and political platform there were loud condemnations of "Imperialistic" and "capitalistic" wars and the regimentation and exploitation of workers to fight them while commercial interests waxed fat (they still did fairly well—those on war contracts—during the 1939-45 war). A lot was preached during the 1914-18 war and before 1939-40 about "no conscription of men without conscription of wealth." Salaries and wages increased by £65,100,000 between 1939-40 and 1943-44 (income of other individuals by £7,200,00; company income by £17,300,000), national savings accounts totalled £31,000,000 at March 31, 1945, and Post Office Savings Banks deposits were up £53,000,000. The anti-war advocates did not all preach pacifism; few indeed. They confined their arguments to opposition to war on the other grounds mentioned. But the result was the same for in time of war there is nothing between the uselessness of a conscientious objector and one who is just opposed to war and will not fight. Before this war had long progressed the anti-war orators of pre-war days found it easy to distinguish between the 1914-18 war against Prussianism with its alleged capitalistic and imperialistic backgrounds on both sides, and that against the modern successor to Prussian lust for power, marshalled under the dangerous, cruel doctrine of Nazism and its counter-part, Fascism, but still in the case of the Germans, supported by the same people, and their descendants, who had acclaimed and fought for the Kaiser. Those who were converted to pacifism or anti-war, and those who would have shirked doing their duty in any case, breathed a sigh of relief when the Labour Party was returned to power in 1935, backed by its tradition of anti-conscription and liberally sprinkled with persons who had suffered because of their attitude in the last war. It was not to be wondered that the objectors and likely defaulters of this war were surprised, even hurt, when the Labour Government, appreciating that all it had fought for in the way of social advantages for the mass of the people would, like itself, perish in the event of defeat, rightly introduced conscription. And with it, regulations and provisions dealing with objectors which did not compare favourably with those of Great Britain, then with her back to the wall. The youthful converts to pacifism or anti-war must also have been bewildered; they had not the mental agility to understand the *volto face* in the attitude of some who had been their guiding lights. It was a matter of significance that most objectors were immature, comparative youngsters; the married men's classes produced remarkably few. This suggests that much pacifism is due to a sense of lack of responsibility.

If a man whose appeal was dismissed still refused to enter the Army he became an offender against the law by disobeying some military command, usually an order to attend for medical examination or to report for posting

to a camp. Such men appeared before a magistrate and were sentenced to two months' imprisonment or less, according to the view of the magistrate before whom they happened to appear. Sometimes some of the magistrates sent the men (classed as defaulters) to the defaulters' detention camps which had been opened for their reception, but if they received a jail sentence, as nearly all of them did, at the end of the sentence they were taken into custody by the Army, and if they still refused to obey orders they were charged before a magistrate with refusing to obey a military command and committed to defaulters' detention for the duration of the war. From the beginning, or almost the beginning, of the camps, there were men in them who refused to co-operate in the conduct of the camps, giving as the main reason the alleged misjudgment of their cases by the appeal boards and their inability to make themselves heard in any other way. (The regulations gave objectors whose claims for exemption were dismissed no right of appeal.) Their method was to refuse to work. At first they were charged before a magistrate with a breach of the regulations and given the maximum penalty of three months' imprisonment. In May, 1942, the regulations were amended to allow a magistrate, on an application that the presence of a defaulter in a camp was prejudicial to good order and discipline, to order the defaulter to be detained in prison as if he had been sentenced to hard labour. Even in prison some of these continued their efforts to make themselves heard by the world outside. Some embarked on hunger strikes, and in February and March, 1945, two men at Mt. Eden Prison refused food for thirty days. By April, about twenty-five of the men in various prisons had resumed the policy of non-co-operation (declining work) which they had adopted in the camps, involving themselves in repeated periods of bread and water, and some in the remote Rangipo Prison were, when last heard of at the beginning of May, still being punished with bread and water for adopting this attitude. In January, 1946, there were demonstrations by defaulters jailed at Mount Eden, because unlike defaulters in detention camps, they had not been advised that they would be released in April, 1946.

To discourage escapes the regulations were amended in February, 1944, so that a period equal to that for which a man had been at large would be served after the date at which he would have otherwise been released. As a further aid to discipline periodic paroles were introduced in November, 1944. Since then men whose conduct had satisfied the camp supervisors, but not detainees, were allowed two days away from their camp, not including travelling time, every three months, and their pay increased from one shilling and threepence a day to two shillings and sixpence.

At the end of 1944 there were twelve detention camps, varying in size from 111 inmates to twenty-seven, and their total population was 620. About fifty defaulters were in prison in Auckland or Wellington or in the National Park and Taupo districts. In September, 1944, the Prime Minister said that twenty-five escapees from detention camps were still at large, that there were 600 in the camps and 600 conscientious objectors whose appeals had been allowed. The number of escapees fluctuated. At least eight of the detention camps, including some of the largest, were in isolated parts of the North Island, and there was one in the South Island. The work at them included breaking in pumice land, cultivating flax, thinning forest plantations and cutting firewood. All the larger ones were surrounded by high barbed-wire fences and the guards constantly on duty were at one time, if they were not later, aided by the compounds being constantly floodlit. Correspondence was restricted to that of a prisoner in jail, or less, and was censored. A limit

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was set to the value and kind of food parcels that could be sent to an inmate. Relatives could, following permission, visit under supervision on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, but no friends unless the defaulter never received visits from relatives. Defaulters were not allowed to meet in groups except for religious devotions. Concerts were occasionally held. New Zealand's treatment of conscientious objectors was criticised, both ways, in this country and overseas. The two main grounds of sympathisers were the lack of a system of appeal from the appeal boards, whose first decision was final as far as the appellant is concerned, and the indefiniteness of the term for which those whose appeals failed were detained. Most of the men by the end of the war had been without their liberty for more than three years, in many cases justifiably. Appeal boards in different parts of the country adopted different standards, with the result that whether a man gained exemption or was sentenced to years of imprisonment and detention often depended on the district in which he happened to live. The Canterbury board, for instance, allowed more than twice as many appeals as were allowed in the rest of the country (in proportion) and two and a half times as many appeals were dismissed outright in the rest of the country as in Canterbury, while considerably more appellants were given non-combatant service in the forces by the Canterbury board than by the other boards. These statements are based on unofficial statistics for the Canterbury board compared with the official statistics for the whole country. Statistics of any kind for other boards were not available.

In England a central appellate tribunal adjusted such inequalities, as is explained further on in this chapter. In the middle of 1943, when about 750 men were in detention in New Zealand, it was stated that if Great Britain had treated her objectors as New Zealand more than 22,000 would be in confinement there instead of 350, and that if New Zealand dealt with its objectors on the same basis as Great Britain it would have twelve in confinement. At the end of 1944 fewer than 100 were confined in England.

The latest development was the introduction in June, 1945, of regulations providing a scheme for the release of defaulters. Two men held in high regard—Mr. A. H. Johnstone, K.C., and Mr. W. H. Woodward, S.M., were appointed "revision authorities." Defaulters who were detained were allowed to apply to them for release on parole. The hearings were public with the Crown and the appellant having right to representation. A revision authority could release a man on parole, or release him subject to remaining under the special supervision of the Controlling Officer of Detention, the official who had control of the detention camps. The revision authority could accept any evidence, including evidence as to the conduct of the man while in detention, but could release a man only if he was satisfied that the defaulter held a conscientious belief that would prevent his participation in war. Released defaulters were to be subject to the orders of the Special Tribunal (limiting their income and directing them to work). The new regulations were criticised by those who had advocated the bringing of the New Zealand law into line with the English law on the grounds that they did not provide a true appeal system but merely for release on licence. If this revision procedure was justified in 1945 it was reasonable to assume it was justifiable from the start.

The Acting Prime Minister (Mr. Nash) addressing the N.Z.R.S.A. conference on June 19, 1945, said that some of the men had been in detention camps for three and four years. He was satisfied, after having looked at the position from all angles and having discussed it fully, that there were men so detained who had an honest, clean and conscientious objection to war.

and he had never yet heard of a right-thinking returned soldier who would not respect a conscience of that type.

In reply, Mr. B. J. Jacobs, Dominion president of the association, said: "If the injustice that is now alleged had just recently been discovered, then it is just too bad, when we think of the men whose appeals on the grounds of conscientious objection were not allowed, who went into the forces and overseas, some of whom will never come back and some of whom have come back maimed."

It is worth while here to give an explanation of the system adopted in Great Britain for the treatment of conscientious objectors, or those professing to be. It might well be thought that this system, which was good enough for the Mother Country in her hour of greatest peril, would have suited New Zealand. The fact that it apparently did not deprive the country of the services of men who could have been utilised in various capacities to fill labour needs. Not only did the country lose their services but it cost a great deal to keep them and many, including non-genuine recalcitrants whose proper place was jail, in the various detention camps. The explanation I quote is that of distinguished people, the Bishop of Birmingham, Vera Brittain, Henry Carter, Laurence Housman, C. E. M. Joad, Ethel Mannin, Charles E. Raven, Bertrand Russell and Sybil Thorndike. It reads: "We believe it might be of interest to hear of the provisions for dealing with this difficult problem (conscientious objectors) in Great Britain. Here the machinery has undoubtedly worked well and though there have been occasional outbursts of prejudice on both sides, the community at large has accepted the wise treatment of the whole problem. The original National Service Act was introduced at the beginning of the war by a predominantly Conservative Government and it provided that there should be Local Tribunals for conscientious objectors with a right of appeal to the Appellate Tribunals. According to Ministry of Labour statistics to the end of 1944 the Local Tribunals have heard some 60,000 cases. More than seventy per cent. of them have been recognised as genuine and registered either unconditionally (4.8 per cent.), or conditionally on doing some civil work like land, hospital or civil defence work (37.7 per cent.), or for non-combatant duties in the Forces (28 per cent.). Over 18,650 appeals have been brought against Local Tribunal decisions and in just over half of them the local decision has been varied, almost always by giving a greater degree of exemption to the appellant. As it is, over 3,500 conscientious objectors have been imprisoned for one offence or another arising from conscientious objection, and it is clear that this number might have been three or four times as great if it were not for the further scrutiny of the Appellate Tribunals. Whatever views one may have about conscientious objection it is obviously desirable that if exemption is to be granted the scrutiny should be thorough so that men are not unnecessarily imprisoned. Those who have been denied exemption and have still refused service in the Forces have been prosecuted and imprisoned, but although some have been sentenced several times, the sentence has always been within the limits laid down by the law, and not often for more than one year. No conscientious objector—and for that matter no other Briton—has been interned or detained indefinitely for refusing service. We know there is a good deal of disquiet in New Zealand about the indefinite detention of more than 600 unrecognised conscientious objectors in defaulters' detention camps [Author's note: It should be pointed out that not all were objectors on conscientious grounds but some on political, national or other grounds, plus defaulters who did not appeal, among them men who,

however, professed conscientious beliefs] where many have now been for over four years. There is in Britain a provision aimed at avoiding the 'cat and mouse' treatment of the last war. If a man has been turned down by the Tribunals and he then receives three months' or more imprisonment for refusing medical examination for the Forces, or for refusing service in the Forces, he is enabled to come before the Appellate Tribunal and out of 2,474 such applications, 1,598 were found to be sincere and the men relieved of military liability. Unless there is some such provision there is danger that men may be repeatedly punished even though they are patently sincere; and this brings the law into greater disrepute than the objector. The law has ensured that exempted conscientious objectors should do useful work and nearly 10,000 are on the land, either with private employers or under county committees. Many more are working in hospitals or relief services and some hundreds have gone overseas with the Friends' [Quakers] Ambulance Unit, Friends' Relief Service, and other relief organisations. Others have been allowed to remain in ordinary civilian jobs, where this has seemed appropriate. In the main the work is left to the supervision of ordinary employers, and the community benefits by more willing and efficient service than it would obtain from rigid regimentation. The treatment of conscientious objectors in New Zealand is, of course, a matter for the people of New Zealand, but in considering this it may be helpful to bear in mind the successful experience of a Coalition administration in this country. As Mr. Winston Churchill said in the House of Commons on March 20, 1941: 'The rights which have been granted in this war and the last to conscientious objectors are well known and are a definite part of British policy. Anything in the nature of persecution, victimisation or man-hunting is odious to the British people.'

The Australian procedure was that the initial appeal went before the Magistrates' Court. There was then right of appeal to a Higher Court. An appellant who persisted in refusing to serve after his appeal was dismissed, was sent to jail, usually three months, and then subject to manpower direction with all pay in excess of that earned by a private in the Army forfeited.

There must be some explanation why New Zealand had more than 600 defaulters or conscientious objectors—call them as you fancy—in detention, when Great Britain with 45,000,000 people showed a much different picture. It is not that this country sheltered an undue proportion of men lacking in courage—its war record tells the opposite. The explanation must be found elsewhere. This chapter on conscientious objectors and defaulters may help a reader in times when we think perhaps more calmly than under the stress of war, to find an explanation. It is not intended as an apology for conscientious objectors or as a defence of them. Rather it aims to be an impartial review, with a reminder that the seeds of pacifism, disloyalty, distorted patriotism, self-before-country and so on are sown in times of peace.

I would class as New Zealand's leading pacifist, the Reverend O. E. Burton who, before he entered the Methodist ministry, served in the Great War and was decorated for bravery. Burton and his ministerial charge soon parted company. He was jailed, in all for twenty months, his offences being concerned with the holding of open-air pacifist meetings. The authorities thought him a "dangerous man." His distinguished service as a soldier, his good repute, his unquestioned sincerity and his position as a Christian minister, stamped him as a "rallying point" for pacifists, genuine and otherwise. He suffered for his belief experiences that must have been most

humiliating for a man in his position. Burton wrote a fine book on his prison experiences.

Many men who joined the forces deserted, some for very long periods. The average sentence was far below that spent by defaulters in detention, but most deserters were placed aboard the next transport, as far as I am aware not against their will.

The one-man tribunals released approximately half the appellants on parole, and in February, 1946, the camps held only 300 odd men.

Other detention camp releases began on a small scale from August, 1945—men unfit for military service or over military age—but were fairly general late in February and early in March, 1946, until by the end of April the camps were empty. Those released were directed to freezing works, flax-growing, gasworks, etc. Those jailed for disciplinary reasons and sentenced for escaping were due for release in May. It was then expected that manpower directions over them would be released soon after June 29 when the last decrees of essentiality were to be revoked, and that payments from income by successful objectors would also cease about then.

The general amnesty on defaulters and military offenders in the 1914-18 was proclaimed in November, 1919, when the main demobilisation had been effected.

In 1914-18 the classes of objectors were Socialist, Religious, Pacifist, Irish, and a number of Maori objectors, mostly from the Waikato tribe, warlike and brave from time immemorial, but whose objection was somewhat akin to that of Irish objectors, that is, based on historical grounds, though they belonged to different periods. The Socialist and Religious objectors made up a majority of the 300 to 400 objectors jailed in the first world war. The late Mr. Harry Holland, former Leader of the Labour Party, was the champion of the objectors. His book, "Armageddon or Calvary," records these sentences: Fourteen sentenced to 84 days and deported (taken aboard ship forcibly for military service overseas), one of this number including Mr. M. Briggs, one of the first Labour Government appointees to the Legislative Council; one each to 84 days, six months, nine months and ten months; sixteen to 11 months; twelve to one year; eleven to 23 months; 150 to two years; thirty-three served two sentences in a civil prison and three, three sentences; thirty-seven others were sentenced to terms not ascertainable. This, however, is not the full list. The Military Service Bill (conscription) was introduced on May 31, 1916. Mr. Harry Holland wrote: "Consistently, the Parliamentary Labour Party, consisting of only four men [Hindmarsh, McCombs, Walker, Webb], fought the measure through all its stages. In this fight alone the Labour Party justified its political existence. On every division the four Labour men voted the right way." Mr. Payne, an Independent, also voted against the Bill. The Bill provided, *inter alia*, for up to five years' jail with hard labour (in addition to liability under the Army Act) for conscientious objectors and military defaulters; fine and, or, jail for employers retaining conscientious objectors in their employ; power to the police to question and arrest without warrant men of military age; fifty pounds fine for persons knowing the whereabouts of conscientious objectors and military defaulters and failing to inform. On June 7, 1916, it was decided to provide that a man might be exempted who at the outbreak of war was a member of a religious body, the tenets and doctrines of which declared the bearing of arms to be contrary to Divine revelation. This left exemption open to members of the Society of Friends (Quakers), Christadelphians, and one or two other small bodies. The provision gave

exemption only from combatant service, the appellant objector having to sign a declaration that if his appeal was allowed, he would perform such non-combatant work or service as required of him. No provision was made to exempt clergy, but after strong objection this was overcome by the Minister of Munitions sending to the Appeal Board in each clerical case a certificate of exemption. The present Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, and others still prominent in the Labour movement, were engaged in anti-conscription activity in 1914-18. Mr. Fraser was arrested while acting as secretary of the anti-conscription conference of December, 1916, where the delegates represented 50,000 workers, while Mr. Semple, Minister of National Service for part of the 1939-45 war, was arrested a few days earlier. Others to the forefront of the Labour movement suffered likewise. The opposition to conscription never quite died in the industrial Labour movement. The 1940 Easter conference of the Federation of Labour reaffirmed its unconditional opposition to conscription, and a joint statement on war policy by the national executive of the New Zealand Labour Party and the national council of the Federation of Labour added, "we further desire to say that in our opinion there is no good reason for either conscription or anti-conscription movements in New Zealand . . . there is no conscription in New Zealand and there will not be while Labour is in power." The report was signed by Mr. James Roberts, Labour Party president, and Mr. A. McLagan, Federation president, and later Minister of National Service whose department conducted the subsequent conscription ballots.

However, it will be readily seen, whatever the criticism of the 1939-45 treatment of objectors, that it was generous compared with 1914-18.

Details of appeals heard and their determination are given in the section dealing with National Service.

INTERNEES, ALIENS AND REFUGEES

When war broke out in 1939, there were nearly 8,000 aliens in New Zealand, of whom 3,400 were classified as enemy aliens. Each alien was the subject of inquiry by the Police, Army Intelligence and Customs Department, under the direction of the Department of Justice, to determine whether they should be interned and in what circumstances. Wholesale internment of aliens was carried out in England after Dunkirk, but in New Zealand only those considered actually or potentially dangerous were interned. The classifications were (a) immediate internment, (b) internment in event of threat of invasion, (c) subject to special restrictions, (d) subject to ordinary restrictions, (e) totally exempted from restrictions. When Japan entered the war class B were further classified and subdivided into a further three classes, those falling into A being interned immediately. Alien authorities composed of magistrates or lawyers of good standing examined all aliens, reported to the Minister of Justice, with the right of appeal against internment provided. Just over 200 men were interned at various stages, representing those thought likely actively to seek an opportunity to aid the enemy by supplying useful information, acting as guides to invasion forces or committing sabotage. The Royal Commission on Shipping Losses found that no information got out of New Zealand to the enemy and there was no reliable evidence to upset this view. Repeated claims by Jews that they should be treated as refugee aliens, not enemy aliens, were disallowed, partly on the ground that it would have been bad policy to differentiate either in favour of or against Jews.

One woman only was interned—in a woman's prison—and that for but a short period after the outbreak of war in the Pacific. She had previously been warned not to come to a city to live. After the outbreak of war with Germany, and prior to Japan's entry, the authorities ordered that frequent changes of staff in a Japanese merchant firm trading in Auckland—and with many branches in the Pacific—cease, the possibility of espionage being suspected. Other Japanese in business in New Zealand left this country before their nation entered the war. The activities of the Japanese Consul after war began with Germany were suspect. When Japan entered the war he enjoyed freedom, though under constant watch, until in accordance with international practice he was returned to his homeland. There were five Japanese resident in New Zealand when Japan entered the war. All had lived here more than twenty years. Two were interned. Forty-six others were brought to New Zealand for internment from Pacific islands. The two New Zealand-resident Japanese excepted, the rest used to walk to the end of the first internment station, Somes Island, daily, to watch for the arrival of the Japanese Fleet.

The number of internees over the whole period of the war totalled about 200 but the number interned at one time seldom exceeded 100.

The first internees were Germans and anti-British aliens. At least eight—seven from Auckland and one from Wellington—were members of the German Overseas Organisation. A number were brought from Fiji, Tonga and Samoa—traders, plantation owners, labourers and one clergyman who held decidedly Nazi views and wore a swastika. Early in the war a group of internees, including the Jews, broke away from the rest, styling themselves anti-Nazis. They had to be given separate quarters to prevent bloodshed between the two groups. The new group professed Communism and bombarded the Prime Minister and members of Cabinet with abusive letters. One set alight to a shed as a protest and was jailed for arson. The other group were constantly "heiling Hitler." A few unsuccessful hunger strikes were staged and broken up by the authorities who removed the strikers to quarters where sympathisers could not give them food. Three Germans escaped from Somes Island by rowing boat on the night of November 21, 1941. After their recapture four days later at Akatarawa, Upper Hutt, the internees' band received them like heroes and they were cheered and feted. With a broken pick-head, part of a hoe and a sack on the end of a rope to cart soil away, internees in one dormitory constructed a tunnel from under their dormitory to five feet beyond the wire of the compound—a distance of nearly thirty-five feet. An informer put an end to their effort. On one occasion a canoe, ready for assembly, was found in a shed. An overheard request by an internee to a visitor to bring some screws to him led to this discovery. The internees were shifted from Somes Island to Pahiataua, in the Wairarapa, where a splendidly equipped camp was provided. They were there nineteen months until they returned to Somes Island to make room for Polish refugee children. The shift to Pahiataua was made during a critical stage in the Pacific war, in accordance with international law, as Wellington Harbour might have been an enemy target.

The Italians in internment were largely docile, spending their time in crafts work. The Germans and Italian groups did not mix.

When the Germans returned to the island from Pahiataua they had lost all their arrogance. They were still divided into groups, the leaders of which promised no further attempts at escape. They asked for work which they had previously refused—except in their own vegetable garden—and laboured diligently for five shillings a day. Many had received from the German Government, through the Swiss Consul as representing the protecting Power, an allowance of twenty-five

shillings a month up to the time of the surrender. They were always well-fed and some were able to send food parcels to friends and relatives within New Zealand, their own rations having been supplemented by parcels received through the International Red Cross from Germany. Releases were gradually effected during the last year of the war and when the final releases were made in October, 1945, only thirty-seven men were left on the island.

Life in the internment camp was not without humour. One internee, suffering from acute rheumatism, killed the camp pet cat, skinned it and placed the skin over his affected part. There was another who performed menial duties such as picking up scraps of paper, etc., clad in a frock coat and spats. A Russian (there were some Communist internees at one stage) and a German quarreled. The Russian vowed heavy vengeance. The camp waited with bated breath till the two men met at the table. The Russian threw a plate of hot stew over the other—that ended the feud. One Italian internee was informed, in error, that his wife had given birth to a child. Having been in internment for a considerable time he was surprised; he fainted. Further inquiries disclosed that it was a case of misunderstanding. He was a much-relieved man. In another case an expert technician used to be consulted by telephone on the intricacies of the X-ray equipment at Wellington public hospital.

The treatment of internees in New Zealand at all times was up to the best standards, despite the trying provocative and defiant attitude of many of the Germans.

The subject of refugees and aliens was debated in New Zealand from 1942 onwards with a vehemence and feeling which might have been better directed towards matters that more acutely affected the rights of the people. There were approximately 1,000 refugees in New Zealand; no fewer. Those who came had to have money or be guaranteed against becoming a charge on the State. The result was that sanctuary was not being afforded, as many people thought, to poor citizens of oppressed countries but to those who, as is usually the case with persons of means, had the better chance of getting to safety. On the figures of a New Zealand-born Jew, whose word I have no reason to doubt, Auckland had between 250 and 300 of these refugees, Wellington 400, Christchurch 100, Dunedin 40, and about 11 other centres, an average of approximately 10 each. A number were doctors and dentists whose presence assisted to meet the need created by the loss of so many New Zealand professional men to the forces. Some refugee doctors bought the practices of men who were serving their country overseas. Some other refugees entered business in the main cities, particularly in the luxury trades. These could not be said to be making any useful contribution to the country. On the other hand, they were probably following the line of occupation to which they had been accustomed. Their business outlook might be described as exceptionally keen but they hailed from parts where the struggle for existence was probably fierce compared to that enjoyed on the civilian front in New Zealand during the war. Their presence in the comparatively small retail business sections of the cities gave a disproportionate impression of numerical strength. It was estimated in the figures I have mentioned that throughout New Zealand 50 were manufacturing on their own account; 60 in trade or business; 150 in the professions, of whom half were employed and half operating on their own account. While so much attention was paid to aliens it was also a fact that Chinese and Hindus already controlled a major proportion of the retail fruit and vegetable business, both were well established in the market gardening industry, while the restaurant trade was dominated by non-New Zealanders. If the 1,000 refugees raise families and, in the course of time, are as well

assimilated into the life of a British community as have been many of their forebears, their long-term contribution should outweigh the early objections.

Assuming it had been possible to obtain 1,000 refugees from the poorest classes, with the monetary and language requirements relaxed in their favour, would the position have ultimately been any different? They would still be competitive with some section of the labour market—perhaps ones less articulate than the professional and business groups—or at the worst a charge on public funds. The plain fact of the whole matter was that the traditional British custom of affording the right of sanctuary either had to be accepted or rejected and, the former course having been taken, objections after the event served no good long-term purpose. No refugees or aliens of any country or type could have done business or practised the professions, and prospered, unless they had customers, clients, raw materials and such other requirements as fitted their particular vocations. The matter of objection to refugee activities therefore rested for determination on the general body of the public. It should not be overlooked that many refugees or aliens did a useful, loyal job of work during the war period.

JAPANESE PRISONERS OF WAR

At the Featherston prisoner of war camp in the Wairarapa, New Zealand accommodated just over 800 Japanese prisoners of war, approximately in equal proportions of labour corps personnel and combatant forces, including some naval. They were returned to Japan by two United States L.S.T. craft which left Wellington on Sunday, December 30, 1945, the labour corps men travelling in one ship and the ex-combatants in the other. The treatment they received in New Zealand was in striking contrast to that meted out to Allied prisoners held by the Japanese. From "scarecrows" they were transformed into sleek, well-fed men and maybe will never again live so well as they did at Featherston. It should always be a source of pride to the New Zealand Government and its people that despite the bestiality of the Japanese towards Allied prisoners and helpless civilians, the standard of treatment accorded prisoners held in New Zealand was in keeping with the best British traditions of fair play. There were hotheads among certain sections of the public who were all for giving the Japanese prisoners a lean time but that sort of thing would have been no cause for satisfaction or pride.

In a ninety-seconds incident at the camp on February 25, 1943, forty-eight Japanese prisoners were killed and sixty-three wounded. One guard was killed by a ricocheting bullet and five slightly injured by flying stones. The explanation for the incident has never been found—perhaps it was an expression of the desire of the combatant prisoners to commit mass harikari. The morning found the prisoners seated on the ground in the compound instead of standing in line ready for work. Each man concealed a weapon, some of which must have taken a long time to make; knives made from nails, bludgeons from tent poles with large nails or bolts as spikes, pick-axe heads and other deadly tools. A verbal warning to line up to march off to work was given and ignored. Then a warning shot was fired, the Japanese with one accord starting forward with their weapons, at the same time bombarding with stones. Tommy-guns stopped them with the result already stated. A large building was utilised as a temporary morgue and the dead laid in the "long sleep," later to be cremated at Karori, Wellington. The wounded were sent at once to hospitals at Featherston, Greytown, Masterton and Wellington. The leader of the revolt was a naval officer. He survived. There was no further

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trouble. One other Japanese was shot in an isolated incident. He had the idea that from the range at the rear of the camp he could see his native land. He tried once but was retaken. Next time he was challenged and then a warning shot fired. This misfired and the little yellow man fell dead without having discovered if the cone-like peak of sacred Fujiyama was "just over the hill." The prisoners who survived the February incident, in months of patient work, erected a memorial shrine in stone to their fallen, inscribed with Japanese characters.

Among the ashes of those cremated after the riot were found remains of weapons and—grim tokens—the bullets which took their lives.

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The war with which this book deals lasted from September 3, 1939, until September 2, 1945, when the Japanese representatives signed the surrender terms on the U.S. battleship *Missouri* in Tokio Bay. Hitler's armies invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, and on September 3, Great Britain, France, India, Australia and New Zealand declared war (South Africa, September 6, and Canada, September 10). Italy entered the war on June 11, 1940. On June 22, 1940, France signed an armistice with Germany and on June 24 with Italy. On September 27, 1940, Japan joined the Axis Powers. June 22, 1941, saw the German invasion of Soviet Russia. Pearl Harbour was attacked without formal declaration of war by the Japanese on December 7, 1941. Next day the United States and Great Britain declared war on Japan, the other Commonwealth Nations doing likewise. Russia did not declare war on Japan until August 8, 1945, a week before an Imperial Rescript announced Japan's surrender. Important dates to New Zealand and Australia in 1942 were May 6-11, when the Japanese suffered severe losses in the Coral Sea battle, and August 7, when United States forces landed on Guadalcanal in the Solomons. Italy surrendered on September, 8, 1943, and declared war on her former ally, Germany, on October 13, 1943. Europe was invaded by the Allies on June 6, 1944, known as D-Day. Events followed swiftly until on May 1, 1945, the death of Hitler was announced. On May 2, 1945, Berlin fell, and the Germans surrendered in Italy, and on May 4 in north-west Germany. The final German surrender came on May 7, 1945. The first atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. Russia declared war against Japan on August 8. Next day the second atom bomb was dropped on Japan, this time on Nagasaki. On August 14, an Imperial Rescript by the Emperor Hirohito of Japan announced the surrender, and twelve days later the first United States forces landed in Japan. The surrender terms were signed on September 2, 1945 (9 a.m. Tokio time; midnight G.M.T.).

The first world war lasted from August 4, 1914, to November 11, 1918, a total of four years three months and seven days (three complete years, 1915-17, four months and 27 days in 1914, and ten months and eleven days in 1918). The second world war lasted five years eleven months and eleven days (five complete years, 1940-44, three months and 27 days in 1939, and seven months and 15 days in 1945, dating the end as August 15, 1945). War with Italy lasted three years two months and 19 days (two complete years, 1941-42, six months and eleven days in 1940, and eight months and eight days in 1943). War against Germany lasted five years eight months and three days (five complete years, 1940-44, three months and 27 days in 1939,

and four months and seven days in 1945). War against Japan lasted three years eight months and seven days (three complete years, 1942-44, 23 days in 1941, and seven months and 15 days in 1945).

While Germany was militarily defeated, statistics published by the International Committee for the Study of European Affairs showed that she had suffered much less internally than she deserved. While Hitler lost the war he left Germany larger by five million people and incalculably weakened the manpower of other European countries, so endangering the future balance of the Continent. The population of Germany increased by 7.5 per cent, to 72,000,000, with still (April, 1946) another two million prisoners to return. In the seven years before the war Hitler's policy gave Germany 1,566,000 more births, while the birth rate in the rest of Europe was falling. Any wartime decline in the birth rate in Germany was checked by regular leave for servicemen and no mobilisation of mothers on a large scale for war work. At the same time, over the rest of Europe Hitler separated between 11,000,000 and 12,000,000 men and women from their marriage partners for five years, thereby shattering the birth rate of the occupied countries. He also sent his victims home in a condition that in many cases destroyed their reproductive value. From twelve to fifteen per cent, of French deportees came home suffering from tuberculosis, and in immediate post-war Poland 1,500,000 Poles were tubercular.

The European Allies lost four times as many people in the war as Germany did. Only two out of every one thousand workers in German factories were killed in the air raids. The losses of life were far below Allied estimates. They totalled about 350,000 civilians. The air raids in fact reduced Germany's population by only .52 per cent., while Britain's much smaller population was reduced by .13 per cent.

The total German war casualties were approximately 3,600,000, while the casualties in other European countries were about fifteen millions, of which seven millions were in Russia and 4,620,000 in Poland. Such was the price of victory. It may yet be a cause for misgiving that the German home front suffered so little—in the 1914-18 war it hardly did at all. In the East several million Japanese soldiers had not been militarily defeated when the atomic bomb brought a sudden end to the war. Though the atomic bomb quickly brought Japan to her knees and so saved hundreds of thousands of Allied casualties, it may well prove the case that a sound thrashing in the field with the weapons at hand prior to the atomic bomb would have been the surest guarantee if not of permanent peace, then of peace in our time. With the Japanese Navy already almost entirely destroyed before the use of the atomic bomb, that defeat in the field would have been certain and thorough, even if a lengthy process.

The total of Empire casualties to May 31, 1945, was 1,427,634 (532,233 dead). United Kingdom figures were 233,042 killed; 57,472 missing, believed killed; 275,975. Civilian figures were 60,585 killed or missing; Home Guard 1,206 killed or died of wounds; Merchant seamen, 30,876 dead and 4,690 missing, believed killed.

New Zealand sent 135,000 men overseas in the second world war compared with 100,000 in 1914-18. The casualty rate in 1939-45 was much lower. The Army suffered the greatest absolute and relative number of casualties. Those of the Navy were small but relatively comparable. Air Force casualties were somewhat heavy, specially if regard is taken of casualties resulting in death where, to March 31, 1945, the Air Force had 3,012 dead against the Army's 5,970. (In world war one, Army killed totalled 16,302).

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The very low casualty rate during 1939-45 was surprising, even allowing for the advances in medical science. Of the 135,000 who served overseas only 200 of the total 9,700 deaths were from sickness, while 19,500 were wounded. In 1914-18, with approximately 35,000 fewer men overseas, there were approximately 17,000 deaths, of whom 1,600 died of sickness, and 41,300 wounded. This marked decrease was amazing in view of the deadlier weapons, increased firepower, and universal use of aircraft. There was only one serious epidemic in camps in New Zealand in the 1939-45 war—that which occurred in November-December, 1939, and spread rapidly through every Army and Air Force camp. About 90 per cent. of the troops were affected in varying degree, to quote the Director-General of Medical Services (Army and Air), Major-General Sir Fred. T. Bowerbank, with upper respiratory disease and many developed pneumonia. The troops were raw and unseasoned, the summer wet, and many camps in an unfinished state. Yet there was not a death. In contrast, during the epidemic of cerebro-spinal fever which followed upper respiratory disease at Trentham in June, 1915, there were 22 deaths out of 32 cases in July alone, and a large part of the force had to be evacuated to Featherston and other camps. The reasons were largely better personal and general living facilities and above all, the extensive use of "sulpha" drugs. Overseas, there was never during the second world war, as far as the New Zealand Forces were concerned, any epidemic or even high sickness rate comparable with the dysentery and diarrhoea which swept Gallipoli, when every officer and man was affected in some degree. In 1916, when the Division moved to France, outbreaks of pneumonia and bronchitis and epidemics of influenza resulted in a high sick rate, with the deaths of many who, under the treatment of 1939-45, would have been saved. New Zealand killed in 1939-45 totalled 7.5 per cent. of forces overseas, the wounded 14.3 per cent. and greatest number of prisoners of war (8,086) represented 6 per cent. The total casualties, therefore, were 27.8 per cent. of overseas forces. In 1914-18, 16,781 were killed (16.7 per cent.), 41,315 wounded (41.2 per cent.), and greatest number of p.o.w.'s in all theatres 498 (0.49 per cent.), making a total of nearly 58 per cent. of the 102,438 who went overseas.

While on the subject of casualties, it is not inappropriate to mention the number of disablement and economic pensions affecting ex-servicemen of both world wars and their dependents which were in force at March 31, 1946. For ex-servicemen the total was 37,739 (1914-18, 14,893 and 1939-45, 22,846), wives, 3,660 (2,741 and 919 respectively), widows, 4,669 (2,235 and 2,434 respectively); other dependents, 2,318 (591 and 1,727 respectively). Total, 48,386 (1914-18, 20,460, and 1939-45 war, 27,926). Total payments for the year ended March 31st, 1946, were £3,659,617 of which the 1914-18 war pension recipients made up for £1,997,390 (a decrease of £48,615 on the previous year) and 1939-45 war recipients £1,662,227 (an increase of £254,767 on 1944-45 year). The number of economic pensions at March 31, 1946, included in the above was 7,552 (first world war, 4,845, and second world war 2,707) made up of soldiers, 5,312 (3,655 first world war and 1,657 second); widows with children, 818 (147 and 671 respectively); widows without children, 1,268 (1,005 and 263 respectively); widowed mothers, 154 (38 and 116 respectively). The annual value of these economic pensions at March 31, 1946, was £579,687 (first world war at £371,367 showing an increase of £4,346 on the previous year, and second world war an increase of £16,226, making a total increase of £20,572. There were 2,029 war veterans'

allowances in force at March 31, 1946, made up of 1,175 married veterans (including 805 wives), 800 single veterans and 54 widows. The total war veterans' allowance payments for the year was £275,028, which was £35,527 more than for the year ended March 31, 1945.

The best tributes to the medical officers, nurses and nursing aides are those of the tens of thousands who had the benefit of their skill and devotion. Many doctors in the forefront of their profession answered the call without hesitation and were accompanied with equal eagerness by younger men who had still their mark to make. If all nurses whose wish it was to serve had been accepted, the demand would have been filled many times over. Here, it may be appropriate to mention a fact often overlooked in official records. Certain New Zealand nurses went away at their own expense during the South African War and joined up and served with the British Army Nursing Service. The Government, at the time, had not seen fit to send nurses abroad with our troops. Also 12 New Zealand nurses left Wellington on April 1, 1915, for Australia and were attached to the 1st Division of the Australian Army Nursing Service, sailing from Australia in the *Kyarra* for Egypt with the first Australian reinforcements. This draft all held N.Z.A.N.S. diplomas, were paid by the N.Z. Government and received N.Z.A.N.S. discharges. They were probably the first officially recognised New Zealand Army nurses to serve abroad and left New Zealand before those in charge of the late and greatly loved Matron-in-Chief Hester Maclean.

The number of Army prisoners taken also provides a great contrast, and an example of the fast movement of the second world war compared with the trench warfare of 1914-18. In the first world war the total New Zealand prisoners in all theatres was 498; in the second world war 8,188. New Zealand's total of killed in 1939-45 represented five and a half out of every 1,000 of the population, which was approximately the same as the United Kingdom's armed forces killed, but adding civilian and Merchant Navy killed, the United Kingdom total was approaching seven. New Zealand dead in the three wars in which her men have fought overseas approximate 27,000, and wounded 75,000. The total of men medically examined and attested for all service areas in 1939-45 was 350,000. Of the women, the 14,800 enlistments were all voluntary. In addition to the 135,000 who went overseas, New Zealand maintained, until the Pacific threat lessened, substantial home defence forces, the majority of the strength of the Forces being in New Zealand until the end of 1942. The Division was, however, maintained at strength, except for a period between July, 1942, until North Africa finished, when it was on a two-brigade field basis. New Zealand's direct contribution, starting with 3,000 regularly engaged in September, 1939, rose to its peak in September, 1942, with 157,000, or, including 13,000 casualties already recorded, 170,000. By 1945, 62 per cent. of the country's manpower between 18 and 45 was or had been in the Forces. Decorations gained by New Zealanders in 1939-45 totalled over 6,500 (1st N.Z.E.F., 1914-18, 3,746).

New Zealand's total expenditure in the first world war was £234,400,000, and in 1939-45, £646,249,000 (including estimate to March, 1946, when demobilisation was almost completed). Exact casualties in the 1st N.Z.E.F. were (102,438 embarked): Killed in action, 10,870; died of wounds, 3,950; died of sickness, etc., 1,877; died while in training or after discharge, 1,469; prisoners, 498 (all theatres); wounded, 41,317. Total, 59,981.

The Navy, three-fifths of whose strength served overseas, had every reason to be proud of the type of men it attracted. It manned its own ships

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and always had more than the quota that could be trained by the Royal Navy. The men had a high standard of intelligence which, according to Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, resulted in a large number being used for radar work. Scattered among ships of the Royal Navy, the men did not get the same publicity as the Air Force, which had seven distinct New Zealand squadrons operating with the R.A.F., as well as its Pacific squadrons.

Though New Zealand was comparatively well represented in the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Naval Air Service (later R.A.F.) in 1914-18, considering that air warfare was then in its infancy, it could be truly said that in 1939-45 the young men took to the air like ducks to water. More than 30,000 served overseas and gained nearly 3,000 decorations, including three V.C.'s, and more than 1,000 D.F.C.'s. One pilot in twelve in the Battle of Britain was a New Zealander. They served everywhere, scattered among 500 R.A.F. squadrons in addition to their own squadrons. For instance, the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia, Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, said that of 340 New Zealand airmen in his command, 40 received decorations for gallantry, which was a higher proportion than any other he knew of, and nine of his R.A.F. squadrons were commanded by New Zealanders. One, Wing Commander K. J. Newman, D.F.C. and Bar, was pilot of a Mosquito which made a reconnaissance flight of 2,256 miles, which was a record for his command. Admiral Mountbatten said that he felt sure that when records were compared it would rank as one of the great flights of the war. Newman was to have piloted a Mosquito on a flight from India to New Zealand in which it was planned, with the aid of a strong westerly following wind, to do the trip from Sydney to Auckland in 2 hrs. 40 mins. However, circumstances connected with the abrupt finish to the war with Japan resulted in a cancellation of plans.

Of the Army, I can do no better than quote a hitherto unpublished letter of Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery to Lieut.-General Sir B. Ereyberg in December, 1942, after the Battle of Egypt. Viscount Montgomery stated: "The Battle of Egypt was won by the good fighting qualities of the soldiers of the Empire. Of all these soldiers none were finer than the fighting men of New Zealand. Possibly I myself am the only one who really knows the extent to which the action of the New Zealand Division has contributed to the victory. I am proud to have the 2nd New Zealand Division in my Army." Field Marshal Alexander expressed to Admiral Mountbatten the opinion that the New Zealand Division was the finest of which he had any knowledge. Captured German intelligence papers showed that Field Marshal Rommel in placing the Divisions of the 8th Army had the New Zealand Division at the head of the list. The United States official account of the Po Valley Campaign, 1945, entitled "Finito," with a foreword by General Mark W. Clark, commanding the 15th Army Group, makes a number of references to the fighting qualities of the New Zealanders, one of which said in part: "It was hard to realise that these relentless fighters were the soul of natural friendliness out of the battle line." In connection with this campaign, Mr. Churchill wrote to Field Marshal Sir Harold Alexander: "Never I suppose have so many nations advanced and manoeuvred in one line victoriously. British, Americans, New Zealanders, South Africans, British Indians, Poles, Jews, Brazilians and strong forces of liberated Italians have all marched together in the high comradeship and unity of men fighting for freedom and the deliverance of mankind. This great final battle in Italy will long stand out in history as one of the most famous episodes in this second world war." The 15th Army Group publication gives to the New

Zealanders the credit of being the first to enter Venice, which they found in the hands of Partisans. The New Zealanders were soon joined by the 56th Division, which took over on the night of April 30, 1945, and Popski's Private Army. On the night of May 1, the N.Z. Division advanced 75 miles to link up with Marshal Tito's forces advancing from the East.

Taking New Zealand's war effort overall, Admiral Lord Mountbatten can be quoted as stating that this country's contribution had meant much to the Allies and even more to the British Empire. He had no hesitation in putting the New Zealand war effort per capita at the top of the list.

The industrial contribution was on a scale and of a variety probably not thought possible before the test of war. The steps taken to make it effective, insofar as these affected the liberty of individuals to choose their own employment, are indicated by the total of 169,000 directions issued to persons by manpower officers, only 2.9 per cent. of which were appealed against. On the financial side, the considerable savings of the common people, as reflected in national savings and small investments in war bonds, were a notable contribution. Large investments were made by big financial institutions and wealthy firms and persons, but what was this in terms of equal sacrifice when measured against the sacrifice of the fighting men whose blood, tears and sweat preserved the safety of capital.

The production of food for the United Kingdom and for the Allied Forces was substantial. Butter rationing, introduced in October, 1943, resulted in a saving of 26,000 tons to March 31, 1946 (when the ration was six ounces a week per person, having been reduced from the former eight ounces a week). In the first two complete years of meat rationing, 40,000 tons were withdrawn from civilian consumption. From June, 1943, there was an unofficial rationing of ham and bacon, no pork being available for public until early in 1946, with the result that to March 31, 1946, 130,000 baconer pigs had been withdrawn from civilian consumption. In addition, tea, sugar, eggs, clothing, household linen and boots were rationed on a coupon basis.

Demobilisation was carried out most expeditiously. By April, 1946, only a handful was left in the Middle East, being engaged in rear party duties, and on April 20 the last of the R.N.Z.A.F. personnel at South Pacific bases reached New Zealand. New Zealand's demobilisation was probably accomplished quicker than any other belligerent country, a praiseworthy effort considering the distance involved in returning men from the Middle East and the United Kingdom. The approximate position at March 31, 1946, was:—Army, 6,268 in New Zealand, plus 4,000 J Force reinforcements and 4,000 in the 9th Brigade in Japan; Navy, 3,697; Air Force, in New Zealand, 5,427, Pacific 451, United Kingdom 609 (including those with R.A.F.). The exact total then overseas was 6,786. Of this number 428 were serving in the Royal New Zealand Navy, 1351 with the Royal New Zealand Air Force (including No. 14 Squadron in Japan), and the balance of 4,742 were serving with the Army. Included in this latter figure were 4,007 serving with J Force in Japan. Demobilisation of those in New Zealand was speeded up after April, 1946, following dissatisfaction expressed by Army and Air Force personnel. An Interim Air Force was already under recruitment, and a similar plan for the Army was set in motion.

The service sections of this book, inadequate as they are to do adequate justice and tribute, may serve to remind those who were in the fighting forces of a period in their lives when they gave willingly—perhaps remind them of comrades who, though passed on, will never die. No written account could tell of what the fighting men endured, or make fitting recog-

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dition of the common man and woman at home or overseas on whose efforts rested the success or failure of the plans of the great architects of victory—military and national leaders, scientists, and so on. Materially New Zealand was treated kindly in that her shores were spared the horrors of invasion. Despite her heavy contribution to the Allied effort, the country moved forward along the road of social progress and the realisation of some of those things for which men of all Allied nations fought. All that has been accomplished can be lost unless every man and woman continues to give just what the New Zealand sailors, soldiers and airmen gave—their best.

New Zealand was represented in the Victory Parade in London on June 8, 1946, by a contingent of 300 from New Zealand led by the former G.O.C., New Zealand Military Forces, Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Puttick, K.C.B., C.B., D.S.O., N.Z.S.C. The Army detachment of 150 was in charge of Colonel L. W. Andrew, V.C., D.S.O., N.Z.S.C. (his fifth London parade, the others being the Guard of Honour for the then Prime Minister, late Right Hon. W. F. Massey, 1918, Lord Mayor's Show, 1918, New Zealand company in Victory March, 1919, Coronation contingent, 1937). The R.N.Z.A.F. was represented by 100 officers and other ranks, including W.A.A.F.'s and Army nursing sisters attached to the Air Force, and the Navy by 50 (leader, Lieut.-Commander J. F. Holm, D.S.C.), including Wrens. The contingent sailed in the former hospital ship, *Maunganui*, on April 20. Captain Upham, V.C. and Bar, Squadron-Leader Trent, V.C., and Sergeant Hulme, V.C., were in the parade. Some personnel already in England swelled the New Zealand representation of 300.

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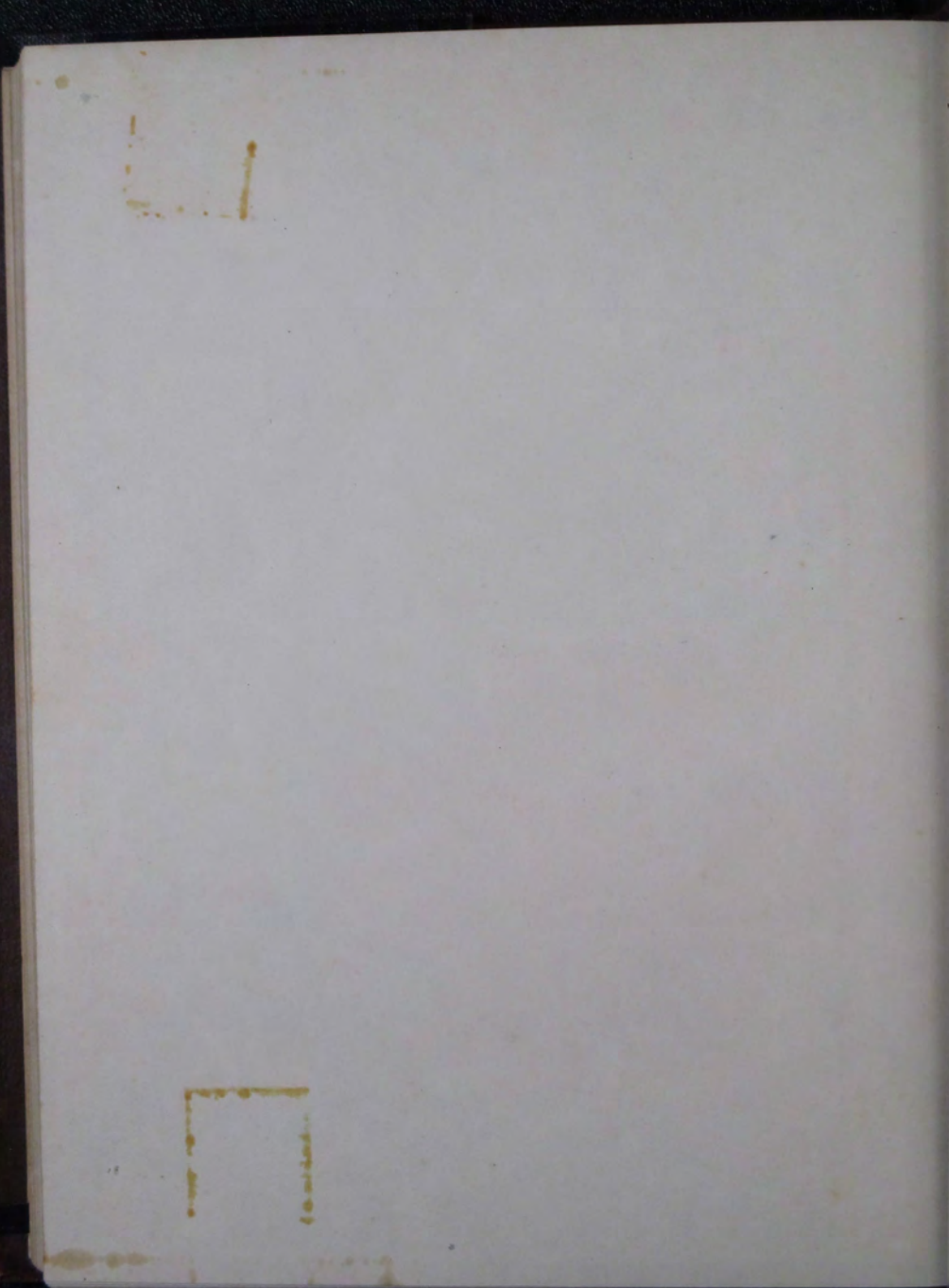
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NEW ZEALAND AT WORK

HANCOCK, Kenneth R.

Date

Name

Time

Rate

NEW ZEALAND AT WORK

HANCOCK, Kenneth R.

