

The Hop Leaf Gazette.

The Monthly Journal of H. & G. SIMONDS, Ltd.

Edited by CHARLES H. PERRIN.

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JUNE, 1942.

No. 9.



MR. G. W. LOTT.

MR. G. W. LOTT.

The portrait in our frontispiece this month is of Mr. G. W. Lott, the Assistant Foreman of our Canvas Department, where he has served since June, 1915, joining straight from school when the first Great War was in progress and the demand for marquees and equipment at Military Camps was at its peak.

Mr. Lott has had considerable experience in canvas work and is thoroughly qualified in the cutting out of canvas and making marquees, as well as a large variety of other canvas goods required throughout the length and breadth of the Firm. He is a trojan for work particularly during the erection of Summer Camps for training and manoeuvres, in normal times. Quiet and unassuming he has never been known to admit that he could not carry out a job, however great, and has always been willing to make the attempt.

In most districts in the South of England he has taken charge of Camp arrangements, also the erection of Canvas Bars at the Aldershot Tattoo, Ascot, Windsor, Royal Show, Henley Regatta, Kennington Oval, *Daily Mail* Air Display, etc. At all of these he has received the highest praise for the smart appearance and stability of the marquees. In this connection we recall that, dating back many years, at certain Summer training camps, the Firm's marquees have been the only canvas left standing after gales have sprung up and swept across the open spaces. Such tests of their reliability have paid tribute to the workmanship in the making of the marquees. Mr. Lott's experiences in camp life have included many amusing incidents, as well as those of a reverse nature.

In the last war Mr. Lott volunteered for service in the Royal Navy, but failed owing to eyesight. He has been passed as Grade 3 under the present Military Service Acts. Before the present war he played football for the Brewery team. The necessity for growing more food finds in him an enthusiastic and hard working toiler in the garden.

The saddest day of Mr. Lott's life was May 18th, when he witnessed the destruction of the whole of the Canvas Department in the disastrous fire which occurred on that day.

Take a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine oft infirmities.—The Bible.

CHAT *from*

THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

(By C. H. P.)



CONGRATULATIONS!

Our warmest congratulations have been cabled to Mr. Lewis Farrugia and Major R. Wingrave Tench, Directors of our Associated Company, Simonds-Farsons, Ltd., Malta, on the award to both of them by His Majesty in the recent Birthday Honours List of the Order of the British Empire, Civil Division. Mr. Lewis Farrugia, who is Managing Director of the Company, apart from the burden which he has carried in supervising the Brewery, has been entrusted with the task of the Milk Distribution for the Island, and he has been eminently satisfactory.

Major Tench has been connected since the outbreak of the War with duties in the Censor's Office and also has been Head of the Communal Feeding Department. He, too, has been most successful in everything he has undertaken. We are very proud of these gentlemen as also of all our staff in Malta.

Our warmest congratulations also to Colonel Frank Benson, C.V.O., C.B.E., who has been awarded a Knighthood for services rendered to the Navy, Army & Air Force Institutes. He has recently retired from the Office of General Manager which he has held with great distinction for many years.

ENGAGEMENT.

The engagement is announced between Paymaster Lieut. John Denys Richardson, R.N.V.R., only son of Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Richardson, of 56, Ravenscroft Avenue, Wembley, and Joan Mary, elder daughter of Mr. A. G. Richardson, our highly respected Chief Accountant, and Mrs. Richardson, of 120, Shinfield Road, Reading.

FIRST AID CONTEST.

On Wednesday, May 27th, we were very pleased to welcome three First Aid teams from Messrs. Phillips & Powis in friendly contest. All teams were equally matched and after a gruelling competition the points gained showed little difference, H. & G. Simonds winning the contest by 5 marks out of a large total. The percentage gained was high and represented tremendous keenness and considerable hard work.

Mr. Buckle ("A" team), Mr. Harrison ("B" team) and Miss Harvey (Ladies' team) were leaders for Messrs. Phillips and Powis. For H. & G. Simonds Mr. Ruffles ("A" team), Mr. Spencer ("B" team) and Miss Taylor (Ladies' team) were leaders.

The men's competition was a serious injury (stretcher case), necessitating tact, resource and discrimination, ending with the evacuating of the patient to hospital, followed by a questionnaire in which all members of the teams were separately questioned. The time taken to complete the incident was one of the main features and undoubtedly showed that all the teams were very proficient in First Aid work. These remarks also apply to the Ladies' team, whose competition was composed of practical bandaging and again a questionnaire. The standard throughout the whole test was excellent. All arrangements for the competition were made by Mr. T. E. Kent and Mr. J. Woodley, Captains of their respective First Aid parties.

After the test had been carried out, competitors adjourned to the Social Club for refreshments and all credit goes to Mr. W. Bradford and Mrs. Hannis for the excellent supper they produced, which was greatly appreciated by both teams.

HOME GUARD: 35TH A.A. BATTERY, R.A.

On Tuesday, 26th May, a very interesting meeting was held at Simonds' Social Club, when the Commanding Officer, Major T. W. Vanderpump, addressed the meeting on the formation of an A.A. Battery of the Home Guard. Owing to the weather being so inclement, the attendance did not reach expectations. However, encouraging support was given to Major Vanderpump, and a number of recruits volunteered that night. Further enquiries have been received and other members of the staff have expressed their keenness to join this organization. Major Vanderpump gave an interesting discourse on the workings of his unit and answered a number of questions which were put to him by members of the Firm.

THE SEAT OF WAR!

The editor of a newspaper dropped into a special afternoon service for the first time for many years. He listened to the service for a while and then rushed to his office.

"What are you fellows doing?" he shouted. "How about the news from the seat of war?"

"What news?"

"Why, all about the Egyptian army being drowned in the Red Sea."

SPOTTERS' TEAM.

Mr. Bloomfield is leaving for the R.A.F. and Mr. Coleman takes command of Simonds' Spotters' Team. He has been elected on the General Committee of the National Association of Spotters' Clubs, Reading Branch 53. It is now more essential than ever that our Spotters' team should be kept up to date in their recognition of aircraft, especially after our recent raids over enemy territory, and we are threatened with reprisals. There are some 300 different planes and they are continually changing. The A.R.P. organization should also be kept up to scratch as one never knows when they may be required to deal with enemy action. It is hoped to start further training for the Fire Watchers when not only will the stirrup pump be used, but there will also be training in the coupling of hoses to the Brewery hydrants. Later it is hoped to work up to wet drill, which will increase the interest of the Fire Watchers and be of assistance to the Brigade. When the alarm bells are rung it is earnestly hoped that the personnel at the Brewery will go to their posts and shelters with all possible speed.

ILLUMINATED ADDRESS FOR CAPTAIN DREWE, M.C.

At the first annual general meeting of the Spotters' Club a well-kept secret came to light when an illuminated address was presented to Captain A. S. Drewe, M.C., by Commander J. Hassard Short, R.N. (Retd.), the Regional Training Officer, on behalf of the members of the Club and in recognition of Captain Drewe's great work on the Club's behalf. Commander Hassard Short spoke eulogistically of Captain Drewe's indefatigable labours. Those who knew Captain Drewe were well aware that if he took up a job he did it with commendable thoroughness.

A SIMONDS ON THE COUNTY COUNCIL.

It will be recognised that the Berkshire County Council are most anxious, though popular election is suspended during the war, that the calibre of the membership should be maintained at the high standard for which this body has been always conspicuous, says *The Berkshire Chronicle*. In recent months the council has

lost quite a number of members who have given many years of service, but the successors chosen will ably carry on the work. Incidentally, our readers must have been pleased to see that the Simonds' family is now represented on the B.C.C. (in the person of Major M. H. Simonds). This is very fitting, considering the valuable help the Simonds' family has given in many directions.

READING UNIT SEA CADETS.

Master Mariner P. Williams, the popular tenant of the Roebuck Hotel, Reading, has taken over command of the Reading Unit Sea Cadets with which Commander H. D. Simonds, one of our Directors, is actively connected.

The Navy League Sea Cadet Corps operates in all parts of the Kingdom and in the Dominions, and makes a special appeal to the best type of British boy. Those of you who enrol in the ranks wear a blue jacket rig and are trained in the elements of seamanship, gunnery, drill, signalling and boat work. Physical training and recreation will form an important part of your life and there will be opportunities for rifle practice. To be a Sea Cadet is to learn the true spirit of discipline, which will form the foundation of your training. Your wits will be sharpened and your physical fitness improved by the drill and camp life, and you will learn to be of real service to your country during an emergency. If you want to do your bit for your country and you are between the ages of twelve and eighteen, join the Navy League Sea Cadet Corps now. By doing so, you answer your country's call for voluntary service. The training, which occupies your spare time only, is purely voluntary. The officers and instructors are chiefly drawn from the Naval service, and give their time voluntarily to train you. The Corps is recognized by the Admiralty, and each unit is inspected annually by Naval officers. Some boys go to Eton and Harrow and other public schools. There they are trained and educated. There they find health and growth and games and comradeship. The Navy League Sea Cadet Corps will be your public school. Join now. It's a man's life for any boy!

SPECK ON SEA SEEN IN PINT GLASS— FIVE AIRMEN SAVED.

The landlord of an East Coast inn, having drawn a pint of beer, held it up to the light to see if it was clear. As he did so he saw a speck on the sea. He put down the pint, picked up a telescope, and perceived that the speck was a dinghy. A lifeboatman was drinking at the bar. The landlord told him what he had seen, and in a few minutes a lifeboat was on its way to rescue five exhausted Polish airmen.

The story is told in an Air Ministry booklet just published.

Between June 1st and September 30th, 1941, 60 airmen were saved from the sea.

WORDS OF WISDOM.

The greatest fault, I should say, is to be conscious of none.—
Carlyle.

In peace and prosperity States and individuals have better sentiments, because they are not confronted with imperious necessities; but war takes away the easy supply of men's wants, and so proves a hard taskmaster, which brings most men's character to a level with their fortunes.

Take from our souls the strain and stress;
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

Look backward with gratitude;
Look upward with confidence,
Look forward with hope.

For howso'er the smile had birth,
It is an added glory on the earth.

Often it's easier to do a good job than to explain why you didn't.

A GREAT THOUGHT.

*When a King puts his hand in the hand of God
At the very gate of the year,
Though the way may be dark and the foe abroad,
What need his Empire fear?
For the God of Hosts will guide us on through many a perilous hour.
Though the way may lead by the way of the Cross,
We are led by a mighty power.*

*We will come at last to a harbour safe
When our hour of trial is o'er;
If only his people will follow their King
And turn to their God once more,
How blessed the nation who follows the lead
Of a King who walks with God;
No weapon that's formed against them shall prosper,
Whose feet are with righteousness shod.*

—From a New Zealand magazine, based on the King's Christmas broadcast.

SERIOUS FIRE AT THE BREWERY.

CANVAS STORES BLAZE LIKE A BEACON.

On Monday morning, 18th May, all was peaceful over the Brewery premises at 5.30 to 6 a.m. The Fire Watchers were getting away to the Club where the usual signing-off process takes place, and other staff were arriving for the commencement of the day's work. As usual the Fire Watchers' sleeping quarters were being inspected and put right just after 6 o'clock, and the Canvas Stores were visited where everything appeared to be in order. The men of the Canvas Stores began their usual work in the Sewing Room about five to ten minutes past six. After a time, one of them realised that something was amiss and, coming out at one end of the Stores, saw that a fire had broken out. The fire was also observed by Mr. F. E. Dryden, a Warden who had just come off duty. Both at once contacted the Fire Brigade, who had one engine out within two minutes, but the fire increased with such rapidity that it was only a few minutes before it became a major fire, which by this time had gained such a serious hold on the top floor that as far as the Works' Brigade was concerned it was out of hand.

In an incredibly short time hoses were coupled to the hydrants and fire pumps were in action, and some of the Brewery A.R.P. workers augmented the personnel of the Fire Brigade and helped fight the flames. The N.F.S. arrived on the scene under the command of Divisional Officer E. F. Batchford, and immediately went into action. Messrs. Heelas offered the services of their Fire Brigade under Chief Officer Gathercole, which were gratefully accepted. Five more pumps soon arrived from the N.F.S.

In the meantime, Mr. Jennings, of the Canvas Department, went back to the Stores to get his coat and respirator, etc., but on opening the door found it was too late and lost the majority of his personal belongings.

In the yard, Mr. Jenner, Mr. Clinch and one or two others immediately ran up the stairs and attached hoses to Brewery hydrants and began playing on the fire.

Divisional Officer Batchford's appreciation of the situation was masterly. He took advantage of his previous experience in the recent fire test which was reported a few

weeks ago in "The Hop Leaf Gazette." Eight National Fire Service pumps were at work, which he placed round the fire, making allowance for the way of the wind, and they gradually forced the fire to the centre of the outbreak and by so doing prevented any further buildings or roofs from being involved, so preserving the whole of the production side of the Brewery. Should the fire have caught the roof of the Fermenting Room there is no knowing how much material damage would have been done.

Our firemen, under the Chief and Second Officers, did fine work and with the help of the N.F.S. undoubtedly prevented a serious extension of the fire by confining it to the Canvas Stores roof, which blazed like a beacon, being fed by the dressing in the canvas. Chief Officer Tigwell and Second Officer Lovejoy could be seen working very hard, Chief Officer Tigwell sometimes seated on a precarious perch above the fire directing our pumps. During the whole time co-operation was being maintained between the various Brigades and the Divisional Officer.

The fire, after an hour and a half's duration, was finally brought under control, to everyone's great relief. Had the fire been allowed to spread to the adjoining roofs, two or three times the number of pumps would have had to be employed and production would have been affected for some time. The enormous rapidity with which the fire spread can be attributed to the canvas tents, poles, ropes, etc., which were stored in this large room, measuring 160 feet by 65 feet.

MANAGING DIRECTOR EARLY ON THE SCENE.

Mr. F. A. Simonds, the Managing Director, and Mrs. Simonds were present very early in the proceedings, followed later by Major Ashby. Mr. Warner was another early arrival, and became very busy in the Wine Stores protecting the stock from the water which was coming down the lift wells and in places trickling through the ceiling.

We are thankful to say that the Wine and Spirits Stores were hardly damaged at all. Owing to the forethought and long-seeing policy of Mr. Blackall Simonds in his design and concrete construction of the building, that part containing all our wines and spirits was left intact, the floors standing up to the enormous strain which was put on them by the

mass of water poured on to them for over two hours, pumped by eleven fire engines, each lifting from the river some 400 gallons per minute. Approximately half a million gallons must have been played on the fire, but very little water penetrated, perhaps a few thousand gallons in all.

At 12 o'clock the Fire Brigades had ceased and the sorting out of hoses had been completed. By the evening the fire had been completely extinguished, but a special watch was kept over these buildings during the night of 18th-19th.

The Police were very much in evidence, and for a time Bridge Street was closed, the Chief Constable (Mr. T. A. Burrows) arriving soon after the outbreak.

Now the clearing away of the burnt and charred stock is gradually taking place. So may we say good-bye to the old Canvas Stores and look forward to a speedy replacement fully stocked again, and to seeing the tents of H. & G. Simonds prominently displayed over as wide an area as before.

We should like to thank Divisional Officer E. F. Batchford and Company Officer Penrose, also Chief Staff Officer A. E. Jones, B.E.M., of the N.F.S., for the excellent work they put in; also Chief Officer Gathercole, of Messrs. Heelas' Fire Brigade, for his timely help.

LETTERS OF THANKS FROM OUR MANAGING DIRECTOR.

THE BREWERY,

READING.

28th May, 1942.

The Editor,

THE HOP LEAF GAZETTE,
The Brewery, Reading.

Dear Sir,

Would you please be good enough to publish in your next edition the attached letter which I have addressed on behalf of the Board of Directors to Chief Officer E. A. Tigwell and members of the Simonds' Fire Brigade.

May I at the same time ask you to publish the warmest thanks of the Directors to all those in the Brewery who lent a hand on the

morning of the 18th inst. to help control the fire or salvage valuable property. It would be invidious to mention individual names, and I do not propose to do so, where all worked so willingly and with such gallantry. Without doubt a very serious disaster was narrowly averted and it is impossible adequately to express our gratitude to those members of the staff and employees, as also to the members of the National Fire Services and other Fire Fighting Units in the neighbourhood who came to our assistance.

Yours faithfully,

F. A. SIMONDS,
Chairman and Managing Director,
H. & G. Simonds Ltd.

THE BREWERY,

READING.

28th May, 1942.

Chief Officer E. A. Tigwell,

Simonds' Fire Brigade,

The Brewery, Reading.

Dear Mr. Tigwell,

I was asked by my co-Directors at their Board Meeting held on the 26th inst. to convey to yourself, as also Second Officer J. Lovejoy and all members of the Simonds' Fire Brigade, their warmest thanks for what you accomplished at the recent outbreak in the Canvas Store. The promptitude and efficiency displayed was undoubtedly in a large measure responsible for confining the conflagration to within comparatively narrow limits and a major catastrophe was thereby averted.

The result is a tribute to the high level of training to which you, and all of you, have submitted yourselves for some years past and it has stood the test of a very severe ordeal. We realise that there were one or two defects in the organisation which this outbreak has afforded an opportunity to investigate and rectify, though we hope and trust you will never again have to contend with such a task as faced you on the 18th inst.

I am sending copy of this letter to the Editor of THE HOP LEAF GAZETTE for publication.

Yours faithfully,

F. A. SIMONDS,
Chairman and Managing Director,
H. & G. Simonds Ltd.



[By courtesy of the "Berkshire Chronicle,"
Brewery Firemen at work on the Canvas Store.



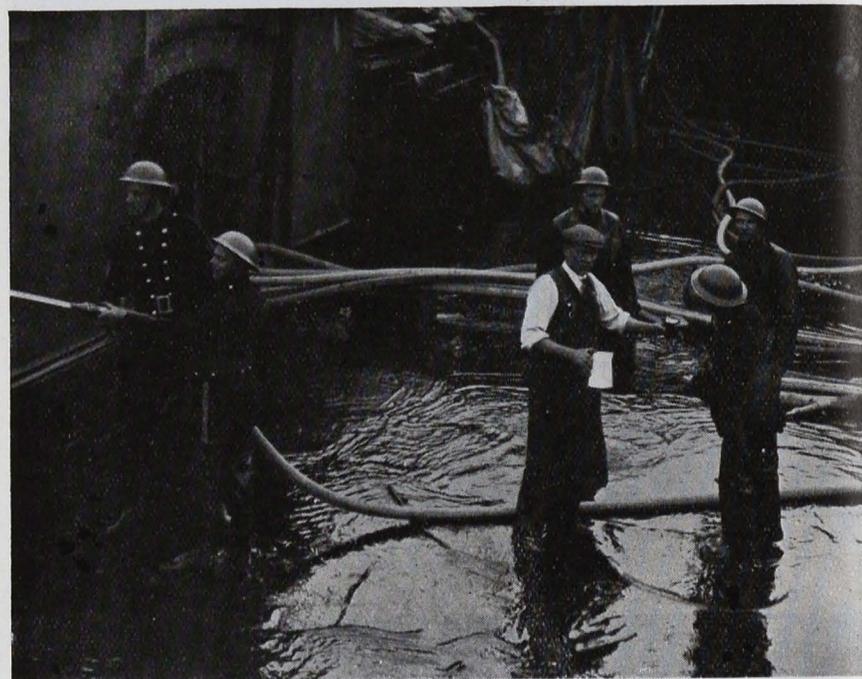
Collapse of the Canvas Store Roof.



This photograph was taken from the Canvas Store Flat. The fire is well under control and nearing the end.



Playing on the fire from Gas Lane, our Social Club is on the left.



After the fire was over,
After the pumps had gone,
Many a heart was rejoicing
Over a Simonds A.I. (S.B.)

[Photographs by C. E. May.]

SPOTTERS.

Mr. Ballard has passed the 2nd and 3rd class tests and Mr. Kury has passed the 3rd class test of the R.O.C.C.

LIGHTER SIDE.

The recruit had the habit of partaking of his soup in a noisy and boisterous fashion. The noise was so loud that it upset the rest of the company. One day when the offensive sounds were at *fortissimo*, a veteran strode towards the culprit and said: "May I help you?"

"Help?" echoed the recruit. "I don't need any help."

"Sorry, Sir," said the veteran, "I thought perhaps you might wish to be dragged ashore."

NATURE NOTE.

(BY C.H.P.).

THE FASCINATION OF FLY-FISHING.

EVEN IN THE POURING RAIN!

When you have the great good fortune to be given a day's fly-fishing on a trout stream and the Mayfly is due to appear, it is difficult to concentrate on anything else. I have good reason to remember the day I was granted this season. The bus seemed to take ages to arrive at the spot where I was to alight. And then the stroll to the stream, not half a mile distant, appeared very much further, though there was much to observe on the way. The rain was coming down in torrents; but that did not deter the nightingale from pouring out his liquid music from the little copse near by and the flute-like notes of the blackbird were almost as rich. I think the little black-cap, who also was evidently enjoying the rain, sang as well as either of them.

A MAYFLY!

But I must hasten on to the trout stream! There was no sign of a Mayfly when I arrived so I tried a Variant. I rose one good fish in the first half-hour, but either I struck too quickly or he missed the mark—anyway, I did not hook him. And then, not far away, I saw another rise. Within a few minutes my fly was over the spot where the water had been broken. The fish seized it and within a very short time I had banked a pounder. That was good going. Then I saw a Mayfly! He was sailing down in the drenching rain like a stately little yacht. Perhaps he had been under the water, in another form, for a couple of years before emerging as a perfect fly. But his life as the finished article was very short for a hungry trout rose and took him. I fastened a Mayfly to my cast and, using a long line, I sent my fly in the right direction. It just hit the bank and dropped back into the water so naturally that it would have deceived any fish. It did this one. He rushed at it and fish No. 2 was soon in my creel.

And so I proceeded with varying success.

QUESTION OF TEMPERATURE.

Because the Mayfly is up on the Thames it does not necessarily mean that they are appearing at the same time in other rivers. It is a question of the temperature of the water, the Mayfly carnival occurring earlier on some rivers than on others. And I can speak from a long experience. Well do I remember, on one occasion, seeing the Mayfly up on the Thames literally in millions. I hastened off some ten miles distant to a little trout stream, taking with me only Mayflies, for when that attractive insect is about the trout will look at little else. But, lo! and behold, when I arrived not a Mayfly was to be seen. I was in a quandary. Looking into the water with eager eyes I saw that the Mayfly was in the nymph stage so I adapted myself to circumstances. I cut off the wings of some of my flies, tied some tiny pieces of line round the fore parts to represent legs and fished with these "nymphs." The fish took them readily and I had one of the biggest bags in my experience.

FOOD AND 'BACCY SOAKED ;

But that was many years ago. Now back to the occasion under review. I was wearing a light mackintosh which was by no means equal to the occasion. Fishing under such conditions, for the rain continued without a break, is hard, wet work and I began to feel, as well I might, the keen demands of appetite. I had with me some biscuits and chocolate which I find take up little room and will keep you going for many hours. My mackintosh pockets were full of water which had also penetrated to my inside coat. When I felt for the biscuits I found that they were merely pap and the chocolate was worse than that. However, I thought I would have a cigarette. When I opened the packet I found them, too, all sodden, except one. Oh, how I was going to enjoy that one! I took a matchbox from my pocket, but they, too, were waterlogged and not one would strike! So I continued for some hours longer without food or 'baccy.

But I had a good bag of fish and I am sure you will agree that I thoroughly deserved them!

BREWERY JOTTINGS.

(BY W. DUNSTER).

The start of the month saw the members of the General Office staff, together with other Departments, busy on balancing the books. This time also corresponded with the commencement of a small heat wave but as is usual, in this country, the warm weather did not last very long, which is perhaps just as well.

We have had quite a number of our staff call in to see us and it really must be said that they all look fit and well practically without exception. Now for some of them. W. Philpott, who is in the Navy, told me he was on a patrol boat and the life was quite good. J. Britnell, who is an Ordinary Seaman, is serving on one of our largest warships. Food was excellent and as he expressed it he liked the "open air." He had been for a while in some cold parts but that didn't trouble him at all. V. Saunders, who is also in the Navy, unfortunately had had a spell of nine weeks in hospital, so was not in such good shape. He was hoping to be feeling more like himself very soon. He had been serving on a destroyer, also he had been in action in the Commando Raid during the Vaagso affair in Norway, when it was pretty exciting. Another visitor was N. Drury (son of Mr. F. Drury, our Head Cooper), who is in the R.A.F., and he had returned to England after being overseas for about 18 months. K. Jenkins, who is a Sergeant Air Gunner in Coastal Command of the R.A.F., has put in several hundreds of Operational flying hours and seemed well pleased with all of it. J. Bradford (son of the well-known Mr. W. Bradford), having passed his course in signal training, called in and everyone commented how well he looked. I understand he has got on very well in all sections, even though the course has been particularly intensive. H. White, who is also in the Signals, paid a flying visit and although he has not been away very long was well pleased with his Army life. News has been received that Sergt. R. Skidmore, of the R.A.F., is making good progress as an Air-Gunner Instructor and as he has had a long spell on operational duties he should be the right one for the job. I am also informed that P. Paice (son of our Mr. R. Paice) is making excellent progress in the R.A.F., in which he is qualifying as a Pilot. I saw J. Biggs (son of our Mr. J. B. Biggs) the other evening and he really looked in fine trim. He said he was feeling very fit and that the Army life agreed with him. Others who have visited us are Messrs. S. R. Gray, G. Gigg, M. W. Tilbury, S. R. Newberry, D. E. Beesley, N. S. Evans, L. Buckingham, J. Martin and R. J. Griffin.

We also had a visitor, whom we were all pleased to welcome, Mr. W. Giddy, from Salisbury Branch, for he made many friends whilst he was at The Brewery. It hardly seems true that he has been away from Reading for 12 years but he assured us that it

was so. He told us he was very fond of the HOP LEAF GAZETTE and looked for it each month to give him the news.

Congratulations are offered to Mr. P. James and Mr. S. Collins on being presented in each instance with a son. Both of these gentlemen are serving in H.M Forces. From all accounts all is well, both mothers and babes thriving.

Mr. K. Organ, of the General Office and now in the R.A.F., says he was delighted to receive a copy of the HOP LEAF GAZETTE which would enable him to keep up with events at The Brewery and the progress of the Brewery cricket. He wished to be remembered to all members of the staff and hoped that Mr. J. B. Doe would have a most successful season in charge of the cricket team.

From what one gathers the Ladies' cricket team possesses at least one "demon" bowler and one particularly good batsman (or is it batswoman?).

One of our staff, who keeps chicken in his backyard, was astounded the other day to find that the *three* pullets he has, laid *five* eggs in one day. Whether these chicken were out for a record or had heard that there was a war on will never be known, but it really must be said they were "doing their bit." A Ministry of Supply!

Holidays are being taken as opportunity offers for one week and so far the weather has been particularly variable. If you are lucky you get a week of sunshine (which has been the case now and again), or all rain. You have to console yourself with the fact that if it is raining on your vacation it is doing your garden good. I think we all more or less are garden conscious in these times.

Mr. C. G. Lawrence has recently received letters from G. H. Beddow (R.A.F.), G. W. Dewey, late of Headquarters Staff and A. Rice (R.A.O.C.) and all wish to be remembered to old friends at The Brewery.

The following changes have recently taken place and to all we wish every success:—

The Gordon Arms, High Wycombe (Wheeler's Wycombe Breweries, Ltd)—Mr. G. A. Lee.

The King's Head, High Wycombe (Wheeler's Wycombe Breweries, Ltd.)—Mr. F. W. Callaway.

The Bull, Swallowfield (H. and G. Simonds, Ltd.)—Mrs. E. Brake.

We regret to record the death of Mr. A. F. Goddard, of the Red Lion, Burbage, Wilts, who had held the tenancy of this House since December, 1929, and to all relatives we send our sincere sympathy.

CRICKET.

As space in THE HOP LEAF GAZETTE is now much restricted, comments on our activities must correspondingly be curtailed. The opening month of our season has not been too successful as only two Saturday games have been completed up to the time of writing. Without further preamble, a brief report of these games follows.

May 2nd. SIMONDS 89 v. WILLIAMSON MANUFACTURING CO. 33.

The opening match was played in real cricket weather and the result was most encouraging. Our opponents batted first, but against the bowling of F. H. Chandler and E. C. Greenaway were unable to make many runs. They took seven and two wickets for 15 and 18 runs respectively.

A good start was made by our opening pair and ere the fall of the third wicket we had passed the total required. It was too late in the day to make it more than one innings each and our friends very kindly suggested our team batted through. The top score was made by Skipper Doe, who got 25, and G. Harding was a good second with 20 not out, 16 of which were knocked up in one over; F. Chandler also reached double figures.

May 9th.

All efforts to arrange a fixture were unavailing so our Youths put out a team to give the Ladies some match practice. The former were "handicapped" but just managed to scrape home by two runs.

May 16th. SIMONDS 74 v. POST OFFICE TELEPHONES 96.

We were favoured by the spin of the coin and batted first. Steady progress was made throughout the innings except for two spells, each of which cost us a couple of wickets without any material addition to the score. G. Harding was top with 18, F. Chandler got 11 and J. B. Doe and A. J. Hawkins 10 each.

McCormack and Pearson each took four wickets.

We got the first wicket down at 6, but the next added 28; the one following added 17 and then we got a couple fairly cheaply. However, the sixth wicket partnership did the trick and we were 4 runs down. After that it did not matter a great deal and a further 18 runs were collected. McCormack followed up his success with the ball by making 48 before being run out.

E. Greenaway took four for 17, F. Chandler and E. Scott each got two.

We were pleased to have A. J. Hawkins in our team again, he being on leave at the time. Any more Service lads about?

May 23rd. SIMONDS v 7TH BATT. HOME GUARD.

No result was possible in this match. We started to bat and had made 30 for the loss of four wickets, C. Morgan had scored 19 and had then been joined by G. Harding, who had just broken his "duck," when rain stopped play and it was not possible to continue.

YOUTHS.

The fixtures for the Senior Division have been arranged by the Reading Youths' Sports Club, although the actual dates of the matches have to be fixed by the respective clubs. We are endeavouring to play our games on either Tuesday or Thursday. The fixtures are as follows, the dates shown being for the *week ending* :—

Date.	Opponents.	Ground.
May 23rd	A.T.C. 1116	Home
" 30th	A.T.C. 381	Away
June 6th	Battle	Home
" 13th	Huntley & Palmers	Away
" 20th	Y.M.C.A.	Home
" 27th	Battle	Away
July 11th	A.T.C. 1116	Away
" 25th	A.T.C. 1836	Away
Aug. 1st	A.T.C. 381	Home
" 8th	A.T.C. 1836	Home
" 15th	Huntley & Palmers	Home
" 29th	Y.M.C.A.	Away

Up to the present only the first game on the list has been played and then we suffered defeat by 41 runs. Batting first we made 19 for the first wicket, 8 were added for the third and another 8 by the rest. E. Priddy was top scorer with 11, followed by K. Cottam (9) and L. Kury (8).

The A.T.C. made 76 for the loss of six wickets, when the prescribed number of overs had been bowled. They have to thank Cadet Weber for a splendid innings of 57 not out and Cadet Underhill, with 12, for their batting superiority. The former gave a fine exhibition and included two sixes in his "bag."

LADIES.

The Secretary of the Ladies' team has been busy arranging matches, mainly for Wednesday evenings, and the list at present reads :—

Date.	Opponents.	Ground.
May 13th	Reading University 2nd XI	Home
" 20th	Scarlet Runners	Home
" 27th	Post Office	Home
June 10th	Reading University	Home
" 17th	Reading University 2nd XI	Away
" 25th	St. George's	Home
July 1st	Scarlet Runners	Home
" 18th	St. George's	Away

Unfortunately, the weather broke a day or so before the first match and rendered the pitch unfit for play and the game had to be cancelled.

The match against the Scarlet Runners ended in favour of the visitors. Neither side was up to full strength owing to a fall of rain in the early evening.

Our girls made 21, Miss Shurmer claiming 8 of these. Our bowlers were not able to make any impression on Miss Phillips, who retired after scoring 27. With the total at 50 for four wickets (two retired), the innings was closed.

Miss Townsend was the mainstay of our attack and claimed the two wickets that fell, clean bowling both.

J.W.J.

LIGHTER SIDE.

A lady recently visited a snack bar, where she was served with a portion of so-called steak and kidney pie, containing the toughest, most tasteless and generally unpleasant meat that she had ever struck.

"This," she protested, "is palpably horse!"

Whereupon a friend, sitting on the next stool, leant over, peered at the offending lump of pie, and removed a thread of coloured silk which had somehow found its way into the stuff.

"Yes," he remarked, "and, what's more, here are the owner's colours!"

* * * *

Inscription on a tin canister: "Milk Food. Full Cream. For Infants and Invalids. As supplied to His Majesty's War Office and Other Government Departments."

* * * *

"WANTED—Stenographer for heating contractor's office" (advert.).

* * * *

The crew of a trawler had been so successful in shooting up dive-bombers that an officer was sent from the War Office to ask the skipper for a detailed report on his methods.

Here, according to Lord Mottistone, who told the story as a true one at a meeting, is what the skipper told him :

"I call out 'George!' and George says, 'Aye, aye, Sir.' Then I say, 'Aeroplane reported, George.' George says, 'Aye, aye, Sir.' Then I say, 'Shoot the blighter.' He says, 'Aye, aye, Sir.' And then George shoots him!"

* * * *

Politician—One who stands for what he thinks the voters will fall for.

Committee—A group of men who keep minutes and waste hours.

Taxation—The art of picking the goose so as to secure the greatest amount of feathers with the least amount of squawking.

Bore—One who talks when you want him to listen.

Coward—One who in an emergency thinks with his legs.

Petition—A list of persons who haven't the backbone to say "No."

Mugwump—A man sitting on a political fence with his mug on one side and his wump on the other.

Good Speech—An address with a good beginning and a good ending, kept very close together.

Positive—Being wrong at the top of your voice.

Londoner—A man who hopes for the best and prepares for the burst.

EXTRACT FROM PETTY CASH BOOK.

		(NOT H. & G. SIMONDS LTD.).		£	s.	d.
April	1	Advertisement for lady typist	...	...	2	6
"	3	Violets	...	...	1	0
"	4	Chocolates	...	...	2	6
"	8	Typist's Salary	...	...	2	0 0
"	10	Flowers	...	...	3	6
"	11	Chocolates for Wife	...	...	1	0
"	14	Flowers	...	...	5	0
"	15	Salary for Typist	...	...	3	0 0
"	18	Chocolates	...	...	7	6
"	22	Winnie's Salary	...	...	4	0 0
"	24	Dinner and Theatre Tickets for Winnie and Self	...	...	6	4 0
"	25	Chocolates for Wife	...	...		6
"	28	Fur Coat for Wife	...	...	65	10 0
"	29	Advertisement for male typist	...	...	2	6

A.T.S. DRILL WITH GUARDS' PRECISION.

(ENTERTAINED AT LUNCHEON BY OUR DIRECTORS).

Reading streets resounded to the rhythm of marching feet on June 11th and although the beat was a lighter sound than is usually associated with marching feet, there was no doubt as to the military origin of the feet. It was the Demonstration Platoon, A.T.S., of the Public Relations Coy. attached to the War Office, and they came to Reading to demonstrate just how smart are the women of the Auxiliary Territorial Service. There were about thirty women with Subaltern Pardo in command, and they marched to the Forbury Gardens, where they gave their display. They were preceded by the drum and fife band of the Royal Berkshire Regiment, and crowds watched the girls' progress with evident approval.

At the Forbury Gardens they were inspected by the Mayor of Reading (Councillor W. E. C. McIlroy), and Col. E. H. Tattersall was also present. The Mayor said he felt they had acquitted themselves with great credit.

This company is periodically drilled by the Coldstream Guards and created a stir by their appearance in London's Warship Week. They were also in the Albert Hall Pageant and were filmed. On Friday, June 12th, they appeared at Henley and Marlow, and on Saturday they formed a guard-of-honour at Oxford's Women War Workers' Week. They have periods of rest between their demonstrations. They drilled three times in Reading on Thursday, and were entertained to lunch by the directors of Messrs. H. and G. Simonds. Their own sergeant gave the commands and they drilled in threes, marching in quick and slow time, turning and wheeling. Although the commands did not conform to a set routine, every movement was precise and efficient.

BRANCHES.

PORTSMOUTH.

EVOLUTION!

"Evolution of the Trade in Portsmouth" would make an interesting and valuable contribution to the chronicles which set forth the development and progress of our ancient city. Compare, for instance, the average hostelry of to-day with that which existed, say, in the year 1700 when the Leet Jury in a "Presentment" considered it necessary to indict certain licensed houses in the district as "Stews and Sinks of Debauchery and Corruption" . . . which "Tend to the destruction of the Youth of this towne and an encouragement to Vice, Immorality and Profaneness from whence proceeds Riotts, Disorders and Violence against His

Majesties' subjects and their properties even to the contempt of Justice."

In addition to the regular drinking establishments in those days there abounded, apparently, numerous other places where liquor could be secretly obtained, for we read that at the Sessions a year or two previously no fewer than 78 persons were indicted for selling beer without a licence. The Leet Jury were not only concerned, however, with the facilities granted for "Victualling houses, Punch houses and other Tippleing houses," but also tried to safeguard the habitues thereof by ordering that "no brewer should sell any bere, but it be good and wholesome drinke, and that it be sold in lawfull cask of measre and at such reasonabell pryces as they dow sell in other places." The price of "bere" in those days, by the way, was three pints for a penny!

Incidentally, the first mention of the establishment of the brewing industry in Portsmouth was in the early part of the reign of Henry VIII. It was Henry VII who made Portsmouth a Royal Dockyard, and we read that one of the first acts of his successor was "to erect on the southe part of the towne four great brewing houses, with the implements, to serve his shippes at such tyme as they should go to se during his warre with France." These brewhouses were called the Lyon, the Dragon, the Whiteharte and the Ankre, respectively, and they remained in full operation for many years.

SPICE ISLAND.

A reader interested in our reminiscences of Old Portsmouth and its inns asks whether we can tell him why that part of the city known as Point was nicknamed Spice Island. In the seventeenth century "Poynt" was perhaps one of the most notorious spots frequented by sailors in the world and it thrived on a trade that to say the least of it would not be tolerated to-day. Many unsavoury stories are told of its debauchery and brutal violence. It was originally an island until a narrow wall was built near the drawbridge in connection with King James's Gate. The main street, we read in an old history, was filled with one of the most heterogeneous assemblages of traffic and conviviality to be found in the same extent in any one street in any one part of the world. Behind it was the Camber, not only the assembly place of ships from near and far, but the receptacle for refuse of all kinds. When the sun was high and the tide was low the mud from the Camber emitted most unsavoury odours which penetrated the windows of the numerous eating houses, causing much annoyance to the patrons. This led to "Poynt" being known, especially by sailors, as "Spice Island," and to its residents being dubbed "Spice Islanders," a nickname they retain to the present day.