

On the authority of the Prime Minister the winter is two-thirds over! By the time this Newsletter reaches you there will be 'something in the air' that tells us spring is just around the corner. The black-out barrage is creeping backward two or three minutes every evening, the night is becoming shorter and the days are lengthening out; which is all to the good for us. Further cheer comes from the good news from Africa and the Mediterranean where our men are helping to make Mussolini sorry he did not stay up on the fence a bit longer. We are warned that the postponed invasion of Britain is probably still on Hitler's programme and he is trying to make our flesh creep with hints of horrid events to come. But we refuse to be intimidated. If he comes, without any boasting or over self-confidence, we hope to make him regret it - so help us God! There is a great spirit abroad among our people, among the millions armed and trained in our Forces - which include the small but doughty band of men and women from Campden. The letters we receive monthly leave us in no doubt of this. One and all breathe the spirit of sober confidence and cheerful determination to carry their job through. It may be news to them to know that this helps to encourage and strengthen those of us who are trying to do their bit at the home base. Letters this month include the following: - J.E. Hadley who is training men in a Midland regiment and is also battalion Education and Entertainment Officer, says he is with "a grand lot of fellows". "I am not afraid of the outcome with the spirit that these boys have". He asks us to give his good wishes to all the other Campden boys who have gone to serve. Aircraftman John Benfield now waiting to go on a flight mechanic's course in Essex, hints at some of his experiences. He says "You have mentioned many of my pals in your newsletter and I want if you will to remember me to them and wish them all the best of luck, especially to Gordon James who you mention was serving in Cornwall". (G.J. please note). Sapper E.A. Cherry writes from Hampshire desiring us to "wish all the Campden chaps in this war together the best of luck". Serg. G.A. Drinkwater in a further letter wishes us to remember him to J. Brotherhood and G.W. Merriman - (J.B. and G.W.M. please note) - and says "Let's get at Hitler and get this war over". Our indefatigable correspondent E.J. James reveals to us certain details of the celebrations of New Year Eve in Scotland and we gather that some people did not get home till morning! Tom Benfield has been in Evesham Hospital for an operation and you will be glad to know he is out again and progressing towards health. We hear of the marriage of Private Newman (Glos. Reg.) and all will join in best wishes and congratulations. Campden News: - J. Mare reports that Campden had a unique Xmas experience, as Santa Claus arrived by barrage balloon. He came down on the roof of a house, but as he found he had arrived a day too soon, he left his wire rope and went off again; the balloon was afterwards found but no one saw Santa Claus.

Whether the next item should be classed as Campden News or come under our "February Frivolities" (see below) the Editor is not sure. But J. Warmington says it is a true one! A young London lady, returning to town from Campden, her train was stopped beyond Reading as a raid warning was in force. The guard went along the train seeing all lights were out. "Do you get out?" she inquired. "No" says the guard, "If you are nervous lie on the floor". She was not nervous and on looking round the compartment saw that her fellow travellers were seven airmen. One said "It's all right miss, you put your head inside my overcoat if you are nervous". She did not accept the offer or follow the guard's advice!

#### February Frivolities

(1) "Ay" mased Duncan, "marriage is a lottery; the prizes are very unevenly distributed". "Indeed an that's true" said his wife, "for instance, you got me, but I only got you!"

(2) "Tommy, d'ye love me?" "Aye". "D'ye think I'm bonny?" "Och aye". "An that I've a guid figure, an bonnie eyes, an a wee rosebud mouth?" "Aye, lassie, aye". "Och Tommy, ye dae say sic marvellous things."

#### Parting Shots.

God has not promised a smooth passage; but He has promised a safe landing. God never lets a man who trusts Him fight a battle alone.

Cheerio: here's to the next time.

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Please notify Mr J. Mare, "Hooocote", Aston Rd, Campden, Glos., of any change of address.

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Here's wishing you all, old timers and newcomers, the best of health, rations, weather, news, leave, letters and all the other good things that help to make life in camp worth living! We have all got to keep on top of life and not let it get on top of us, and that's none too easy in times like this. But time is moving on, another month has gone and we are all that much nearer the end of the war! What a great thing it will be to put this job through and to feel it is a job well done.

Since we started this Newsletter there has been a great scattering of the Campden clans into all parts of this island, as well as overseas; and it has been a great job for Mr Mare to keep you all supplied each month with our journal. I think you will all agree that he has succeeded admirably in his task. Addresses change continually, for members of our great circle have the knack of suddenly disappearing from John O'Groats and turning up at Lands End, as it were; and it has sometimes not been easy to keep track. So Toc.H. has decided that in future our letter each month will be delivered at the homes of all whose families and relatives live in Campden, so that they can be sent to you from home. Those who have no relatives still living here will still receive the Letters direct. We hope the home folk will cooperate to make the plan a success and let you have the Newsletter each month without undue delay.

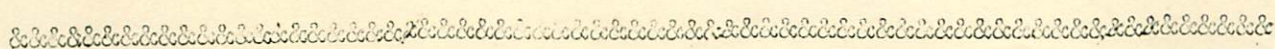
Our Letterbox this month contains more letters we have been glad to receive. A.G.H. Drinkwater from Salop thinks it will be good "when we get back into our working clothes again and get back to the good old times we had before this started", and wishes to be remembered to all the lads. L/bdr A. Mayo is in Middlesex and wants to be remembered to the lads in the 301st battery and to Gnr W. Booker (301s & WB please note) AC/1 R. Nobes in Lancs. says "Remember me to all the lads, also best of luck to John Benfield who is about to commence on a mechanics course in the RAF. (JB please note). AC/2 Gordon Bennett newly recruited and in Lancs. when he wrote was in the M.O's hands; we hope and expect he is quite well again now. AC/2 J.T. Cranke also from Lancs writes thanking us for the newsletter. Sgt G.D. Cooper writing from Co. Durham tells us he has not been able to visit Campden since June 1939 and is disappointed at not meeting Campdonians in the services during his travels. We congratulate him on the following news - "Please inform J. Brotheridge that I'm keeping the name of Cooper going with a son; also I should like to hear from him again". (JB please note). Spr E.J. James has sent us his monthly letter again and mentions that he has had 'embarkation leave'.

We gloat over the following item of news:- Last month the BBC, without acknowledgement to us, used information which appeared in the Toc.H Newsletter of Jan. 1940 to the effect that "the Germans are fixing zip fasteners to the bottom of their ships in order to scuttle them more easily!"

Hard bitten old Campdonians will relish the following message:-  
 "Hello bwoys, how bist? Hast thee yerd our latest gooin on yet? Well, at fust it was the speshuls, then th'ome gard as cum t'cheer us; now we git th'firewatchin! Un I doant myun th'oald cat in front o th'fire a' washin er faace, I myuns th' wimmins branch o th'fire watchers. They a git a ut to themselves un gus on duty awl nite, in shifts. Aw; an gud eigers they maakes too, they byent lead swingers I can tell the. An they manages to get a bit o fun on it too. One on um sed as that bloom in fly er buzzed round all nite un udnt be ketcht wuz wuss than they jerry planes a darn site. Another, a yung un, sez "Wunt we ha summut t'tell our branschildern." Er seems t'be lookin ferrud a bit, I thawt. -----  
 That dust think o th'navy gooin t'Norway un bringin ome them ther Gwislins? It shows we be gettin short, fur we used t'buy they things in tins like they little sardines! They swopped Woodbines fur um, un then had t'ha sum Germans uz well, ur else they udnt a let us had any! Ah vell, see tha at Scuttlebrook!  
 A spot of thought to finish with.

"Look up. not down! Out, not in! Forward, not back! And lend a hand!"

SO LONG TILL APRIL.





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As Easter holidays in the Forces are likely to be conspicuous by their absence, and as Easter will be over before this letter reaches you it is not much use sending the compliments of the season! However as Easter does after all represent a landmark in the history of our Christian faith, let us hope all have been cheered by the thought of the Resurrection message and the hope it holds for a war stricken world.

The war seems to be entering a new phase; April has brought the inclusion of yet another National Anthem into the BBC Sunday broadcast, for the German attack on Yugo-Slavia (and Greece) adds yet another victim to German aggression. We surely have a grave task laid upon us to stop that dark invader of men's liberties. Hitlerism must be smashed and with God's help, if we do our part, we shall free the world of this monstrous thing.

Since we last wrote it has been decided that Campden is to have its War Weapons Week commencing May 3rd. It is part of the bigger effort to run a N.Cotswold Week which aims at £75000 in all; Campden with the surrounding villages is to be asked to lend at least £20000 - the equivalent of 4 Spitfires. Will they do it? Of course! In our next letter we hope to tell you something of the great doings of that week and fully expect to announce that the figure has been reached and passed.

We trust the new scheme of sending the Newsletter through your families is working well, and that the March number reached you safely and in good time. Our correspondence list this month is smaller than usual, as we have received only two letters. Ord/Sig. Ernest E. Bennett writes from his training ship on the E. Coast and tells of the progress of his naval education. The other letter is from Mrs Raybould (sister of Jack Brotheridge) who thinks it might interest newsletter readers to know that her brother got engaged on his recent 48 hours leave. Mrs Raybould mentions that "being a Campden girl, I know nearly all the boys you write about. All best wishes to all." In addition Sub. Lieut. John Wilson on leave recently told us how much he enjoys the newsletter and promised to write about any Campdenians he may meet in the Fleet Air Arm.

Things we hear - That the Boys Club was very successful in brightening up Campden when on March 27th its Drama Class acted three one-act plays before a crowded audience in the Grammar School. The boys had been trained by Mrs W. Thomas and the acting reflected great credit on the producer. Pat Pledsted played two female parts in a very convincing way and George Woodard made a good Ali "of the fat stomach".

--That not to be outdone by the boys, a Girls Club was started on March 20. But we have not yet appointed our special correspondent to deal with their activities.

--That in a period of less than two years, by means of Whist Drives and Dances, Mr Harry Powell has raised over £100 for the Church Room. We congratulate him - and Campden.

In lighter vein.

-An American in his will left his clothes to his valet, including the fur coat - "which the valet wore the previous winter at Palm Beach" and his cars to his chauffeur - "he has almost ruined them and he may as well finish his job".

-Minister: "There seems to be an epidemic of colds - I heard a number of coughs during my sermon today". Deacon: "Hoots, they were no coughs - they were time signals".

-Little Jessie to new clergyman: "Mither says, will ye please come tae tea today - then that'll be done wi'".

For the quieter moment.

"Life is not a goblet to be drained, but a measure to be filled."

"It does not take much of a man to be a Christian, but it takes all of him."

"I love the man who attempts the impossible; any fool can do what he can do."

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Cheerio, and all the best, and - er - drop us a line.

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An east or N.east wind has rather spoiled the Spring in Cotswold, but the sun is shining again. It always does eventually! So will the sun of success shine upon our efforts and our cause after the difficult and dark times of the past month or two. We greet you all and hope you are keeping in good health and cheer, for the best is yet to be!

Now while you have been doing your bit all over the country and abroad, the splendid achievement of the N.Cotswold War Weapons Week shows that we at home are doing our best to help the old chariot along. The organisation under the direction of an Executive Committee consisting of Messrs Kittson, Mare, Winter and A. Pymont (Programme Sec.) was a marvel of efficiency and enterprise, and Campden was treated to a week of events which drew large and appreciative crowds. Lack of space forbids giving all the details, but they included Exhibitions of mechanized vehicles and war weapons, Tank manoeuvres, Dive Bombing by aircraft, Pipes and Drums and the Eightsome Reel by members of a Highland regiment, First Aid and Nursing demonstrations by the Red X, Home Guard exercises Church parade of all the Auxiliary Services, Dances in the Square by scholars of all three schools, Dances, Whist and Bridge drives and films in the Town Hall, and a Football match. The week was opened by Rt Hon. W. S. Morrison, K.C., M.P. (Postmaster General). The amount aimed at was £75000 for the whole N.Cotswold district, of which the Campden section was to be responsible for £20000 (Campden £10000, Willersey and Saintbury £2500, Ebrington and Hidcotes £2500, Weston and Aston £2500, Mickleton £2500). Now prepare for a surprise! Campden itself reached £40000, Campden and District £76000 and the whole N.Cotswold area over £300000! Figures are at time of writing only approximate but naturally we feel elated and we know you will be glad to hear how well the old home base has done.

A number of letters have come to hand this month. Cpl J. Chamberlain writes from RAF Egypt (dated Jan. 18) and we give extracts from his letter as it shows what some of the boys in the Middle East were thinking three months ago, especially about their Italian opponents - "Well, sir, how do you like our war... referring to our away game with Musso and his boys? We have been playing five backs up till 5 or 6 weeks ago, but now we are on the attack. Oh boy, oh boy, can those organ grinding ice cream soldiers retreat! As a matter of fact they have had to do away with cavalry already, as the horses cannot keep up with the men whilst retreating....! P.S. I can go one better than E. Bennet who wrote his letter on sandbags. I wrote mine with nothing in sight but sand and it wasn't in bags either!" Spr E. A. Cherry writes from S. England thanking us for our "most interesting letter". Bdr H. Cole from the N.W. much looks forward to the Newsletter. Among other things he makes the cryptic remark "After Hitler has been put away in a safe place I still have hopes of a bit of LAM cubbing with F.C. and I hope he can still mix 'flutters with flour'.... Would you please remember me to one of the original battery whom I have not seen for a long time? He is a sergeant now and he tries to walk down concrete steps head first! Lastly remember me to all the lads of the local British Legion." Leading A/C E. Cooper wishes all the Campden boys the best of luck. Spr E. J. James keeps in touch with a cheery letter and sends greetings. Spr F. Jones is in Sussex and is glad Jerry can't stop the old Campden Toc.H. He only wishes he were back there with them all now! L/Bdr J. E. Keeley in N. Wales tells us he and several of the Campden boys are there for a fortnights firing practice, and sends good wishes to Toc.H.

Everyone knows Harry Withers whom the Parish Magazine names "THE FLOWER OF THE VERGERS OF ALL ENGLAND". He has cared for the Church for 30 years and has made hundreds of friends. May he be with us many more years". And so say all of us.

Well, space has gone, so here is the thought for the month:-

"Pray to God in the storm, but keep on rowing."

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The rest will keep till we meet. Cheerio.

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The number 21 on this letter reminds us that our journal has

come of age! It seems a far cry back to October 1939 when we came into being and presented our first number to a small group who at that time had gone from Camden. Now we have grown in circulation-we must be near the 150 mark-and have established contacts and cross-contacts between

an ever widening number of Camden folk both at home and abroad. Another point about this month is that being June, we should call this a summer number-except that some of you might smile and think the Editor is trying to be humorous! The season, so far, is summer by name but not by nature, and the Abyssinian rains seem to have come west! But still the may is out, and the lilac, while the Laburnum is beginning to look golden on Stannway Hill. So we keep smiling and cherish the hope of better things.

As an instance of the wide area we touch and to remind you that it is even possible to have too much sunshine, here is part of an interesting letter from the Middle East, written by S/Sgt J. Meadows, No. 2 En-gineer (Base) Workshops, M.E.F. It is dated 17/3/41. I have just received from my wife your Newsletter for Nov. 1940 and I am very glad you are keeping up the good work. Although I have only visited Camden on odd occasions since I joined the Army some 14 years ago, it is still my home town and any news of it is very welcome. A greater contrast between the old town nestling amidst its green hills and pastures, and this temporary abode of mine, cannot be imagined. As soon as I got home I am going out into the fields and eat grass; perhaps I'll get some of this sand or of my lizard while I am doing so. I have never had the good fortune to meet any Camden men out here. I wonder if any are about. I know a QMS from Stroud and a sapper who has a romance in Chipping Norton, but that's the nearest. With the influx of British troops out here, the shops are beginning to blossom with signs written in English, with some strange results. Perhaps the best are "Ahmed Melek Butcher of Families" and "Said Mohamed families washed daily". Another has made a big splash with "Chit-dress clothes our specialty" and under that "We also specialize in men's clothes and women's clothes". One wonders what other variety of human being there is, but it has been suggested that he'd refuse to clothe Germans! I asked one native what his people did during an air raid and he said "Shaweech, we pray to Allah to save us, but we help him all we can by running like h..l!" I will conclude this by saying that all our British and Imperial troops out here are in fine fettle and good and ready to dust up Mussa and Hitler; and although we all occasionally exercise our privilege of having a moan, we are all really quite happy in this land of Allah and bakhsoosh.

Two other letters have been received, one from Ord/sig.E.E.Ben-nett who writes from a Naval Base in Gloucestershire (!) He congratulates us on our War Weapons effort and wishes to be remembered to all his pals now serving. Referring to our remarks last month on Harry Withers he says "How well I can remember toddling up those steps to the battery just to see him pull the rope". He considers life in the Royal Navy grand, but he longs to get a smack at Adolf, the little bit of hair on whose upper lip has already turned grey. In conclusion he hopes the Boys Club survives at Cotswold House. (It does.) The other is from AC/2 G.A.Ben-not in Somerset, who considers (rightly) that Camden's War Weapons effort will result in another nail in Hitler's coffin. He asks us to wish J. Benfield, W. Bruce (RAF), E. Bennett (RN) the best of luck in their respective training.

News from Camden itself includes another effort by +Camdenians- of whose battalion were captured at Dunkirk. Exhibitions of Dancing, 120 splendid support from the many, resulted in something like £260 being received. Well done Camden! That will mean 130 parcels/month for 4 months. The British Legion at Camden ask us to send their greetings to all Camden serving men and hope they will call in at the H.Q. any time they are home. They are keeping a place warm for them.

Not at Camden Station --- "What's the guild o' havin a time table" exclaimed the passenger "when a' your trains are late!" "Well sir" said the Station Master "an' hoo wad ye ken they were late if ye had na a time table?" - Something to keep in mind. - "Fath is a way of walking, not of talking."

Here's to next leave! and God bless everybody.



Several weather records seem to have been broken since our last letter. The particulars of these will, we understand, be announced by the BBC in July 1942! But by that time several other things will be old history, including the war itself, dare we hope?!

Campden, and doubtless all Campdenians have shared in the thrills which have enlivened our summer months. Hitler's attack on Russia was something to go on with. It was an even more shameless and cynical action than usual - but it was something more than that! He had a sudden realization of the shadow of impending doom, and was forced to a desperate gambler's throw - and he has lost! Whatever partial successes he may gain in Russia, and however much hard work lies still before us, this action will be found to have been the turning point of our great struggle. Hitler has lost the war!

While all the great events are happening in the great world outside, in Russia, the Middle East, America and the much bombed industrial centres of Germany and France - news of Campden itself seems ordinary by comparison. The little town plods along, and carries on, with its useful local activities. The Women's Institute Garden Fete at Shepherd's Close on July 3rd, with its baby show, dog show and other attractions, was a great success. The Baptist Church has celebrated its 278th Anniversary and raised over £60 for a Thankoffering Fund. The Campden Hospital Sunday, though shorn of some of its more spectacular features, was observed on July 13th. Full results are not yet announced.

What one correspondent calls our "Fan Mail" has been smaller this month and we have received only two fresh letters. R. Charles feels himself to be "the world's worst correspondent" in not writing earlier. He tells us that the boys to whom he shows the Newsletter "are unanimous that every town should have something similar, as their people's letters never give a truly varied account of what is happening in the old home town". (Other towns please note!) He thinks that Campden's feat of raising such a sum for War Weapons Week was a wonderful contribution to the cause of freedom and final victory. Ser Fred Jones writes thanking us for the Monthly Letter and tells us he has heard from Erny Clifford. We congratulate him on having found a Toc.H. Group, the meetings of which he usually attends. We give another extract from the letter of S/Ser J. Meadows quoted last month: - "Another feature of this queer land is the public scribe, who for a piastre a time will indite a letter in Arabic, Greek, French or English with equal facility if not accuracy. He must hold enough secrets to grow rich on blackmail! I have before me a specimen of his art - 'To OC---. Sir, I have the honour to lay before your kind notice to beg you for the following: - I am youth 20 years of age with good conduct and from good family. I am assistant blacksmith. Having heard that Depot under your Head-work in need for some assistants like me though I put this application to your excellency hoping to be appointed in one of them. Testimonial of conduct is under orders. In conclusion I hope that you will be more than kind enough with me and get my approval. I remain Sir, Your most humble servant, Abdel Morim Moha El Sadu.'"

As a further specimen of English as she is written we have received from our vernacular expert this account of a purported happening in a certain town in England: - "Our young Peter John cum a runnin in tother day, un sez 'Hey our Mam! There be sun sojers stopped in th'Squar.' 'Is there?' or sez, 'Oo be they?' 'Oo, they sez they be th'Coral Islanders' or sez, 'Oo ah! sez th'Missis, 'ow be they dressed then? Be they a wearin a skirt o palm leaves in a necklace o flowers? Cos that's what they wears.' 'Goo on! sez Peter John, 'they beyant dress like that'. 'Then they beyant Coral Islanders' sez th'Missis. Un so our Peter John a'get another guess a'comin!'"

Latest War News 1. "Hitler is now fighting for a draw." (But we thought they didn't play cricket in Germany!)

2. "In view of the impending bankruptcy of the Italian Empire, Mussolini is going to make over Italy to his wife!"
3. A war problem: "What is going to happen to all those gas masks when the war is over?"

This Month's Watchword. "Do not pray for easy lives, pray to be strong men  
Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers, pray for powers equal  
to your tasks."

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Keep going. We'll be writing again in August.  
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