

Contribution to "Toe H" Newsletter

September 1940

Here is a story too good, or too bad, to pass over without telling you; as a long dead Campdonian put it after hearing another story "it has scant regard for the trammels of veracity".

A mon yerd the Jerries gooin over Tother night, 'e fotch 'is missis out o'bed un thay started dressin in nurry.

'E wuz stannin tween th bed un th winder, un 'e wuz a'tuckin 'is shirttails in 'is trowsurs, when thur wuz a crash uz broak th winder un giz in a good un on th back of 'is yud.

'E yells out to 'is missis - "I be it", 'e sez - "you get them kids outside", un 'e 'urries up un kep on a'tuckin in 'is shirt un then ~~th~~ found 'e wuz a'tuckin in th curtin un it wuz th curtin pole as ud broke th winder un 'it 'im.

'Is missis didn af laff, un thee shudst a'yerd 'im cussin
ol. 'Itler.

(If room)

Here 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 we get out" she enquired? "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, "Its alright miss, you put your head inside my overcoat if you are nervous. She didnt accept the offer, or follow the Guards advice !

Here a story too good, or bad, to pass by without retelling - or if retold in
 Campden dialect - someone may think it really happened here.
 A man yerd they jerries over yerd in the night, yerd his munnis out
 o' bed & they started dancin' in munnis. 'E was stamin' beteen
 th' bed & th' window, wuz tuckin' his shirt tails in his trousers
 wuz thus wuz a crank. Then he got a good in an' yerd, an' he
 yelled th' wuz tuckin' th' bed out - "I bo' it"
 on a tuckin' in in short some th' wuz form an' wuz tuckin' in
 th' wuz an' it wuz the wuz an' wuz tuckin' in
 'Er didn' art laff. an' didn' a wuz an' broke th' wuz
 in 'an' Alex

(13 2000)

Is wuzate dnan ex jerr' nu free wuzdat e' lera, th' wuzate
 ma th' wuzate boje wa nu droke th' wuzate nu, th' wuz'
 wuzate nu th' wuzate dnan, e' ma e' th' wuzate th' wuzate nu th' wuzate
 ktra wuzate, nu, e' wuzate nu nu keb on e' th' wuzate th' wuzate
 e' lera out to, th' wuzate - "I re th' wuzate", e' wuzate - lera wuzate
 droke th' wuzate nu th' wuzate nu on th' wuzate of th' wuzate
 th' wuzate th' wuzate th' wuzate wuzate th' wuzate e' wuzate nu
 e' ma wuzate th' wuzate th' wuzate nu th' wuzate, nu, e' ma e' th' wuzate
 wuzate out o' wuzate nu th' wuzate wuzate th' wuzate.
 A wuzate lera th' wuzate wuzate wuzate wuzate, e' wuzate, th' wuzate
 wuzate wuzate "th' wuzate wuzate th' wuzate of wuzate"
 wuzate wuzate e' wuzate wuzate wuzate th' wuzate wuzate
 here th' wuzate th' wuzate, or th' wuzate, to wuzate wuzate

September 1840
 Campden, Gloucestershire

With each issue of the Newsletter we have moved another month towards the end of the war and victory -though that end cannot be expected quickly. As the first of a new volume reaches you we are still in the first phase, of "defence"; when this second year finishes we may expect to have reached the next phase, of "attack"; and then you may have moved further afield, and close touch with Campden and home be more difficult. But far or near, there are folk here who think of you, send you greetings and pray for your safe return.

We have been glad since last month to hear from some of you. E. Bennett writes sitting on a sandbag while helping to man a pillbox somewhere in the North. He says "It cheered me greatly to think that, although I am many miles away, the people of my dear native Campden still remember one who has gone to do his bit to help stop the advance of such a villain as Hitler..... If I should ever feel blue I shall only have to read the Newsletter over once before feeling quite cheerful again".

J. Hargreaves writes from Peebleshire "It is very cheering and good to hear all local news and a quip or two therewith -nothing like the tonic effect of keeping cheery whatever betide. At the moment it is foul, but the tide will turn. It is in God's hand and we must drive through and clear up all the mess after". R. Charles says "I must say what I hope all the other chaps have said to you -I have always enjoyed reading your so splendidly cheery newsletter. Long may such cheery spirits be imparted to all the peoples of every town and village throughout the country. Again I thank you one and all for your grand efforts to restore law and order (as we understand it) throughout the world."

Mrs Knott of "Whaddon", Campden, tells me she has a number of woollen helmets, scarves and mittens. If these would be of any use to you, please write to her about it at the above address.

The following are some of the Campden activities that may interest you. Harvest Thanksgivings have been held, and this time have possessed a special significance. The harvest has been good and we have had food to eat in war time.

A town Boys Club backed by a strong committee has been formed and has held its first meetings. Rooms have been provided through the kindness of Mr and Mrs Hargreaves at the Cotswold House Annexe, and the attendance so far has been about 60. It should have a good future and serve a good purpose specially during the coming winter.

A new National Savings Group has been founded, the Committee of which hope to extend the excellent work which the Women's Institute and the Schools are doing. Mr Mare, one of the Secretaries writes "We want every family in Campden to be contributing by loan to the funds for our war effort. Twelve collectors have started work already."

The weekly Whist Drives have been recommenced for the winter in the Church Room on Mondays.

A series of gatherings during the winter has been inaugurated under the title of Cotswold Winter Evenings. It is a successor to the "Pleasant Monday Evenings" held for the past two winters and meets on Mondays fortnightly at the Cotswold House Hotel, by the kind permission of Mr and Mrs Hargreaves. At the inaugural meeting held on Oct. 7th, Leslie Banks (of film and stage fame) was the speaker. An audience of about 120 attended and the sum of £8-2-6 was collected for the Actors Benevolent Fund.

This month's quips.

- "Where be yo a' goin Bill?" "I'm goin a' courtin". "Yo dont want no lantern to go a' courtin; I never did". "No; and look what yo got!"

- Strange happening: "Terrific punch on the nose causes man to regain speech". (His first remarks are not recorded!)

- Old lady to village carpenter: "Do you think you could put me a piece of wood in front of my fireplace? I'm thinkin that if one of them bombs come down my chimney, it would stop the soot messin all over my hearth!"

Thoughts for the month.

"When you feel down in the mouth, think of Jonah; he came out all right".

"To do little things in a great spirit, to use little things to a great end - this is the way to greatness."

"To my fellowmen a heart of love; to my God a heart of flame; to myself a heart of steel". (St Augustine.)

Cheerio everybody. Here's to the next time!

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Any change of address to Mr J. Mare, Aston Rd, CAMPDEN.

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The Toc H. Newsletter has established a monthly touch with men (and women) in various parts of England, Scotland, Wales and abroad - and for a year we took it on trust that the letters reached their billets. Now we are glad to say that it has become a two-way contact, for we have been delighted to receive letters in return from some of you. Last month we received three, and this month we have heard from six more. This is something that might develop into a threeway contact, for this Newsletter exists not only to give Campden news to absent friends, but also to keep absent fellow-townsmen in touch with one another. If you are not all acquainted with the other Campden folk who are serving away from home, here is a chance to become so. Send us a line and we will pass on the news to all the rest.

This month we have heard from the following:-

(Miss) L.E.K. SYLVESTER serving with a M.T.Coy. A.T.S. feels that through the Newsletter Campden still remembers those who are away in these dark days. P.L. BROTHERIDGE thinks of the sport he used to have at football in Campden when he stood between those sticks every Saturday. Now he is gunning for planes somewhere far to the south. E.F. CRESSWELL though a gunner, is temporarily looking after a big garden in the west and producing sprouts, cauliflowers, savoys and leeks - which he rightly says "will give the troops a bit of pleasure in eating, even off a tin plate." E.J. JAMES writes from an R.A.F. station in Scotland. He escaped from Dunkirk, but hopes that "someday we shall be able to go over there again and take it back - and more - from that greedy villain who thinks he can take just what he wants." E.H. SMITH also with the R.A.F. sends us news of Poles, Czecks, Rhodesians and French, with whom he is. Incidentally he gives a vivid picture of lining up on pay day! GORDON TEAGUE is with the R.A.S.C. He thanks us for the letters and has many a good laugh at some of the jokes. He wishes us and Toc H the best of luck.

As to Campden news this month, it is scarce. Eyewitnesses have failed to discern anything worth reporting, possibly owing to the fact that it gets dark very early and the blackout is strictly enforced! However, we do not hanker after excitement, especially of the kind that some places get. It shows no lack of interest in the stirring events of the present war and especially rationing, that we have recently been taken into the past by Mr W.B. Adam who lectured at the "Cotswold Winter Evening" on "Eating throughout the ages." Someone remarked that the sustenance was expected to be poor, as the poster announced "light refreshments". As a matter of fact both the lecture and the refreshments were very good! At another "C.W.E" we were fortunate in hearing Stanford Robinson (BBC Director of Musical Productions etc) who lectured on "Music at the BBC" and brought with him the BBC Theatre Chorus who gave us a feast of madrigals, part-songs and other pieces. The whole evening was a delight. Armistice Sunday was observed in Campden with the afternoon procession of all the services both military and civil, to the service in the Parish Church, at which the Vicar preached the sermon. The Poppy Day today is proceeding as we write these lines - and it is hoped the amount this year will be as big as ever.

After many years of agitation we are informed that the Sandgate Brook has been cleared; and so when it rains Campden will be able to go boating!

Our Home Guard has been properly equipped and clothed; but in a nearby village they have been supplied with armlets, and heavy boots - presumably to kick the parachutists hard!

The story is told that a woman appeared in a shelter in her night attire. The Warden told her she must go back and put something else on. Later she reappeared with the addition of a hat! (This did not happen in Campden.)

In an English town (likewise not Campden) the teacher asked who wrote the famous poem beginning "O to be in England" and got the answer "Hitler!"

Searchlights

"If we could see ourselves as others see us, we should never speak to ourselves again!"

"Measure the clouds which way we will. The blue of heaven is greater still!"

Goodnight, children, everywhere!

Change of address to

Mr J. Mare,
Aston Road,
Campden.

Being the season it is, this should be a Double Christmas Number. But, alas, there is a war on, and like so many of our contemporaries such as the Times, Illustrated London News, Strand Magazine etc, we are under the paper ban! Also a large selection of illustrations by Toc H. artists have had reluctantly to be omitted. However we seek to make up for these deficiencies by the warmth of the greetings we send to you one and all for a Happy Xmas and a Prosperous New Year! It may seem strange in the midst of the tragedy which is upon the world, to be talking of Happiness and Prosperity. But we have something to be happy about, first in the fact of Christmas and all it stands for -which nothing can kill or destroy; and the fact that we are still alive and well and entrusted with a tough job of helping our own country -and as we believe, the whole world, from the evil forces that threaten. Our second Christmas of the war finds us all in good heart in spite of many dangers, and resolved more than ever in the strength of God to see this thing through.

We shall think of you all -the 115 men and 5 women -to whom we send our monthly letter, in your various localities and stations, both at home and abroad, and wish you good Xmas fare in good measure; and be sure that those in the old home will have you all in their thoughts, wishing you were back to take part in all the Xmas doings, and praying that you may be kept safe and sound till you return.

Six more letters have reached us this month and you will be glad to hear something from the following:-A. Drinkwater in the Midlands thinks we are doing our share to help on the war by cheering the men in the Forces. Hearing of our Boys Club makes him want to be a boy again, for as he says "I am still young." Serg. C.H. Chamberlain from somewhere in Glos. tells us that in spite of occasional "visiting cards" from Jerry, they are a very happy family. He wishes us all the best of luck. Serg. G.A. Drinkwater in Wales likes his locality but says "Give me dear old Campden". As he got married on Nov. 4th we shall all join in hearty congratulations and best wishes. Incidentally he tells us that stationed with him are Merriman from the Station, Pitcher and Keely from Blockly and Fincham from Mickleton. Gunner G.E. James from Cornwall still remembers "that delicious cup of coffee" at Toc H. Sm E.J. James from Scotland mentions that all the lads like to read our newsletter as it helps to cheer them up a bit, especially the jokes at the bottom. He reminds us (what we know must be true) how many are thinking anxiously of their wives and children in the bombed areas. Gunner P.L. Brotherhood also writes again to tell us how interesting it is to know what his old pals are doing, and in this connection mentions Benton James (still smiling), F. Creswell (who has evidently got a good job) and R. Chayney.

As to news from Campden itself you will be sorry to hear of the death of Jim Court after an accident. He will have been known to many of you, and our sympathy goes out to his father and other relatives.

A welcome visitor to the "Cotswold Winter Evenings" has been R.E. S. Wyatt, Warwickshire and All England Captain, who gave us some reminiscences of Test Cricket. The usual number of Whist Drives, Dances, and Debates have helped to enliven our dark evenings and to counteract the "banshee howlings".

And here is the monthly budget of humour:-

- Sandy was late, and in his hurry put his trousers on back to front. Whilst running to work he fell down. "Are ye hurt?" asked a passer-by. Sandy, locking down answered "Nae, but I must hae gien ma'sel an awfu twist".
- "Here boy, where can I find your father?" "In the pigsty, Sir; you'll know him by his brown 'at, sir."
- At the First Aid Examination - "If you found a man bleeding freely from the head, what would you do?" "Apply a tourniquet to his neck!"
- During an air raid in Sussex granny refused to be brought downstairs, saying "My dears, I shall be all right - they are probably our own bombs!"
- A Women's Land Army recruit who, although frightened of cows, wished to learn to milk, said "I am sure I should be all right if only I could start on a calf!"

Christmas Crackers.

- "Few of us ever get dizzy by doing too many good turns!"
- "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

Good Night! and don't forget to hang up your stocking!

Please notify Mr Mare, Aston Rd, Campden, Glos., of any change in your address.

Since we last wrote Campden has had one important visitor - a new year of the name of "1941". As he has been to you as well, he needs no introduction. Some have been glad to see him, some are not so sure! I think however, we may welcome him, in spite of the mixed record of his predecessor, and be fairly sure he has some very good things in store for us. He has begun well with a very good present from Bardia to go on with. So here is wishing you all a Happy New Year and the blessing of Almighty God through all its days.

It may interest and, we hope, help you, to know one piece of news. The current number of the Parish Magazine gives a full list of names of those from Campden serving in the Forces and mentions that each name is remembered in prayer at the daily services of the Parish Church. The name of each one comes round on the rota five times each month.

Our post bag is now a going concern. We have heard already, as you know, from several readers, and last month more have been received. Aircraftsman Cherry somewhere on the west coast, who on his three home visits saw none of his pals who who are in the Forces, takes the opportunity of the newsletter to send his greetings to them. L/cpl E.A. Haydon from Hampshire finds much interest in the news of others who are serving and also finds something of local interest in the newsletter that his relations have not mentioned in their letters! He wishes all a bright new year. Ernie Lockyer from Bristol sends his greetings to Toc H, thinks of the good times he had there and looks forward to the time when he can return. Gr W. Merriman in a letter to "Harry" mentions that he was about the first Campden man out in France 10 days after war was declared and one of the last to leave Dunkirk. He sends a message to J. Betteridge that they could do with him as they want a goalie and how about getting him transferred! H.E. Wheatsroft Warrant Telegraphist R.N. from S. Africa, tells us that being such a long way from home any link with Campden is very much appreciated. "Let us have more stories of the people left at home." He encloses a cutting from the Cape Argus giving S. Africa's description of Hitler's requiem:-

Underneath this heap of stones, turned to dust lie Hitler's bones
Adolf Hitler scoundrel, knave, behold his long awaited grave.
Unwept, unsung, in fact reviled, this man was Europe's problem
child.

And with his death we do bestow, upon this wretched so and so,
This mound which we might truly name, his final territorial claim.
We have received also cards from H. Gabb, R. Charles and Miss Sylvester; also still further letters from E. J. James who sends messages to his pals he saw when home, and E. Bennett who writes "Thanks for the cigarettes". That brings us to a word of explanation about the "cigarettes" which you all received, we hope. These were a little New Year memento from the Campden community. Some money was left over from last year's soldiers Xmas party and at the invitation of the Editor, the committee presided over by Mrs Bennet Clark decided to use it in this way as a greeting to Campden away from home. It was one way of "burning money" and we expect it all went up in smoke!

Campden news includes quite a good number of Xmas dances, parties and other things of a festive kind. Work too has not been forgotten. Mr Mare informs us that the Campden Savings group started in October has raised £445 in the 3 months!

Now to conclude -- we have received the following effusion from our Vernacular Correspondent, who writes as follows:-

"Well bwoys, dus' know it's time I sent tha a faow lines in praper Cyanden talk, but ther yunt time fur me t' do it, fur that ther Editor ha' jus' bin in t' say I be t' let im av it be taytime t' day, un its fower o' clock now; so I'll tell tha a vacuee yarn instead. Its a lung while since we had a real true un wuth th' tellin. One of our local vacuees got into trouble at school for lack of politeness, ond so had to write an essay on how a gentleman behaves. He said "If two men were walking along the street with a lady and the lady fell down, the one who noticed it and picked her up would be a gentleman! He also said that being polite was to do as you were told in school and not mutter about it 'either out loud or to yourself'; and that to slam a door in a lady's face was not gentlemanly, but to slam a door in a man's face would not matter. -- Well, there yunt time fur no more cawbobbin now, ur he wunt get this in time t' gu in this month's newsletter. Ar - 'appy new yer to all on ye; see tha at Scuttlebrook!"

Which brings us to the end of our time and space for the present. So a Happy New Year to one and all - and so say all of us.