Listening Post

Peace on Earth and Goodwill to All Men

Christmas 1947
THE R.S.L. BAND

The R.S.L. Band is an integral part of the R.S.L., and has been for many years. It is anxious and willing to discharge its function within the League, and is always happy to co-operate in every way to help the League in its work.

The R.S.L. Band is the League’s band, and has a very important part to play in the scheme of League affairs generally.

Sub-branches would be wise to give the band the opportunity to assist. There is also the question of new players.

Players are invited from those willing to practise to come forward and train.

BOB MARSHALL, CHAMPION BILLIARDS PLAYER.
Taken at Anzac Club during the Competitions.

The opal and gold gum leaf emblem presented to Princess Elizabeth by the Returned Servicemen’s League.
Time And Eternity

On the threshold of a new year our thoughts are employed not only looking backwards but also in looking ahead.

Reviewing the past year we are struck, not only with the swiftness of the passing of time, but also by the quick and varied changes which have taken place not only in world events but also in our own little spheres of activity.

One year means so much to us.

The astronomer tells us of the prodigious distances in the Milky Way. The galaxy comprising that marvellous cluster is said to be 40,000 light years in thickness, and 300,000 light years in diameter. One light year is approximately six million million miles. This can only give us a faint idea of the magnitude of things. What then, is one short year when compared to eternity?

Today there is murmuring and discontent; tomorrow, doubt and fear. We are fooled by the mirage of material gain or personal advantage and harried by the hot winds of petty annoyances and little cares which we allow to steal away our peace; but on the other hand the lessons of memory intensify our gratitude.

The times through which we are passing are fraught with many difficulties and dangers, and change besets us behind and before. Amidst all the welter and change it behoves us as ex-servicemen to maintain our fullest energy, the comradeships which were formed on service.

Hardship endured and difficulties overcome teach men the realities of life, and a greater value is on that account placed on time.

This period of the year is an imaginary line of demarcation between points of time surrounding to illustrate the rapid flight of time, and is a reminder to us of the necessity of our observing the duty to our country, to our neighbour and to ourselves.

Let those ideals be foremost amongst the resolves which we make for the New Year.
WELL DONE, GABBIN!
The quota allotted by the War Memorial Appeal Committee to the Gabbin sub-branch with a membership of 14 and covering a small district was £30. During the month Mr. Hugh Leslie, M.L.A. (the Member for the district) handed to the appeal chairman (Mr. E. S. Watt) a list containing 47 subscribers and a cheque for £33/16/6. President Bill Barons, in a covering letter, said: "It just shows what personal contact can do. Not one person asked to subscribe refused to do so."

Gabbin is the first sub-branch to fill its allotted quota, but most sub-branches are making good progress and it is expected that a flow of returns will commence early in the New Year. The League has undertaken the obligation to perpetuate the memory for all time of our war dead. It is a sacred task and in the performance of it there must be no slackers.

NON-SOLDIERS AND GOVERNMENT JOBS
The Federal President of the Returned Servicemen's League (Mr. Eric Millhouse, K.C.) said that the League would renew efforts to obtain more equitable treatment for ex-service personnel over non-soldiers in Commonwealth Government jobs.

"The Executive will draw the attention of the Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) to one glaring anomaly," said Mr. Millhouse. "This concerns civilians who were employed in the C.C.C., Munitions Department and other service departments during the war.

"It will be pointed out to Mr. Chifley that many civilians on being absorbed into permanent departments have been credited with their wartime service for the purpose of seniority. On the other hand, many ex-service personnel, who entered the Public Service after their discharge from the Forces, have had to start from scratch. Obviously this is grossly unfair and should be rectified.

"Further, the Executive will ask the Government to introduce a regulation to provide that, in respect of the Commonwealth Public Service, any qualification or experience acquired by non-service personnel between September 2, 1939, and December 30, 1945, shall not be regarded as a higher qualification or as being more valuable experience for a vacant, permanent position or other benefit, than that of active service.

"These are reasonable requests and the Executive feels that the Government should consider them sympathetically," added Mr. Millhouse.

DISABLED EX-SERVICEMEN AND P.M.G. DEPT.
A request by the Returned Servicemen's League that, to overcome staff shortages, disabled ex-servicemen be employed as telephoneists is being considered by the Postmaster-General (Senator Cameron).

"Senator Cameron has informed the League that recently male telephoneists have been used on night operating, and the award has been amended accordingly. It is possible, he said, that this amendment will now enable suitably trained disabled ex-servicemen to be employed as telephoneists.

He added that before a decision is reached certain medical aspects will have to be investigated in conjunction with the Director-General of Health and Commonwealth Public Service Board, whose regulations deal with the employment of disabled persons in certain categories.

FARM MACHINERY SHOULD BE CONTROLLED
The problem of ensuring that soldier settlers are assisted in obtaining various types of farm machinery was closely studied by Federal Executive at its meeting in Melbourne last month.

"It was felt that the only immediate solution was for all available headers and all agricultural machinery to be placed under control and a request on these lines will be made to the Government.

"Executive also decided to ask that where there is a shortage of the necessary machinery, import restrictions be lifted.

Another request will be for all ex-service settlers to be given a No. 1 priority for tractors and other farm implements.

To further assist settlers the League will press that—

The Disposals Commission give preference to ex-servicemen needing motor trucks, particularly those who have drawn blocks under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme.

The time for repayment of the rehabilitation loan for the purchase of agricultural machinery be extended from five to ten years.

Permanent wheat farm registrations be given to all ex-service personnel allotted blocks in wheat districts under the Land Settlement Scheme.

The intention behind this is to protect Digger farmers in the event of there ever being any curtailment in wheat-growing or the imposition of quota production by non-registered farms.

HOUSING POWERS
Government Must Use Them
Applauding the Federal Government's decision to give the Department of Works and Housing power to compulsorily acquire building materials for War Service Homes, Federal Executive, at its meeting in Melbourne last month, decided to urge the Government to exercise that power to the fullest possible extent.

Delegates agreed it was useless giving the Department such wide powers unless they are enforced without delay and, if this is done, it will prove that the Government is making a sincere effort to solve one of the most pressing problems facing ex-service personnel.

The Executive did not comment on the official announcement that a vigorous building programme is to be launched to make up the leeway in War Service Homes, preferring to await results.

One matter that troubled the Executive was a strange position that has arisen in Victoria. While the War Service Homes administration has been unable to secure suitable blocks of building land, within an eight-mile radius of Melbourne and with electric light, gas and sewerage, the State Housing Commission has been given permission to seize suitable sites within that radius.

It doesn't make sense and the Executive will take the matter up with the appropriate authorities.
The Commonwealth Government will also be requested to enact legislation urgently to provide for control, at the source, of all building materials and that the highest priority will be given to ex-service personnel to procure materials to build, repair or add to their homes.

ENTERTAINMENT TAX ASSESSMENT ACT, 1942-1944
Sections 17 and 18

17. Entertainments tax shall not be charged on payments for admission to any entertainments where the Commissioner is satisfied—

(a) that the whole of the takings thereof are devoted to public, patriotic, philanthropic, religious or charitable purposes;

(b) that the entertainment is of a wholly educational character (any question on that point to be determined, in case of difference, by the Commissioner);

(c) that the entertainment is of a partly educational or partly scientific character conducted by a society, institution or committee not established or carried on for profit; or

(d) that the whole of the nett proceeds of the entertainment are, or will be, devoted to the purchase, erection, maintenance or furnishing of memorial halls for the use of sailors, soldiers or airmen who served in any war in which His Majesty has been engaged since the fourth day of August, one thousand nine hundred and fourteen, and that the entertainment is not provided directly or indirectly for the financial benefit of any person connected with the promotion of the entertainment or of any person employed or engaged by that person for the purpose of the entertainment.

18. Where the Commissioner is satisfied that the whole of the nett proceeds of an entertainment are, or will be, devoted to—

(a) public, patriotic, philanthropic, religious or charitable purposes;

(b) such funds of a society or association, not carried on for the profit or gain of the individual members thereof, as the society or association sets apart to provide sick, accident or funeral benefits for or on behalf of any of its members,

and that the whole of the expenses of the entertainment do not exceed fifty percentum of the receipts, he shall repay to the proprietor the amount of the entertainments tax in respect of the entertainment:

Provided that where the Commissioner is satisfied that, owing to adverse climatic conditions or unforeseen circumstances, the expenses of the entertainment exceed fifty per centum of the receipts, the Commissioner shall repay to the proprietor the entertainments tax in respect of the entertainment.

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A Last Look Around Congress Decisions

The 32nd Annual Federal Congress held in Canberra from October 28-31 can be regarded as the most successful in the history of the League. Elsewhere in this issue you will read in detail the important matters discussed and the decisions reached. Here is a round-up of other business dealt with.

Election of officers: Federal president, Mr. Eric Millhouse, K.C.; hon. solicitor, Major-General F. P. Derrham; hon. treasurer, Air Vice-Marshal G. J. W. Mackinolty; hon. auditor, Mr. J. H. Wicks (the latter trio being unopposed).

Repayment Requests
The Act be amended so that war widows and dependent children be given full use of reparation inpatient and out-patient and specialist treatment; also surgical and other aids in addition to treatment by approved local medical officers. (Moved by Western Australia.)

Sustenance be paid to personnel attending reparation hospitals during working hours. (Moved by New South Wales.)

Institutions be set up to assist neurosis sufferers to readjust themselves in society. (Moved by Victoria.)

That ex-servicemen inmates of mental hospitals in receipt of special pensions shall have no deductions made for upkeep and that they be placed on the same footing as patients in reparation hospitals suffering from physical ailments. (Moved by Western Australia.)

Land Settlement
The Act be amended to provide for all soldier settlers having the option to purchase the freehold. (Moved by Tasmania.)

That the provisions of the Act be extended to ex-servicemen of the British Empire. (Moved by Queensland.)

Re-establishment
Legislation, similar to that in force in the United Kingdom, be introduced to compel employers to engage a percentage of war-disabled personnel. (Moved by New South Wales.)

That the rural rehabilitation loan be increased from £1,000 to £3,000. (Moved by Western Australia.)

The Department of Labour and National Service arrange for the Reinstatement Committee to visit country centres regularly to hear claims of local applicants.

That the Commonwealth Government establish sheltered industries for disabled personnel so that they may take a useful place in the community. (Moved by Queensland.)

Preference
That a formal protest be entered against the appointment of a non-serviceman to a position in the Disabled Persons' Section of the Commonwealth Employment Service (Queensland Branch), as it is considered that the majority of persons to be handled by that office will be ex-servicemen who have become disabled as the result of war service. (Moved by Queensland.)

Congress emphatically protests against the indifference shown by the Commonwealth Government in implementing preference to ex-service personnel, particularly in reference to recent appointments of refugees over the heads of Australians to positions in the Public Works section of the Public Service. (Moved by New South Wales.)

That an assurance be obtained from the Commonwealth Government that ex-service personnel will not be retrenched or deprived of their present opportunities of promotion if the nationalisation of banking is effected. (Moved by South Australia.)

That the Commonwealth Government be approached to introduce a regulation to provide that the services of ex-servicemen temporarily employed in the Commonwealth Public Service shall be dispensed with only in the event of:
(a) A violation of the C.P.S. Act or Regulations;
(b) Retrenchment;
(c) The position held becoming non-existent, providing that in the event of consideration having to be given to (b) or (c) the board or department shall make every effort to arrange for absorption of the returned ex-servicemen employees concerned into another department. (Moved by Victoria.)

That the Commonwealth Government to create additional permanent positions in the Postmaster-General's Department so that 75 per cent. of permanent employees will be ex-service personnel. (Moved by Queensland.)

A League representative be appointed to the Public Service Board. (Moved by New South Wales.)

That the Commonwealth Government give more consideration to returned soldiers when making appointments to country post offices, particularly to incapacitated soldiers, and not as in many cases to persons who are in good circumstances and/or single girls. (Moved by Queensland.)

Defence
That, believing the defence of the Commonwealth to be too important to be left to improvisation in time of war, congress reaffirms the League's policy of universal compulsory training in Australia and asks the Commonwealth Government to align itself alongside the sorely-pressed British Government by the introduction of compulsory defence service without delay. (Moved by Victoria.)

The League gives unqualified support to the Commonwealth Government's legislation brought down to protect the Mt. Eba rocket range operations. (Moved by Western Australia.)

That no change be effected in the dress of the Australian Army by substituting the beret for the slouch hat. (Moved by Victoria.)

Former Prisoners of War
The Commonwealth Government grant sustenance at the rate of three shillings per day to all prisoners of war or their dependants; such sustenance to be part of Australia's claim for reparations. (Moved by Tasmania.)

General
Congress requests that a full report on the murder by the Indonesians of three unarmed Australian officers (being under orders from the Australian Government to search as a war crime unit for missing Australian prisoners of war) be made public.

Congress urges that all war medals be inscribed with the name and number of the recipient. (Moved by Western Australia.)

The Commonwealth Government provide free rail warrants to recipients, wives, mothers and next-of-kin issued with invitations to attend in-
vestiture of war decorations. (Moved by Queensland.)

Active servicemen who are still serving, but who are liable to be discharged because of their being over 47 years of age, be permitted to continue serving or to re-enlist for a further period up to 55 years of age, with a view to their being used for administrative work. (Moved by Victoria.)

A protest be sent to the Minister for Repatriation against his letter to the employees of the Repatriation Department requesting them to join their respective unions. Congress, while not opposed to the members joining such unions, points out to the Minister that employees should be free to join or abstain from joining any industrial or political organisation, and that no compulsion or coercion should be exercised by the Minister or the Commission, particularly where the employees are ex-servicemen entitled by their war service to be employed in their own right. (Moved by Victoria.)

The Commonwealth Government prohibit Japanese from operating in the pearling trade in Australian waters. (Moved by Western Australia.)

Congress endorsed the opinion of the British, Australian, New Zealand and Norwegian Governments on the banning of Japanese whaling activities in the Antarctic, and considers this should be made a major point at the Pacific Peace Conference. (Moved by Western Australia.)

That provisional taxation for ex-servicemen of World War II, who have taken up new businesses, be spread over a period of three years. (Moved by Queensland.)

All gift duties be waived on properties given to ex-servicemen's sons by their parents to assist them in their rehabilitation. (Moved by Queensland.)

The Commonwealth Government be requested to allow gifts of £1 and upwards to ex-service personnel hostel building funds and memorial halls as allowable deductions under the Income Tax Assessment Act. (Moved by Tasmania.)

Congress emphasised the importance of all questions of rehabilitation of ex-servicemen and will request the appointment of a Minister to co-ordinate all matters affecting the welfare of ex-servicemen.

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Bayonets in London

The A.I.F. was granted the honour of marshalling through the City of London with bayonets fixed, bands playing and colours flying.

The "City of London Rights" are so jealously guarded that to date the only regiments to be granted this privilege are:

- Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Fusiliers, Grenadier Guards, Honourable Artillery Company, 3rd Battalion, the "Buffs," the A.I.F.

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First "Aussie" Prisoner

Bugler F. Ashton, of the 11th Bn., was the first Australian captured alive by the Turks in the First World War.

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Wireless in War

Wireless had its first application in war in South Africa. The British Army had six allegedly portable transmitters in the field, but because of difficulties in transport, handed them over to the Navy in 1900.
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Federal Executive Seeks Repatriation Reforms

Badly needed reforms in the Repatriation Act were discussed at length by Federal Executive at its meeting in Melbourne last month and, as a result, a number of important matters affecting the welfare of those who suffered in the service of their country will be raised with the Federal Government.

Executive considered reports from all States on the need for substantial increases in all war pensions and, though the details of the ultimate recommendations cannot be made public until they are ratified by Annual Congress, it can be disclosed that, if adopted by the Government, they will provide a little more comfort and security for those to whom Australia remains ever indebted.

Neurosis Patients

The position of neurosis patients in repatriation hospitals was further considered and, in an earnest endeavour to improve their condition and future prospects, the Executive will ask the Government to:— Segregate them from mental patients.

Have them interviewed by a welfare officer to discover their present and past interests so that their re-establishment can be moulded satisfactorily.

Place them in a home with a good family environment when they are sufficiently recovered to be allowed out, even on probation.

Secure them suitable employment on discharge and, if necessary, train them for such a position.

The Executive will also ask that a member, who on medical advice is compelled to change his place of residence because of his disability, be assisted financially in the cost of the removal and that he be aided in obtaining suitable employment in his new surroundings.

Funeral Grant

Delegates were unanimous that the present funeral grant of £15 is totally inadequate and an increase to £25 will be sought.

Other repatriation resolutions carried included:

The League views with concern the absorption of the Commission into the control of the Public Service Board and urges regulations to ensure that the department continues to be staffed by ex-servicemen only.

"That the Commission reimburse personnel who lose wages through attending repatriation clinics, hospitals, etc.

**Nominal Roll of Deceased Australian Personnel Buried in America**

Only two deceased Australian servicemen are buried in the United States, and complete details of name, date of death and location of grave are as follows:—

Date of death: August 12, 1945.
Burial particulars: Golden Gate National (War) Cemetery, San Bruno, California, Block 1, Section E, Row 6, Grave 153.

13732, Ldg. Aircraftsman Scott, R.W., R.A.A.F.
Date of death: February 12, 1944.
Burial particulars: Veterans' Administration Cemetery, Sawtell, Los Angeles, California, Section 138, Row E, Grave 12.

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The frightening cry that once signalled the suicidal charges of Japan's doomed Pacific Island armies echoed through Tokyo. More than 100,000 cheering Japanese swarmed over the outer grounds of Emperor Hirohito's palace to shout "Banzai!" to his proclamation of Nippon's new democratically worded constitution (effective May 7th). The Emperor and Empress showed themselves for only five minutes, but that was long enough to get oldsters weeping. A college student expressed the new Japan, enthusiastically "democratic," yet still tied to the Emperor by fantastically worded constitution. "I consider it the greatest joy; I do not know whether I am happy because of the constitution, or because I have seen the Emperor. I shall strive to the death for his and my country's welfare."

The Imperial appearance highlighted a day of strange contrasts. In the morning Hirohito, in an ancient Shinto ceremony at the palace shrine, reported the promulgation to the souls of his ancestors. Later he drove, in a handsome black Mercedes-Benz, to the Diet to read his Imperial Rescript in high-pitched colloquial Japanese. At the palace celebration, Hirohito emerged in an open, horse-drawn carriage.

The Emperor had chosen "Meiji setsu"—birthday of the Emperor Meiji, who made Japan a modern power and Shinto, a war-inspiring State religion—to proclaim democracy. Tokyo's famous Meiji shrine staged a three-day festival that included a tea ceremony and geisha dances, but at the same time the government began distribution of new "democratic" photographs of the Emperor, in civilian instead of military dress. Nagasaki residents held a snake dance and a poetry contest on the subject: "Reconstruction from the Atomic Bomb."

The new constitution gave Japan a pattern for democracy. The Japanese are now faced with the responsibility of making practice fit the pattern. Aged statesman, Yulio Osaki, warned that the Japanese moral code—"based on murder and falsehood"—must be radically altered, predicted that three generations would be needed to educate Japanese to the meaning of the new constitution. Said Tokyo's Asahi Shimbun, as it prepared to publicise and interpret the constitution's text and meaning: "Only when we have created a state or society in which we can get along perfectly well without knowing a single article of the constitution can the new constitution really be said to have been completed."—"Time."

"BUTTER FROM BULLS"
And Greetings to Cowes

When Field Marshal Lord Montgomery returned to England after his tour of Australia and New Zealand, he brought greetings from the citizens of the town of Bulls, New Zealand, to the people of Cowes.

When he paid a brief visit to Bulls the chairman of the town board handed him a package of butter, on which these words were written:

"As this is the only place in the world where one obtains butter from Bulls, we have pleasure in presenting you with a sample."

The chairman added the people of Bulls were sending food parcels to the people of Cowes.

POPPY SELLER

Extract from a letter received from the Claremont sub-branch, dated November 24, re Poppy Day:

"L. A. Denbeigh, 10 Thompson Road, Claremont: This member collected £23/5/10 as an individual effort. Perhaps this warrants a note of appreciation from Headquarters. I know such action would be very gratifying."

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PASSING OF AN EMPIRE SOLDIER
The Late Sir Ian Hamilton

The Federal President (Mr. Eric Millhouse, K.C.) whilst in London sent the following letter to the Federal Secretary (Mr. A. V. Raymond):

I received your cable with reference to Sir Ian Hamilton's funeral, which was duly passed on to the General's nephew, Mr. Ian Hamilton, and he has written a very nice letter expressing his appreciation. I also got a wreath (price £3 3/-) and sent this up to Scotland and the card attached read as follows:

"In affectionate remembrance from the Returned Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia."

I was not able to go to the funeral in Scotland, so I asked Lieut.-Colonel Colin S. Macleod, an Australian Secretary of the British Legion (Scotland) if he would represent Australia, which he did, and he was very proud at having been asked to represent the Returned Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia.

The family asked me if I would care to see Sir Ian, as he was lying there before being taken to Scotland. He looked like a young man and he was wearing the suit which he wore on his honeymoon. He was buried beside Lady Hamilton in Scotland. At his feet were his medals and orders and an ivory-handled sword. I recognised the sword as the one he had worn when I saw him on the beach at Anzac. I particularly noticed the ivory handle because I had never seen one before and thought it was some oriental trophy instead of, as a matter of fact, being a general's regulation sword. I mentioned this and was told that the General had asked for the sword that he had worn at Gallipoli to be placed at his feet and that, as he had several swords, they had selected this sword after a little hesitation and they were relieved to have unexpected confirmation of it being the right one.

I attended the memorial service at Westminster Abbey and Mr. N. E. Mighell, C.M.G., represented Australia. I have been to several of these services but never one that was so impressive as this. Most beautiful music had been chosen and was sung by the choir with a haunting beauty that I will not easily forget. The Scots' Guards played a lament and then trumpets, echoing through the Abbey, played the Last Post and Reveille. It was very beautiful and very impressive.

GALLIPOLI AND FRANCE
At the Dardanelles, Australia lost 362 officers and 7,779 other ranks killed in action or died of wounds, and 639 officers and 17,261 others wounded.

New Zealand lost 116 officers and 278 others killed or died, and 208 officers and 4,544 other ranks wounded.

Australian casualties on the Western Front were 2,368 officers and 46,249 others dead, and 5,361 officers and 125,559 others wounded.
LIFE IN JAPAN

B.C.O.F. Man’s Experiences

Mr. Rex Clegg, of Badgebup, speaking at the November meeting of the Katanning sub-branch held recently had a remarkably interesting story to tell of the occupation forces and the life of its members in Japan.

The two features of Japan which left the greatest impression on members of the occupation forces were its hills and its smells, said Mr. Clegg. Middle East veterans thought they had met the last word in hills in Greece, but for number and steepness, the Japanese terrain was on its own. In order to cultivate the sharply rising ground, the entire hillsides were terraced to widths varying from two to four or five feet with terrace walls about four feet high. As an illustration of the steeply rising hills, in the 15 miles between their camp at Hiroshima and the harbour of Kure the wide, concrete road passed through three tunnels. The railway line, running parallel to the road and half a chain in, had to go through seven tunnels. Troops in the Middle East, said Mr. Clegg, reckoned they knew all about smells, too, but in Japan one wasn’t game to draw a deep breath. Owing to the absence of animal manures, human excrement was used almost exclusively on the agricultural holdings, while in the town lack of sanitation and general filth created an all-powerful stench. A large rest centre had been built on the snow-covered upper slopes and, on three days’ leave there skiing, he met an Army Sister whose one comment had been “Thank God, I can take a deep breath here.”

In mentioning Kure, Mr. Clegg said the harbour was infinitely better than Sydney and “all the fleets of the world could shelter there.”

The first 12 months in Japan had been occupied mostly by guard duties, ceremonial parades to impress the Jap, repatriating Japanese prisoners of war and in destroying colossal dumps of explosives. He had been fortunate in that he had covered extensively three of the four main islands and had seen most of what there was to be seen.

MAID OF ORLEANS

Did you know how the 48th Battalion got its nickname “Maid of Orleans”?

It happened like this: Colonel of the 48th was Sir Raymond Leane, afterwards Commissioner of Police. Then there was Major Ben Leane and Captain Allan Leane, with Lieutenants Reuben and Geoff Leane.

RECORD MARCHES

1898—Before the battle of Atbara British infantry covered 134 miles in the desert in 6½ days.

1900—City Imperial volunteers marched 30 miles in 17 hours.

1900—2nd Battalion Shropshire Light Infantry marched 43 miles in 32 hours.

1916—4th and 5th Australian Divisions across heavy desert from Tel el Keibir to Suez Canal carrying full equipment, 120 rounds of ammunition, rations and water, 39 miles in 3 days (24 hours’ marching).

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THINK TWICE BEFORE BUYING LAND!

How Some Diggers Have Been Caught

R.S.L. SEEKS AMENDMENT TO PURCHASERS' PROTECTION ACT.

Here are some cases recently brought before Mr. Justice Woolf in the Supreme Court in connection with land purchased from Land and Homes Company (W.A.) Ltd. and Estates Development Coy. Ltd.

First Case

Land: Lots 192 and 193, Woodfield Estate.

Perth Road Board value: £10/10/- per acre.

Amount of claim: £147/7/6.

Judge's Decision: Contract cancelled; monies forfeited; land returned to vendor company; purchaser to pay as damages £10.

This buyer is a married man with wife and four children; earns £6/5/6 per week net.

Date of Contract: June 6, 1930.

Second Case

Land: Lot 300, Woodfield Estate.

Perth Road Board value: £24.

Amount paid: £4.

Judge's Decision: Contract cancelled; land returned to vendor company; monies forfeited; damages £15 and defendant to pay £1/10/-; cost of warrant thrown away.

This man was married and has seven children; earns £6 per week as a painter; war pension of 10/- per fortnight.

Date of Contract: January 11, 1930.

Third Case

Land: Half-acre, Bellavista Heights.

Amount paid: £1 deposit.

Judge's Decision: Contract cancelled; land reverts to vendor; damages £5.

Defendant is married man with nine sons. At present he is a Rehabilitation student receiving £5/10/- per week.

Date of Contract: August 10, 1929.

Fourth Case

Land: Lot 169, St. Andrew's Estate (½ acre).

Perth City Council value: £25.

Amount paid: £115.

Judge's Decision: Contract cancelled; land returned to vendor company.

This man served 5½ years in R.A.A.F. overseas service.

Date of Contract: December 1, 1929.

Fifth Case

Land: Half-acre; Lots 1093 and 1099, Westminster Estate.

Perth Road Board value £50.

Price: £150.

Paid £22/11/6.

The Act needs further amendment

At a recent deputation by the R.S.L. to the Premier, further amendments were suggested to the Act to cover cases where the court feels it is not able to grant relief. The R.S.L. would like to see an amendment passed giving all purchasers of subdivisional land purchased under contracts entered into between 1929 and 1934 the option of electing to cancel their contracts now on giving written notice to the vendor company. Such election to cancel would, of course, be subject to forfeiture of all monies paid.

If a person desired to buy vacant land between 1929 and 1934, and has not completed the contract by 1947, the land cannot have been a very attractive proposition.

The League is aware that this particular company—Estate Development Coy. Ltd.—is obviously most interested in the fact that the purchasers, who were in 1929 and thereafter, very often persons of small means, have been in the Forces and are entitled to deferred pay.

This amendment, though most desirable, might have a lot of objections, but the amendment suggested to the Premier and passed on to the Attorney-General would have the effect of curbing the activities of this company and providing relief for the purchasers.

Relief to the extent of approximately £700 has been granted already in the Supreme Court in the case of four (4) ex-Diggers. These are additional to the cases quoted above.

The R.S.L. feels that the Government should be urged to bring this measure before the House this session as it is a matter of extreme urgency.

It is most unlikely that there would be any opposition from either side of the House, as the previous amendment was passed in both Houses without a dissentient voice.

One purchaser—Frank Elliott-Smith—has been compelled to seek protection from the Bankruptcy Court owing to the actions of this company. The Estates Development Coy. Ltd. is the only creditor. He had to do this because his application for relief was dismissed on the ground that the judgment was recently obtained against him, and, although he had legal advice at the time, he did not then make an application for relief.

The judgment was consented to by his then solicitor who, no doubt, felt at the time—1941—that any opposition to Estates Development Coy. Ltd. was hopeless unless you could prove absolute poverty and a miserable standard of living.

In one case, a man who had been a prisoner of war in Japanese hands for three and one-half years received a letter from the Estates Development Coy. the day he returned to Fremantle after his release. The letter re-
minded him of the contract and the necessity to recommence payments.

One of the applicants has spent forty-two (42) days in gaol on an Order of Commitment rather than pay under the contract.

There are many more cases of ex-servicemen having been caught—over a hundred, involving many thousands of pounds owing by them on land which many of them will never own and which will eventually revert back to the original owners—the Estates Development Coy. Ltd.

Meanwhile, good money has been thrown away by unwary ex-servicemen buyers of these blocks, forming parts of Estates bearing high-sounding names and depicted on fantastic locality maps.

UNVEILING, TOBRUK MEMORIAL

The Federal President of the R.S.L. (Mr. Eric Millhouse, K.C.) said recently he was pleased at indications that Federal Cabinet would approve of a party of five ex-fighting men attending the unveiling of the Tobruk Memorial on January 26 next year.

At its next meeting, Cabinet is expected to approve of a delegation of one representative each from the R.S.L. and the Rats of Tobruk Association, two from the Battlefields Memorials Committee and one Government nominee.

None is better fitted to lead the delegation and perform the unveiling than Sir Leslie Morshead, former G.O.C., 9th Division, and a Gallipoli veteran.

Mr. Millhouse said the League felt certain Cabinet would also approve of the delegation visiting Gallipoli after the Tobruk ceremony.

"It is not generally known that there are approximately 5,000 graves in the 17 war cemeteries on Gallipoli, the largest of which are at the Landing, Suvla Bay, Cape Helles, Lone Pine and Brown’s Dip. There has been no official visit to any of them since 1924," said Mr. Millhouse.

"Anticipating that this pilgrimage will take place, the R.S.L. representative will be a man who served both at Gallipoli and Tobruk, and there is a wide field of distinguished soldiers from which to make the selection," he added.

LEAGUE SCORES A HIT

Caravan Rent Anomaly Removed

An amendment to the increase of Rents (War Restrictions Act) was recently amended to control, amongst other things, the rental of caravans. This was the direct result of representations made by a deputation from the League to the Premier (Mr. McLarty).

The housing committee of the League has been very uneasy over this matter for a long time and it is with gratification that we now find that steps have been taken by Parliament to regularise the charging of rents for makeshift homes.
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Land Settlement Delay Defended

Congress Turns Down Move For Single Control

A move by New South Wales to have the control of soldier land settlement placed under a single authority instead of the present dual system was defeated at Federal Congress in Canberra after delegates had heard a spirited defence of the Commonwealth Government by the Director of War Service Land Settlement, (Mr. W. A. McLaren).

Mr. McLaren declared there had been a magnificent exhibition of "buck-passing" on land settlement with the Commonwealth always on the receiving end.

His remarks were made after a request had been vigorously pressed for single control as a means of speeding up settlement.

It was said that of 17,500 men who had applied for properties, more than 10,000 were qualified to take up land without further training.

If land was available, these men were qualified to go straight on to it.

However, he feared that at the present rate of progress it would take 15 years to get all trainees settled.

Delegates said the States and Commonwealth were not a happy family on this highly important matter, and the time was ripe for a full enquiry into the delay to find means of remediying it.

Not a single soldier settler had yet been placed on the land in Tasmania or Western Australia.

There was criticism of the failure of the Commonwealth Government to supply information to prospective settlers, both in regard to repayments and the conditions under which they would work.

Some aspects of dual control were causing concern. One was that in the final decision as to the price charged to the soldier, a charge for improvements to his property was included.

Good progress was being made in settlement in Victoria, but complete success would depend, among other things, on the price fixed for improvements.

There was voiced a warning against over-capitalisation, as it would cost as much as £1,750 to erect a home on a property.

It was hoped a single authority would determine what was to be paid, by a soldier for his overall settlement, including improvements, which would be written down.

By invitation, Mr. McLaren addressed congress and said the State branches of the League were apt to take a poor view of the Commonwealth Government's attitude.

"The Commonwealth has fixed a high standard of land settlement," he declared. "There have been charges that the Government is spoon-feeding some settlers, but these are not justified."

Referring to complaints by New South Wales and Queensland about unnecessary delays, Mr. McLaren said it was better to delay for two years if it meant that a man would go to a farm that was ready to produce.

In the agents states—South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania—the Commonwealth was insisting on developmental work being carried out. Soldier settlers there might have to wait two years before going on to their holdings but, in waiting, they would eventually be 20 years ahead.

"A lot of work has to be done on new country before a farm can be made of it," Mr. McLaren said. "We do not want the ex-serviceman farmer to be a labourer. We want him to be able to get a living out of his farm right away."

Mr. McLaren praised the Victorian and South Australian Governments for the land settlement work, and said the Governments of New South Wales and Queensland had failed to get into the job.

"It is pitiful to say that the little delay caused by this proper development of land is not greatly outweighed by the Commonwealth influence in this scheme," Mr. McLaren added.

"In Victoria it is possible to get quick decisions, but this is not so in New South Wales."

Congress also defeated a request by Queensland for a committee to be set up by the Commonwealth Government to inquire into all returned soldiers' land settlement, but carried the following resolutions:—

That no enemy or naturalised aliens be allowed to purchase land while there is one ex-service man or woman qualified to take up land and who is not placed on a property.

That the Department of Post-War Reconstruction should open courses in tobacco culture and purchase suitable land for ex-service trainees to enable them to enter this industry.

That no repayment premiums or demands for interest on loans under the Re-establishment Act to ex-service settlers shall commence until two years after the grant of the loan.

That sustenance be payable to ex-service settlers from the date they occupy their farms.

That the Commonwealth treat the problem of soil erosion as a matter of urgency.

That the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research make full inquiries into growing jute in the south-west of Western Australia.

That the present Government policy of no further alienation of land in New Guinea be reviewed to permit ex-servicemen (not former residents) becoming settled there, and that the present system of permits to enter New Guinea be revised to enable ex-service settlers to enter the Territory.
THE ROAD BACK

By PROFESSOR F. R. E. MAULDON

For all ex-service men and women the story of their lives since the day of demobilisation could be written around the theme of re-establishment. Each would have his or her own interesting story to tell. Fitting into a niche in civilian life has not proved uncomfortable for large numbers, but for large numbers it has, and for all, I suppose, there have been awkward moments.

A great many agencies, official and unofficial, have been trying to smooth the paths of re-establishment. Choosing a particular path, however, has been a matter of decision for each of the thousands of individual men and women themselves.

I sometimes wonder whether the individual fully realises what a complex process the business of re-establishment is for these agencies. Each agency, whether it be a government department or some unofficial social organisation, assumes a part responsibility for easing the burdens of thousands. But, at the same time, it has to treat each individual case as something unique within a general framework of policy. Bill Smith and Tom Brown and Bob Green may each need something different in the way of training for an occupation, or tools of trade, or getting established on a farm, or getting a house or premises for a business. But the interests of each have also to be safeguarded. The over-all policy must attend to this. Sometimes it may seem restrictive to the individual. Yet it is essentially protective. In any case, it must ensure that all get substantially the same fairness of treatment.

Then, again, an ex-serviceman may need assistance in a variety of ways. He then finds himself in contact with several government departments and perhaps seeking and receiving advice and aid from an ex-serviceman's association. If, instead of picturing only one ex-serviceman like that, you think of hundreds or, indeed, thousands, requiring a variety of helps, you will understand why it is that the various departments must co-ordinate their work of re-establishment.

On the Commonwealth level it is the Ministry of Post-War Reconstruction which has the job of coordination. In order that it may be done effectively and continuously, the Ministry has two large committees assisting it in each State. One is the Regional Reconstruction Training Committee, the other the Regional Re-establishment Committee. The first—as the name suggests—concerns itself particularly with reconstruction training. The second, a much larger committee, keeps a watchful and critical eye on every aspect of re-establishment. It includes not only officers of the Ministry of Post-War Reconstruction, the Defence Services, and all Commonwealth departments, as well as of State departments, the State Housing Commission and the Rural and Industries Bank, who are actively engaged in some special field of reconstruction, but also representatives of the Servicemen's Associations, the Red Cross, the Trades Hall and the University. It meets about once a month.

I can assure you that the Regional Re-establishment Committee is quite a vigorous and alert body. As one of its non-official members, I have been impressed by several things. One is that it does see to it that the many parts of the complex programme of re-establishment are properly tied together. It helps to straighten out what otherwise might be anomalies, contradictions or confusions. Another is the critical frankness with which the problems arising are tackled—new problems are always cropping up. This frankness is by no means confined solely to the non-official members. The official representatives of government departments are able to shed their normal reticence and to say plainly what they think. All the members—official and non-official alike—have come to realise that they must work as a team in a very important task. It is no less salutary for the non-official members, to realise the great difficulties of governmental administration in this field of public service than for the official members to keep their fingers on the pulse of the men and women whose needs are being met. Another thing is that the committee is at all times anxious that ex-service men and women should be continuously and fully informed of the services available to them.

Perhaps these few words of mine will serve to widen understanding of what is meant by not only the need, but what actually is being done, to co-ordinate efforts in re-establishment. It is only proper, too, that some tribute should be paid to the conscientious and intelligent service which so many of our public officers are giving to the tasks of rehabilitation and re-establishment.

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WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT
Some Pertinent Points
1. Under present arrangements of the scheme, how many applicants will actually get farms?
2. How long will the applicants be kept in suspense?
3. Does the delay lie with the State or the Federal Government—or both?
4. Is the development of the closer settlement aspect being explored?
5. When will the State Government take steps to secure small holdings for the 150 ex-servicemen who are willing to undertake raising of pigs, poultry, tobacco and vineyards?
6. Is it a good thing to keep secret a system of allotment of points? Unsuccessful applicants would derive some satisfaction from knowing just where they fell short of the requirements.
7. What rights of appeal have unsuccessful applicants to the classification committee?
8. Would it create a greater feeling of satisfaction if the League had an advocate to represent applicants when appealing against their classifications?
9. How many applicants will ultimately get farms?
10. When is the Commonwealth Government likely to close the scheme to applicants?
11. The normal development of land settlement in the State is comparatively small. It should have been additional to and not almost entirely displaced by War Service Land Settlement.

THE ROYAL WEDDING
The following messages of thanks were received by the League through the Governor-General:
"The King and Queen sincerely thank all members of the Returned Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia for their kind and loyal message on the occasion of the wedding of Princess Elizabeth."
"(Sgd.) Private Secretary," 18th November, 1947.
"Princess Elizabeth and Lieut. Mountbatten send their warmest thanks to all members comprising ex-service men and ex-service women of Australia of both world wars for their kind message of congratulations on their forthcoming marriage."
"(Sgd.) Private Secretary," 18th November, 1947.

"The High Road and the Low Road"
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Initial period of 6 years with extensions of 6, 5 and 5 years, allowing for a total of 22 years continuous service when the soldier volunteers and is accepted for re-engagement.

You are offered the best pay, medical care, food, quartering in the history of our Army.

Any soldier may elect discharge within three months of enlistment.

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<tr>
<th>AGE GROUPS</th>
<th>The Regular Army needs men, skilled and unskilled. Among the skilled types are the following:—</th>
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<tr>
<td>Boys may be enlisted as apprentices</td>
<td>16 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boilermakers, Bricklayers, Electricians, Refrigerator Mechanics, Plumbers, Saw Doctors</td>
<td>18—30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartographic Photowriters, Photowriters, Qualified Surveyors, Draughtsman topo (qualified), Helioworkers, Machine minders</td>
<td>18—35</td>
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Applicants are required to be British Subjects of European Origin. At least 5 ft. 4 ins. in height. Medically fit.

GRATUITIES After 6 years service, £120 is payable. If that amount is not drawn, £260 is payable after 12 years service. The payment of a gratuity entails an obligation of 5 years service on the Reserve on completion of engagement. Service on the Reserve is one muster parade each year and an obligation to report home address when required.

FOR FURTHER PARTICULARS SEE YOUR AREA OFFICER or The Commonwealth Employment Service
The Real Santa Claus

FORTY-TWO years ago, a little girl named Virginia wrote to the editor of the New York Sun as follows:

115 West Ninety-Fifth Street.
Dear Editor,—I am eight years old. Some of my friends say there is no Santa Claus. Pap says "If you see it in The Sun it is so." Please tell me the truth: is there a Santa Claus?
Virginia O'Hanlon.

We love Editor Charles A. Dana's reply to Virginia's enquiry. This is what he wrote:

"Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the scepticism of a sceptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant in his intellect, or compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

"Yes, Virginia, there is a real Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! How dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginia. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance, to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

"Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies. You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not! but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

"You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

"No Santa Claus! Thank God he lives and he lives forever! A thousand years from now, dear Virginia, nay, ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood."

CLOSING DATE FOR THE RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER TRAINING

In order to assist in meeting the acute shortage of teachers throughout the Commonwealth, at present estimated at 3,000, the Minister for Post-War Reconstruction has given approval to the following plan extending the closing date for the receipt of applications for teacher training under the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme:

Applications for training as teachers with the various State Education Departments may be accepted from ex-service personnel who are within the ordinary categories of the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme, including P. 14, but who would be ineligible for training because application was not made before June 30, 1947, or within 12 months of date of discharge, subject to the following conditions:

(a) Applications must be lodged on or before June 30, 1948.
(b) Selection under this plan will not confer eligibility for training other than under this plan; transfer to other courses will not be considered.

POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

Arresting the Drift

The Federal President of the R.S.L. (Mr. Eric Millhouse, K.C.) recently expressed concern at statements that an early announcement is expected by the Federal Government of cuts in the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme, particularly in the building trades.

Mr. Millhouse said the League had prepared a comprehensive report with recommendations dealing with the shortcomings of the scheme, and the matter will be fully discussed at the annual congress opening in Canberra.

The League, said Mr. Millhouse, had been assured that the Minister for Postwar Reconstruction (Mr. Dedman), who administers the C.R.T.S., will be available for discussions. "The drift in training has been apparent for some time," went on Mr. Millhouse, "but the R.S.L. feels that any curtailment would not only be a tragic betrayal of ex-service personnel but would seriously affect the future economic stability of this country.

"The drift must be tackled realistically before it is too late. It is all very well blaming shortage of materials for delays in placements. Unless a way is found to step up training considerably, we are not faced with the position of having insufficient skilled workmen when materials are again in normal supply?" added Mr. Millhouse.

YOU EARNED IT! WEAR IT!

Clip on the badge—your protection against the other fellow's so easily cultivated forgetfulness; a protection for old cobbers who were wrecked in war; a protection for those who gave their sons, husbands and fathers in to the maestrom of 1914-18; a protection for the good name of the fighting men.

A million men and youths in Australia would give years of their lives for the privilege of wearing the badge that isn't—we regret to say—in every ex-warriors' coat lapel—and might be tomorrow.

Or today!
You earned that badge. Get it! And—what is important—wear it, always.
THOSE CANTEEN FUNDS

CONDITIONS covering the distribution of £4,500,000 to ex-service personnel and their dependants have been announced by the chairman of the Canteens Trust Fund (Brig. A. S. Blackburn, V.C.).

A welfare fund amounting to £2 million and an educational fund of £2½ million will be distributed over a period of 25 years commencing on January 1 next.

The funds available to the Trust were considered by Federal congress in Canberra last month, when dismay was expressed at the decision of the trustees that they will be compelled to use portion of the money for providing educational facilities for children of ex-servicemen from World War II as have been provided from the Sir Samuel McCaughey Trust for children of World War I veterans.

Congress expressed the opinion that money for education should be provided from government funds so as to place the children of World War II personnel on at least an equal financial footing with those of World War I, who received benefits from both the government and the McCaughey Trust.

Following are the conditions for payment as announced by Brigadier Blackburn:

Welfare

A regional welfare committee in each State will be authorised to deal with applications for assistance from the welfare fund. Assistance will be granted in the following classes, as authorised by the committee:—

1. To dependants of an ex-serviceman who dies leaving them in need of assistance, if the committee considers the case particularly deserving.

2. To an ex-serviceman, whose work through illness or an accident.

3. To an ex-serviceman whose wife or dependant child is sick and requires attention additional to that provided by social services.

4. To any ex-serviceman's widow who is in need of assistance due to sickness of herself or her dependants or to circumstances beyond her control.

5. To ex-servicemen or their dependants who are in necessitous circumstances and who are, in the opinion of the committee, deserving of assistance.

6. To the dependants of any totally or permanently incapacitated eligible ex-serviceman in need of assistance.

Education

Education committees composed of ex-servicemen with special knowledge will be authorised to grant educational assistance in the following case:—

1. Orphans of members whose deaths have not been accepted as due to war service.

2. Orphans of members whose deaths have been accepted as due to war service.

3. Children of members who have been accepted by the Repatriation Commission as totally and permanently incapacitated.

4. Children of an incapacitated member, whether the incapacity is due to war service or not, whose income or earnings, in the opinion of the trustees, will not be sufficient over a period of three years to provide adequate educational facilities for his children.

5. Children of members other than those provided for in (3) and (4) above who, in the opinion of the trustees, are particularly deserving of assistance.

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ALL MAKES NEW TYRES SOLD
The young, newly-married veteran after a very trying day was enjoying his pipe and reading the evening paper. The wife, who was poring over a cross-word, suddenly called out: “Henry, what is a female sheep?” “Ewe,” curtly replied her husband; and that’s how their first row started.

A Scots ex-serviceman was stripping the wallpaper from the walls of his house when an old army pal called to see him. “Weel, Donald,” said the latter, “are ye going to have a new paper?” “Na, na,” replied Donald. “Ah’m moving.”

Having only recently moved into the garrison town, the Colonel’s lady was determined to impress the officers of the regiment and their wives. She arranged for a musical At Home and told her husband to see to the booking of a musician to entertain the guests. “Have you engaged the pianist yet?” she asked, a few days before the great evening. “Yes, my dear,” the Colonel replied, “a great virtuoso.” She looked annoyed. “Never mind about his morals. Can he play?”

After the blackout the girl said: “Ebert, you really shouldn’t have kissed me like that, with all those people so close around us, even if it was in the dark.” “I didn’t kiss you,” said the boy, looking angrily around in the crowd. “I only wish I knew who it was—I’d teach him!” “Ebert,” sighed the girl, “you couldn’t teach ‘im nothing!”

The train was pulling out when a young soldier jumped on. As he stood panting, an elderly passenger said scornfully: “You—army fellows don’t keep yourself in condition. When I was your age I could carry a cup of coffee in one hand, run half a mile and catch the 8.15 and still be fresh as a daisy.” “You don’t understand, Pop,” said the soldier. “I missed this train at the last station.”

A soldier came to a base hospital with the complaint that he was unable to sleep at night. The M.O’s advice was that he should eat something before he went to bed. “But, sir,” the soldier reminded him, “two months ago you told me never to eat anything before going to bed.”

The medical officer blinked, and then, with full professional dignity, replied, “My boy, that was two months ago. Science has made enormous strides since then.”

“What I want is a new-fashioned house at the old-fashioned price.”

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A TRIAL WILL BE TO OUR MUTUAL ADVANTAGE
Inspiring Messages to Federal Congress
Governor-General Praises Work of League

EXPressing his personal admiration of the work of the League, not only as an organisation pledged to guard the welfare of ex-servicemen and women, but as a great national institution, the Governor-General (Mr. W. J. McKell), in opening Federal Congress in Canberra, said the R.S.L. was privileged to be in the position of fostering and encouraging those who he hoped were destined to be the future leaders of the nation.

His Excellency was applauded when he told delegates that the King is deeply interested in the affairs of Australian ex-service personnel, and he read a message from His Majesty, who is our Royal Patron, sending warmest good wishes to all members. Mr. McKell continued:

"I would like to say that I deeply appreciate the invitation to open the congress. As some of you may know, I have always been interested in the League's work, not only on behalf of your membership in general, but in your efforts to help members individually.

"I think that the majority of the general public are well aware of the League's efforts to further the interests of returned servicemen as a body, but few realise the work the League does for individual members. This is, I consider, a most important aspect of your activities and although, perhaps, such work falls within the sphere of the sub-branches, it is something to be fostered and extended by the State branches and the central executive.

"The problems of the man-in-the-street bear heavily on him, more so than ever in this period of readjustment, and the availability of wise, friendly counsel can do much to ease the load and set his feet in the right path.

"I speak of this matter, as my mail contains evidence every day of people, including former servicemen and women, asking for guidance in the minor or serious problems confronting them in our complex life. This leads me to another point—that of leadership. If ever the world had need for wise or, should I say, inspired, leaders, it is now and for the next decade. It is idle to say that we are on the fringe of a new age; it is here—it may have just commenced, but we have passed from the period of electricity to the atomic era and none of us can forecast the ultimate development that will take place. One thing is abundantly clear, however: unless we can turn this development to the benefit of the peoples of the world, the power our scientists have within their grasp might well engulf our civilisation.

"Because of the status Australia has achieved in the councils of the world, there is a great call for her representatives to take part in world deliberation in the diplomatic, political, cultural, economic and industrial fields. This presents a task for leadership of the highest calibre, and it is as essential in Australia as in any other country. The call is to the young men and women—to those who gave their energy to the successful conclusion of the war.

"If they and their children are to reap the benefit of their wartime sacrifices they must prepare themselves to carry on the task of maintaining the peace. I am not reflecting on my contemporaries in saying this. The names of Australian leaders, both in civil and service spheres, are too well established and too well known for comment from me. History will record that, in her hour of trial, Australian leadership faced tremendous problems with great courage, determination and capacity.

"I do emphasise, however, that they won't be available indefinitely. It is obvious that to obtain a continuance of wise leadership in the various spheres mentioned we must look to, amongst others, those in the ranks of ex-service men and women—the men and women who, during the war, were trained in discipline, teamwork, self-reliance and leadership.

"It is your privilege to foster and encourage those of your members who have these attributes to serve the nation in the capacity I have indicated. In your own sphere you are leaders and few are in a better position to guide others in similar service to their fellows.

"I know from my own experience, and from what I heard in a recent R.S.L. broadcast, that youth isn't over-anxious to undertake the task, but nevertheless, the need is apparent.

"May I take this opportunity of congratulating the League on the strength of its membership of over 373,000. To have a membership of more than one-third of a million is indeed an achievement and speaks highly of the wise policy followed by your organisation," concluded His Excellency.

Disabled Ex-Servicemen and Staff Shortages

1. A request by the Returned Servicemen's League that, to overcome staff shortages, disabled ex-servicemen be employed as telephone is being considered by the Postmaster-General (Senator Cameron).

Senator Cameron has informed the League that recently male telephone operators have been used on night operating and the award has been amended accordingly. It is possible, he said, that this amendment will now enable suitably trained disabled ex-servicemen to be employed as telephone operators.

He added that, before a decision is reached certain medical aspects will have to be investigated in conjunction with the Director-General of Health and Commonwealth Public Service Board, whose regulations deal with the employment of disabled persons in certain categories.

2. Federal Executive of the Returned Servicemen's League has decided to urge the Commonwealth Government to use its influence with the Imperial authorities to prevent food from Australia for Britain being sent to ex-enemy countries.
Work of War Graves Commission

“The Dead of the Empire”

ON Remembrance Day the nation recalled those who lost their lives in two wars. It is not enough that there should be only one day in each year on which the country is conscious of its duty to the dead or to the maimed who, by miracles of surgery and care, remain as living evidence of the horrors of war. For those who survive, for the widows and children of those who fell, living memorials are essential, and their maintenance a national duty. The appeal for support on Poppy Day rightly emphasised that “in remembrance of its fallen, a nation finds strength in unity. In the manner of their remembrance a people shall know their greatness.”

The wisdom of founding such memorials is unchallenged; yet our duty to the dead still demands that their bodies shall receive the direct homage of a sufficient burial and commemoration.

Until the 1914-18 conflict no nation had cared systematically for its war dead; this task was first undertaken by a small mobile unit, formed at Lord Kitchener’s request, in the second month of hostilities, by the Joint War Committee of the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St. John. This mobile unit was soon marking and registering all the British graves it could locate, and from it grew the Graves Registration Commission, later known as the Directorate of Graves Registration and Inquiries.

Then, in 1917, when the Imperial War Conference was meeting in London, proposals were submitted for the creation of an Imperial organisation to care for the Empire’s dead, and thus the Imperial War Graves Commission was established. By 1928 the immense task entrusted to the Commission had been completed and its ideal achieved of honourable burial and exact record for every man and woman who fell or died in the war service of the Empire. Its responsibilities continued in the care of cemeteries, which by dignity of design and the expert work of gardeners, were made and honoured by thousands who made the pilgrimage to the battlefields of Northern France. Memorials were also raised to those “to whom the fortune of war had denied the known and honoured burial given to their comrades in death.”

Another ideal which the Commission held was soon to be overwhelmed: by fostering and leading the peoples of other nations to cultivate the remembrance in common of the dead of one war, it felt it might make “a practical as well as a sentimental and emotional contribution to the maintenance of peace.” With the crumbling of this ideal as the dust of new oppressions drove across Europe, plans were made for the work another great war would entail. The task of commemorating the dead of “the war to end wars” was hardly completed when preparations had to be made by the Commission to fulfil its trust to a new generation of the fallen, and to protect, so far as was in its power, memorials recording past sacrifices. A supplemental charter, approved in 1940, extended its responsibilities to the care of the new graves, and to the commemoration of those members of the Forces and the Mercantile Marine who have no known place of burial. The Commission was also entrusted with the task of compiling a list of civilian casualties, a record of 64,000 names now enshrined in Westminster Abbey.

In the years of occupation and of battle reliable information was difficult to gain, but last year Sir Fabian Ware, who has served the Commission long and faithfully as its vice-chairman, was able to report that the enemy had respected the cemeteries, and that few had suffered irreparable damage. The gardeners were helped by civilians who adopted individual graves, while many allied airmen were buried secretly by rest station groups. When the war ended the care of graves by local inhabitants was extended, organisations being set up in several countries for this purpose.

Sometimes this generous solicitude may itself make the work of completing the cemeteries difficult; on one day recently, for instance, over 50,000 Dutch people visited the graves of the fallen of Arnhem. The schemes of adoption are, however, often the cause of friction between British and local authorities in Normandy and in Holland, where there is still no clear idea of the beauty and dignity these cemeteries will ultimately achieve.

Complaints about war graves made in the Press and in the privacy of bereaved homes flow from two main sources: first, the slowness of progress made; secondly, a confusion of the responsibilities of the services and of the Imperial War Graves Commission. When a man was killed in action he was, if possible, buried by his own platoon or troop, the site of his grave being ultimately recorded at the headquarters of each of the Service departments. Often divisions prepared their own burial grounds near the scenes of major battles, but these were in no way permanent, for when the fighting moved on units of the Army War Graves Service would start their task of checking and, later, of concentrating the bodies of all those buried in communal cemeteries in friendly countries.

The work is carried out with the utmost care, under an officer’s personal supervision, so that no chance of identification shall be overlooked, and no mistake made. By diligence and by subsequent cross-checking it is intended to reduce the number of those at present unidentified to a minimum, and to avoid any error, however slight, that may be a cause of grief to next-of-kin. Only when each cemetery is completed and each grave’s details finally recorded, is it handed over to the care of the Imperial War Graves Commission.

The Directorate of War Graves Services was convinced that it was better to carry out its duties thoroughly, though slowly, rather than to hasten their completion by recruiting unskilled and unsympathetic aid.

The graves of the second war are less numerous but far more scattered—and, particularly in the Far East, much less accessible. As Sir Fabian Ware pointed out in his broadcast on the morning of Remembrance Day, “there is hardly a country on earth where our sailors, soldiers and airmen
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do not rest.” With the co-operation of the Dominions (to whom are now added India and Pakistan) and of foreign agencies, the task continues, as each day from remote Pacific islands, from the fields and woods of Europe, from Asian forests, the dead are gathered; and already the Commission has added 250,000 “graves of the recent war to the memorials and graves of 1,080,000 who fell in the first conflict.

The countless deaths in concentration camps, the horrors of massacre and forced migration, the fate of unknown thousands in countries whose ways it is difficult to understand—all these in many minds tend to cheapen the currency of a single life, however lost. Facts have overwhelmed imagination and now, as never before, the worth of the individual, in death as in life, must be maintained. It is to this task that the work of the Service authorities and of the Imperial War Graves Commission dedicates itself, and, by realising their difficulties and their achievements, this country and Empire can prove that the dead of two wars survive in the minds of the living: “For the whole world is the sepulchre of famous men; and their story is not graven only on stone . . . but lives on far away, without visible symbol, woven into the stuff of the lives of other men.”

**The Australia Day Gymkhana**

_Swanbourne_ sub-branch wants a permanent home. The Swanbourne district needs a war memorial. The people of Swanbourne lack a meeting hall and civic centre. So, on January 26, 1948, the 100 members of the sub-branch will entertain 25,000 people and persuade them to give according to their means to assist towards the building of a memorial hall and gardens for Swanbourne. And every one of the 25,000 will get value for money. It will be the Australian Day Sports Gymkhana and Moonlight Fiesta—a truly Western Australian celebration of Australia’s national day.

The R.S.L. Gift will be the principal event for professional foot runners and the cream of W.A.’s peds will compete for big money. In future years, it is hoped, the R.S.L. gift will be the local counterpart of the famous Stawell Gift. In addition, there will be a big 880-yard handicap.

In a nine-event programme for professional cyclists, under the patronage of the W.A. League of Wheelmen, the chief race will be the West Australian Wheelrace. The winning of this event will bring cash and prestige to one of the best riders in the State. This, too, will be an annual event, and it is planned to make it the track-rider’s equivalent of the Beverley to Perth.

“A ten-lap teams’ race and three-lap senior handicap will be two of the events conducted by the W.A. Amateur Cycling Association. Here, too, there will be thrills and spectacular riding by the pick of the W.A. amateur cyclists.

One of the best sports from a spectator’s point of view, and one which is growing in popularity, is log-chopping. By permission of the W.A. Chopping League, the Swan Districts Chopping Club will conduct a £40 programme at the gymkhana. Choppers and their supporters will be there in strength, and any patron who watches this section of the programme and ignores the other events will still receive full value for his entrance money.

Followers of national dancing will have a feast of entertainment provided by the youngsters. Dancing will be practically non-stop throughout the day and will be conducted under the auspices of the Scottish Union. And, incidentally, the Perth Highland Pipe Band will be present all day and half the night.

Spectacular grass-track motor cycle racing will be provided by riders under the auspices of the Coastal Motor Cycle Club. A full-hour’s programme of these exciting events will provide thrills aplenty for those who want thrills.

There are rumours of band competitions (a diagram march for brass bands has been suggested), side-shows, chocolate wheels, ice-cream stalls, picnic lunches, and even the usual bars dispensing the usual amber fluid. Nothing is more certain than the fact that Claude Young, the Honorary Organiser, and his team are leaving no stone unturned to make the day a complete success. And not only the day!

The evening show—the Moonlight Fiesta—will be a night out for the youth of the metropolitan area—the teen-agers and those in their twenties and the not-so-young who like to see youth having a good time and, perhaps, like to join in the fun. Forty pounds will be distributed in prizes among the wearers of the six best
Did You Know?

That an ex-serviceman gets a War Service Home according to his needs, but a farm under the War Service Land Settlement is according to his merits?

That normal development of agricultural land is practically at a standstill?

That it was never intended that the War Service Land Settlement Scheme should replace normal development?

That it is a serious question to ask "What happens to the men who will never achieve a farm under the scheme?"

That it is very disquieting to be told that only about one-third of the applicants for farms will achieve their heart's desire?

That ex-servicemen allotted farms should be placed on their farms as caretakers pending finalisation of the arrangements?

That, by putting a high priority man on a farm, which he will not ultimately occupy as the owner, creates disappointment and dissatisfaction?

That, because of the idealistic nature of the Commonwealth scheme, good types of ex-service farmers are being unduly kept waiting?

That valuable opportunities are being lost to those ex-servicemen, as prices cannot continue at their present high level?

That, in view of the large amount of money already being spent, it would appear that there is on occasions unnecessary quibbling over prices?

That this quibbling occurs over prices where sellers' values are often only slightly in excess of buyers' offers?

That the policy of disposing of plant and stock on properties acquired does not appear to be a sound one?

That long delays are thereby caused by waiting for new plant?

That it would seem that the only properties being acquired under the scheme are through forced sales, as the better class of farm is not being disposed of as the prices offered by the Government are not attractive?

That it would be interesting to know how many properties are not being utilised for full production?

That the acquisition of properties might be greatly speeded up if a check such as this were made?

That continuity of production on acquired properties should be strenuously aimed at?

That it is a waste of time endeavouring to estimate the productive capacity of any farm?

That it all depends on the individual farmer?

That the costs already incurred in the scheme are excessive?

That it is hoped that the large sums already spent will not affect the attitude of the Governments towards the scheme?

That it should be clearly understood that the large amount already expended on the scheme must not be considered as having been expended on or given to the soldier settlers?

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CUTS IN C.R.T.S.

The Federal President of the R.S.L. (Mr. Eric Millhouse, K.C.) recently expressed concern at statements that an early announcement is expected by the Federal Government of cuts in the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme, particularly in the building trades.

Mr. Millhouse said the League had prepared a comprehensive report with recommendations dealing with the shortcomings of the scheme and the matter would be fully discussed at the annual congress in Canberra on Tuesday.

The League, said Mr. Millhouse, had been assured that the Minister for Postwar Reconstruction (Mr. Diefenbaker), who administers the C.R.T.S., will be available for discussions. “The drift in training has been apparent for some time,” went on Mr. Millhouse, “but the R.S.L. feels that any curtailment would not only be a tragic betrayal of ex-service personnel but would seriously affect the future economic stability of this country.

“The drift must be tackled realistically before it is too late. It is all very well blaming shortage of materials for delays in placements. Unless a way is found to step up training considerably, are we not faced with the position of having insufficient skilled workmen when materials are again in normal supply?” added Mr. Millhouse.

THE ROAD BACK

Australian ex-servicemen will soon be welcoming their British comrades-in-arms who intend settling in this State.

In coming to a new country, they will naturally turn to ex-servicemen for information.

British ex-servicemen have certain entitlements in Australia. Briefly, these are free legal advice, free local transportation, free employment service, free fares to employment, free tools of trade, re-establishment loans, social service benefits, and clothing coupons.

All Australian ex-servicemen who come in contact with British ex-servicemen should advise them to seek further information from the Department of Post-War Reconstruction, Yorkshire House, St. George’s Terrace, Perth.

All ex-servicemen please note that by recent amendment to the Tenant and Landlord Act, an ex-serviceman is now protected up to three years from his discharge instead of two, in matters relating to housing. This means that a civilian landlord cannot evict an ex-serviceman who has not been discharged for three years unless he finds him suitable alternative accommodation. Also, the ex-serviceman still has the right to apply to the Court for the occupancy of premises unoccupied or about to become unoccupied. This applies to furnished as well as vacant houses.

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FREMANTLE CITY

On November 13 the sub-branch had a very successful annual reunion. The State Executive was represented by Mr. Tom Stein and other guest present were representatives of the fighting services. His Worship the Mayor represented Parliament and the Fremantle City Council, and others present were the presidents and secretaries of Cottesloe, North-East Fremantle, Mosman Park, Spearwood and Safety Bay sub-branches. Apologies came from the Premier and Federal sub-branch. The harmony was of a very high order and was in the hands of the inimitable Billie Edwards and his renowned quartette, and everyone agreed it was a very enjoyable evening. On Tuesday, December 1, the sub-branch extended a social dance to our women's auxiliary, and on this occasion the guest list was a large one. Sister auxiliaries were invited to come with their women's auxiliary, Messdames McKinlay and Rockman and other ladies of the women's auxiliary State executive attended, and among other guests were the State President and Mrs. Hunt, State Secretary and Mrs. Chappel and Colonel Olden. During an interlude, Mrs. McKinlay presented certificates of service to Mrs. Hobbs for many years treasurer of our women's auxiliary, and also Mrs. Wilton, a prolific worker for the cause. Miss Tinnin, the office typist, presented Mrs. McKinlay with a beautiful bouquet of flowers given considerable applause. The State President, in a very happy speech, congratulated Fremantle. She has won the Newdegate Cup which he assured the company, should not have been done without the assistance of the ladies present, and ended up by seasonal greetings to all. The very pleasant evening ended up with a supper that our women's auxiliary cannot be excelled in. The president makes an appeal to all members of the sub-branch to attend regular meetings on soldiers' pension nights (alternate Thursdays) so as to work up a social side of the sub-branch, and extends seasonal greetings to all.

SISTERS

The monthly meeting of the Returned Army Nurses' Club was held in the clubrooms on Thursday, December 1. There was a very good attendance. The Hollywood Sisters had a stall at the All-Nations' Fair. It was a great success, due to their hard-working efforts. Their share in the proceeds is for the War Nurses' Hostel.

COTTESLOE

The annual party to the women's auxiliary was held at Mr. Smith's residence on November 15 and a very enjoyable evening was spent by all. The thanks of the sub-branch are due to Mr. Smith for his generosity once again in providing his residence. The Poppy Day sales were satisfactory and the returns showed an increase on last year. There is room, however, for further improvement. Recently the sub-branch has been conducting sports nights each month in addition to the annual meeting. The attendance has not been very gratifying and the committee is now investigating exhaustive suggestions in regard to these sports nights, and it is hoped that an announcement will be made at the next general meeting of the sub-branch. Members are reminded that trophies have been donated for these sports contests, and in fairness to the donors every effort should be made to make the contests as representative as possible.

KATANING

The November meeting was held on November 21. Mr. L. Thompson (vice-president) took the chair. A scheme was drawn up for the collection of our allotted amount for the State War Memorial. All members are

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very keen to obtain our quota of £200 and our secretary, P. G. McRae, is counting over this amount being subscribed. It is very satisfactory to the younger members predominant and taking a keen interest in the League's affairs. Our members very much regret the resignation of Brian Allen from the management committee and secretary of the finance committee. Brian has done great things to assist the sub-committee for the local castle.

Osborne Park

The last two meetings were both well attended, and at the 29th, a new committee was formed to sit in conjunction with executive members once a month. The sub-committee, presided over by Mr. T. B. Osborne Park and the Emu Brewery, which resulted in a win for Osborne Park. Collections are well in hand for the Lennox Christmas visit, which fails to us on December 1st.

The usual monthly meeting of the sub-branch was presided over by vice-president Dick Albury, acting secretary, Len Turner, held everything in apple-pie order and a budget of business was carried out. Our building fund is progressing very favourably. It should not be too long now in the New Year when we shall have our own building. Poppy Day was most successful. The women's auxiliary held a dance recently, this also proving quite a success. Our next meeting, being the annual one, will be held on Tuesday, January 13, when the election of officers will take place. The committee will meet a week previous to this meeting.

Narembeen

The sub-branch wishes to congratulate the Lonsdale sub-branch on their enterprise and the attractiveness, in general, of the new publication. However, we are sure that our respective cheques will do if these notes gain publication. We discontinued sending our expenditure only a few days after it happened. President Arthur Holt, with his gaining experience and confidence, makes a point of being at all his meetings and reports on all. Many and varied were the items discussed. The members are encouraged to take an interest in the affairs of the county and to attend our meetings and are proving very popular. Our 'benefit looking' secretaries have exposed these games and has many. A cheap evening's entertainment. The main item of interest is the annual meeting of the sub-committee, presided over by William Stelfonion, and under the leadership of Bill Bishop. The meeting was held at 8 p.m. on the 13th, and we hope he will meet a week previous to this meeting.

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