

20/12/41 No:5

THE ESSENTIAL WORK (BUILDING AND CIVIL ENGINEERING) (NO:2) ORDER 1941

An amended form of the Essential Work Order for the Building and Civil Engineering Industries has now come into force. Two of its most important new provisions are:-

1. In weeks in which a recognized holiday, e.g. Christmas Day, occurs, workers on scheduled sites will, subject to the conditions of the Order, receive a proportionate guaranteed minimum wage for the days of the week excluding the holiday.
2. The provision whereby in emergencies the services of men might be lent by scheduled employers without permission of the National Service Officer to another undertaking, or used by the employer on a different site for a period of not more than 14 days, is now restricted to work urgently required to be done as a result of enemy action.

Saturday, December 20, 1941

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

NEWS BULLETIN No. 537

CHRISTMAS PARTIES FOR BRITAIN'S LONELIEST SOLDIERS

Some of Britain's loneliest soldiers - men of A.A. & Searchlight Regiments stationed in isolated districts - will not be lonely this Christmas, even if they will have to spend a great deal of the time near their guns and searchlights.

Hundreds of them have received invitations from local inhabitants to join in their Christmas parties. One woman, whose husband is serving in the Army overseas, has invited 12 gunners to her home on Christmas Day. A Searchlight Detachment has been adopted by the A.F.S. and A.R.P. who have promised to give the men a cheerful time. A local baker has agreed to let the cook use his oven on Christmas Day.

Workers at a factory have made weekly contributions to a fund for the gunners who defend it. W.V.S. workers have been giving dancing lessons to other gunners so that they will be able to enjoy a dance to which factory girls have been invited.

Gunners of another battery have received a Christmas present of gum-boot stockings - made from wool supplied by the Lamas of Thibet.

Clerks and telephonists at a Battery H.Q. who have been practising carols are to lead community singing among the small detachments on the sites in their area.

Flags of all nations have been lent by the League of Nations to decorate a hut which London gunners will use for a dance.

Gunners of a light A.A. battery near London have decided it is better to entertain than be entertained. They have booked the village hall for a grand carnival dance which they are to give to evacuees living in the district. -

War Office

M. o I. 1

CHEQUE FOR RED CROSS AID TO RUSSIA FUND

The London Telecommunications Region of the General Post Office has sent a cheque for £571,18s.2d. to Mrs. Churchill's Red Cross Aid to Russia Fund.
General Post Office

M. o I. 2

HEARTBREAK SECTION, G.P.O.

Not all the Christmas gifts that were posted will be delivered. At Mount Pleasant sorting office in London a long table is piled high with toys, tins of sardines and pilchards, soap and scent, a ruddy Dutch cheese and three onions, a broken doll, a forlorn looking rabbit, face powder and trinket sets: there is even one box of cigarettes. They have all fallen from damaged parcels with no indication of the addresses to which they were being sent.

Thirty women are employed all day repairing torn parcels and doing their best to connect up the kippers and pots of jam that have come adrift. They call their corner of the sorting office "Heartbreak Section", for there is something pathetic about a jig-saw puzzle on which is written "With love to little Johnnie" but with no sign of where little Johnnie lives. "My darling wifie", too, is not going to get a box of handkerchiefs embroidered with a regimental crest because her hubby trusted to a piece of newspaper to wrap his parcel in and it broke away.

All these goods will be kept for some weeks waiting claimants. If no one asks for them they will find their way to the periodical salvage sales of articles lost in the post. - General Post Office.

M. o I. 3

NEWS ITEMS FROM THE SALVAGE AND RECOVERY BOARD

Bermondsey's Big Salvage Jump

Waste paper collected during October 1941 in Bermondsey is 168% more than the total for August. Actual figures are 35 tons in October, 13 tons August. £537 is the value of all October Salvage collected in the borough - an increase of 112% above August.

This is the citizen's great way of helping. Rags, metal, paper, bones and many other things are wanted urgently and in ever increasing quantities.

St. Marylebone Paper Salvage Almost Doubled

The 108 tons of paper collected in the borough during October 1941 is 83% higher than the August figure. This splendid news is made even better by the fact that the value of all types of Salvage collected shows an increase of 129%, the October collection being worth £968.

Deptford Doubles Its Paper Salvage

Deptford contributed no less than 31 tons of waste paper to the Salvage effort during October 1941, exactly double its total for August. This is a splendid increase and will no doubt prove to be the first of many, since the need for salvage of all kinds grows more and more imperative.

Old Cannons Will Fight Again

229 tons of old cannons have been contributed by Woolwich in the great salvage campaign.

Bones Of The War Machine

Don't waste bones! Even after they have been in the stockpot and the dog has had a gnaw at them, what is left is still valuable to the last crushed grain. Bones can be turned into glycerine, which makes nitroglycerine. After that the same bones give glue for use on aircraft and in camouflage paint. Even then these bones give faithful war service since they are then ground into valuable poultry and cattle food and fertilisers for the ground. - Salvage and Recovery Board, Ministry of Supply.

M. o. I. 4

Saturday, December 20, 1941

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

NEWS BULLETIN NO.538

BLAZING CAR RESCUE

Sergeant Jack Burtonshaw, of a heavy anti-aircraft battery in the North West, was returning to his unit after a forty eight hour leave.

He was given a lift in a private car which had to pull up behind a stationary van on the Chester-Warrington Road.

Burtonshaw got out to see what was holding up the traffic and was told that a steam-wagon and a small car had collided. The car was ablaze.

Burtonshaw saw a passenger, a Regimental Sergeant-Major, still in the burning car.

He threw his overcoat over the R.S.M. and managed to drag him away from the flames.

Although his face and hands were burned, Burtonshaw supported the R.S.M. until an ambulance arrived and took them both to hospital.

Burtonshaw was allowed to leave hospital after treatment for his burns, but the R.S.M. died the next day.

Burtonshaw, aged 26, has been officially commended on his courageous action.
War Office.

M.o.I. 1.

CHRISTMAS PARCELS FOR DISAPPOINTED PRISONERS

Special Christmas parcels from the British Red Cross have been sent to wounded prisoners in Rouen. These men were moved to France during the unsuccessful repatriation negotiations in October. Some 250 of them were afterwards sent back to hospitals in Germany but nearly 1000 are still in Rouen.

In addition to Christmas parcels for each man, over 7300 standard Red Cross food parcels, 1500 invalid parcels, 384 tins of butter, 3000 vitamin packages, 189 tobacco parcels, 10 cases of soap, 633 great-coats and 1500 each of blankets, shirts, pyjamas, underwear, pullovers and towels have been sent to the men in Rouen from the Red Cross at Geneva since the end of October. British Red Cross.

M.o.I. 2.

CANADIAN WOMEN FIGHT INFLATION

Delegates from eighteen National Women's Organisations gathered in Ottawa have volunteered to enlist three million Canadian women to make war on the home front against price inflation. Canada House (Through Dominions Office Press Section).

M.o.I. 3.

LATEST GIFTS AND LOANS FROM THE COLONIES

TANGANYIKA

Acknowledging a gift of £500 from the Tanganyika War Relief and Welfare Fund as the first instalment of Tanganyika's contribution to the Red Cross Aid-to-Russia Fund, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, has telegraphed to the Governor: "I have learnt with much appreciation of this contribution from the people of Tanganyika to the Red Cross Air-to-Russia Fund."

NIGERIA.

Nigeria's War Relief Fund has given £4,500 to the Red Cross Aid-to-Russia Fund. It has also sent to London a sum of £10 collected by school-children in Akoko, Ondo Province, for the Lord Mayor of London's National Air Raid Distress Fund. The children asked that the money should be used to relieve distress among London school-children.

Acknowledging these gifts, Lord Moyne, Secretary of State for the Colonies, has telegraphed to the Governor: "I have learnt with much appreciation of the splendid response from the people of Nigeria to Mrs. Churchill's appeal for aid to Russia, and also of the collection made by the school-children of Akoko. The Lord Mayor is being asked to arrange for the children's gift to be used as desired."

/Contd.

CEYLON

Lord Moyne, Secretary of State for the Colonies, has telegraphed to the Governor of Ceylon: "A further £450 sent by the Ceylon Planters' Society on December 4 is being allocated to the Anti-Aircraft Command Welfare Fund. Please thank the Society."

.....
BRITISH HONDURAS

A sum of £215 the total of the 1941 collections in the Colony of British Honduras for the Earl Haig's Poppy Day Fund, has been received in London.

.....
NORTHERN RHODESIA

An interest-free loan of £100 has been received from Miss Briod, of the Kingsley Mission, Mongu, Northern Rhodesia.

.....
NYASALAND

Nyasaland Protectorate has given an interest-free loan to His Majesty's Government of £100,000 on account of surplus public revenue for the current year.

.....
Straits Settlements

Interest-free loans amounting to the equivalent in sterling of £14,554. 19. 3. have been received from the Straits Settlements. The people from whom the loans were received were:

Mr. J. H. Nellis,	£10,000;
Mr. Tan Chin Tuan,	£10,000;
Mr. R. G. Roden,	£6,000;
Mrs. I. T. Wearne,	£5,000;
Mr. A. B. Paterson,	£2,000;
Dr. W. R. Duff,	£1,000;
Mr. T. R. Hutton	£1,000;
The Island Flying Club,	£1,000;

and anonymous, \$50,000, \$20,000 and \$17,000 respectively. Also an unconditional gift of \$1,064.50 cents was received from the late Mr. Chew Boon Hean to the Imperial Government for the prosecution of the war.

Colonial Office Press Section

M.O.I. 4

20/12/41 - No. 1

Air Ministry No. 5914

AIR MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY COMMUNIQUE

There is nothing to report.

----oo---

20/12/41 - No. 2.

Air Ministry News Service.

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 5915.

FLYING AGAIN AFTER BREAKING HIS BACK

For seventeen weeks visitors to Fighter Command's top scoring station have been unaware that the Group Captain Station Commander has been carrying on his normal duties with a broken back.

Now that he is completely recovered, the plaster of paris in which he has been encased for so long has been chipped off. While the Group Captain was encased in it he did not allow it to stop his flying.

The Group Captain, who is 35, was taking off with squadrons from his station for an offensive sweep during August when the engine of his Spitfire failed and he crash-landed outside the aerodrome. The crash broke his back. He was taken to hospital where it was found that with care the bones would knit together. The plaster of paris was then put round him and he was so keen to get back to his job that he was on his station again within a week.

Later he went to an R.A.F. hospital for about a fortnight and then returned to his work - still with his back in plaster. By the latter half of September he was again flying his Spitfire on local patrol "just to keep his hand in."

The Group Captain, who is one of the youngest in the R.A.F. won his D.F.C. early in the war for gallantry in action.

20.12.41 - No. 3

HOW THE ALLIED FORCES WILL SPEND CHRISTMAS

The age-long traditions of the Festive Season, some peculiar to their own countries, will be observed by Allied Troops in Britain this Christmastide.

For the Poles, Christmas is the most solemn of their Holy Days. Tradition demands that the Christmas dinner -- taken on the 24th -- shall be one of 12 courses. They won't have their 12-course dinner this year -- they will be satisfied with Bortsch, a helping of fish and Christmas cake.

Around Christmas trees in their clubs and messes the men will sing their carols as they used to do in Poland.

Cigarettes from Madame Benes, wife of their President, will be distributed to men of the Czechoslovak Army on Christmas Eve. There will also be gifts from "Friends of Czechoslovakia" in U.S.A.

On Christmas Day the famous Czech choir will broadcast.

The Dutch Troops have already had their main celebration -- on December 5, the Feast of St. Nicholas. On Christmas Day, however, there will be an entertainment for the children and special carols which the Dutch choir are recording for broadcast to their people overseas.

For the Norwegians there will be a special issue of aquavit, the exhilarating Norwegian Schnaps. The newly formed Norwegian choir will probably make its debut.

20.12.41 - No. 4

NATIONAL HEALTH AND PENSIONS INSURANCE

WARNING TO EMPLOYERS

The Ministry of Health warns employers that the new arrangement ---
to come into force on the 5th January --- by which the Health and
Pensions cards of their regular workers may be stamped half-yearly instead
of weekly, applies only to those with at least 100 employees. It is
essential that in each case permission should be sought from the Ministry
of Health, Blackpool, and cash payments made to the Ministry in advance.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH.

MIDDLE EAST COMMUNIQUE

H.Q., R.A.F.
Middle East
Saturday,

Bomber and fighter aircraft took heavy toll of retreating enemy units on the road leading from Al Faidia to Barce and in the area west of Mechili yesterday.

Fighter aircraft made a series of successful attacks on lorries, trucks, field guns, armoured fighting vehicles, and motor transport of all kinds. Many vehicles were left in flames, and others were put completely out of action.

Our bombers were particularly active in the region west of Mechili, where many direct hits were obtained on enemy motor units.

Maryland bombers of the South African Air Force raided the aerodrome at Benina with good results. Two Me. 109s which attempted to intercept the bombers were shot down. The landing ground at Maraua was also attacked, our bombers shooting down one Me. 109 over the target.

During Thursday night (December 18/19th) naval aircraft located and attacked an enemy convoy of three large merchant ships escorted by units of the Italian Fleet off the coast of Tripolitania. In spite of a smoke screen put out by the warships, our aircraft scored hits with torpedoes on two of the merchant vessels.

During the same night, in addition to the heavy raids on Benghazi harbour and the aerodrome at Berka mentioned in yesterday's communique, objectives at Tripoli and closely packed enemy motor transport on the Derna-Barce road were successfully bombed.

During Friday night (December 19/20th) dispersed aircraft on Benina aerodrome were again attacked, and a number of fires were seen to break out. Objectives at Benghazi were also bombed.

Off Malta yesterday our fighter aircraft engaged a number of Ju. 88s one of which was shot down on land. A further Ju 88 which approached the island was also intercepted and severely damaged.

From these and other operations four of our aircraft are missing.

20.12.41 - No. 10

REPORT FROM HONG KONG

The Governor of Hong Kong has reported by telegraph this morning: Operations are proceeding on the island.

The Governor wishes it to be known that the Japanese story that he has left the Island is entirely false.

COLONIAL OFFICE

20.12.41. - No. 11.

WAR SERVICE GRANTS MAY BE RE-CONSIDERED

As Sir Walter Womersley, M.P., Minister of Pensions, stated in the House of Commons on Wednesday last, the revision of the large number of War Service Grants in payment has been completed.

In all cases where the amount of the grant has been altered an individual notification has been issued.

In cases where the grant has been maintained at its existing amount no notifications have been sent.

In many of these cases the grants would have had to be reduced but for the new scheme.

The wives and families concerned have thus had the benefit of the scheme; but if in any case they feel that the present assessment is too low, owing to changes of circumstances of which the Ministry of Pensions is unaware, they may apply for reconsideration by writing to the War Service Grants Department, Ministry of Pensions, Heyhouses Lane, Lytham St. Annes.

MINISTRY OF PENSIONS

20.12.41 - No. 12

WAR COMMUNIQUE

Cairo, December 20

Yesterday morning our troops occupied both Derna and Mekili without opposition.

Forty destroyed enemy aircraft were found on Derna aerodrome.

By the afternoon our forward mechanised patrols had reached a point 25 miles west of Giovanni Berta. At the same time our armoured patrols were making rapid headway west of Mekili in pursuit of the enemy main body.

Throughout the day our air forces subjected to severe bombing and low flying attack many columns of the retreating enemy. Great havoc was caused to enemy mechanical transport on a number of roads which were literally packed with traffic.

To summarise yesterdays operations, our advance into the heart of Cyrenaica continued successfully, and relentless attacks by our air forces on the retreating enemy coupled with the continuous pressure of our forward columns succeeded in keeping the enemy on the run throughout the day.

WAR OFFICE

20.12.41 No. 14.

Air Ministry Bulletin No.5917

MIDDLE EAST COMMUNIQUE

H.Q., R.A.F.
Middle East
Saturday,

Bomber and fighter aircraft took heavy toll of retreating enemy units on the road leading from Al Faidia to Barce and in the area west of Mechili yesterday.

Fighter aircraft made a series of successful attacks on lorries, trucks, field guns, armoured fighting vehicles, and motor transport of all kinds. Many vehicles were left in flames, and others were put completely out of action.

Our bombers were particularly active in the region west of Mechili, where many direct hits were obtained on enemy motor units.

Maryland bombers of the South African Air Force raided the aerodrome at Benina with good results. Two Me. 109s which attempted to intercept the bombers were shot down. The landing ground at Maraua was also attacked, our bombers shooting down one Me. 109 over the target.

During Thursday night (December 18/19th) naval aircraft located and attacked an enemy convoy of three large merchant ships escorted by units of the Italian Fleet off the coast of Tripolitania. In spite of a smoke screen put out by the warships, our aircraft scored hits with torpedoes on two of the merchant vessels.

During the same night, in addition to the heavy raids on Benghazi harbour and the aerodrome at Berka mentioned in yesterday's communique, objectives at Tripoli and closely packed enemy motor transport on the Derna-Barce road were successfully bombed.

During Friday night (December 19/20th) dispersed aircraft on Benina aerodrome were again attacked, and a number of fires were seen to break out. Objectives at Benghazi were also bombed.

Off Malta yesterday our fighter aircraft engaged a number of Ju. 88s, one of which was shot down on land. A further Ju 88 which approached the island was also intercepted and severely damaged.

From these and other operations four of our aircraft are missing.

20/12/41 - No. 15

BOXING DAY PAY FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

The cancellation of the usual bank holiday on Boxing Day this year does not affect arrangements or agreements relating to payment of wages for work done on that day. So far as agricultural workers are concerned, this means that where in any area special provisions, such as payment at overtime rates, apply to Boxing Day and the week in which Boxing Day falls, these provisions apply to December 26 and the week in which that day falls.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

20/12/41 - No. 16

NOTICES TO QUIT FOLLOWING SALES OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

Landowners and farmers in England and Wales are reminded that under a Defence Regulation made on the 11th November, 1941, where agricultural land has been purchased since the outbreak of war, any notice to quit given by the purchaser to a tenant so as to expire at any time after the end of the year 1941, will be null and void unless the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries gives his consent in writing. The Regulation applies whatever the reason for purchase, and therefore includes cases where a farmer has purchased land and has given or intends to give notice to quit in order that he may occupy the land himself.

In the case of a notice to quit already given, and intended to expire on or before Ladyday 1942, any application for consent should be made forthwith to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 23/25, Soho Square, W.1., in order to allow adequate time for the necessary consideration and decision.

Applications in respect of current notices intended to expire after Ladyday, 1942, should be submitted as soon as possible. In other cases the purchaser should make application for consent at least one month before he proposes to give the notice.

A tenant of agricultural land who has received or receives a notice to quit from a person who has purchased the land since the outbreak of war, would be well advised at once to notify the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries at the above address, stating whether he wishes the notice to stand or not. This does not apply, of course, if he has received with the notice to quit a copy of the Minister's consent to such notice.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

20/12/41 - No. 17

THE NEW NATIONAL SERVICE ACT

by Ralph Assheton M.P.

Following is the talk to be broadcast after the 9 p.m. news by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour:-

The new National Service Bill became law on Thursday. It makes two big changes. The age for military service is raised to 51 and single women are to be conscripted to the Women's Services. What do these changes mean? I will take men first.

The Government can now call up men for the Services up to the age of 51: this does not mean that they will be called up at once or that all men between 41 and 51 will go into the Services: very many men of this age are already doing work of national importance, and they will not as a rule have to join up: those who are called upon will, if they are fit, take over static and sedentary duties in the Forces and so release younger men for active service.

Reservation by occupation is gradually to be brought to an end and each man's case will be treated on its merits. Where necessary the man will be deferred and I want you to realise that deferment is not necessarily only for a short time, but can be renewed as often as needed: I don't think this has been clearly understood by everyone.

Now about women.

We have already the power to direct compulsorily any man or woman into industry. But up to now we have not had power to call up women for the Services. Many people dislike the idea of calling up women, but the Government told the country that they believed this step was necessary and, for that reason, Parliament accepted it, because we are all prepared to do whatever is necessary to win the war.

Some people say "Why call up women when there are lots of young men in reserved occupations". Well, I've just explained that we are going to comb out the young men and only defer those whom it is really necessary to keep out of the Forces on account of the importance of their work. So we are not going to call up women without at the same time dealing with the men who are reserved.

Women to be called up have been given a choice between going into the Services or going into certain specified jobs in civil defence or in munitions (mainly in the filling factories). They will have the same rights as men to appeal on grounds of hardship or conscientious objection.

Some women will not be called up at all: for example, women already in munitions or women in the nursing or civil defence or transport services, women on the land, or women school-teachers; a list of these has been issued.

For other women whose work is necessary to the war effort there will be careful arrangements for deferment.

The first women to be called up will be those born in 1921 and 1920. Those who have already registered won't have to do so again but we shall go on registering women over 30 for war work.

Some people say that married women ought to have been conscripted too: the majority, however, agree that it would have been wrong. But I want to remind you that married women are just as liable as single women to compulsory direction to work and married women who have not got children to look after, or other domestic responsibilities, will be interviewed and required to work near their homes. Married women with children can often do part-time work, and some can do whole-time jobs, if provided that proper arrangements are made for their children to be looked after.

All this means more sacrifice for our country both by men and women. It is called for because the situation is so serious.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR

20/12/41 - No. 18

PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT

Ulric Grant who was born in Barbados was sentenced in 1937 to 10 years imprisonment for sedition at the time of the disturbances in Barbados in that year.

A message has been received from the Governor of Barbados that he has recently reviewed the sentence and that as a result Grant is being released today the 20th December.

COLONIAL OFFICE PRESS SECTION