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Organ of the Bookhams Social Service Bureau

No. 30

MARCH 1941

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Editorial

It is now sixteen months since the introduction of the Pensions (Navy, Army, Air Force and Mercantile Marine) Act, 1939, was passed by Parliament, with Royal warrants issued under its authority and these have received the close attention of the Editor so that he can give advice and assist in the matter of claims, but as far as possible to obtain social justice. Unhappily the question of awards are subject to a "means test," and in the opinion of the editor this is not compatible with any new social order so strongly in the minds of the government.

Benefitting from the experience of the last war, when for the first two years the three Service depts. dealt separately with their own claims, the government decided that the Minister of Pensions should be responsible for all claims in the present war. The value of such united control is obvious but the whole process of the machinery of pensions administration does not prevent some injustice creeping in, even in the fact of the differences between the War Pensions Act of 1919 and the present Act. Whilst realising that the standard of rates were based upon the cost of living, very many

factors must be taken into account, but whatever the circumstances and whatever changes may possibly come about in the matter of pensions, any idea of a "means test" in any claim for an award of pension must be cleared away. We must not allow a repetition of the aftermath of the Great War to occur again.

The resumé of the War Damage Bill, still before Parliament, must not at this juncture be taken for granted, as the Bill is still in the Committee stage and many amendments have been made. It is hoped that a broader outline will appear in our next issue.

Quite recently the German Government intimated to the United States Government their desirability to allow British internees to communicate with relations and friends in this country. As a result of supervision by U.S. Consuls, regulations are now available and can be obtained from any Post Office or Citizens Advice Bureau.

If you have a criticism to air or a "grouse" to make on any matter of any nature, write to the Editor, who will give space to it with pleasure if of sufficient interest.

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Air Training Corps

In order to meet the growing need for pilots and air crews and men for the technical trades of the R.A.F., a new Air Training Corps scheme was announced on Feb. 1st. It has been promoted to ensure an adequate stream of young men of the right standard for service in the R.A.F. and the Fleet Air Arm and will provide facilities for general education and service training for boys who are physically fit, between the ages of 16 and 18. By the formation of Air Training Corps squadrons at schools and universities and local units in towns with a population of 20,000 or over it is hoped that all classes of the community will benefit by the training furnished.

The Air Defence Cadet Corps will be used as the foundation on which to build the Air Training Corps. The formation of local units will be in the hands of local committees of prominent citizens set up by Local Authorities, County Territorial, Army & Auxiliary Air Force Associations and similar bodies. The training will be of two classes—air crew and technical. The air crew syllabus approximates to that provided by the initial training wings of the R.A.F. State assistance in cash and equipment will be found, but the social side of the scheme will have to be provided for by local funds, while the whole administration will be in the hands of the director of pre-entry training at the

air ministry.

It is intended that membership of school units will not be confined to boys of the school, but may be extended to old boys as well as to boys resident in the locality. Similarly local units could take in a section of boys from a local school. The service departments will issue instructions from time to time for the guidance of headmasters.

The A.T.C. has been established by Royal Warrant and will have similar status to that of the old Officers Training Corps. A.T.C. officers will be commissioned in the R.A.F. Volunteer Reserve and wear R.A.F. uniform with an appropriate badge; School squadrons will as far as possible be officered by masters. Members of the A.T.C. will wear blue uniform similar to that of the old Air Defence Cadet Corps.

General education will not be directly given by the A.T.C., but boys are to be helped and encouraged to raise their educational level to that required for entry into the R.A.F. Local units will receive a per capita grant of £1 a year plus 10s. for each cadet with a proficiency certificate. Units which are financially weak may be assisted further from a central fund. Uniforms will be issued free and a grant for their upkeep made from public funds.

Applications from schools wishing to form Air Training Corps units should be addressed to Mr. H. C. Hodges, The Clerk, Leatherhead Urban Dist. Council The Council Offices, Leatherhead.

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Citizens Advice Bureau

Since our last issue a further extension of the Red Cross postal message scheme has been introduced, and it is now possible to transmit messages through the Bureau to occupied France, under the same conditions existing with other enemy and occupied territories. The following conditions must be observed:

1. Messages to consist of not more than 20 words, excluding name and address of sender and name and address of addressee.
2. Messages can be written in French or English.
3. The cost is one shilling.

Instructions have been received from the International Red Cross Committee that Red Cross postal messages can now be sent by air mail for an extra cost of 5d. to cover air mail rate.

During the past 15 months the Bureau have dispatched well over 250 messages and have received a large number of replies, but there has been delay in many cases particularly regarding the Channel Islands. In this latter case it must be pointed out that there is no Red Cross organisation there, and as far as the general scheme is concerned the main causes of delay were due firstly to the collapse of France, which for a time diverted transport to Lisbon and thence to Geneva. At Lisbon there was considerable congestion owing to lack of transport facilities as well as weather conditions which have

been bad during the winter, but it can be stated upon the authority of the International Red Cross that everything is being done to speed up the scheme, and the air mail service will expedite matters.

Once again a full list of the countries to which messages can be sent is as follows: Austria, Belgium, Channel Islands, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France (occupied), Germany, Holland, Italy, Norway and Poland.

The Leatherhead and District Citizens Advice Bureau, although sanctioned by the Urban District Council, has been recognised by the Ministry of Health, and it must be emphasised that it is a voluntary body giving a free service on all matters affecting the public in war time. In any case of doubt or difficulty consult the Citizens Advice Bureau, Alnwick House, Church Street, Leatherhead.

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War Damage—Government Scheme for Insurance

Parliament and the Country have been emphatic in the welcome to the War Damage Bill, which covers buildings and other immovable property against destruction and damage by enemy action.

Two days were given by House of Commons to its second reading, which is the stage on which the main principles of a measure are decided. The bill should come as a great relief to property owners for it covers war damage occurring during the two years from the outbreak of war until Aug. 31st next. The position will then be reviewed and further legislation made. Even now, four big questions require further consideration and separate provision:—

- 1 Insurance of the railways,
- 2 Provision for churches & chapels
- 3 Insurance in respect of loss of life and personal injury,
- 4 Hire purchase goods which will be dealt with under an amended commodity scheme.

The main scheme is for property insurance, and many will wish to know more about the arrangements for restoring property and the question of replacement value. These points raise such issues as the increased cost of building materials and labour. Still, these are minor questions and the scheme as a whole has removed a load of anxiety from the shoulders of every

property owner, large or small.

The total value of property covered is probably about twelve thousand million pounds, and the compulsory insurance of buildings alone will mean premiums amounting to two hundred million pounds being payable to the government in five years. The only buildings exempted are churches and charitable institutions. On a house worth £1000 about £5 a year will be payable according to its assessed value. On £500 worth of furniture the premium is £7 10s. and on a £500 car you also pay £7 10s a year. Contributions for property and business assets are compulsory; for furniture and personal chattels it is voluntary.

If a man's home or business has already been bombed he will automatically come within the scheme, the government paying compensation less the amount of premium. To control payment of compensation a War Damage Commission will be set up to decide how, when and how much will be paid. It will also provide temporary "first aid" to bombed sufferers at once, but full compensation will be delayed until a time conditioned "by the national interest."

Immovable property such as houses, business premises, factories and fixed machinery, the insurance is for five years. On each property the owner will pay 2s. in the £ on the nett schedule A value, or rateable value, for each of the 5 years.

War Damage—*continued.*

Premiums will be payable to the Inland Revenue on July 1st. On agricultural properties and on land used for recreational purposes it is reduced to 6d. in the £

Insurance of movable assets as plant, shop and office equipment, requires a premium of 30s. per £100 for the period Sept. 3rd, 1939 to the end of Sept., 1941. To spread the charge, payment will be made by three successive policies ending about Sept. 1941. Premiums payable through Insurance Companies.

Professions also come under the scheme, and insurance is compulsory where assets exceed £1,000.

All these contributions apply to war damage occurring during the two years from the outbreak of war until August 31st next, when the position will be reviewed and further legislation made.

With regard to leaseholders of houses or business premises it is anticipated that where the tenancy is not for more than seven years the contribution will be collected from the landlord. A longer lessee will pay the contribution and have the right to recover part of it from the ground landlord according to scales laid down in the Bill. Where there is a mortgage the payment is similarly shared by the freeholder and the mortgagee. For example, on a £1,000 house with a £700 mortgage the freeholder pays and recovers about one-third from the mortgagee.

Soldiers, Sailors & Airmen's Families' Association

It is not generally known that this Association operates throughout the country for the benefit of dependants and families of present serving members of H.M. forces. Its objects are to find employment for and to give temporary assistance to wives, widows, children and other dependants of serving and ex-service men, and to help applicants to obtain assistance from official sources or other service funds. The form of help given is varied and includes grants to relieve special distress, for sickness, confinements, surgical appliances, removals, clothing, advice on pensions and other difficulties. Officers and men themselves are ineligible for assistance, and grants are not made for nursing homes, emigration or funeral expenses. The clothing branch collects and distributes clothing.

Each county is represented by a committee with affiliated divisional committees for Boroughs, Urban Districts, etc. There are about 1,000 branches throughout Great Britain, as well as in most of the garrisons overseas.

Applications can be made to :

Ashtead—Lady Gascoigne, Ashtead Pk.
Bookham—Hon. Sec., British Legion,
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Ld. Lieutenant's Fund in 1940

In April an Emblem day organised by Mr. Mugeridge realised £40 for the central fund.

Following two meetings convened by the Vice-Chairman of the L.U.D.C. two Committees were formed in May for Bookham. The Appeals Committee (Chairman Mr. Brayne) was concerned with providing funds, primarily to buy wool, and £280 was raised including £66 specially contributed upon an appeal from Mr. Teesdale for the Home Guard. £166 was spent on wool and materials, £31 on comforts for the Home Guard, and £5 sent to the central fund.

The Committee gratefully acknowledges the help of local residents in organising entertainments and collecting funds. Mrs. Hackett's Fete realised £86, the Youth Club Concert £13 5s., a cricket match Bookham C.C. v. Mr. Teesdale's XI. £16, Bookham Guides whist drive £3 6s., a sale of work got up by the two little girls Misses V. Pickles and H. Drew £2 3s., and Mrs. Kleboe's whist drives provided a steady monthly income, box holders contributed £12 10s

The Comforts Committee (Chairman Mrs. Emuss) co-ordinated the efforts of the working parties, distributed wool, and sent 770 knitted garments to Hook Rise, whilst hundreds more were sent to special units adopted by working parties and to local men serving in the forces. Many letters of appreciation have been received. The Hon. Sec. Miss Freeman welcomes fresh knitters at The Croft, Church Road, every Tuesday, 3 to 4.

The Bookham Organisation has been officially recognised by the Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry.

When the Canadian troops arrived, an Entertainments Committee was formed (Chairman Mrs. Jacobs) and accommodation secured at the Corner House for a club and canteen, which kept open eight hours every day, being much appreciated. Books, games, etc. were supplied by Col. Cooper, and a piano, billiards table and gramophone

lent by friends added to the attractions. A successful Xmas party was given, and through the efforts of Mr. Robertson a swimming pool was provided during the hot weather. Through the generosity of local residents and good management the canteen was able to keep its prices low, and in spite of heavy initial expenses to pay its way. Great credit is due to Mrs. Jacob and her band of voluntary helpers who carried on through blitz and bad weather alike.

Looking Forward

Two or three fine days in succession during the early part of the year encourage us in the hope of good things to come, viz.: spring and summer flowers, vegetables and fruit. The joy of having the home redecorated, the erection of that much-wanted workshop, those faded clothes needing replacement and many other things are dreamt about.

Already the government has dreamt of making this England of ours better architecturally. Most of the foregoing are more or less visions, as we are urged by the government to spend money only on necessities and to prepare for the realisation of these dreams by saving the money in Savings Certificates or Bonds. In the change over to peace conditions the money that has been saved will be extremely useful both to the buyer as well as the manufacturer.

The government while appreciating the fact that nearly 500 million pounds was saved in one year, is asking the people to double that sum during the second year. It has been said that owing to rationing restrictions some women are saving a portion of their housekeeping money, and if that should really be the case, that surplus should be invested as above.

An office has been opened at Barclays Bank, High Street, on Wednesdays and Fridays between 2.30 and 4.30 for the sale of Savings Stamps, Certificates, &c. and it is hoped that residents will take advantage of these further facilities.

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- Bookham Youth Club
- Bookham Youth Organizations Cm'ttee
Mr. C. V. Brayne, C.M.G.
Wolverley, L. Bookham Tel. 502
- Bowling Club
Mr. Andrews, Five Beeches,
Dorking Road. Tel. 201
- Boys' Brigade
Mr. D. Cook, Flushing Farm House
- Boys' Brigade and Life Boys
Mr. L. S. Kay, Lingfield, Nutcroft
Grove, Fetcham
- British Legion (Effingham & The Book-
hams Branch)—Mr. Mugeridge,
St. Jean, Crabtree Lane. Tel. 399
- Brownies
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Windy Mead, Downs Way
- Citizens Advice Bureau
Mr. Mugeridge. St. Jean, Crab-
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Delaune, Sole Farm Road.
- Garden Society
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Leatherhead Road
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Miss Joce, The Spinney, Eastwick
Drive Tel. 84
- Girls' Life Brigade
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Close, Fetcham Pk. L'head 2420
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Omira, Leatherhead Road
- Leatherhead Hospital Linen Guild
(Bookham Circle)
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Hawkwood, Guildford Rd. Tel. 38
- Little Bookham Girls' Club
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