

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

CONDUCTED BY "THE ADJUTANT"

All Communications to be Addressed to P.O. Box 2000.

We would remind readers of the Record of Jewish War Services which is being compiled by the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies. Information is required as to regimental number, rank, full name, and unit of Jews serving in the Forces as well as home address.

Rosh Hashona in Middle East.

How the New Year was celebrated in the Middle East is told in an article I have received from Lieut. A. Lewin. He writes that the celebrations held at Headquarters will be remembered by all those who were privileged to take part in them. For weeks beforehand Padre (Major) Potashnik, Senior Jewish Chaplain, had busied himself with numerous details, and the unqualified success of the celebrations was a tribute to his indefatigable work. Lieut. Lewin writes: "The camp synagogue, erected earlier in the year, had been renovated and looked most solemnly attractive when hundreds of soldiers of all ranks assembled inside it for service on the eve of Rosh Hashona. Not only U.D.F. personnel were there, but also a large contingent of Palestinian men and women who had come over from surrounding parts to participate in the services. The Shool was crowded to the doors and many had to stand outside. The service was conducted by Major Potashnik in a most solemn atmosphere."

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Padre Welcomes Guests.

After the service over 600 persons sat down to an excellently prepared dinner. Among those present were Col. Lewis, Lt.-Col. Myers, Col. Charlton, Padre Cilliers (Senior S.C. Chaplain), Padre Harvey, Lt.-Col. de Klerk, Major Eaton (Gifts and Comforts Committee), Capt. Theunissen and many other officers and friends. "During dinner Padre Potashnik welcomed the guests, and said that this year every one felt when wishing his neighbour a happy and victorious New Year, that the wish might really come true, and that by next year we may all be home with our families and friends," wrote Lieut. Lewis. Lt.-Col. de Klerk expressed pleasure at being present and on behalf of the General (who was unavoidably absent on duty) he wished all the Jewish soldiers a happy and successful New Year. Padre Cilliers, speaking in Afrikaans, assured the gathering that no South African or Christian could tolerate anti-Semitism or do other than sympathise with the Jewish people for all the inhuman suffering they had undergone in recent times. P.O.C. the Jewish Company, speaking in Hebrew, expressed his pleasure at the co-operation shown on all sides. And then followed the community singing in Hebrew and English. After the service next morning, a well-attended, a cold luncheon was held for the Jewish personnel. Lieut. Lewin concludes: "Altogether the New Year celebrations passed off excellently. Every soldier received a beautiful gift in the shape of a Christmas case, duly inscribed, from the Board of Deputies. This will for all time serve to remind the Jewish men and women of New

Year, 5704, spent by them in the Middle East."

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R.H. in Alexandria.

Lt./Bdr. B. Gordon also writes to me of how he spent the Yomtovim. This is what he says: "This letter comes to you from a lonely Ack-Ack post somewhere in North Africa, but my reason for writing is to try and give you some idea of the most remarkable Jewish New Year I have yet spent, and also of the amazing efforts of the Jewish community who made all preparations to meet the demands of hundreds of Jewish soldiers who were spending their leave in Alexandria. Special luncheons, dinners and accommodation were provided, free of charge, during the two days, and I can confidently say now that the hospitality shown and the manner in which things were organised surpasses all other efforts made by any Jewish Women's Organisation—even in Cape Town! Unfortunately I only have sufficient space in my letter-card to let you try and imagine a gathering of several hundreds of Jewish soldiers from all parts of the world—Palestine, America, South Africa, Great Britain, New Zealand, etc.—all sitting down to a special New Year dinner, with Palestine wine flowing freely. There is a remarkable atmosphere of jollity and I can recognise several Hebrew songs being lustily sung by our comrades from Palestine."

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Sarie Marais in Hebrew.

"Not to be outdone, South Africans—and we were quite strongly represented, too—sing Sarie Marais, and imagine our surprise when a Palestine girl calmly gets up and retaliates by singing it in Hebrew! And of course the 'Hora,' since no Hebrew celebration is complete without it. Before the end we all rise and sing 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow,' both in English and Hebrew, concluding with the 'King' and Hatikvah. And I have never heard a more impressive version of Hatikvah as it was sung by the gathering that night—the voices of the Palestinian soldier-girls ringing out above everyone else's—everyone's inner feelings, expressions and hopes seemed to make themselves heard. Those few dramatic moments I will never forget. Cheerio to you from North Africa."

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P.O.W. in Germany.

In the course of a letter to the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies on the subject of a Jewish soldier who is a prisoner of war in Germany, the South African Red Cross Society states: "For your information, the Germans are known to be meticulous in their observance of the terms of the International Convention governing the treatment of prisoners of war." This should allay the fears of many parents

whose sons have been removed from Italy to prison camps in the Reich.

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Awards for Gallant Services.

In the latest list of mentions, approved by H.M. the King, for gallant and distinguished services in the Middle East during the period May 1, 1942, to October 22, 1942, are the following: T/W.O.1 (C.S.M.) Philip Grosman, 1st S.A. Infantry Brigade Headquarters; T/Corporal Markham Leopold Greenberg, S.A.E.C.; Trooper Morris Heyman Garb, S.A.T.C.; Tpr. Harold Goldberg, S.A.T.C.; W.O.1 (now T/2nd Lieut.) Eric Werner Heilbronner, S.A.M.C. I have just learned that Major H. G. G. Bernstein, R.A.M.C., has been awarded the M.B.E. Major Bernstein, whose parents are Dr. and Mrs. Ben Bernstein, of Breda Street, Cape Town, has been in Malta for almost four years.

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Died from Injuries.

Bdr. Phil Kossick, a veteran of World War 1, of whom I have before written in this page, called to give me the sad news of the death of his only son Mossie, as a result of injuries in the Western Desert. Mossie was a trooper in an armoured car regiment and, like his father, a keen soldier. He was only 18 years old at the time of his death. My deep sympathy goes to Bdr. and Mrs. Kossick in their loss. Phil says he has but one desire—to get back in action and have another crack at the Hun. Mossie's photograph is below.

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The Kantey War Record.

Last week I recorded the award of the M.B.E. to T/Capt. Basil Kantey (Mentioned in Despatches), son of Mr. and Mrs. S. N. Kantey, of Sea Point, and former Mayor and Mayoress of Mossel Bay, and this week I reproduce his photograph, as well as those of his brother Leon and his sister Ruth. Mr. and Mrs. Kantey have, after a lapse of some months, heard from Leon from a P.O.W. camp in Italy. Whether or not he has been transferred to Germany since he wrote is not known.

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Operating on Mediterranean Front.

I have had news of the son of Mr. and Mrs. M. Kentridge, M.P., who is attached to No. 1 Squadron of the S.A.A.F., and who is operating on the Mediterranean front. He is Air/Sgt. S. W. Kentridge. He joined up at the age of 19 in January, 1941, after he had obtained the B.A. degree at the Witwatersrand University. When he completed his training course with the S.A.A.F. he was drafted to Kenya. From there he went to Egypt and Tunisia, where he was posted to No. 1 Squadron. The next time his parents heard from him he was in Malta, where he spent some of his free time as, in his own words, "a rubbernecking tourist." He was on the spot during the invasion of Sicily and there is no saying where he may still find himself before the war is over.

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Gifts from Board of Deputies.

Many letters have been received by the Board of Deputies expressing appreciation of the New Year gifts sent up to them by the Board. Typical of these letters is one from Corporal E. Spiro, of 101 S.A. General Hos-

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T/Capt. B. Kantey.

Miss Ruth Kantey (S.A.A.F., now Air Ministry Mission).

Leon Kantey, 2nd Ack-Ack The (P.O.W.)

late Tpr. Mossie Kossick (Armed Car Regt.)

Air/Sgt. S. W. Kentridge (S.A.A.F.)

Sgt. B. Kaimowitz.