

EDITORIAL

CORPS PUBLICATIONS

DURING the past few years the Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps and the Army Medical Services Magazine have experienced the bite of the financial climate, as with many of the Service publications, and with some of our civilian counterparts of the Journal of the R.A.M.C.

Unfortunately, the culmination of the above together with the Liquidation of our printers who gave us faithful service for a period of 12 years or more, has now necessitated a review of our financial situation.

We must apologise to both the readers of the Journal and the Magazine for the non-publication of the July 1977 issues. However, we have now obtained the services of F. Bailey & Son Ltd., of Dursley, Gloucestershire, to undertake the publication of the Journal and the Magazine commencing with the October 1977 issues.

Our printers—Hugh Evans & Sons Ltd.—went into liquidation during the course of preparation of the April 1977 issues, which were not finally distributed until early June, for this delay we must also apologise. At this stage we realised that we would not be able to obtain the services of a new printer in time to publish the July issues and regrettably they had to be dropped.

The position we now find ourselves in is, that we do not have sufficient funds to continue with four issues per year of both the Journal and Magazine, and rather than drastically cut one publication have decided that commencing with the October 1977 issues, both Journal and Magazine will be published three times per year instead of quarterly. Publication dates will be February, June and October of each year.

Apologising once again for the inconvenience to our readers, and hope that you will continue to support our Corps publications as you have done so in the past.

THE DOCTOR'S HORSE

THE poet (Kipling) sings of the 'Undertaker's Horse' and the Irish have long danced jigs to the air of 'The Tinker's Horse' so why not a few words on the 'Doctor's' horse.

The medical officer in the past was wholly dependent on the horse (we use the term in its widest sense to include mules and donkeys) for getting about and also for the transport of his medical equipment.

The diaries of medical officers reveal their dependence on the horse. Contrary to what readers might expect, cavalry officers including cavalry surgeons tended to regard the horse as expendable, and when ridden to death could be replaced.

On the other hand the Infantry Surgeon looked upon his horse with affection. We recall reading a Crimean War Diary (kept by an Infantry Surgeon) in which appeared a passage which went as follows 'Awoke to a fearful storm of wind and rain. Lay awake thinking of poor "Warrior" in the open picquet lines. 2 a.m. got up

and covered him with my greatcoat'. Across the years this kind act still shines. We hope that 'Warrior' survived to accompany his master home.

By far the most important diary showing the importance of good horse management is that kept by Major Porter, R.A.M.C., during the South African War. Until we had read it we had not appreciated how vital good animal management was if a unit—such as the Field Hospital which Porter commanded—was to be kept mobile. Horses, mules and even trek-oxen he managed with equal ease and the whole diary is a lasting tribute to his skill.

But probably the most famous of all Medical Officers' horses is that painted by Lady Butler in her 'Remnant of an Army'. The painting shows Dr. William Bryden wounded and fainting in the saddle of his dying horse which just staggers on to Jalalabad and safety. Dr. Bryden's name lives on but not that of his horse which shared his trials.

The last major war in which our Army was horsed was World War I (which when we joined the Army in 1934 it was still horsed and we underwent an equestrian course). One of the finest poems from that war is Julian Grenfell's 'Into Battle' which contains two lines with which we may fittingly take leave of the horse.

'The horses show him nobler powers;
O patient eyes, courageous hearts'.

Birthday Honours List — 1977

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| <i>M.B.E.</i> | Major M. J. DEMPSEY, R.A.M.C. |
| <i>M.B.E. (T.A.V.R.)</i> | Major L. T. LEWIS, T.D., M.B., Ch.B., R.A.M.C. (T.A.V.R.)
Major A. C. M. L. MILLER, T.D., M.B., Ch.B., F.R.C.S., R.A.M.C. (T.A.V.R.) |
| <i>B.E.M.</i> | Staff Sergeant F. A. TAYLOR, R.A.M.C. |
| <i>B.E.M. (T.A.V.R.)</i> | Staff Sergeant (LWO/2) R. F. W. DRAKE, R.A.M.C. (T.A.V.R.) |
| <i>R.R.C.</i> | Lieutenant-Colonel (A/Col) P. G. BURGE, Q.A.R.A.N.C.
Lieutenant-Colonel M. J. McDERMOTT, Q.A.R.A.N.C. |