

Hospitality was shown to troops in war-time Britain

I'm worried about the hospitality our troops in the Middle East may be missing. The Saudis don't strike me yet as the take-you-in, cup of tea types like the British were in 1939-45.

There isn't a returned soldier who can't roll off a yarn of how well he was treated by locals in England during their years of rationing, blitzes, waiting in line, and putting up with youngsters in uniform from Canada and the United States.

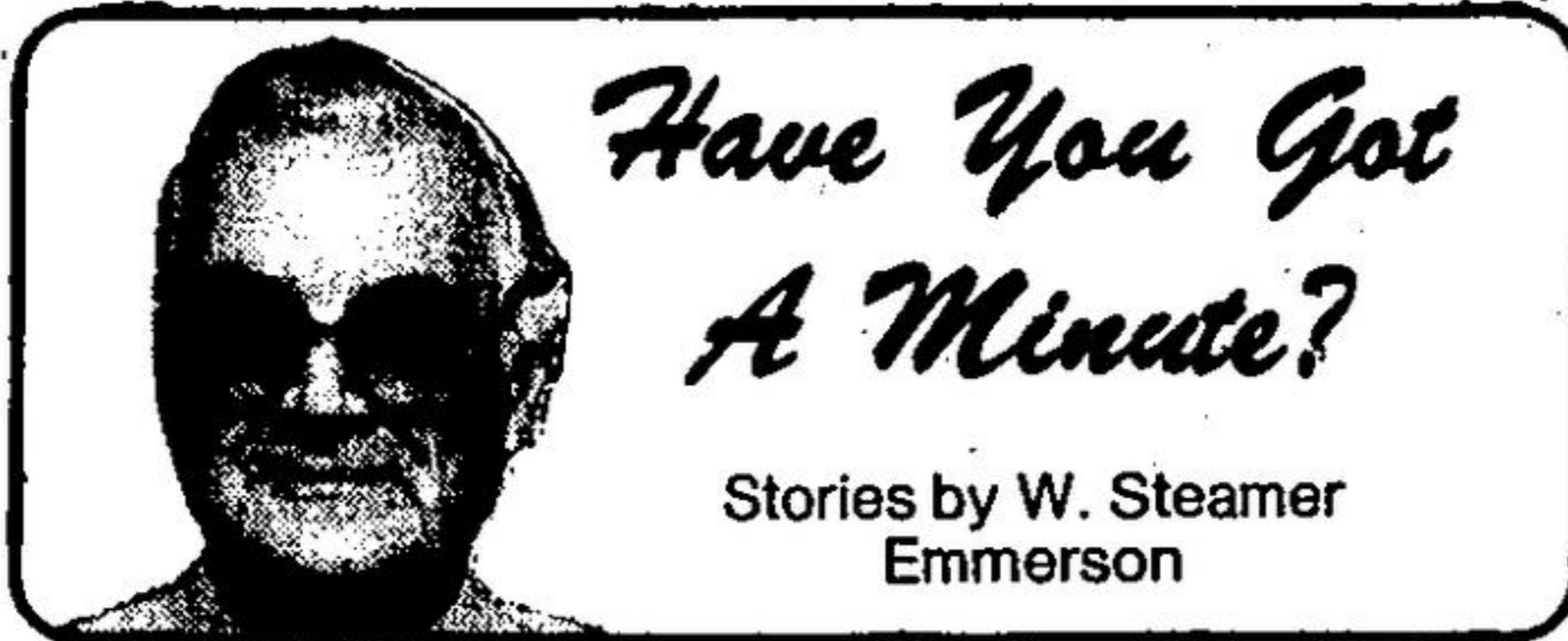
We were often adopted by a family who was caring, concerned and delighted to share their home with a home-sick lad to give him a few hours of T.L.C. away from the raucous, rowdy barrack room of army life.

My brother Bob could attest to this if he were still alive. He had a home away from home just a threepenny bus ride from Aldershot in England. It was worth threepence to get away from Aldershot.

Unexpectedly, I was to learn first hand of his home-care treatment and the comfort that was his.

He had found a wonderful family who were willing to take him in and share their rations. As best he could, he would see they got a pair of boots, from the Q.M. stores, even a blueish grey blanket or two. Bob's buddy was the Quarter Master of his Regiment and anything unaccounted for, was given to Bob for his home away from home.

When I met Bob in England he was just ready to hop the bus to his friend's house with army bags



Have You Got A Minute?

Stories by W. Steamer Emerson

loaded with items the army would never miss. I was the designated soldier about to leave camp for a 14-day furlough if questioned at the gate.

Bob insisted this was the only way and besides, the guards on the gate wouldn't recognize me with my Lorne Scot insignia.

But before I tell you more, let me explain how I met Bob in Aldershot.

I was walking down the street after my army day was over and was allowed out for a bit of fresh air. Before my very eyes was Sonny Stockford, a Georgetown boy, a Top Streeter of my day. We were long time buddies. Glad greetings were exchanged.

He asked me if I had seen my brother Bob lately and when I said "not in years" he was surprised. Pointing to a black door in a nearby building he told me to enter and ask for Bob.

Sure enough Bob was in there packing bags to the brim. I had come at the most opportune time for him as he was preparing to go visit his English family to do his

Santa routine.

He was preoccupied in making sure there would be no challenge at the gate so I was, as I said before, the simple private leaving camp on leave loaded with all my gear, fitting in perfectly with Bob's plans.

The Provost on the gate asked me where I was going and I blurted out Glasgow with a confidence Bob was proud of.

Once outside the gate he impressed upon me the importance of being alert to catching the last bus back from our home visit. Bob had visited many times and knew exactly the layout of the house and was familiar with the sound of the bus. My instructions were "when we hear the bus we must hurry because it turns around at the end of the street and if we are not at the bus stop after it makes it's turn we will have to walk. It's the last bus," he explained.

Goodness, we struggled on the bus, off the bus, delivered the goodies, enjoyed a cup of tea with new found friends and when it

seemed no time, Bob jumped up and told me to "hurry, it's our bus."

Gentleman that I was, I wanted to take a moment or two to tell Bob's friends how nice they had been and to thank them for their hospitality but I had to quicken my goodbyes because Bob was already outside shouting to "come on."

In the black-out in England no light was to be exposed when a door was opened. This family let you out into a black little room, closed the kitchen door so we were in darkness. Thus you could open the outer door without fear of an air raid warden descending upon you.

In my hurried goodbye in the darkness of the little room, being pushed by the anxious call of my brother, I walked into a wall. There was a shattering of glass and I heard the anguished groan, "Oh, my God, my teeth!"

Bob's family pushed me out into the darkened street to catch the bus. The British are so polite. No angry "you so and so Canadian," just "hurry or you will miss your bus."

Can you picture a Saudi family sacrificing like the British did for us?

If there is I hope the couple still have their own teeth.

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Bird carving offered by Credit Valley Artisans

The Credit Valley Artisans are offering a seven-week course in bird carving for beginners on Monday evenings starting February 4th.

Norval resident George Gastle will be the instructor. He has taught two previous bird carving courses for the Credit Valley Artisans.

Fascinated with wildlife, George began painting birds over 20 years ago. As he studied his subjects he felt the need to extend the two dimensional canvas into three dimensions and thus started his interest in carving. Mr. Gastle began bird carving

nine years ago with an introductory course taught by Paul Burdette of Orton and has drawn on his art background to improve his techniques. George carves for self enjoyment but has sold some of his carvings. Mr. Gastle teaches art and industrial arts in Brampton but is interested in teaching woodworking full time.

Students will learn all aspects of bird carving while carving a loon. The course will cover pattern development, carving techniques, anatomical features of birds, eye insertion and painting with acrylics. This course is suitable for beginners as well as

experienced carvers who wish to learn new techniques.

For further information contact Frank Anthony, Registrar at 877-5856 between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. Deadline for registration in this course is Monday, January 28, 1991.

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