

Diary note from 1943¹

by
A.N. Prior

There is a lot in the papers about the Immorality of soldiers and the evil influences that play on the poor lads that are brought into camp; but what astonishes me about the bulk of these jokers is their quite childlike innocence. There's endless telling of dirty stories, but there's a larger proportion of "chaste" young persons here than I've encountered in the various strata of society in which I moved in civil life. I am astonished to find that here in camp I myself am a relatively "tough" guy. I can put down a handle of half-and-half, for instance, {2} quicker than anyone else in this dormitory. It is fantastic.

Sidelight on Race Prejudice: A fellow-AC2 told me of a letter written to the paper in his home town after some Chinese had been had up for playing fantax or pakapu, putting out that the N.Z. national forms of gambling viz. betting on horses, is legalised, but our Chinese Allies are had up for practising theirs. A point for the Campaigners for Christian Order to take up!

There is a fellow in the dormitory named Earwaker. He pronounces it "Erica". I don't know whether he ...

¹ This text has been edited by Martin Prior. The original is kept in the Prior Collection, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Box 7.