perpetrated during Stirrup-Cup. Tin plates, or the white hat of a cook, caught the sun; a plume of smoke gave away a position otherwise well concealed in a wood; wheel-tracks also told a tale. In fairness to those responsible for camouflage the Bückeburg site, where wheel marks showed up also told a tale. In fairness to those responsible for camouflage the Bückeburg site, where wheel marks showed up also told a tale. In fairness to those responsible for camouflage the Bückeburg site, where wheel marks showed up also told a tale. In fairness to those responsible for camouflage the Bückeburg site, where wheel marks showed up also told a tale.

**STIRRUP-CUP**

The absence of Red Cross markings visible from the air raises the controversial issue as to whether or not the jet ground-attack pilot of tomorrow would have time to sort out his target. Apparently the doctors think he would not.

For the purposes of the exercise, the British Army of the Rhine daily provided one hundred "dummy" sick and wounded (about a third of them Canadian), and the R.A.F. Regiment provided sixty; all were skilfully made up to resemble real casualties. The proportion of four lying cases to six sitting is what the Army considers we would have in a war of conventional weapons. There are, of course, many more sick in war than there are wounded, and so there were all sorts of simulated diseases, unlikely and otherwise. Some of the cases were purposely so splinted as to make them difficult to load.

The "casualties" were fed into three airfields and evacuated from Wunstorf and Gutersloh to Bückeburg by light aircraft, and from Bückeburg by Valetta. The Valettas did not, in fact, fly "casualties" to the United Kingdom, but took them off on half-an-hour's local flying. Light aircraft used included Bristol Sycamore helicopters, an Auster Ambulance/Freighter, Austers and Ansons. The Ambulance/Freighter has been undergoing service trials. The Mk 2 Sycamores were provided by No. 1906 Helicopter Training and Development Flight; they had come over for Exercise Hold Fast and stayed on for Stirrup-Cup. Afterwards—"They shall go away and depart backwards, and the place that knew them shall know them no more."

Something must be said on the relative roles of helicopters and light aircraft. They are not mutually exclusive, but complementary. The helicopter is excellent for picking up casualties in jungle or mountain warfare, for air/sea rescue, and so on. The little Auster Ambulance/Freighter and other light aircraft are very useful for hopping into forward strips in almost any kind of country, and they have the advantage that any qualified pilot can fly them (though, admittedly, "strip work" requires considerable practice), whereas only specially trained pilots can cope with a helicopter.

On Exercise Stirrup-Cup the Valettas each carried twelve stretcher and six sitting cases; the Ansons, two stretcher or six sitting; the Ambulance/Freighter, two stretcher and one sitting; the Austers, one sitting; and the helicopters, two sitting.

Most of the "casualties" had never flown before, and there were some amusing reactions. For example, having flown in a batch of "casualties" by Anson, the pilot—the D.P.M.O. (Flying) 2nd T.A.F., S/L Allan Crawford—asked one of the youngsters whether he liked flying; he got the reply: "I liked it fine—especially the bit when we went round the corner..." It is only fair to add that Crawford normally flies jet fighters.

Altogether, over 560 casualties were airlifted during the two-and-a-half days of Stirrup-Cup. This involved 69 "casualty"-carrying sorties, with a total of 120 take-offs. The organization could have dealt with a good many more, but there were just not enough "bodies" available. But four hundred were all that were needed to prove that the organization could cope; it would have taken far more to test the set-up to what one Medical Officer called "destruction." Generally speaking, it took the teams under 15 minutes from doors-opened to doors-closed to handle twenty stretchers.

Stirrup-Cup provided an opportunity to try out for the Command Catering Branch an experimental field cooker. The thing weighed 13 tons and was slightly out of role in that it took 110 men on ropes to get it into the woods. Once in position, however, it turned out 500 hot meals a day.

Certainly Stirrup-Cup achieved what it set out to do—to practice medical and operations staffs in carrying casualties by air, and to demonstrate to all ranks of 2nd T.A.F. and the British Army of the Rhine that the machinery exists to get sick or wounded back to full hospital facilities in the United Kingdom. Everything worked very smoothly on the operations side, and much was learned in the technique of liaison between the medical staff running the C.A.E. Flight and Sections and the executive officers controlling air movements. One result is that 2nd T.A.F. now has a cadre of officers and men who could cope with casualty air-evacuation if something started—an inverted pyramid ready to expand.

Much of the success of Stirrup-Cup was due to the Officer Commanding the C.A.E. Flight—W/C. M. W. L. White, the Senior Medical Officer of the Royal Air Force Technical College, Henlow. He has been concerned with the planning and equipping of such exercises since 1942, when he organized the Maison Blanche—Gibraltar lift in the old Vickers Valenta biplanes.

* All the doctors are full of praise for the pilots, who (they say) were extremely keen and co-operative. A surprisingly large number of G.D. officers took the trouble to see for themselves how casualty air-evacuation is run. The Director of Medical Services, British Army of the Rhine (Major General R. D. Cameron), whom G/C. MacDonald had invited to visit Stirrup-Cup, said afterwards that he thought it was most successful, and he congratulated all concerned on the enthusiasm and efficiency with which it was conducted.

Tailpiece.—Reality touched Stirrup-Cup on the very first day, when one of the Valettas taking part was ordered to Gibraltar to fly a seriously ill patient—a genuine case—to the United Kingdom.

F.G.